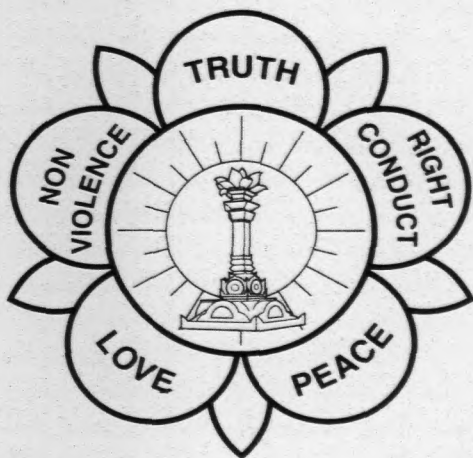




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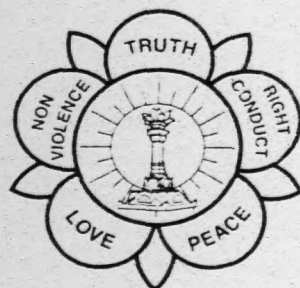
Volume 22, Number 1

September, October, November
Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA

*This publication is dedicated with love and devotion to
Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba*

Sai's Message	Sathya Sai Baba	1
Saraswati, Goddess of Arts and Learning	Michael Hollander	2
Sai Talks to College Students	Sathya Sai Baba	3
Sai School in Zambia	Genevieve Kanu	9
Transformation via Swami's Love	Tara Chander	12
When He Is with Children	Peggy Mason	14
Sai Speaks to Teachers	Sathya Sai Baba	15
Sai Education, How Does It Work?	Loraine Burrows	19
Playing Promotes Creativity	Winnifred Bolton	22
Teaching an Enrichment Workshop	Cathy Daub	23
The Right Answer	Anonymous	24
Universality and Sai World Culture	Hymon Johnson, Ed.D.	25
From Nelson Mandela	Nelson Mandela	28
Announcements	Editor	29
Tender Saplings	Sathya Sai Baba	30
Sathya Sai Book Center of America	Book Center Staff	32

***The Sarva Dharma symbol of the Sri Sathya Sai Organization, depicts
the five qualities from which all human values emanate.***



The *Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA* welcomes photographs, drawings and literary contributions. Sorry, but we are unable to return any material which is sent to us, so please keep a copy for your files. We reserve the right of discrimination in selecting and editing material for publication. Kindly send any material to: **Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA, P.O. Box 660908, Arcadia, California 91066-0908** or **Fax (909) 337-5270.**
—Barbara Bozzani, Editor

Workers, office bearers, teachers, and seva dal members of the Sathya Sai Organization all over the world, all must remember that they are subject to the scrutiny of the public, wherever they are and whatever they do. They must, themselves, be free from the habits and practices which they recommend that others give up. The teachers should not leave their own children out of the Sai Spiritual Education classes. They should not lose their tempers; they should keep their emotions under control and not exhibit depression, dejection or a wavering will. The quality of work is more important than the quantity, so they should not undertake to do more than they can render satisfactorily.

Let their own conscience be the judge. If they feel that they have discharged their duty sufficiently to the children, then they may rest content. . . .

There are also problems of all sorts. Solve them with discrimination and deep love. Meet these problems with a desire to serve the children better, and the problems will be easily overcome. Gradually, you will realize that the Sathya Sai Spiritual Education is devised not only for the education of children but also for the teachers.



Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, Kodaikanal, circa 1988

—Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. X

Chapter 33

Saraswati Goddess of the Arts and Learning

Be a student

and seek the path of academic excellence

Be an artist

and discover the hidden talent

study the law and know His classless ideology

and I tell you

none comes to fruition

without the grace and love of Saraswati

She is the immortal Goddess of the Arts and all Learning

She adorns the campus of His university

She blesses those who approach Her with

ardent discipline

humility and readiness to serve

She holds the key to success and failure

She holds the balance of fruitful labor

She holds the pearls of wisdom and learning and

She plays the vina—setting the tone for every drama

Such is the grace of the Holy Mother

Such is the Love and Magnificence of Her Eternal Splendor

Advent, Volume II, The Poetry of
—**Michael Hollander**

The great teachers belong to all mankind. . . . To accept one of them as one's own and discard the rest as belonging to others, is a sign of pettiness. Christ, Rama, Krishna—they are for all people everywhere.

—**Sathya Sai Baba**
Thought for the Day, January 10, 1992

Sai Talks to College Students

If one is blind, but he exercises sense control, he can attain liberation.

If one is an angel, but has no sense control, he cannot attain anything.

Open your eyes and look into the Lord's eyes.

He is found everywhere.

They say He was in Shirdi in the past and is now in Parthi.

He is present in the eyes of those who have true devotion.

Dear Students! In Bharathiya (Indian) culture, the four goals of human life are declared to be: righteousness, earning wealth in a righteous manner, controlling desires, and obtaining liberation. It may not be possible for all human beings to achieve these four goals. However, there are four qualities which people have to develop if they wish to pursue and attain true spirituality. These are very important for everyone today. If you understand these, you understand everything. It is the failure to properly understand the four requisites that is the cause of many problems and difficulties. These four are: friendship, compassion, appreciation, and indifference or detachment. These important qualities are necessary for everyone.

Cultivate These Four

The characteristics of each of these qualities have not been properly explained, so they are not understood:

• Friendship (*maitri*) is being regarded as mere friendliness. But what is friend-

ship? With whom should you be friends? In what way is one to be a friend? These different aspects have to be understood. One should not develop friendships with all and sundry. One should cultivate friendship among those who are equal in age, status, education, health, wealth, etc. Friendship with those below or above one's own status should be avoided. This is the true meaning of friendship. When you make friends with those who are higher in status, they may try to control you. If you are not subservient, you may lose the friendship. When you develop friendships with those below your status, you may try to boss or control them. If they do not obey you, the friendships will not last. Therefore, friendship will only endure when it is between equals in age, wealth, education and socio-economic status.

• Compassion (*karuna*) should not be misdirected and indiscriminately used. It should be shown only toward those who are in a more abject position than one's self in respect to age, wealth, health, status, education, etc. Only then, compassion becomes meaningful and valuable.

• Appreciation (*muditha*) is a quality which relates to the attitude shown toward those who are better off than you. You should feel happy when you see such people. They may look richer than you; they may be better placed than you in wealth, power or health. You should rejoice at the sight of those who hold higher positions or score higher marks in school. This means freedom from jealousy and a feeling of happiness about the good fortune of others.

•Next, there are two terms, indifference or detachment (*upeksha*) and liking (*apeksha*). We should not have any liking for the bad deeds or bad thoughts of others. Stay away from all company who indulge in bad thoughts, words and deeds. This is practicing indifference and detachment.

If you cultivate these four, then you do not need any other qualities in life. Friendship with equals, compassion toward those in abject positions, rejoicing in the good fortune of those who are better off, and having no liking for or being indifferent toward bad company—these are the objectives to be pursued in life. It is failure to observe these directives that causes the quality of life to deteriorate.

Two Kinds of Purity

Everyone has to observe purity in body, dress and manners. This is external purity, which is not enough. The mind has to be kept pure; the thoughts should be clean. It is necessary to practice both external and internal cleanliness. It is easy to maintain external cleanliness by simply washing and removing the dirt. How is one to recognize internal impurity and remove it? There is only one way. That is to recognize that God dwells in all beings from the smallest to the largest. This awareness will make the mind pure. You must have the conviction that God dwells in everything and is present everywhere. If you recognize this truth, you will sanctify life. The Infinite Universal Spirit is omnipresent. No one can determine what is good and what is bad in this all-pervading Spirit because it is the One without a second. Only people who identify themselves with the body make such distinctions because of a feeling of duality

and ignorance. For Divinity, there is no such distinction, and no one can attribute such qualities to the Divine.

Three Human Attributes

Here is an example: There are a number of vessels made of clay, wood, copper, brass, silver and gold. They are all filled with water. The reflection of the sun can be seen in the water in all containers. Is it possible to say that the reflection of the sun in one vessel is good and that in another it is bad? The value of the containers may vary; clay is less valuable, gold is more valuable. But can any value be given to the sun's reflection in each of them? The vessels are products of nature; the sun is transcendental. The containers can vary in quality; the sun is incomparably pure. The sun symbolizes the Infinite Spirit; every living being is an image of the Infinite. In human beings, the mind represents water, the body is the vessel, and the Indwelling Divinity (*Atma*) is the sun. The *Atma* that is present in all beings is the same. The differences among them relate only to the bodies. Thinking in this way, it will be found that defects in quality relate to the body and the mind, not to the *Atma*. The water in one vessel may be pure, while in the other, it may be turbulent, and in another, it may be muddy. The reflection in the pure water is regarded as calm, balanced (*sathwic*); the turbulent water is regarded as angry, greedy, active (*rajasic*); the muddy water is regarded as dull, ignorant (*thamasic*).

It is the mind which has to be purified by removal of *thamasic* and *rajasic* qualities. How is this to be done? By getting rid of two bad tendencies: First, there is the tendency to disguise our own faults. Second, people search for faults in

others. As long as these two defects are practiced, no one is pure and steady. Only those who are conscious of their own faults and seek to recognize the good in others, can make their minds pure and steady. Ostentation and pomp destroy human beings. If one is pretentious, one cannot be *sathwic* or understand the nature of *Atma* (indwelling Divinity).

Where Is the Defect?

Someone mentioned that it is difficult to understand Swami's nature, but if you follow Swami's instructions, you can understand him and receive his grace. That person also pointed out that sometimes the students have difficulty understanding Swami. Students may use their imaginations instead of their understanding, so where is the difficulty or defect? In whatever situation you are placed, you should have self-control, forbearance and be able to overcome any situation. If you let your defects remain—then no matter what holy places you dwell in, which temples you visit, what holy company you keep—it will be of no use.

For example: You use a mosquito net to avoid being bitten. As long as you have the net, no matter how many mosquitoes there are outside, you don't have to worry. However, if mosquitoes are inside the net, no one can save you from them. If you keep a net to protect yourself, but foolishly allow mosquitoes to come inside, then whose fault is it?

Students may say they have devotion and love for Sai, but mere love for Sai is not enough. To practice Swami's teachings and to maintain good conduct are essential. Only then, will you be able to understand the principle of Divinity.

Go Deep

Another example: As you go along the road, you find on one side a tree rich in foliage and in full bloom. Across the road, you notice a rice paddy field in which the crop is withering because it was not watered. What is the reason for this difference? Why is the big tree flourishing without being watered? It is because, in the case of the tree, the roots have gone deep into the ground and reached the water table, thus they have a constant source of sustenance. In the case of the paddy, the crop has withered because the roots have not gone deep and have not received any water from underground. Similarly, one who is filled with deep devotion for God will be happy and experience bliss (*ananda*). Those whose devotion is only surface deep will have no contentment; they will be miserable and unhappy. Why is there unhappiness and sorrow? Some are sorrowful because they are unable to practice what they preach, and their minds have not gone deep to the heart of God. It is questionable whether the roots of devotion have gone deep, or they are superficial, or whether they exist at all. Some of you are artificial.

In ancient times, when Bharata (the brother of Lord Rama) returned from the Kaikeya kingdom, he saw the city of Ayodhya immersed in sorrow and heard about the sudden demise of his father, King Dasaratha. He approached his mother, Kaikeyi, and inquired what had happened in his absence. She replied with the attitude that she had done a great thing, "Son, for your welfare, I asked your father, King Dasaratha, for a boon to make you the King of Ayodhya instead of Rama and, because of that sorrow, your father

died." It was very painful for Bharata to hear that reply from his own mother. He got very angry and told his mother, "Oh, cruel woman, you must have taken birth to destroy the name and fame of the race of the Solar Dynasty. Is it possible to kill the tree and plant the branches?" Similarly, some of you are trying to break the tree of Divinity and develop the branches of worldliness.

So many of you come here [Prasanthi Nilayam] as devotees. If you inquire whether you came out of devotion or for selfish desires; you will get an answer, the real answer.

Direct Experience

In today's educational system there are a number of changes, but where are these changes leading? They are leading to the destruction of humanity. Today, some people look with contempt at ancient traditions and scriptures. They think that these are not useful to society and were made to fool innocent people, thus making fun of them. But that is a great mistake. Ancient cultures, traditions, and righteous actions (*dharma*s) are meant to uplift and transform people and to make them Divine. Today, educators do not believe in anything without direct proof from experimentation. Only foolish people believe in such theories. Humanity is caught up in these cobwebs. I agree that direct experience is necessary, but people should not only think about the external forms but about the internal essence. It is declared in the *Upanishads* (holy text). "Without the essence, everything is useless." When there is no essence, then there is non-sense.

Imagine that you see artificial grapes, mangoes, and bananas which have the

form but no essence, so you cannot eat and enjoy them. The scientific experiments of today are like those artificial fruits. The essence of Divinity is lacking in all these experimental studies. If people are accepting these experiments as truth, you can imagine how foolish they are. You should realize that there are certain things which cannot be proven, but they are true.

You experience sorrow and joy, do they have form? Because they do not have a form and cannot be seen, can you deny the experiences? For example: You are in a sorrowful mood and your friend says that because he cannot see the form of your sadness, he doesn't believe that you are sad. Hearing this, you might become annoyed and say to him, "Whether you believe it or not, I am sad; I don't need to prove it to you." If you inquire in this way, you will understand the truth. Can you see your mind, intellect or conscience? No, but who can deny their existence? Sometimes you say that your mind is wandering; but, if someone wants to see it, can you show it to them? It is a matter of experience.

Faulty Education

Unfortunately, modern education is going in the wrong direction, and because of that, humanity is going astray. You should have faith that there is Divinity in every object. If you don't have faith in Divinity, you are wasting your life.

Put into Practice

Once King Shivaji sent money, jewels and other valuable articles to the saint, Samarth Ramdas (a devotee of Lord Rama). Saint Ramdas was a poor renunciate; but he was very charitable. Know-

ing this quality, King Shivaji thought that Ramdas would make good use of the gifts. Soldiers came to the saint's dwelling and unloaded all the gifts; then they waited for the arrival of Ramdas. After finishing his bath in the nearby river, Ramdas returned. He asked the soldiers who they were, and why they had come. They replied that King Shivaji had sent them to deliver the gifts because Ramdas was a great, charitable person, and he could use all these gifts for good causes. Hearing that, Ramdas looked up, laughed, and said, "Oh, Rama, when you are my master, how can I be in need? Why is it necessary for me to depend on others? It is you who do not have anyone to depend on because you are the master of this entire cosmos and of all beings. As you have nobody to help, you accept these gifts. I am dependent only on you, not on any king." Such was the faith and broad understanding of devotees in olden times; they had absolute dependence on God. Present devotees give great speeches, but they do not put them into practice. Are you practicing what you preach? You may talk of many teachings, but do you practice at least one?

Playing a Drama

Earlier, someone talked about devotion, duty and dedication. You may have devotion, but are you discharging your duties? We have appointed room leaders to supervise the studies, spiritual practices and conduct of younger students. If these leaders themselves are not following the rules and not attending devotional singing and prayers regularly, how can we expect the new students to learn from them and follow them?

Before getting selected for the courses in the institution [Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning], you and your parents beg for admission and exhibit humility. Some of you pretend to be devotees until you complete your studies. Once you finish the courses, you start playing a drama. You say that your father is sick, or your mother cannot see properly, and because there is no one else to take care of their needs, you want to go home. So who took care of those parents all this time when you were completing your studies? Besides that, the parents are joining in to support your ideas. Parents know that you have obtained scholastic degrees, and you can earn three, four, or five thousand rupees and give the money to them. Some of you are suffering from excessive greed. I am not saying that you should not go home and take care of your parents, but I don't want you to give me excuses or play untruthful games. Do not enact any false dramas to go home. Playing that kind of drama is treachery to God.

Sometimes you perform good plays and think that you can make Swami happy.

Then Swami sang this song:

*Open your eyes and see this Sai Deva.
He cannot be deceived by mere
words.*

*This small Swami, moving among you
in orange clothes.*

*He is not deceived by this dummy dance
drama.*

True Education

The reason I started these evening discourses was to make you students talk, and then point out your faults. A true teacher points out the faults in his students and directs them on the right path.

A good teacher should not condone defects and thus spoil the students. This kind of discipline makes your entire future a royal path. When you are unable to recognize this fact, you are destroying your own future. The one important message for students to remember is to follow the rules and regulations of this institution if you want to stay here.

If you misbehave, neither your parents nor your neighbors will be happy, and also, you will not be happy. When you go to your homes be happy, and make your parents happy. All students should follow these disciplines: friendship with equals, compassion for younger students, appreciation and respect for parents and elders, and indifference for that which is bad. If you develop these four goals, your lives will be sanctified.

Students should also follow these precepts: Be friendly with other students, do not develop hatred or jealousy, do not dis

play arrogance, but do develop humility. True education confers humility. Do not show humility only when you are at Prasanthi Nilayam. Your discipline should follow you like a shadow wherever you go—home, school, market place—in all places and at all times. That is true discipline. So have good feelings, thoughts and conduct. That is true education. What is the use of this worldly education? You may make some money or obtain worldly comforts, but you cannot obtain peace without true education. Peace is essential for mankind. At the end of each spiritual session you chant, “peace, peace, peace” (*shanti, shanti, shantihi*). Why do we repeat it three times? It signifies peace for the body, mind and spirit. When you utter *shanti, shanti, shantihi*, say it in a peaceful and calm way.

—Sathya Sai Baba

A discourse given to students of
Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning
June 20, 1989

The well-known journalist, William Raspberry, has said, “We have to understand that, for the first time in [U.S.] history, our children are cut off from the value-forming myths that constitute our own moral compass: Bible parables, the tales of Honest Abe [Lincoln], accounts of self-sacrificing abolitionists, stories of men and women whose heroism consisted not of striking it rich but in doing the right thing. We have to reclaim these good examples.

And we have to set good examples. No amount of talking about honest and decent behavior will suffice when our children see us subordinating integrity to expediency, cutting ethical corners or cheating on our taxes or on our spouses.

It's not enough to mourn the “good old days,” when neighbors were safe and when people cared about their neighbors. We have to do what we can to **restore the values** of those good old days, or the days ahead will be worse than anything we can now imagine.

—William Raspberry

1990 Washington Post Writers Group

Sai School in Zambia

A Model for Africa

The Sri Sathya Sai School in Zambia, set on 14 acres of beautiful grounds with 380 pupils, was the first Sathya Sai School outside of India. It derives its name, inspiration and authority from Sri Sathya Sai Baba, whose permission and guidance were sought about everything relating to the school before it was opened. It is managed by the Sathya Sai Central Board of Management, Zambia.

Study the system, build the school in one year, and start with three classes, was the Divine command. When this happened, we sold everything and used the money to build the school, assisted by some well-wishers. It all comes from Swami anyway.

The essential structures were completed in one year, and by June 1991 it was opened to the public for admissions with three primary classes and three secondary classes. The school is for boys who had all failed in their grade 7 national examination.

The distinctive features of the school are that it is set in the heart of three townships of low-income families, so many pupils are on scholarships provided by the Sathya Sai Central Board of Management and well-wishers. With Swami's grace, no tuition fees are charged; only nominal auxiliary contributions are made and, even then, some are exempted. There is an open admission policy irrespective of race, color, religion, creed, class or income. Human values orientation for primary and secondary education is taught, and Sathya

Sai Education in Human Values is integrated into the teaching of every academic subject and all co-curricular activities. Unity of all faiths is professed and emphasized, home and community links are fostered, and in both primary and secondary schools, emphasis is placed on service activities.

Happily, full parental cooperation exists with 100% attendance on Parents' Open Days. This, in itself, is a remarkable feat when many parents do not speak English, and some have not even been to school. Of course, there are some parents who are Chief Inspectors of Police and Ministers. Even the Mayor's child is enrolled. There are also Inspectors of Schools, M.P.'s, police and army officers, and professionals represented, but no preferential treatment is given to them or to their children.

A large ministerial delegation from the office of the Vice-President, including the Deputy Minister of Educational Development, came on an inspection of the school in order to assess the Sathya Sai EHV value-oriented program. They were so impressed that they wrote in their official report, "We recommend the building of Sathya Sai Schools all over the country."

The Vice-President and about 16 counselors on another tour of the school marveled that there was "no graffiti, no rubbish, not a single broken window, and the fifty-one pupils' flush toilets were so clean that you could almost eat in them." They wondered how some boys who had

indulged in vandalism in other schools the previous year could have changed into "such angels" in one term at the Sathya Sai School—only Swami's grace.

Remarkable Results

The first national results for grade 9 produced 99% passes with 30 distinctions, and the second year there were 100% passes, 51 distinctions, and 121 merits. These were all results from boys who had failed in their grade 7 national examination and were classified as "drop-outs." Swami said, *Give them a chance.* We did. This is the only school in Zambia—and probably in the world—which accepts only "failures." To get 100% passes with dozens of distinctions can only be due to Swami's grace and his unseen influence on the students and teachers.

The characters of these boys, drawn from 12 schools where they had previously studied, has changed dramatically. Boys whose behavior was deplorable and disgraceful, who were on the expulsion list, are now among the prefects and the best-behaved boys in the school. Mothers cry and say, "We don't know how to thank Sathya Sai."

Boys do *Nagarsankirtan* (the ritual of singing devotional songs to God) daily in procession around the campus, attend other devotional song sessions twice daily, singing in Sanskrit, Bemba, English and French. They maintain excellent punctuality, attendance records, and set such good examples around the school that they were awarded several prizes for excellent behavior and character for the past two years. When problems arise, the eight-year-old boys say, "Don't worry, Baba will help."

Parents are Happy

The parents' joy knows no bounds. Their sons who were dropouts four years ago will be sitting for the national "O" level examinations next year with hopes of going to college. Most of them are on scholarships. Sathya Sai Baba has made a dream come true for many a poor, struggling mother.

Their comments are invariably similar, "Thank God, my son has changed. He is so polite and well-behaved, studies hard and sets a very good example at home—even helping his mother to clean the house!" This is unheard of in a male-dominated society.

A bank manager who took his seven-year-old son away from another school because of his bad behavior, says, "My son is so good now and so studious; he can sing in four languages (Bemba, Sanskrit, French and English). He feels he is much better in languages than I, for I only know two." The son says, "I have heard that Baba has a beautiful university, and if you are a good boy, you can go there. One day, I'll go there."

Boys from grade 1 to grade 11 clean their own classrooms, the environment, the teachers' rooms, the auditorium and the toilets—and they sing *bhajans* while doing so. Where else would you get sixteen to eighteen-year-olds to clean toilets when there are cleaners to do it, and sing devotional songs while doing so?

Sathya Sai EHV Workshop

Last year, the Minister of Education asked our Sathya Sai School faculty to conduct an SSEHV workshop for 58 head teachers from all over the region. Later they sent three teachers from each of

their schools to another workshop. The Ministry of Education has asked the Sathya Sai School to conduct a pilot program for some schools in the locality.

Parents, teachers and government officials have accepted the Sathya Sai EHV program because of the improvement in behavior, work habits and character that they see in their children.

Interest in Baba

On the day the Sathya Sai National Best Results appeared on Zambia's national television and news, the whole country knew about Swami in a positive way—unsolicited. Now everyone is asking, "Who is this Sai Baba?" All parents and officials are told from the beginning that, for us, He is God Incarnate, and that we follow a policy of unity of all faiths, and that we do not force our

beliefs on anyone.

The President of Zambia had declared Zambia a Christian nation, and while we have children professing different religions in the school, the parents have seen that there is no indoctrination, no evangelism, no conversion, no Sai Baba Church—only the religion of love. Our school motto is: "Love All, Serve All."

The government has granted 20 acres of land for the construction of a Sri Sathya Sai Girls' School—Swami's grace.

That the transformation of their children is taking place through love—resulting in spiritual, moral, environmental and academic excellence—testifies to Swami's grace.

—Genevieve Kanu, Ndola, Zambia
From *Sānathana Sarathi*, Sept. 1995

Sikshana is a process in which the teacher and the taught cooperate, and it must be a pleasant experience for both, a useful and heartening endeavor. Kshana means a second of time, and I want you to learn a good lesson every second of your school life. For example, when the instructor enters the classroom, the students should salute him. That is a lesson in humility, in respecting age and scholarship, and in gratitude for services rendered. The teacher should deserve the salutation of the students entrusted to his care by his doing sincere work and giving selfless service. The students should not respect the instructor because of fear, but be moved more by love. The teacher should avoid all methods that frighten or terrorize. Education is a slow process, like the unfolding of a flower, the fragrance becoming deeper and more perceptible with the silent blossoming, petal by petal, of the entire flower.

The unfolding will be helped if the teacher is a fine example of viveka (discrimination between the real and the unreal), vinaya (humility and discipline), and vichakshana (keenness of intellect and the urge to enoble one's actions) rather than, a person engaged in the task of mere repetitive instructing and coaching for examinations. Instruct by example, not by precept, that is the best teaching aid.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Saeaks, Vol. I

A Teacher Views Her Students Transformation via Swami's Love

For ten years the miracle of transformation has been experienced and witnessed within the minds and hearts of the children of Hawaii. As a teacher and administrator in both private and public schools, the transforming effects of Swami's Sathya Sai EHV program never cease to amaze me. They extend far beyond logic, as his program is, of course, perfectly logical.

To witness a child's heart open in love, especially those, so deeply scarred as a result of the heartless abuse inflicted upon them, is nothing less than a miracle. To witness the *buddhi* (intelligence) of a child—especially those labeled as slow or retarded—suddenly awakened, proves that Swami's education serves all through the awakening of the spirit or Divinity within. It exemplifies that all have access to the power of truth and knowledge, love and peace, brotherhood and sisterhood—resulting in righteousness and nonviolent.

Our children so desperately want to understand themselves and the part they play in this world. They are crying out for love and guidance, discipline and self-respect, so that they may discover who they truly are and realize the purpose of their lives. To watch their faces light up like the sun, and the love from within their hearts pour forth—as a result of Swami's transforming grace—is the greatest blessing. Swami's inspiration allows the children to love and serve in a natural way, which is their true nature. Their Divine state of being needs to be

encouraged, nurtured and molded for it to blossom.

One of the most profound experiences with Swami's program took place during my sixth year of teaching. Swami decided to challenge my faith. I was placed in one of the most difficult classes of a school on the Big Island of Hawaii. That was after the previous teacher had left due to suffering a severe stroke. Since no one who was certified in the field of Special Education could be found to fill the position, it was offered to me.

The shock of reality hit when I entered the classroom; I was faced with a room full of students totally out of control. They were jumping out of the windows, beating on each other. Worst of all, they were filled with such anger that their eyes burned with the fire of hatred, piercing my heart and soul. I wondered, "What have they done to our children?" To return love for hate was my challenge, besides trying to maintain sanity from day to day. Needless to say, the only hope was to give them megadoses of Swami's Education in Human Values. Weeks passed with little change. My rock-solid faith that there is always hope (or so I thought) began to wane along with physical, mental and emotional exhaustion.

The words of a respected colleague began to echo in my mind, "Sometimes, so much damage is done that it is irreparable." I began to wonder if he might be right. With a heavy heart, a feeling of

defeat, and not knowing what else to do, the next morning found me continuing with another Sathya Sai EHV lesson.

The quotation for the day was, "Have patience, in time even an egg will walk." It was intended more for me than for the children. Suddenly, before my very eyes, a little boy's face—which had been so filled with hatred—suddenly transformed. His face softened, and the softness reflected in his eyes. I saw the pure innocence of a child filled with love. His entire demeanor radiated a peacefulness beyond my expectations. One had to experience it to believe that it was nothing short of a miracle. My faith was restored ten-fold.

Hawaii's foundation in SSEHV began in 1985 when Neil and Pamela-Gale Monet (a.k.a. Anil and Pamela-Gale Malhotra) returned from California after having attended an EHV training session. With full faith, devotion and enthusiasm, they introduced the program at St. Joseph Catholic School, where I was teaching at the time. They succeeded in breaking through a conservative Christian barrier, and convinced the officials to accept the philosophy of "unity of all faiths." Meanwhile, the Malhotras trained my friend, Karen Esposito, and me on a one-on-one basis.

Mr. and Mrs. Malhotra gave the first presentation to principals and teachers of St. Joseph School. The response was overwhelmingly positive. All were inspired. In December, 1985, Mr. Malhotra introduced SSEHV to the Hawaii District Superintendent, Dr. Mizuba. He was convinced and inspired, and he personally recommended to state level administrators that the Sathya Sai EHV be reviewed and accepted. In the first

quarter of 1986, Swami's program was approved and accepted by the State of Hawaii for implementation on a voluntary basis. This was the critical step; the doors had been opened to lay the foundation.

Since that time, workshops have been given to teachers, parents and administrators in many schools on the east side of the Big Island. Individual presentations have been given to subsequent District Superintendents and State-level Administrators for the purpose of awareness and continued support. It is now expanding into the university. Invitations have been extended by the Professors of Education to speak on SSEHV's philosophy. The response continues to be overwhelmingly positive as all are continuously inspired by Swami's truth and love.

Most recently, two more schools have taken steps to begin implementation on a school-wide basis.

What is the reason for such growth and expansion? The most obvious is, of course, Swami's grace. Along with Sai's grace, my dear friend Anil has always told me, three things are needed:

- Faith in Swami's program.
- Absolutely no compromising on the purity of Swami's program.
- Intelligence. Not worldly intelligence, but that which comes from the *buddhi* where one is sensitive to a higher level of understanding. Understanding, through love, opens the heart; when the heart is open, trust is shared; when trust is shared, fear dissipates; when fear dissipates, wisdom and truth can be imparted and accepted.

In Hawaii, we have remained consistent with the original five levels of

personality—physical, emotional, intellectual, psychic and spiritual. Although change has taken place throughout the world, we find that the original structure of Swami's program is simple, clear and pure. It has worked and has been accepted in Hawaii for over ten years, and so we continue.

What will happen from here on in Hawaii is in the Lord's hands. We must surrender the fruits of our actions. On a personal level, Swami has clearly blessed me with understanding, by allowing me to experience the miracles of his love and his transforming power. As for his

educational system, I have been privileged to see it work on the tender minds and hearts of our children.

Deepest gratitude and love go to my dearest friends, Anil and Pamela, who have served as my teachers and inspiration throughout the years, showering me every step of the way with their guidance, encouragement, patience and love, and to my sister, Karen, for her constant support, and above all, to my dear, sweet Lord. I love you Swami.

—Tara Chander (a.k.a. Cheryl Frazier)
Hawaii, USA

In a talk that Ms. Tara Chander gave before a group of Sai devotees, she told them that Swami had informed her that if the EHV is used without the name, Sathya Sai, the program will lose its power!

—Editor's Note

When He Is with Children

Swami says, *When I am with children, I am a child.* . . . How delightfully true! In 1978, a large group of children from a Sai Center in England visited him in Brindavan, taking with them seven sacks of "presents" for Swami to give to needy children.

And what a collection it was! Apart from all the garments, the children had given the things they liked best, teddy bears, toy trains, cars, toys of all descriptions, even clothes pegs and a box of Weetabix breakfast cereal!

And is this for me, too? Swami kept saying in wonder—as he took out, examined, and played with each item—to the delight of the children. Then he took them to see his little animal friends in the Brindavan garden, setting a small white rabbit on his crown of hair for their amusement. Then they went on to see and pet the calves, for at that time, the *gokulam* (dairy) was situated behind Baba's former residence. (In the meantime, several important personages who had come to see him were forced to curb their impatience).

The first night, the children were far too excited to sleep, so Baba visited their quarters and asked them, if they would go to sleep if he went to sleep. There was a chorus of assent. So the Avatar lay down on the floor, pretending to sleep, until all were in blissful slumber. Then, he was able to creep out on tiptoe.

—Peggy Mason, England
Excerpted from her article,
"The Sathya Sai Sense of Humor"

Sai Speaks to Teachers

In November of 1993, a convention for teachers was held at Prasanthi Nilayam. At that time, Sathya Sai Baba clearly set the basic ground rules for teachers to follow, so that they could better carry out their sacred task of influencing young minds and improving their own personal lives. Swami told the teachers:

In this physical, transient world, teachers have to be familiar with all that is happening and pass that information on to the students committed to their care.

Of all ages, it is in the *Kali Yuga* (this difficult age in which we live) that easy techniques are adopted. This time is ideal for the redemption of mankind. There is a great deal of intelligence in this *Kali Yuga*. We find thousands of colleges and hundreds of universities dedicated to the process of teaching. We find, also, many techniques for making money.

But in spite of all these conveniences, people have no peace or happiness; they are restless. What is the reason behind this? The teacher must understand, analyze, and only then help to formulate objectives.

Some think that money is the most important objective; some feel that the value of education lies in this process. Some think that the power of intelligence is the primary aim of education. But according to Sai, the power of education to obtain wealth and intelligence is a sign of weakness, not strength. It is only character that conveys strength. Along with character, it is good behavior that will take mankind to exalted positions.

In spite of all our conveniences, there is no peace or security. The reason for this is the unethical behavior of people. There would be many possibilities for

having peace, security and happiness if only virtue, values and good behavior were to be practiced.

If there is no character in education, it is like fruit without the juice; it is like a cow that doesn't yield milk.

There are many educated people in the world. There are thousands of intellectuals and many wealthy people. In spite of all that, there is no proper behavior nor character. Because of this, we find today that the world is put to much suffering.

In ancient times, the noble souls kept peace and security in their minds and propagated them accordingly. The names of those noble souls are indelibly imprinted on the hearts of Bharathiyas (Indian people). What is the reason for this? The main reason behind these indelible impressions is the virtue and conduct that was practiced by those ancient beings. Those teachers took up teaching only after personally practicing such virtues. They will always have an exalted place in the world. If there is teaching without the practice of virtue and character, then world change cannot be brought about. A teacher should be a shining light to the world. If a lamp provides light, it will be able to light other lamps. If a student is spoiled, then just one student is ruined. But if there is not proper conduct by the teachers, then many students are spoiled.



Human values spring naturally from the heart.

The main reason students are spoiled today is because the teachers are irresponsible. A teacher may instruct well; he may teach easy methods. But if the teacher merely instructs without prac-

ucation in Human Values).

What is education? Is it familiarity with books? No. Education means not only knowledge but also actions. What are human values? We just spell it out

ticing what he teaches; if his behavior is not in accordance with what he says, then no one will follow him; no one will care.

Governments and individuals may spend a great deal of money on education, but human values are not to be obtained from books; they cannot be supplied by any company. Human values cannot be gifted by friends. They cannot be purchased at a market. The human values spring naturally from the heart. We call them EHV which means Education in Human Values (now known as Sathya Sai Ed-

and utter the words; *sathya* (truth), *dharma* (right action), *shanti* (peace), *prema* (love), *ahimsa* (nonviolence). But values are not just those. Human values are present naturally, along with one's blood.

Sathya, truth, is that which has to be spoken. *Dharma*, right action, is that which has to be performed or practiced. *Shanti*, peace, is that which must be experienced within. *Prema*, love, is a natural quality. *Ahimsa*, nonviolence, is that which is not far from mankind. These are all natural qualities of humanity. Therefore, it is true that if people have these qualities—love, compassion, tolerance, sympathy, truth, sacrifice—they are true human beings.

The characteristics of anger, jealousy, hatred and pomp are all animal qualities. When someone develops the trait of anger, he must then take time to discriminate and overcome that characteristic. This is something that cannot be read in a book. As far as jealousy is concerned, even animals are not guilty of that characteristic. It is delightful to watch animals in the forest. They do not feel any jealousy toward other animals because of the others' beauty, strength or position; nor do animals feel jealous of people who have money. But unfortunately, people today feel jealous and suspicious.

You should each have the faith to say, "I am a human being." Only then can you be rid of your negative qualities and develop true human values. For example: This tumbler is full of pure water. Unless you pour the water out, you cannot fill it with anything else. Today, people have filled their hearts with bad qualities. If they pour out all the bad

qualities, then they can fill their hearts with human values. Therefore, teachers must cleanse their hearts of negativity, and fill them with pure Divinity.

One does not obtain human values by merely repeating mantras. Teachers must examine themselves. Say to yourself, "I am teaching this," and then ask, "But am I practicing it?" You teach the students to tell the truth, but teachers sometimes tell lies. How then do you expect the students to follow the teacher's instructions?

Teachers are like water tanks. Students are like taps. Therefore, clean the tanks, so the water that comes from the tap is clean and pure. Consequently, teachers must be prepared to sacrifice. It is only through sacrifice that one gains immortality. Teachers today do not have any idea of sacrifice. They say that they teach, and that is sacrifice. How can teaching be a sacrifice? Teachers are paid to teach; that is not sacrificing.

Not only that, but a teacher should have a steady mind. Teachers are like guideposts. If the guidepost is not in place and moves hither and thither, it will sway in all sorts of directions. So in the first place, the teacher should have a steady mind. Only then will he or she have the authority to teach.

Students today are highly intelligent; they observe everything. If a teacher is explaining what he is doing, the students will observe. The teacher earns the respect and courtesy from the students only if he follows in accordance with what he teaches. Do not lose the respect of the students—first be, next do, then tell—uphold and preserve righteousness.

Today in the Sai organization, many teachers are working hard. They are

teaching the five values, but sometimes they do not have the depth of meaning of those values. For example, some teachers think that nonviolence means that the students should not beat one another, but nonviolence is not only that. It also means that one should not cause harm with any of the five senses: bad looks, listening to bad tales, saying bad words, having bad thoughts, as well as bad actions, all of which are violent.

What is meant by *sathya*, truth? It is not truth to just repeat what has been told to you. Real truth should satisfy your conscience, but in the name of truth we utter blatant lies. Truth is God. Keep that in view. Therefore, what we say should be Divine. Teach the human values with clarity. In that way, everyone will become better.

The whole world is in a sorry state of affairs. Therefore, teachers should be exemplary embodiments of love. All teachers should have proper conduct.

How many students have you taught? It is enough if a teacher has taught ten students. Sai wants only quality, not quantity. It is said in all 18 scriptures that the sum and substance of the epics is, "Help ever, hurt never." Do not hurt anybody. Others may hurt you. Take the attitude that, "The hurt is good for me, it is good for me." Suffering and sacrifice will build character and eventually bring satisfaction and happiness. If there is a sunset, there will also be a sunrise the following day. Pleasure and pain are like heat and cold; we need not have fear of either. We should have fear of only one thing. There should be fear of sin. Love God and fear sin and have morality toward society.

We are born and develop in society. Therefore, we should desire the welfare of society. If you are good, society will become better. You should have a broad mind, not a narrow heart. Explain human values clearly to students. Instruct them to tell the truth. Never tell a lie under any circumstances. When you commit a mistake, accept it and be honest about it. The one who accepts his own mistakes will be respected.

We say that *dharma* is right action; *dharma* also means that satisfaction of one's conscience has been accomplished. And remember, whatever you do or give is charity, not *dharma*.

Teachers, do not become disappointed. Develop human values, not only for children, but for each other, and also for elders. Before teaching, experience these values for yourself; then they will remain permanent. Have the satisfaction of your achievements. In every school, human values should be developed. Bear your difficulties with good humor.

Swami knows that the children are very good, but teachers and parents are spoiling them. In these times, the parents will follow what the son says. That son has a fool for a father, and the foolish father then will have a fool for a son. So teach the students correctly.

If we follow the path of truth, the country will progress, not only in Bharat (India) but in every country of the world. Be happy. All countries should be peaceful. All are children of God. Develop human values with a broad feeling of love. Good quality is good character. Behavior, behavior, life is of no use, unless we have proper behavior.

—Sathya Sai Baba, November 20, 1993

An Overview of Sai Education

How Does It Work?

This issue of the *Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA* is obviously dedicated to Sai Education. You may ask, "How does the educational system work? What makes it unique? Why are there two systems? At what age can a student begin this program? Where can we take our children to participate in one of these programs?"

We hope to answer some of these questions and then take you, or you and your child, through a lesson plan.

You will get the basic idea of how the system works as the lesson plan unfolds, starting at the bottom of this page. There are two systems with the same component parts; one is called **Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV)**. It is planned for all students everywhere, for the public at large. The well-thought-out plan teaches human values along with the students' secular education. It teaches academic material so that the information is retained longer by the student.

The other system is known as **Sathya Sai Spiritual Education**, formerly called *Bal Vikas*, and is similar to the aforementioned plan, but includes more spiritual study. All the major religions are studied in depth with the view that they are all good; they all teach moral codes; they all advocate belief in God. The focus of this method is for the children of Sai devotees.

A child can begin either program at his or her mother's knee, but the usual age to start is when the child enters kindergarten. These methods can be applied to a student of any age, and can even continue—with more sophistication, of course—through a college program.

Check with your local Sai Center near you to find out where a Sai Education group is located.

Now we're ready to begin. Read the story and questions to your child or borrow a child. To have more fun with it, why not prepare the whole lesson and present it to a group of children. Keep it light and fun. It's better than TV.

Lesson Plan

Age group: 6-10 years

Value being taught: Love

Sub-value: Unselfishness

Objective: To understand that to be loving and kind is more enjoyable than being mean and selfish.

Teaching aids: Classical music tape, preferably flute music, *J. S. Bach's Flute Sonatas* or *Sachdev's Indian Bamboo Flute* are both recommended. Paper, pencil, and colored pencils, crayons and

perhaps a pretend TV set made from a cardboard box.

Prayer or positive thought:

Let me learn to love others, to share and give equally, knowing that we are all brothers and sisters of the family of humanity.

Silent sitting: A quiet time which is done by sitting for a short time before a candle or a penlight and thinking of the saying or prayer.

Creative work: Let the children draw a flower within their hearts, using their imaginations.

Hand out paper, crayons and pencils. Ask the children to draw the flower that they “saw” within their hearts during the silent sitting. It’s important to ask them to remain quiet and not to talk or discuss with their friends, so whatever they portray is really their own experience.

After the class, all the pictures may be displayed—on a board, wall or the cardboard TV—for everyone to see.

Storytime: “The Flute Boy”

There was once a boy who loved to play the flute. Whenever he played, the people would come out of their houses to listen to him. Even the wild animals would forget their fear and would follow the sound of his flute. Sometimes, when he was feeling particularly happy, his music became magical! As he played, flowers would open their petals, and tiny fairies would fly out and dance to the lilting melody of his flute. Because he gave so much joy wherever he went, he was loved by all.

One day, the flute boy was passing by the king’s palace. The young princess, who was proud and haughty, was sitting by herself wondering what to do. Being selfish and greedy by nature, she had very few friends, so most of the time she was feeling quite bored. As soon as she heard the sound of the flute, she ran to the window, climbed on a chair and peered out. To her amazement, she saw a raggedy-looking boy playing a flute. While he played, as if by magic, flowers opened up and tiny doll-like creatures danced on the petals. “What a wonderful toy!” exclaimed the princess, “I must have it!” Picking up her skirts, she ran

downstairs and out into the garden where the boy sat playing his flute. “What a wonderful flute you have,” said the princess, “Would you sell it to me? I’ll give you any price you want.” The boy stopped playing and smiled at her. “Certainly, you can have my flute, and I don’t want any money for it, but there is one condition.” At first the princess was indignant. How dare anyone speak to her like that, she thought. However, her desire to have this magic flute was so strong, that she swallowed her pride and, forcing herself to smile, she said, “Whatever you say, I promise I will do, as long as you give me the flute.”

“This flute,” said the boy gently, “is not an ordinary flute. For good things to happen, you must have love in your heart. You must play to give joy to others, not for your own selfish pleasure.” With this he bowed and handed her his precious instrument. Snatching it gleefully, the proud princess ran away to another part of the garden. “What a stupid boy,” she thought, “How does he know what I’m thinking? Why should I think of other people? Nothing is more important than my own amusement.” With this, she pressed the flute to her lips and started to play. Immediately a flower opened, but instead of a delicate fairy dancing on the petals, a big fat spider jumped out and started to spin a web around her. At the same time, a large black and orange wasp flew out of another flower and stung the selfish princess right on her nose! Squealing with pain, the princess threw down the flute and ran as fast as she could back to the palace.

The little flute boy had been watching the whole scene from where the prin-

cess had left him; he shook his head sadly. "I warned her," he said softly, "But she wouldn't listen." He walked over to his flute, picked it up lovingly and walked away into the distance. The melodious notes filled the air wherever he wandered.

Back at the palace, the little princess sat rubbing her painful nose, tears flowing down her cheeks. She felt very sorry for herself. Later, much later, she understood that her experience was due to her being unkind and selfish. She decided from that day to turn over a new leaf. Henceforth, she became known throughout the land for being gentle, kind and very generous.

Questions:

1. What was the flute boy like?
2. Why did fairies sometimes come out of the flowers?
3. What kind of girl was the princess?
4. What were the conditions for the princess to receive the flute?
5. Do you really think that the princess meant to keep her promise?
6. Why do you think the wasp stung her on the nose?
7. If you ever had the opportunity, would you want to play the magical flute? Why?
8. Have you ever done anything to give other people joy without thinking of your own pleasure?
9. Why do you think the princess changed?

Group singing: "Love is the Only Power" by Rabbi David Zeller

*Love is the only power.
Love is the only way.
Love, love, our love.
Watch our circle grow.*

Group Activities:

Game I, Passing Love

Ask the children to sit in a circle and hold hands. One child is asked to think about "love" and pass it on to his or her neighbor by a squeeze of the hand. As soon as the love is passed on, the one receiving must show that he has received it by smiling.

After completing the circle, the teacher should explain that when we give out love, it always comes back to us.

Game II, Pass the Smile

Ask the children to remain sitting in a circle. The first player takes the smile off his/her face and passes it to the next one, who is looking very solemn until the smile is directed at him/her; then that child becomes "radiant."

Attitude Test:

1. Your father has just come back from a trip and has brought a big box of chocolates for you, your brother and sister. He asks you to share them. What would you do?

A) Eat your favorite ones before your brother and sister come home, and then share the rest?

B) Wait until they come home, and then share them equally?

C) Hide the box and eat all the chocolates yourself?

2. You are watching your favorite TV program when your friend telephones and asks you to come to her house quickly, as she has a problem. What would you do?

A) Go to your friend's house to help her?

B) Tell her that your mother won't let you go, and continue watching TV?

C) Finish watching your favorite program, and then go to her house?

Homework:

Ask the children to each make a point of doing some selfless act during the course of the next week, and then ask them to report to the class on what they have done.

Closing Minute of Silence:

Before finishing the class, have the

children sit quietly in a circle and close their eyes. Have them think about what it feels like when we are kind and gentle to others.

Ask them to imagine the light once more in their hearts and to radiate this light through the entire universe.

Sing or say together:

Peace, peace, peace

Peace on earth.

Peace, peace, peace.

For all the universe.

Excerpted from, *Sathya Sai Education in Human Values*, Group I, Part II

—**Loraine Burrows**, Bangkok, Thailand

This is an example of a basic SSEHV lesson. The same principles can be applied to the teaching of every academic subject and all co-curricular activities.

Playing Promotes Creativity

Play promotes creativity; that is something most people do not think about very often.

We do most of our playing using the right brain (the right hemisphere is the artistic, creative center) in the first five years of life. Then we go to school and learn the power of the left brain (the analytical, learning center). The problem is, then we leave the right brain behind. That's when life starts to get tough.

Research has shown that playful behavior, indulged in when young, is critical for the child's development. If the child has not worked out the emotional issues appropriate to each stage of his/her development, and has not been allowed to be a "kid," there may be problems later on.

In our home, there was always play. Even, and especially, when times got bumpy. I remember a poem that had a great impact on me, but I don't remember who wrote it. It goes like this:

I tried to teach my child with books, he gave me only puzzled looks.

I tried to teach my child with words, they passed by him, often unheard.

Despairingly, I turned aside, how shall I teach this child? I cried.

Into my hands he put the key. "Come," he said, "play with me."

—**Winnifred Bolton**
Mt. Angel, Oregon

Teaching an Enrichment Workshop on the Unity in Diversity of Faiths

A circle has no beginning and no end, each part is connected to the other. If you close your eyes, perhaps you can imagine your friends and family sitting in a circle, feeling connected to each other. And then, imagine all the people of the world, and of all religions also sitting in this circle, connected to each other. In this way, the concept of unity was introduced at our exciting Sathya Sai Spiritual Education* Teachers' Training Enrichment Workshop which was held in Atlantic City in October, 1994.

Another analogy was that of a tree. The branches represented the world religions connected to the main trunk which was nourished by the roots below. Sai Baba says, *There is only one religion, the religion of love. All religions are paths to the same goal.*

Three complete lesson plans on that theme were presented, one at the Group I level (ages 5 to 10), one at the Group II level (ages 11 to 14), and one at the Group III level (ages 15 to 17). Fifteen Sai Spiritual Education teachers presented one component of a lesson plan for each of the three groups. Even though the teachers had not discussed their plans with each other prior to the workshop, we felt Baba's presence, and his guiding hand as it became apparent how perfect the lesson plans fit together. The concepts of the circle and the tree were woven into each lesson.

*Please note again that the name Sathya Sai Spiritual Education has replaced the term, *Bal Vikas*. The basic concept of fine education, unity of religions, and the teaching of a values system remain the same; only the name has changed.

Prayer is one important way to feel the connection of all religions. Prayer brings a "smile" into the subconscious. We recited the *Sarva Dharma* prayer and also shared prayers from St. Francis of Assisi and "O Great Spirit" from the Native American Indians. It was pointed out that one need not remember the exact words of a prayer, just to remember love is to remember God, for God is love and love is God. It is love that holds the circle together. It is love that sustains the tree of life. It is love that connects all religions and all peoples.

Presentations were Creative

- One teacher asked the children (who were played by the adults) their names. Next, she asked if they are known by a different name, like a nickname.

Then she pointed out that even if a person is known by two names, he or she is still the same person. In the same way, there is only one God, but He is called by many names.

- Other teachers wrote original stories on the unity of faiths. We sang:

*Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh or Jain,
Christian, Jew or Muslim,
You'll get there just the same.*

- Another teacher presented a "Loving Kindness" meditation. We pictured being in perfect circles radiating love and peace which filled the entire world and then the universe.

•We prayed, "May all beings everywhere be free from suffering, be peaceful, be happy and be free." We were asked to keep this feeling of peace and love toward all people everywhere we go and in everything we do. In this way, our lives become Baba's message, the message of love.

It was a day of laughter, and a day of tears as we shared, learned and were inspired by each other.

We left still thinking about our discussion on "Choosing to See Good." By practicing this concept, we can choose to see good, choose to be good, and choose

to do good for that is the way to God. That is also the way to love, happiness, and the peace that passeth all understanding.

*The name of God is flowing
within me.*

I hear it always singing within me.

Allah, Allah, Shiva, Sathya

Sai Baba,

Rama, Rama, Krishna, Jehovah,

Buddha, Lord Jesus.

—Cathy Daub

Former Sai Spiritual Education Coordinator
for the Mid-Atlantic Region

The Right Answer

Some time ago, I shared a story at a Sai Center study circle. A passage was read about the importance of using a simple thing like a tree as an example for children's lessons. Just prior to the reading, a person shared how she uses the Socratic method of questioning to help children become aware of, and understand the *Atmic* Self (Divinity within, Soul). The importance of simplicity and the questioning method, reminded me of an experience that I had with my daughter when she was five. With her simple questions, she taught me an important lesson.

One day when she was playing, she suddenly turned to me and asked, "Mommy, why is life?" The question stunned me. I didn't know how to answer the question in a way that she would understand. While I was struggling for an answer, she went back to playing. After some reflection, I knew what I should have said, but she was busy playing and no longer interested. Imagine my despair; I had blown it. She had asked and I wasn't ready. Then all of a sudden, she stopped playing, looked at me and asked again, "Mommy, why is life?" "Thank you Swami," I silently prayed as I responded, "We are here to become God." She then asked, "How do we do that?" and I told her, "We become God by being love."

—Anonymous

The home in which the Sai Spiritual Education student grows, as indeed in all homes, has to be clean, and have vibrations free from hatred, envy, greed, spite and hypocrisy. The food that the child eats must be wholesome and pure. Between the ages of two and five the child's mind is profoundly affected by the behavior of those nearest to him, so the parents must take care to set a good example.

—Sathya Sai Baba, Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. X, Chapter 33

Universality and Sai World Culture

In a recent graduate course which I teach called, "Managing in a Culturally Diverse Environment," one of my students disputed my admittedly radical, yet deeply considered, conclusion that there is no such thing as "Black Culture." Recalling Swami's teachings regarding the "One," and trusting that I had overridden all arguments to the contrary; I brushed past her objections and summarized the evening's discussion. Slightly disturbed, she stayed after class to confer about our apparent disagreement.

During our exchange, I found that she had actually agreed with my contention, but felt it was too high a point for her classmates to absorb and wanted them to take more time to process the understanding. We talked for a while and then proceeded to our respective homes to renew our strength for the rest of the quarter! We had agreed that America's peculiar history of racial segregation was largely, but not exclusively, responsible for the preponderance of differences ascribed to black or any other categorical culture.

The Unitive Principle

Especially mindful of the language and examples I would use, my thesis had begun with a discussion of the "Unitive Principle." That is, the point of view deeply rooted in religion, philosophy, and science that there is one interconnected energy which underlies and intrapenetrates the entirety of Sai's creation.

Of course, Swami's Divine teachings on this topic, especially in his *Summer Showers* series [of books], and indeed on

any and all other topics, are absolutely complete. Yet in higher education, we are duty-bound to enlist the ideas and theories of others which all proceed from Swami's boundless knowledge anyway. So I mention eminent scientists, such as: Max Plank, Niels Bohr and Albert Einstein—to name the more recognizable—who helped bring this principle to a more palatable place for the Western, empirical mind. Yet I remind them that this Unitive Principle has always been integral to all of Eastern philosophy and the indigenous and enduring mystical traditions the world over. In his classical, *Crest Jewel of Discrimination*, Shankaracharya refers to this understanding as "nondualism." Seattle, a renowned American Indian Chief, called it the "interwoven web of life." And we should be well aware that Chinese and Ayurvedic approaches to health and wellness are also based on this principle.

Describing Human Beings

I often complement such discussion with a left brain story told by Sai devotee, Dr. Art Jumsai, a physicist from Thailand who played a key role in the United States' efforts to land on the moon. Speaking to an audience of educators in London, Dr. Jumsai asked each person to describe the person sitting next to him. Using the medium of visible light, they described what they saw. He then asked that they describe the person again, but this time they were to imagine that they were looking with X-ray vision. Naturally, their ability to describe and compare differences changed rather

dramatically. Finally, he asked that they again change their medium, and view the other person through radio waves. After changing the medium, they reported that they would be unable to see the person at all, since radio waves pass through what we call solid objects.

Thus we might ask, what is the truth about human beings if they change and even disappear, based solely on the medium through which one views them? It may be seen that we are *Brahmananda* (bliss itself, not possible to explain in ordinary words). We are Being-Awareness-Bliss, and we merely possess that which appears to be diverse; we are possessors of mind-bodies.

Systems Thinking

For management by students, it is useful to also discuss this concept in terms of "systems thinking." Here one can easily proceed from a discussion of engineering, management, communications systems to human systems. A human system, as we already know, is comprised of a wide range of interconnected subsystems which include the nervous, circulatory, muscular, skeletal, immune systems on one level, and the *indriyas* (the senses) on another, and the components of mind on yet another.

As human beings, we are considered "open systems" since our boundaries are permeable, and we exchange energy with our environment. To see, our brains construct patterns from the light and shadows received into our systems; to hear, we translate a series of sound waves, and so on. Thus the central idea associated with systems thinking is that such thinking represents what I like to refer to as, "The Sai World View," that is, a way of

perceiving all of creation as interconnected and, inseparable from its one central Source. I remind students that we live within a socialized time and space continuum, which represents a continuity of personal experience for each and everyone of us. And since this experience has occurred within some social context, it is largely defined through the lens of the more dominant culture in which we have acquired that experience.

To convince my students of the efficacy of this kind of thinking as the basic framework for all other considerations, I carefully select their readings—then benevolently conspire to weave Swami's universal human values throughout the lectures and assignments—providing the appropriate content specific to whatever course I am teaching.

One Race of Humanity

As we all know, race has played a major role in both differentiating and confining educational and other experience. Yet race is merely a social construction of stratified categories designed to serve ego and ethnocentric purposes. Culture has validity, race and color do not. Yet to deny the often devastating impact that these broadly accepted categories have on thought, word and deed, is to deny the typical level of existence and expression at which most live their daily lives. Swami reminds us again and again that there is only one race, the race of humanity!

Cultural Diversity and Unity

Because of its nature, culture defies precise definition, for it is related to the Unitive Principle. It is comprised of a wide range of elements which include:

values, morals, norms, beliefs, religion, language, music, art, food, symbols and more. Culture refers to capabilities and behaviors acquired through our experience in this illusory world. These elements, or parts, comprise a systematic or unitary whole. It is certainly clear in this postmodern world of satellite television in the Kalahari desert and e-mail in the Amazon jungle that cultures are much less distinct than they used to be, and that they all overlap considerably. Thus, the question of whether we share culture or not, is a moot one. We do, in fact! That answer might vary in degree, depending upon emphasis, accentuation and personal clarity.

Shall we emphasize eating practices, languages and tools of play? Or shall we stress the purpose of life; the role of the family, and the universal values of truth, right action, peace, love and non-violence? Shall we give false credence to the different bodily appearances and concentrations of melanin, color chemistry, which have evolved over time? Or shall we first establish common ground? Learned differences and diverse modes of expression abound, yet contentment and freedom from fear are all desires of the self-same humanity. So shall we focus on the becoming, on the ebb and flow of the waves? Or shall we focus on the being, the gravity and stillness of the ocean from which each wave temporarily arises?

Adaptation and Transformation

When it comes to education, Swami always emphasizes the central importance of the quality of the teacher. He instructs us that all true leaders (educators in this case) must BE, then DO, and

only then, TELL. He reminds us that followers (students) more often do as leaders do. Yet any teacher's doing and telling can only result from his being. This is why constant practice of Swami's first two universal human values of truth and right action, the practice of the Self, then "larger other," is truly placing first things first!

Unfortunately, it has become our tendency to define "others" by their differences and not their similarities. The purpose of culture is not exclusivity, comparative advantages, or profiteering, as is the case with the sweeping globalization of the United States culture in the form of artifacts, symbols and commodities—Disney, Ronald McDonald and the Marlboro man. The purpose of culture is harmonious adaptation and spiritual transformation through magnanimous open-ended investigation and shared expression. This requires careful vigilance and mental discrimination in the highest sense, where intellectual humility and an open heart always hold sway.

Culture, Part of Spirituality

Beginning with our intention to love and serve all, we Sai educators are enjoined to engage ourselves, and then our students, in a variety of experiences and activities which are consistent with this understanding and which are designed to confirm that illusive sense of human unity. We must learn to see things inside out, upside down, and backwards and forwards in our efforts to bring this message of the Unitive Principle and its positive practice to light.

In the book, *Summer Showers 1990*, Swami says: *You hear people talk about culture and spirituality as if they are two*

different things. In my view, culture is only the essence derived from spirituality. Just as sugar is common to all the varieties of sweets which are seemingly different from one another, spirituality is common to the seemingly different cultures of all lands and nations. In short, you should recognize that culture is part of the all-inclusive spirituality. You must cultivate and develop this all-inclusive unity of oneness.

Using Swami's synthesizing philosophy, and the universal principles which are infused throughout his Sathya Sai Education in Human Values program, we educators must design and refine curricula which will serve to promote substantive educational interactions based

on respect for differences and the heartfelt appreciation for the Fatherhood of Baba and the Family of Humankind. For all are embodiments of the *Atmic* Principle, and every student we teach contains the omniscient and omnipresent God fully within his heart.

Follow the Master

So as we approach this next millennium, let us follow the Master more faithfully and use our Swami-given genius and creativity to educate our students to the heights of their human potential by modeling and promoting the glorious ideal of a loving and unified Sai World Culture!

—**Hymon Johnson, Ed.D.**
Santa Barbara, California

Dr. Hymon Johnson is Chair of the Postsecondary Education Sub-Committee of the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values Advisory Committee. Please contact him at (805) 968-7297 if you are a postsecondary educator—current or retired—and are interested in working with the committee.

From Nelson Mandela

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.
It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us.
We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?
Actually, who are you NOT to be?
You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the World.
There is nothing enlightening about shrinking, so that other people won't feel insecure around you.
We are born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us.
It is not just in some of us; it is in everyone.
And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.
As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.

—**Nelson Mandela**, South Africa
From his 1994 Inaugural Address

Announcements

The Year of . . .

This is the year of right action, righteousness, *dharma*, and the year is nearly over! That is no surprise to anyone; but what have we done about making *dharma* a part of our lives? Have we been righteous in thought, word and deed?

It has been suggested that before the year ends, we devotees read the *Dharma Vahini* which is written by the Avatar, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Whether we read it for the first time or the 12th time, there is wondrous information to be gained. Let us show our love for the Avatar by putting at least some of those concepts into practice. *Sai Ram!* (See page 32 for obtaining the newly published, updated *Dharma Vahini*).

Going to Prasanthi Nilayam?

Effective July 16, 1997, Indian Airlines will commence operations of flights to Puttaparthi as follows:

Mon. & Thurs. IC-969

11:00 a.m. depart Chennai (Madras)

11:55 a.m. arrive Puttaparthi

12:35 p.m. depart Puttaparthi

13:55 p.m. arrive Mumbai (Bombay)

Airbus A-320

Mumbai (Bombay) depart 11:00 a.m.

Puttaparthi

Puttaparthi

Chennai (Madras)

Wed. & Sun. IC-970

arrive 12:20 p.m.

depart 13:00 p.m.

arrive 13:55 p.m.

Make reservations through a travel agent or contact Indian Airlines at:

Location:

Bangalore

Chennai (Madras)

Mumbai (Bombay)

Telephone:

91-80-141 or 2211893

91-44-141 or 8553039

91-22-141 or 2023031

Fax:

91-80-2214784

91-44-8555208

91-22-2830832

Remember the Children

Did you know that there is a fine quarterly, Sai periodical published in the U.S. for children? It is called: **Sai World, A Newsletter for Children and Youth**, and can be obtained at: P.O.Box 7722, San Diego, California 92167 at a annual cost of: \$5.00 for the USA, \$8.00 for Canada & Mexico, and \$12.00 airmail for all other countries.

More Good Reading

Would you like to receive *Sanathana Sarathi*? It is the monthly publication from India which has personal stories and experiences, poems, pictures, Swami's discourses and more. To obtain *Sanathana Sarathi* write to: The Convenor, Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust, Prasanthi Nilayam, Anantapur Dist., Andra Pradesh, 515 134, India. Specify English or Telugu, subscriptions are accepted for one year only, at a cost of: Rs. 240 or \$8.00 airmail for the United States.

—Editor

Lord Krishna Speaks to Arjuna:

Whenever there is decay of righteousness (dharma) and rise of unrighteousness (adharma), then I embody myself. For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked, and for the establishment of righteousness, I am born from age to age.

From the **Bhagavad Gita**

Sai Speaks to Disadvantaged Youngsters

Tender Saplings

Sathya Sai Baba spoke to children in the Remand Home for juvenile offenders—which provides therapy and vocational training for delinquents, ages 8 to 16—in Hyderabad, India:

Though you have to observe a rather strict schedule of duties in this institution, you should find in your stay here a valuable opportunity to mold your lives and shape your character for the better, while there is time. A sapling can be helped to grow straight, but once it becomes a tree, it cannot be guided in its growth.

In your childhood, you were led astray because you did not know which action was right and which was wrong. There was no one to guide you along the good path. You fell into bad company because no one warned you, or rescued you when you had done wrong deeds. No one pointed out to you the way to God and goodness. If they had, you would have quickly absorbed the advice, for the minds of children are capable of imbibing the good as well as the bad. No one around you had faith in your innate Divinity, or compassion to save you from evil, and guide you into good ways.

Forget the past. It has already elapsed. The present is the most important time for you. Hold on to truth and follow the right path, now. Speak the truth, walk on the path of virtue, act righteously, act virtuously, do the right things, say the *Vedas* (scriptures). Do not entertain thoughts of despair or dejection.

Be happy that you have this chance to rebuild yourselves into fine boys and girls with lovable manners and behavior. These people from the *Sai seva samithi* (service volunteers) come to you through their devotional singing and prayers to raise the atmosphere of love and mercy. They tell of God, the Avatars and saints. Have Ramakrishna and Vivekananda* as your models. Follow their ideals.

In this institution, you are given training that will liberate you, unlike the training which you had when you were children, and which put you in bondage. Absorb the lessons that you are taught here to the fullest possible extent and put into practice the guidance that is given to you.

Do not have any ill feelings among yourselves. Help others when they need help, when you can really help them. Do not think that it is enough if you just sing devotional songs when the people from the *seva samithi* come and join you. Sing in your minds, silently and sincerely, when you are at work, with your friends or even alone. Just as a flashlight in your hand shows you the way if you are walking at night in the dark, the name of God on your tongue will guide you through the night of ignorance in your journey through life.

*Sri Ramakrishna (1836-86), was an Indian saint who practiced Hindu, Christian and Moslem religions. He taught that all religions are one, and to see God in everyone.

Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), was an Indian monk who was instrumental in bringing Vedic philosophy to the USA. He was a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna.

From this moment, resolve to be good and loving. Do your duties gladly and well, to the satisfaction of your well-wishers. If you feel sorry for the wrongs you did, that in itself will please God and he will pardon you. If you endeavor to turn a new leaf and become better, God will shower his grace on you. Here you are given protection and education, and an opportunity to learn how to be useful sons and daughters of this great land.

Whenever an idea—of hurting others, or taking someone's belongings, or spreading falsehood about others—enters your mind, turn to God for help. Ask him to give you strength, for all these ideas are born of fear and cowardice, qualities which in turn come from weakness. Repeat the name of God or hum a devotional song, and you will find that all your bad thoughts will flee, leaving you free from evil.

When you leave this institution, you must serve as examples for others by leading active, useful lives. This is a workshop where you have come like cars, damaged through ignorance and neglect. You must leave the institution in fine running condition, rid of all your faults and become attractive in appearance and character. Your acquaintances, family, friends, the elders of your village, and



***The present is the most important time for you.
Hold on to the truth and follow the right path.***

all who have the welfare of the country at heart must be happy and proud to see you acquiring new skills, fine character and eagerness to serve others.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Hyderabad, India, March 19, 1978
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. X, Chapter 31

Sathya Sai Book Center of America

305 West First Street, Tustin, California 92780

Phone: (714) 669-0522 Fax: (714) 669-9138

A Revised Edition

Dharma Vahini written by Sathya Sai Baba offers good reading material to absorb before the year of righteousness, 1997, is over. Some of the foreign words are translated where appropriate, and there is a glossary of words which require an explanation. The larger print makes for smoother reading. This volume sets forth Sai's righteous conduct for everyone today and for all times. # BA-302 \$2.80

A Classic Text

Bhagavad Gita translated by Camille Svensson with comments and explanations from the teachings of Sathya Sai Baba. This classic of Lord Krishna's conversation with his devotee, Arjuna, has withstood many centuries and continues to be one of the most widely read spiritual texts. # BW-015 \$3.00

Cassette Tapes

Sai's Birthday Discourse and Bhajans, 1968. This is the public discourse that Sathya Sai Baba gave in 1968, in which he announced to the world why he has incarnated, and what his mission is. The translation and voice of Prof. N. Kasturi is given in clear, precise English. # C-006 \$2.50

Sai Baba's Message to Western Delegates, November 20, 1992. This is Baba's discourse as given to Western officers of the Sathya Sai Baba Organization. Sai explains the reasons and deeper meanings behind their duties to the organization and their opportunity to serve mankind. # C-050 \$2.50

Popular Standard Books

<i>Conversations With Sathya Sai Baba</i> by Dr. John S. Hislop	# BW-035	\$5.50
<i>Divine Memories of Sathya Sai Baba</i> by Diana Baskin	# BW-050	\$7.80
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