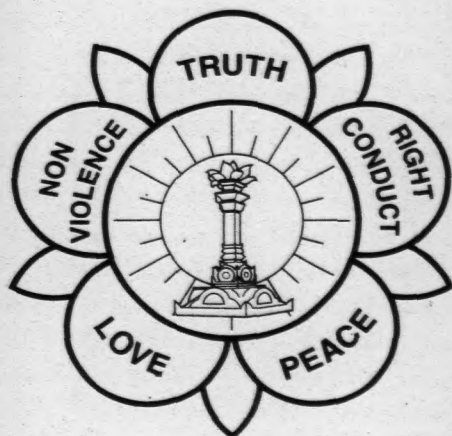




SATHYA SAI NEWSLETTER, USA

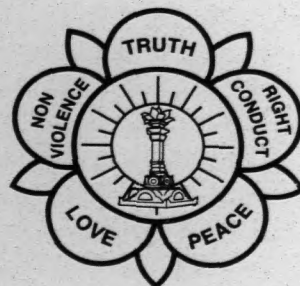
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Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA*This publication is dedicated with love and devotion to****Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba***

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



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—Barbara Bozzani, Editor

Sai's Message

We do not need to fear anyone. Why should one be afraid of truth? When there is a defect, there is fear. When there is fear, you need security. . . . You may think that in Prasanthi Nilayam, Swami has a secretary or a president. There are neither; Swami does all the work. This morning someone asked, "Who is your secretary?" Swami said, "One who has no secrets needs no secretary." Swami has no secrets, no secretary. Swami has no fear [and needs] no security.

When the former Prime Minister of India came here, a hundred security men also came. Swami asked him, "Why do you need so many people?" He said, "Security is very necessary." Then, Swami said, "There must be some mistake in you. Because of mistakes, you have fear and you need security. That is your only mistake." Swami continued, "We do not need anybody's security. We have Self-security. That

is the protection of Aatma, that is God's protection; we should rely on this." We do not need anybody's protection. Truth will protect you. Righteousness is your protection. Truth and right conduct protect mankind. If you follow righteousness, then righteousness will protect you.



—Sathya Sai Baba

From a discourse, January 13, 1992

Experiencing Sathya Sai Education

At the Institute in Thailand

The Institute in Thailand has become the world headquarters for training teachers in Sathya Sai Education in Human Values. The teachers have hands-on training with the children at this remarkably beautiful boarding school. To qualify, one must be a college graduate.

Attending the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values Teacher Training course at the Institute of Sathya Sai Education in Thailand was nothing like I had expected. But it was everything I needed. Swami knew what I needed to learn in order to be a teacher in the truest sense of the word. When people ask me, "What did you learn at the Institute?" I smile because I know this is Baba telling me to always remember what I learned, and to practice it in my daily life. Three lessons stood out during my 10-week training at the Institute.

Lesson #1: Education in Human Values is the integration of 3Hs—Head, Heart and Hands. If I wanted to be a teacher, I had to take a good look at myself—my thoughts, my words, my actions.

Was I practicing the 3Hs—head, heart and hands—in every aspect of my life? The answer was usually, "No." Why wasn't I? Because I didn't fully understand the basic concepts of God, life, existence, karma, love, truth, peace, right conduct and nonviolence. I had the bookish knowledge but not the deep understanding that changes behavior and transforms a person. As the weeks went by, I learned the deeper truth about many things: God, the five human values,

life, death, karma, duty and faith. Each day was an opportunity to examine myself and be aware of my thoughts, words and actions. I was able to constantly inquire when and why my actions were congruent or incongruent.

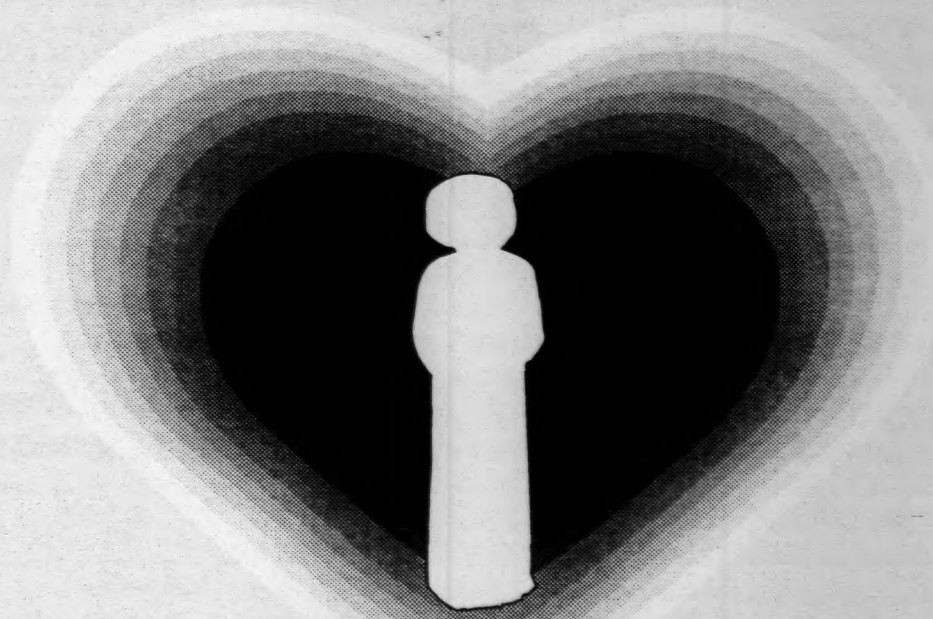
Lesson #2: The teacher must be the example. Teaching at the Sathya Sai School in Thailand was the perfect training ground to practice being the example. Communication was very limited because of the language. [Most of the children speak their native Thai and are just learning English].

Therefore, the only way to communicate with the children was through my actions. I had to constantly be the example, the model of all the values.

Through my behavior, the students could learn about the five values—love, peace, truth, right conduct, nonviolence, and also patience and kindness—I couldn't rely on my words, only my actions. So I learned how to be and to radiate all of the values.

Lesson #3: Have faith in Swami and the Sathya Sai Education program. When I first came to the school, I brought with me all of my experiences, and knowledge of what a school and its students should be like. In other words,

"I had the bookish knowledge but not the deep understanding that changes behavior and transforms a person."



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Because of your good fortune, and your good deeds in previous lives, you can participate in the promotion of these Sathya Sai human values. You should do this in the right way and never misuse this opportunity. Be one with everybody, join with them, reply softly and sweetly, "I am human, I am not an animal." . . . Then you can accomplish human values. Do not doubt this; enter with complete confidence. You should take an oath to practice and promote human values. Otherwise, you would be turning against these qualities in the sight of others. That would amount to doing something harmful to society. Therefore, help ever, hurt never.

Join these people who are practicing Sathya Sai human values. Instead of two there will be four people who can do it, and so on. . . . When the help of the officials is there, the organization can accomplish a great deal. You must awake, arise and not stop until the goal is reached. You should wake up everyone, encourage them to join this effort. Only then can we develop, promote and gain joy from these values. The duties that have to be accomplished will be decided by society. Swami is not concerned with them. . . . Swami's view is that human values are in everyone and should be preserved. . . .

You can meet from time to time and get your doubts clarified. There was a lot of delay, but now human values are being practiced and taught in many places. ~

—Sathya Sai Baba

From a discourse, January 13, 1992

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the Institute.

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I had expectations. I didn't know this consciously, but it was revealed to me by my own frustrations. Then, I realized, I did not have complete faith in Baba and the SSEHV program. I did not have complete faith that it is he who is the doer, and that everything is his will. Otherwise, why would I be upset? When I was in the classroom, or anywhere for that matter, and things were not what I expected—if the students were not paying attention or understanding the lesson—I had to make a conscious choice to turn to love and have unshakable faith in the Avatar.

Baba says, *As teachers, you have taken upon yourselves the task of molding and shaping the characters of young ones. This is*

your spiritual activity (sadhana). You don't have to do anything else. This is the sanctifying feature of your life, and you are certainly making your life a worthy existence.

At the Institute, I finally realized what Baba meant by this statement. The teacher has to embody all the values. And embodying the values means striving to master all of the spiritual disciplines, stilling the mind, practicing ceasing on desires, developing firm faith, surrender, etc. We are all teachers, whether we are a parent, grandparent, employer, student, aunt, uncle, or employee. Whatever role we play, someone is learning from our example.

—**Stephanie Mew**
Kailua, Hawaii

Because of your good fortune, and your good deeds in previous lives, you can participate in the promotion of these Sathya Sai human values. You should do this in the right way and never misuse this opportunity. Be one with everybody, join with them, reply softly and sweetly, "I am human, I am not an animal." . . . Then you can accomplish human values. Do not doubt this; enter with complete confidence. You should take an oath to practice and promote human values. Otherwise, you would be turning against these qualities in the sight of others. That would amount to doing something harmful to society. Therefore, help ever, hurt never.

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—**Sathya Sai Baba**
From a discourse, January 13, 1992

Sports Day 2000

“You are the pure, unsullied and eternal *Aatma*. You will understand that this worldly life (*samsara*) is but a dream, once you wake up from the sleep of attachment.”

Sanskrit sloka

“You are neither the body, which is nothing but a conglomeration of flesh, blood and bones; nor the mind, which is a combination of thoughts and vain desires; nor the delusion, which is born out of attachment that diverts you away from liberation. You are essentially divine.”

Telugu poem

Youth and Patriotism

Embodiments of Love! The youth of today are the future leaders of their nations and the architects of an ideal society. The future of a nation depends on its youth. It is only patriotism that confers strength on the youth. The primary duty of youth is to render service to society. The physical and mental strength of youth is the foundation on which a nation is built.

This is not the time to relax. Wake up from the slumber of selfishness and narrowmindedness—resolve to serve your nation. Perform your activities keeping the esteem and honor of the nation uppermost in your heart. Understand the reason behind God creating humanity. Every individual has a goal. It is unbecoming of youth to forget Divinity, the goal of life, and to waste time in physical and materialistic pursuits. Youth should express human qualities by rendering service to society, discharging their duties with sincerity and cultivating noble character. Youth should reestablish the ancient culture of Bharat (India) by practicing and propagating its pristine values. But modern students are neglecting their

duty to their countries. They are not giving priority to the progress and prosperity of their motherland. First of all, students should understand that the well-being of the individual lies in the safety and security of the nation.

A Formula for Doom

Understand the truth that, in the myriad forms of life, human life is the most sacred. Lead your life in a way so as to uphold *dharma* (right conduct), not merely to eat and sleep like birds and beasts. Birds and beasts are acting according to their innate nature, but human beings are forgetting their responsibility of fostering righteousness. Modern youth are under the mistaken notion that education is the means for obtaining a job (*udyoga*). *Udyoga* without yoga is futile. Contemplation on God is true yoga and true *udyoga*. That is the primary duty of humanity. Without understanding this truth, some people take pride in their jobs. Ego (*Ahamkara*) is the pest which attacks the root of the tree of human life. Attachment and hatred foster ego. Together these three spell doom to human life. Human life will shine forth brilliantly only when human minds are filled with divine love. The life of one who forgets God and gets immersed in selfish love is rushing to ruin. The one who has total faith in God and love for God will lead a life of joy and bliss. Human beings should make an effort to understand their innate divine power which is unfathomable.

Bharat is the source of the *Vedas* (sacred writings) and sacred rituals. How is it that such a sacred land is facing hardships today? The people of yore considered truth as God, sacrifice as the true human quality; they adhered to them

and experienced the bliss derived therefrom. But modern students and the educated consider money as God, and think that they can lead a happy life by holding positions of authority. Those are not true human qualities. One should aspire for bliss, which can be experienced by acquiring the knowledge of *Brahman* (Universal Absolute, the Highest). *Brahman* is that which is changeless in all the three periods of time. Such an eternal principle is referred to in the *Vedas* as Constant Integrated Awareness (*Pragjnanam Brahma*).

What Is Food?

From the principle of *Brahman* emerged ether (*akasha*). From ether, wind (*vayu*) originated. From wind, water (*jala*) emerged. From water, fire (*agni*) emerged. From fire came earth (*prithvi*). From earth, vegetation (*oshadhi*) emerged. Vegetation gave rise to food (*annam*); man is born out of food. Thus, you can see, man and *Brahman* are intimately related.

On this basis, Lord Krishna declared: "The eternal *Aatma* in all beings is a part of my being." Without the principle of *Brahman*, nothing can exist, be it ether, wind, fire, earth, vegetation or food. Without food, humanity cannot survive. Because of this, the *Vedas* declare, "Food is God." What is food? Does it constitute merely the rice and vegetables that we consume? No. The whole world is composed of food. One body is the food for another body. That which we consume is food, and the one who consumes it is also made up of food. In fact, everything is made up of food. Therefore, it is said, food is God. You offer the food to God by chanting the sloka "*Brahmarpanam . . .*" before you partake of it. But where is God? God is very much in you. That is why God responds to your prayer immediately

from within, "*Aham Vaishvanaro bhoothva*" meaning, "I am in you in the form of digestive fire (*Vaishvanara*), digesting the food that you consume."

Truth (*Sathya*) forms the basis for food. What is *sathya*? It is that which creates food. *Sathya* or *sathyam* is comprised of three syllables, *sath*, *ye*, *yam*, which stand for the individual, food and the sun. Sunlight produces food, which sustains the individual. So truth is the basis for all. Our ancients considered truth and righteousness as their very life breath. But people today aspire for food, neglecting truth. They fail to understand that truth is the basis for food.

Brahma (the Creator) is the basis for everything. Who is *Brahma*? Expansion is *Brahma*; it pervades the wind, sound, water, earth and sky. The five elements are the manifestations of *Brahma*. That is why people worship earth as Bhudevi (earth goddess), water as Gangadevi (water goddess), wind as Vayudeva (wind god), etc. But they do not realize that the same *Brahma* permeates all the five elements. All the five elements are present in the human body. So divinity is not separate from humanity. Humanity is the very form of God (*Brahma*). Human beings are the embodiment of truth. So they should make every effort to manifest their latent divinity. That is true spiritual activity. *Brahma* does not mean the four-faced entity that you see in pictures. *Brahma* permeates the entire universe. All living beings are the embodiments of God. All actions of humanity are spurred by the divinity within.

Divinity Within Does All

Students participated in various sports and cultural activities and emerged victorious. But they should not pamper their egos thinking that they are responsible for their victory. They

should realize that it is the divinity within that does all. Students who have never sung before in their lives, sang melodiously. Similarly, those who never participated in any sports before, emerged victorious. All this proves the fact that it is the divinity within that brings forth the latent talents and skills. The process of inhalation and exhalation, *soham*, also proves the presence of divinity within. *Soham* means "I am That." The process of inhalation and exhalation repeats itself 21,600 times a day reminding human beings of their divinity. This being the case, why should people consider themselves inferior? In fact, human beings are the embodiment of all powers and faculties.

Self-Effort

You are under the false impression that knowledge is acquired through books. In fact, it is the manifestation of that which already exists within. Nothing is possible without divinity. There are flowers, thread and needle, but they cannot form a garland by themselves. There should be someone to string them together. Similarly, alphabets by themselves do not convey any meaning unless there is someone to build words (for example, G-O-D) and explain their meaning.

You have curd and a churning rod, but can you get butter out of curd without churning? No. Likewise, the infinite power latent in the individual should be manifested through self-effort. It is possible only when you fill your mind with love for God. It is evident that self-effort and the grace of God are essential in any human endeavor. The reason for all misery and grief is that your mind is not directed toward divine love. You will lead a blissful life only when your mind is suffused with divine love. Divine love is the ultimate goal of life.

Perform your activities with divine feelings. Do your duties sincerely. Only then, the job that you do will be transformed into yoga, and work will be transformed into worship. But people lack such noble feelings. People differentiate between their work and others' work without understanding the truth that the same divinity exists in all. All the heads, hands and feet are God's. The entire universe is God's manifestation. Divinity exists in one and all, be they theists (*aasthika*) or atheists (*naasthika*). Theism stands for divinity, which means divinity is the basis even for atheism.

Seven Levels of Bliss

Human beings use words without understanding their inner meanings. This is the cause of their ignorance. They get immersed in worldly pleasures and say that they are experiencing *Brahmananda* (Highest Bliss). Worldly pleasures are transient, whereas *Brahmananda* is eternal. The type of joy that people derive out of worldly comforts and conveniences is *maanavananda* (human joy). One hundred times more powerful than *maanavananda* is *indrananda*. One hundred times more powerful than *indrananda* is *devendrananda*. One hundred times more powerful than *devendrananda* is *devananda*. One hundred times more powerful than *devananda* is *brihaspathiananda*. One hundred times more powerful than *brihaspathiananda* is *prajapathiananda*. One hundred times more powerful than *prajapathiananda* is *Brahmananda*. This is the true measure of *Brahmananda*. Such an expression as *Brahmananda* is used in common parlance to mean worldly happiness. Only *Brahmananda* confers supreme comfort. All the comforts relating to body and mind are like passing clouds.



“No Maya, Only Bhrama” Says Baba

*Maya*¹ is a ticklish concept in Vedantic metaphysics. It has no absolute reality and hence does not exist for the enlightened ones. It has a relative reality, which deceives and tantalizes ignorant people. In fact, it is a case of self-deception (*bhrama*)² as, for instance, in the classical analogy of a rope being mistaken for a snake in dim light, with the attendant fear. It may also be compared to concepts like sunrise and sunset which are false in the absolute sense, but apparently real from the relative standpoint. That is why Swami says: *Maya is real-unreal, like a man's shadow which is he and not-he, at the same time.* The following statements of Bhagavan Baba gives us some useful insights into this enigmatic concept of *maya* and the cognate tenet of the illusoriness of the universe. When requested to explain *maya*, Baba answered:

*Maya does not exist. Brahman*³ *alone exists. What you call maya is nothing but your bhrama or hallucination. Dehabhavam, identifying your-self with your body, is alone maya. Anaatmabhavam, considering the non-self to be real is only maya. You are thinking that you are something that you actually are not. This is maya. To speak the truth, there is nothing called maya. It is all your false imagination. For example, when the sun's rays fall on a tree, you see the shade under the tree. Herein is a subtle point to be noted carefully. What is it? There is no shade in the sunlight. There is shade only under the tree. Why? If you exam-*

ine, you will understand that the shade is due to the branches, twigs and leaves of the tree. Here, sunlight is like Brahman, in which there is no shade called maya; and the tree is like jiva (individual soul), while the branches, twigs, leaves, etc., are like the individual's desires and attachments. It is due to these that the shade called maya appears to you. In its absence there is no shade, i.e., no maya.

When simple-minded children are told, “Lo! There lurks a ghost there,” they believe it to be true and get terribly frightened. So, too, unthinking, ignorant persons get convinced of the reality of objects around them through the influence of *maya*. Those endowed with *viveka* (discrimination), however, distinguish between the true *Brahman* and the false *jagath* (world of change); others unable to do so, or to find out the real nature of *maya*, simply dismiss it as beyond description—*anirvachaneeya*.”

Jnanis (liberated persons) who have clearly grasped the truth, characterize *maya* as the mother whose corpse is cremated by the son! It is the experience of *maya* that gives rise to *jnana* (wisdom), or the revealing wisdom. The child, *vidya* (knowledge), kills the mother as soon as it is born. The child was delivered for the very purpose of matricide, and its first task is naturally the cremation of the dead mother.

When one tree rubs against another in a forest, fire starts and the fire burns both. So, too, the *vidya* or knowledge that arose from *maya* des-

1 *Maya* is cosmic illusion, the deluding wiles of the really unreal.

2 *Bhrama* is delusion or false belief.

3 *Brahman* is the Universal Absolute, there is none mightier than *Brahman*.

troys the very source of the knowledge. *Avidya*⁴ (Ignorance) is reduced to ashes by *vidya* (knowledge).

Like the expression, “hare’s horn,” which is the name for a nonexistent thing, *maya*, too, is nonexistent and one has only to know it to dismiss it from the consciousness. So say the *jnanis*⁵. Nor is this all. You label anything nonexistent as *avidya* or *maya*. Whatever becomes meaningless, valueless, untrue, baseless and nonexistent when knowledge grows, that you can take to be *maya*’s manifestation.

Another interesting point is this: It may be argued that since *maya* produces *vidya*, *maya* is right and proper and deserving of respect; but the *vidya* that arises out of it is also not permanent. As soon as *avidya* is destroyed through *vidya*, *vidya*, too, ends. The tree and the fire, both are destroyed when the fire finishes its work.

There is no *maya*, so the question of overcoming it does not arise. What you call *maya* is your own delusion or illusion. For example, in semidarkness you mistook a rope for a snake and became frightened. When you see the rope with the help of a torchlight, your fear is gone. Actually, no snake appeared or disappeared. It was only your delusion that appeared and disappeared. So, too, what always exists is *Brahman*. All else is your *bhrama* or delusion.

When you bring light into a dark room, where has the darkness gone? It is there, but it is not seen because of light. Light is *jnana*. Darkness called *maya*, *ajnana*, *avidya* or *mithya* (neither true nor untrue) will be dispelled only by the light of *jnana*. During the stage of *sadhana* (spiritual

practice), which is like a bus journey on a dusty earthen road, the dust of *maya* will be behind the bus during the motion called *sadhana*. But when *sadhana* is stopped, *maya* enters in you, just as dust enters into the bus when it halts. However, when you finish *sadhana* and become a *siddha* (realized being), no *maya* will enter in you, because it is like a bus traveling on a cement road with no dust of *maya*.

On the one hand, scriptures say, “*Brahman* is real, universe is illusory.” On the other hand, the very same scriptures declare: “All this is verily *Brahman*.” When requested to reconcile these two conflicting statements, Baba replied:

When did you come? You reply, “I came just now.” Here you are identifying yourself with your body. If asked, “Why do you look weak and bent?” You reply, “Because of old age and ill health, my body is bent and weak.” Here, when you say “my body,” you imply that you are the Self or *Aatma*, which is separate from the body. Which of your two statements is correct? Both are correct, the first from the viewpoint of *deha bhaava* or body-consciousness or dualism; and the second from *Aatma bhaava* or identification with the Self or *Aatma* i.e., nondualism. Thus when one is in the stage of *dvaita* or dualism, God and the world are different for him. In the stage of *advaita* or nondualism, there is nothing other than God, i.e., everything is God. Hence, it should be understood that the teachings of scriptures are meant for people at different stages of spiritual growth.

—Dr. A. Adivi Reddy
Arcadia, California

⁴ *Avidya* is individual illusion, ignorance, also having no knowledge.

⁵ *Jnani* one who is spiritually enlightened. *Jnana* is enlightenment.

Does God Need To Prove Himself?

The place was Camp Wyman located in the picturesque valley in Eureka, south of Saint Louis, Missouri. The weather should have been mild and pleasant, but thanks to El Niño, it was fairly warm and humid. The occasion was the 21st North Central and Mid-Central Regional Sai Conference. The venue was the big community center transformed into the prayer hall by the Sai conference committee. A life-sized picture of Sathya Sai Baba giving blessing adorned the north wall. The floral and religious decorations with Bhagavan's picture added to the sanctity.

It was 9:00 A.M., the prayer hall was densely packed with wall-to-wall devotees. There were more than 200 people in that hall. I looked around, and there were representatives from all cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

What made all these people with diverse backgrounds of race, color and ethnicity gather under one roof in a remote mountain camp, away from civilization? They all looked peaceful and contented with smiles on their faces, and an unexplainable gleam in their eyes. They were all chanting the same devotional songs of Sathya Sai Baba, considered an Avatar.

This was my second visit to the annual Sai retreat. Though born and raised in India, my exposure to Baba is nothing to brag about. My wife, Aruna, whom I am married to for more than 25 years, comes from a family of Sai devotees. Though we have been married for a long time, and I watched her in Sai Baba's prayers and *bhajans*, it wasn't until the last four years since we started a Sathya Sai *bhajan* group in our small community that my interest in Baba was

aroused, and I became a devotee.

My inquisitiveness—to find out why these people with very little common background gathered to worship and spread the message of Sathya Sai Baba—grew by leaps and bounds as the days went by. I decided to talk to and interview a few of the devotees.

The first person I encountered was a pleasant Afro-American young man who greeted us as we were registering for the conference. After mutual introductions, I asked him (I'll call him Charles) what made him become a Sai devotee. He said that he worked at an automotive plant in Saint Louis, and about four years ago, his six-year-old son got sick. Even after one week in the hospital, the doctors were not able to diagnose the cause of his illness. The child continued to have a high fever. My new acquaintance had been talking to a friend about his son, and his friend told Charles about Sai Baba, gave him *vibhuti* (holy ash), and advised him to put some on his son's forehead and a pinch on the boy's tongue. Though Charles' wife didn't like it, he went ahead and placed the *vibhuti* as he was told.

That night, Charles had a strange dream. He saw bright lights followed by a strange man with an Afro hairstyle who smiled at him and walked away. The next day his son started feeling better, his fever broke, and he was released from the hospital in a couple of days. The doctors told him that his son's cure was as miraculous as his disease, and they still didn't have any diagnosis. Since then, his son has done well. He told me, it was at that time that he became a Sai devotee. He now goes to Sathya Sai Baba meetings and

spends most of his weekends doing bhajans or reading Swami's scripture. He hopes that when he saves enough money, he will go to India to visit Baba in person.

The next person who attracted my attention was one of the keynote speakers (let us call him John). John comes from an orthodox Christian family without any exposure to Sathya Sai Baba. He is one of 12 children. John started having dreams when he was very young. In those dreams he saw Swami (he later identified him) coming into their house carrying groceries. He desperately tried to attract Swami's attention, but Sai Baba ignored him and walked away. The only acknowledgement he received was when Swami looked over his right shoulder and winked at him. Later, when John went to Prasanthi Nilayam with Alan Woods, Swami walked over to John during morning prayer, took a letter from him and walked away. However, Baba looked over his right shoulder and winked at him!

When John was young, he went through a phase of life where he was confused, restless and anxiously looking for any help that would guide him to peace and tranquility. He tried to study the scriptures of most religions, including yoga and the *Holy Bible*. One day, while going home from a camping trip, John picked up two hitchhikers. One of them gave him Baba's *vibhuti*, and told him Baba was a divine incarnation. John did not believe him, but he heard a voice next day saying, "If God is everywhere, and is in everyone, why not Sai Baba?"

John, his wife and son have been staunch devotees of Baba. They visit Prasanthi Nilayam frequently. John, who is the head of a large corporation, always feels Swami is with him in times of happiness and anguish, like a parent guarding a child.

Deepak (not his real name), is another devotee who visited the Sai conference, and narrated his experiences. As an immigrant from India, he was working in a rough neighborhood in Northern England. One night he was traveling by Metro and was alone in a large subway car when he noticed a group of "skinheads" approaching him. He heard that skinheads are a notorious gang in England, known for their crimes. He knew he was in imminent danger and was scared. Deepak had one of Sai Baba's books in his hand, which he was carrying to give to a friend. He started doing the only thing that he could do in that situation—he prayed. Holding Baba's book in his hand, he closed his eyes and started praying to Baba. He heard the skinheads approach, stop in front of him, whisper something amongst themselves, pause for a moment and leave. Amazed at the rather pleasant turn of events, Deepak thanked Swami for helping him. He looked out the window and saw a neon sign over a warehouse; in the darkness of the night he read, "Why Fear, I Am Here." He looked at the book in his hand, on the cover was a picture of Sai Baba with the right hand in a blessing posture, and underneath was Baba's quotation in large letters, "WHY FEAR, I AM HERE."

Raju (again, not his real name) shared his experience. His son was studying in the Sathya Sai college in Brindavan. One day, Baba went to see the students' exhibits in the library. One of the exhibits was a basketball goalpost, and the visitors were supposed to test their skill by trying to make a goal with the basketball. Students gave Baba the basketball. Swami took the ball and tried to throw it into the basket. He missed. He tried again and missed! After missing three chances, and with a vexed look on his face, Baba took the ball and started to walk away. After

reaching the exit door, without even looking back, Swami threw the ball toward the goalpost and made a perfect basket!

My wife and daughter went recently to India to Prasanthi Nilayam for Baba's *darshan*. After going through customs in Bombay, they came out of the international airport to catch the shuttle to go to the domestic airport. However, they could not find the Jet Airways shuttle which they were supposed to take. They were waiting outside, but could not locate anyone to ask for directions. Aruna and our daughter noticed a man walking toward them. He asked if they were waiting for the Jet Airways shuttle. He showed them where to find it and walked away saying, "*Sai Ram*." Even today, they cannot figure out how he knew they were waiting for that particular shuttle, and rightly said *Sai Ram* as if he knew them to be Sai devotees who were going to Prasanthi Nilayam.

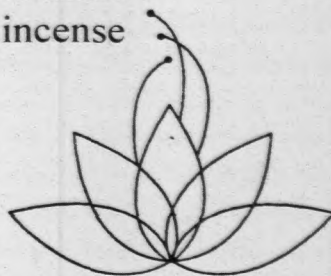
Last but not least, I shall share my own experience. Four years ago, the last time I visited India, I was traveling to Puttaparthi from Hyderabad with my sister and brother. It was a long drive and it was after midnight when we finally approached Puttaparthi. Except for the driver and myself, the rest of the passengers were fast asleep. I saw a sign that said Puttaparthi, 30 kilometers. I suddenly could smell *vibhuti* and the fragrance of lighted incense

sticks, which we often experience in a temple. The car was still on a deserted, forest-like road, with no trace of humanity or any temples. I looked around in the car, and all I saw were my relatives still sleeping, tired from the long day's ride. As the divine aroma got stronger, I asked the driver if he could smell what I was smelling. He said, "No." So I awakened my fellow passengers and asked them if they could perceive the incense. They said they could not smell anything. I was the only one who could smell that scent until we reached our destination, Puttaparthi and then to Prasanthi Nilayam.

I know now why so many people gathered at that mountain resort in Missouri to pay their respects and to share their experiences of Sathya Sai Baba, whom they consider to be an incarnation of God. Most of us believe in him because of our own or our friends' experiences. But what if Sathya Sai just came out, and told everyone that he is God and asked them to worship him? Without the miracles or the unexplainable phenomenon, how many of us would have believed him and followed him as God's Avatar?

So it leads us to the basic questions: Vision or phenomenon? God or Avatar? Even he has to prove himself before we simple-minded mortals can believe him.

—**S. D. Madduri, M.D.**
Poplar Bluff, Missouri



Let me tell you one thing: However you are, you are mine. I will not give you up. Wherever you are, you are near me; you cannot go beyond my reach.

—**Sathya Sai Baba**
From, *My Baba and I* by **Dr. John S. Hislop**

Contemplation of the Gayatri Mantra

Background

Sathya Sai Baba has placed strong and repeated emphasis on the importance of the three-tiered Gayatri Mantra for adherents to the spiritual path. Not only Swami, but various devotees have presented discourses on the value of the mantra and the theory behind its use. Thus, it is not surprising that Sai Centers include this mantra as part of their worship services.

The tradition of those born in the West, however, does not include special reverence for the Sanskrit language nor inspire the expectation that spiritual power should inhere in the sounds of mantric syllables. Thus, the proverbial “rescuing” efficacy of the Gayatri Mantra for these devotees is likely to be diminished by a significant psychological barrier. This barrier can become even more substantial when the attempt to associate a meaning with the mantric sounds leads only to frustration, because there appears to be not one, but a number of translations for the mantra. In fact, the attempt to render the Sanskrit words into English sentences has led to some versions that are quite different in thought from others.

In one of the study circles in our Sathya Sai Baba Center in Houston, Texas, we discussed a long and illuminating passage on the Gayatri by an author who had been requested by Sai Baba to prepare a discussion of this mantra and received instruction on the topic directly from Swami. We learned that in 1974 Swami gave specific English definitions for the first 10 and the last two words of the mantra, and that “*dhiyo*” refers to the intellect. Unfortunately, the chapter was not concluded by a full English translation of the man-

tra; furthermore, the chapter’s instructions about the significance of the first of the three sections seemed to follow only imperfectly from Swami’s definitions of the words.

For someone like myself, who expects a specific meaning to be conveyed by a spiritual passage, especially when it is considered to have great significance, the chapter remained unsatisfying. Of course, it might be argued that it is best to approach the Gayatri Mantra with the attitude of a poet, where words are only vehicles for a more wide-ranging thought pattern. However, when the subject concerns the very purification of one’s soul, those accustomed to precision in language, including lawyers, engineers, scientists and philosophers, will find the latter approach disconcerting. Sai Baba has defined specific Sanskrit words, but an English rendition of the Gayatri must also include verbs and linking phrases between the topics, so that complete sentences are formed. Since Swami has not undertaken this additional step, perhaps it is his intention to permit each devotee to complete the translation of the Gayatri in a way that will convey devotional thoughts that are individually meaningful.

With this concept in mind, and with the assistance of my wife who shared a similar concern, I attempted to assemble coherent English sentences that would have significance for those familiar with both Eastern philosophy and modern science. Because the resulting translation has served as a valued spiritual tool throughout the past six years, I am emboldened to pass it along to those who may have similar needs.

Gayatri Mantra

Aum

Bhur Bhuvah Suvah;

Tat Savitur Varenium;

Bhargo Devasya Dheemahi;

Dhiyo Yo Nah Prachodayat.

Sathya Sai Baba's word-for-word translation [within brackets] as it appears in Gayatri Mantra, *Shabda Brahma, Mother of Vedas*, compiled from the divine discourses of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba:

Aum;

[sound as the basis of creation]

Bhur

Bhuvah

[the earth, the gross][atmosphere, ether, subtle]

Suvah;

[Heaven, region beyond *Bhuvah*]

Tat

Savitur

[the ultimate reality] [vivifying power within the sun]

Varenium;

[adore]

Bhargo

Devasya

[radiance, luster, illumination] [Divine radiance or Grace]

Dheemahe;

[We contemplate]

Dhiyo

Yo

[(inspired) intellect]

—

Nah Prachodayat.

[requesting, urging, praying]

Discussion

For many in the modern world, truth and consistency have virtually no religious significance; the absence of these principles seriously interferes with devotion. However, an insistence on consistency between scientific truth and religious truth is a huge order. Fortunately, there happens to be a remarkable correspondence between Vedic mystical inspiration, as sum-

moned at the beginning of the Gayatri Mantra, and scientific theories associated with the observation of the "background" microwave radiation known to radio astronomers. It is generally agreed that this radiation (which constitutes an electromagnetic "vibration") permeates all of space, and almost certainly is the lingering "echo" of the primordial "Big Bang" of creation. Thus, the recitation of "*Aum*" can be considered to recall the moment in which the universe was created, and the Gayatri reminds us that in addition to the gross plane of matter, the primordial creation also generated subtle and spiritual planes that science has not yet understood. With each introductory repetition of *Aum*, devotees may wish to contemplate the existence of a psychic continuum threading from the matter originated in the "Big Bang" through the first simple organic compounds and then, vibrating with the vitality of life, extending through evolutionary advance to the cells that make up their bodies.

In the second section of the mantra, the English words supplied by Sai Baba first suggest the existence of a Divine Principle by which the transformation of gross matter within the sun (through fusion) gives rise to radiation that subsequently supports the many forms of life on earth; in appreciating the life-giving power of the sun, we naturally are inspired with awe and adoration.

The third section of the Gayatri can be viewed as a suggestion that we consider that the Divine Principle also irradiates our consciousness with grace, which we can receive by praying for the spiritual illumination of our intellect.

The following English version of the Gayatri Mantra has seemed surprisingly satisfying and

appears to be in reasonable agreement with the meaning of the words supplied by Sai Baba.

English Rendition of the Gayatri Mantra:

Aum;

Repeating this eternal sound, reverberating with power from the primordial creation of matter, the subtle planes, and the domain of pure spirit, and

Pondering the Ultimate Reality, whose brilliant emanation energizes all of life,

We worship in awe and adoration.

We contemplate the radiance of divine grace.

We fervently pray that this meditation will illumine our highest awareness.

Conclusion

Obviously, it is impossible to have the English translation recreate the original sound of the mantra. Thus, Western devotees may want to continue to chant the Sanskrit form while thinking of the meaning in English. Alternatively, chanting of the mantra might be followed by a recitation of the English translation. In either case, it is desirable to begin with a slow, spaced chanting of the syllable, *Aum*.

—Allen T. Ansevin
Houston, Texas

Diamonds in the Dark

*We may use the polished intellect
To add luster to our wit.*

*Personalities of infinite facets,
Each a talent with.*

*Our shapes honed to perfection,
Color radiating health.*

*Souls pledged to pristine piety,
Fingers busy counting wealth.*

*We may be all these things,
And flawlessness is a start.*

*Yet, until the lamp of love is lit
We're but diamonds in the dark.*

—A Devotee
Southwestern United States

Concentration and Meditation

“A person without knowledge of *Brahman*¹,
can that person be called a *Brahmin*?²
A person without equal-mindedness,
can that person be called a good person?
A person without good qualities,
can you call that person human at all?
You educated persons, tell me
whether this is a fact or not?
I am prepared to accept.”

Telegu poem

All things in the cosmos are the gifts of God. They are manifestations of his will. Some of them, however, have to be used carefully. When they are used intelligently after due inquiry, they can serve as boons and give us happiness. Indiscriminate and reckless use of these things may turn them into our worst enemies.

For example, there are objects like fire, a knife and electricity. It is only when these are used in the right way that you benefit from them. If fire is not handled properly, it can cause great harm. A knife is helpful only when it is used carefully. Electricity serves us in many ways: by lighting bulbs, running fans, heating stoves for cooking, powering machines for printing and multifarious uses. However, if one tries to be friendly with electricity by touching a live wire, one will be electrocuted. We have to use it with discrimination.

Control of the Tongue

In the same manner, man's sense organs have to be used with extreme care. When the senses are used correctly, they are of immense help. But if they are used in the wrong way, they can cause great harm.

Among the sense organs, the tongue is very important. Each sense organ has a specific function to perform. But the tongue has two functions: speech and taste. Jayadeva praised the tongue as the author of all sweetness and declared that he would use it only to chant the names of the Lord, and not misuse it for any unholy purpose. “I will use the tongue only for speaking truth and good.” In the *Bhagavad Gita*, also, it has been laid down that whatever is spoken should be soft, truthful, and well-meaning. The tongue is thus endowed with sacred qualities. You have to be ever-vigilant in the use of the tongue. It can be the means of liberation or of bondage. Hence, it has been accorded an important place among the sense organs.

The ancient sages attached great importance to the control of the senses and suggested various practices to achieve this. For instance, the tongue should not be allowed to have its way with regard to food. If it is pampered by being given whatever it desires, ultimately it will swallow up the person.

To control the palate, the ancient sages prescribed various regulations. Chief among them is a ritual observance to impose severe discipline on the tongue. This is observed each year for four months, commencing from the month of *Aashada* (July). There is another reason for this observance. As the next three months are a season of heavy rains, it would be difficult for any renunciant to move from place to place. Hence they were enjoined to stay in one place and devote themselves to contemplating on

¹ *Brahman* is the Universal Absolute, the Highest, Supreme Being.

² *Brahmin* is the priestly class of Hindus.

God for four months. Living in a forest for these four months, they had to live on fruits and roots. Thereby, the tongue was brought under control.

At the present time, because of the perversions of the *Kali* Age (this era), this ancient four-month ritual of austerity has become an ostentatious observance. The sages ask for tasty dishes while staying in villages; they expect each devotee by turns to provide them with a feast. This is done in the name of a pious offering by a devotee. With this change in the nature of religious observance, people's conduct also changes. The sages of today should realize that the real purpose of these observances is to achieve control over the palate. How can they expect to realize the divine without achieving mastery of the senses? If your house is on fire, you may try to escape by running out of it. But if your sense organs are on fire, how can you hope to escape from them? Today, what is happening in the case of spiritual aspirants is that their sense organs are on fire. Today's aspirants are allowing their sense organs to burn like a blazing fire.

Parable of Two Sons

In a temple in Jerusalem, pigeons were being sold. Jesus entered, and he objected to the sale of birds in the temple. The priests jointly questioned Jesus about his authority to raise such an objection. Jesus then related the following parable: A farmer had two sons. He ordered the elder son to go and keep watch over the crops in the field. The son said that he could not go. The younger son was asked to go, and he agreed to keep watch over the field. The elder son, though at first he declined to go, felt that it was not right to disobey his father, so he went to the field. The

second son, despite his promise, did not go to the field. Jesus asked the priests, "Between these two sons, who do you think obeyed the father's command?" They replied, "The elder son. He acted upon his father's command. The second son promised to go but did not do so."

"Priests and teachers are proclaiming that they are adhering to the injunctions of the scriptures, but in actual practice are not following them. All of you are acting in the same manner," declared Jesus. The priests got angry and brought a number of charges against Jesus, saying that he was preaching against the established religion and promoting disobedience against the authorities.

There is an old saying: "Truth creates enemies. Falsehood pleases many."

Truth is not always pleasant, and hence provokes enmity. Lies and falsehood appear attractive and pleasing. Nevertheless, people must adhere to truth for its own sake. To say one thing and act differently is destructive of the self. It is opposed to the scriptures. One should try to practice at least one or two of the precepts one professes.

Purpose of Yoga

The ancient sages went to the forest for practicing yoga. Can self-realization be attained through yogic practices? No. The rishis (sages) practiced yoga for the sake of acquiring control over the senses. Patanjali³ declared, "Yoga is control of the movements of the mind." It is believed that by controlling the senses, life can be prolonged. Who should live longer? Good persons, righteous persons, kindhearted persons, if

³ Patanjali an Indian scholar and philosopher, lived in the late 2nd century B.C., and is regarded as the founder of yoga. He is the author of the *Yoga Sutras*.

they live long, the world will benefit. The world will only suffer more if the wicked and evil minded live longer. For this reason, the ancients established that only selfless and dedicated persons should practice yoga for living long. Society benefits immensely from their longevity. Disciplines were prescribed for this purpose. Students should take note of these disciplines.

Breathing and Longevity

The physical body is subject to certain limitations. For instance, there is the continuous process of inhaling and exhaling air. It has been found that, by slowing down the time taken for inhaling and exhaling, life can be prolonged. The faster the process of breathing the shorter becomes the life span. There are examples to show how this rule operates:

Elephants and human beings inhale and exhale 12 to 13 times per minute. By adhering to this time scale, people can expect to live for 100 years. Snakes and tortoises breathe at the rate of seven to eight times per minute. Consequently their average life span extends 200 to 300 years. Monkeys, dogs, and cats breathe at the rate of 30 to 40 times per minute. Hence, their average life span does not last beyond 12 or 13 years. The rabbit breathes at the rate of 40 to 50 times per minute. Its life is only five or six years.

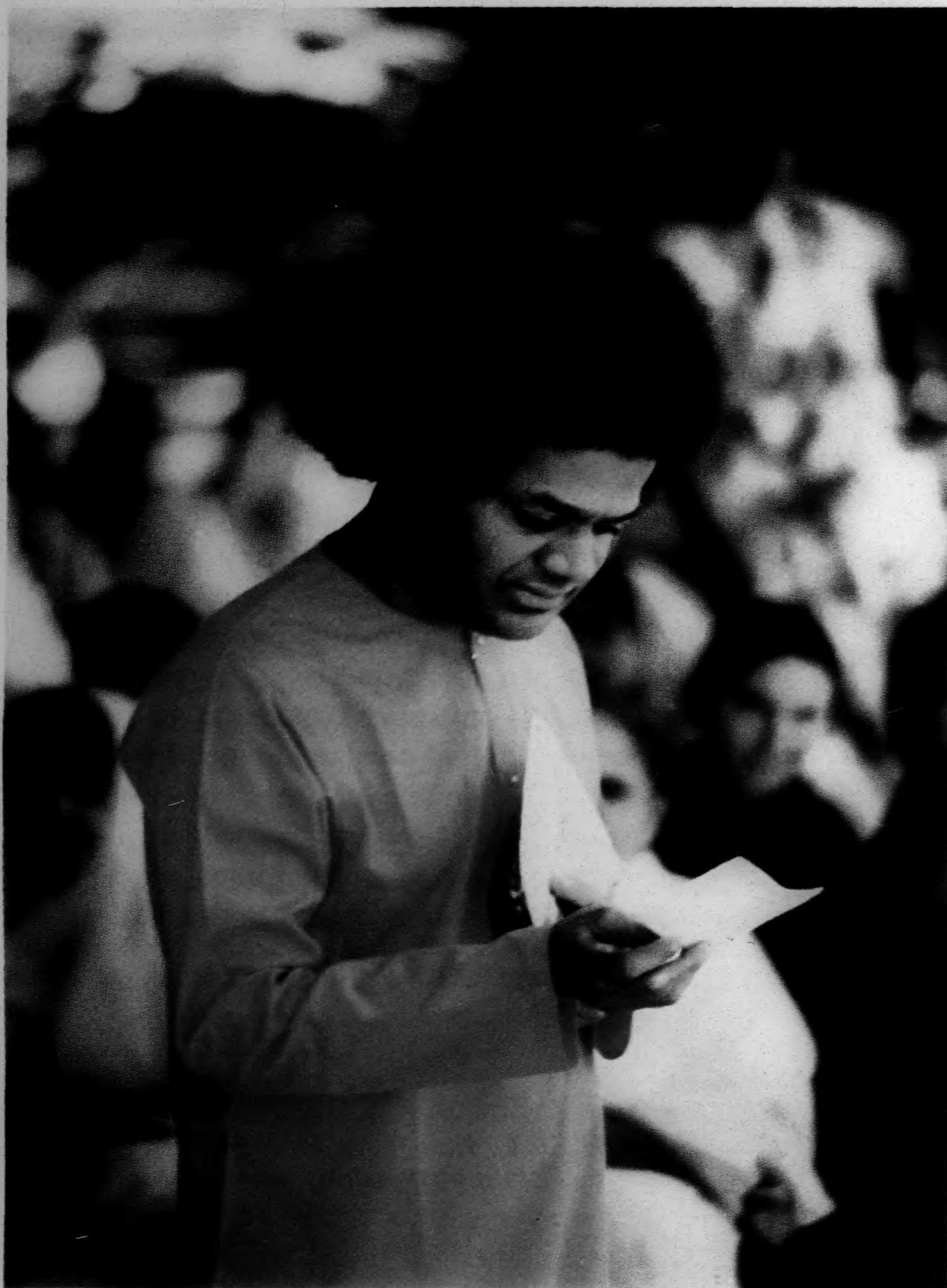
The faster the rate of respiration, the shorter is the lifetime and vice versa. How is breathing to be regulated? Breathing should be so slow and quiet that if fine powder is put near the nostrils the powder will not be disturbed. The practice of yoga helps to slow down the rate of breathing in this manner. So what is the procedure for doing this? Is this yoga? How is it to be done?

Meditation Explained

How is meditation to be done? The first step is *dharana* (concentration). Twelve *dharanas* amount to one *dhyana* (meditation). Twelve *dhyanas* are equal to one *samadhi* (equal-mindedness). *Dharana* is steady concentrated viewing of an object for 12 seconds. You have to look at an object, a flame, a picture or an idol, for 12 seconds with total concentration, without blinking the eyelids. This is concentration. Practicing *dharana* (concentration) is a preparation for *dhyana* (meditation). The duration of *dhyana* is 12 *dharanas*. This means meditation should last 12 times 12 or 144 seconds. That is two minutes and 24 seconds. *Dhyana* does not call for sitting in meditation for hours. Proper *dhyana* need not last more than two minutes and 24 seconds. It is only after concentration has been practiced well that one can do meditation well. Twelve *dhyanas* equal one *samadhi*. This means 144 times 12 seconds: that is 28 minutes and 48 seconds, very much less than an hour. If *samadhi* is prolonged, it may prove fatal.

These are the disciplines the yogis practiced. These disciplines are not explained in any of the *Sastras*. If you want to proceed correctly in the practice of these disciplines, you have to begin with concentration for 12 seconds each day, from now on. This is very important for students. In the past, yogis like Aurobindo and Ramana Maharishi practiced these disciplines. Ramana Maharishi used to go up to the terrace and concentrate on a particular star for 12 seconds. In that state his mind was still.

By continuing this practice of concentration, you develop the capacity to perform meditation for two minutes, 24 seconds. Continuing the



practice of meditation in this way, you develop the capacity to be in a state of *samadhi* (equal-mindedness) for 28 minutes and 48 seconds.

What is the inner meaning of *samadhi*? It is

not a state of unconsciousness or some other kind of super-consciousness. It is nothing of that kind. That is only hysteria.

Equal-Mindedness

The correct meaning of *samadhi* is equal-mindedness, the state in which the intellect has achieved equanimity. Whether in pleasure or pain, in praise or blame, in gain or loss, in heat or cold, to be able to maintain an equal mind is *samadhi*. That is the real fruit of meditation.

This is a sacred day on which you can begin this yogic practice. This will enable you to sharpen your mind and develop the keenness of your intellect. I have not revealed all this to anyone hitherto.

Dhyana is an extremely easy process. *Samadhi* is even easier. But because of improper understanding of these methods, aspirants get involved in difficulties. Many imagine that all meditation calls for is sitting in the *padmasana* (cross-legged sitting posture). But one does not know where one's mind is wandering at that

time. A person's concentration is disturbed by a mosquito sitting on his nose. When the mosquito repeats its attack, the person loses patience, gets angry, and with both hands tries to kill the insect. The entire purpose of the

cannot be described as meditation. To maintain one's calmness during meditation, unaffected by any disturbing elements, concentration has to be practiced. Through concentration, control of the senses is also achieved, and purity of mind is secured. Through mental purity, the divine is experienced.

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, chapter XII, verse 12, it is expounded that peace is very important. Meditation in these days is often confined to the *puja* (shrine) room. As soon as one emerges from the shrine, one is filled with all sorts of mental agitation. Hence, it has been declared, be *sathatham yoginah* (be established in yoga all the time). This does not mean giving up all worldly affairs. Pursue your studies, fulfill your duties, but in all these activities, use your power of concentration. In the process, you develop your powers of meditation. *Dhyana* means single-pointed contemplation.

Even in daily life, when one is in a reflective mood, one is asked, "What is the meditation that you are doing?" *Dhyana* means absorption in thought. It should be centered on only one specific subject. This is described in Vedantic parlance as *saalokyam*. This means, concentrating your thought on the object or the subject; if it is a person, your thought is centered on the person. "*Saa*" encompasses every aspect of divinity. "*Saalokya*" is absorption in thoughts of divinity.

It is human to think "mine and thine," but this

is not a correct approach. Nothing belongs to you, except one thing, that is *Aatma* (the indwelling divinity). Through meditation you have to achieve the sense of oneness with the divine. The various types of meditation practiced today are concerned with the trivial. Through these methods the divine cannot be realized. The very first requisite is to control the vagaries of the mind. Only then can meditation be effective.

Nowadays, people think they are meditating simply by sitting cross-legged and closing their eyes. This is only a disguise. Students must first practice concentration. They may choose any

object for the purpose of concentration, a picture or any physical object. There is also an internal method of practicing concentration. When you close your eyes, a small dark spot appears before the inner eye. Concentrate on this spot for 12 seconds without

letting it move. By this practice, the power of meditation can also be developed.

For the body there are six inner foes—lust, anger, desire, greed, hatred and envy—which come in the way of achieving any progress. But the individual soul can control these foes and achieve unity, because it is a reflection of the Supreme Soul. The Supreme Soul has no beginning or end. The practice of meditation leads to proximity of the Lord. This leads to the next stage, of experiencing a vision of the Lord. This may be compared to a river merging into the

"For the body, there are six inner foes—lust, anger, desire, greed, hatred and envy—which come in the way of any progress. But the individual soul can control these foes and achieve unity, because it is a reflection of the Supreme Soul."

ocean. At first, the ocean repels the advance of the river. After repeated attempts, the river will merge into the ocean. The latter allows the river to pass under its waves. Spiritually, this process of merging of the *jivaatma* with the *Paramaatma* is described as the merging of the individual soul with the Supreme Soul, or merging with the Divine. The first stage in the process is continuous contemplation of the Divine. Think about the Lord in whatever action you do. Then you will achieve nearness to the Lord.

Fourfold Approach

Coming nearer develops closer relations with the Divine. In due course, a state is attained where the realization that you and I are one dawns. Then, complete oneness with the Divine is experienced. This fourfold approach to the Divine is to be found in any philosophy or religion. The creeds may vary, but the spiritual process is one.

In Christianity, Jesus first declared, "I am the messenger of God." The yearning grew steadily, and in the next stage he declared, "I am the son of God." That means a newer and closer relationship with God. In the third stage he declared, "I and my Father are one." And the final stage was the realization of the "Holy Spirit."

Similar concepts are described by the Muslims. The first stage is, "I am in the light." The word light has two meanings. One meaning is illumination, the other meaning is lightweight or subtle. This indicates that as you progress on your spiritual path, you become more subtle. After that, the next stage is, "The light is in me." The third stage is, "I am the light." The final stage is when there is no more weight, one is subtle and illumined.

In Vedanta, a similar situation is described in three stages. The first stage is *dwaita* (duality), when human beings and God are regarded as separate. The second stage is *vishista adwaita* (qualified monism), when human beings are regarded as part of God. The third stage is *adwaita* (one with the Supreme), when human beings are regarded as God. This is common to all religions.

Science and Discrimination

Students, you should reflect on the sacredness of humanity. You should always try to use discrimination, not just reasoning. Whatever reasoning you do is useless without discrimination. When science is associated with discrimination, it is useful; otherwise science is dangerous. You should also develop humility along with discrimination. Humility is the very life breath of education. All these can be obtained on the spiritual path.

Time and Its Qualities

Students, first practice concentration. When should you do this? Time also has three *gunas* (qualities): *Satwa* (balanced, equal-minded), *rajas* (overactive, passionate), and *tamas* (dull, inactive). Even in the earth there are *satwic*, *rajasic* and *tamasic* qualities. *Satwa* is represented as air which is volatile and comes out as vapor (bioscience). *Rajas* is represented as liquid causing constant movement and turbulence (chemistry). *Tamas* is represented as solid (physics). Similarly, time is also divided into *satwa*, *rajas*, and *tamas*.

At night from 8:00 P.M. until 4:00 A.M. (8 hours) is considered as *tamasic* time. During this period even animals and birds sleep. This time is also very important for demons (people with evil with

tendencies). From 8:00 A.M. until 4:00 P.M. (8 hours) is considered as *rajasic* time. Everyone is active with ones daily duties during this period. From 4:00 A.M. to 8:00 A.M. (4 hours) and from 4:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. (4 hours) is considered as *sathwic* time. You should be awake by this time in the morning and undertake your *sadhana* (spiritual practice) and start your studies. During the hours 4:00 A.M. to 8:00 A.M. the senses will be quiet. There is no need to take a bath and stimulate the senses. It is easy to concentrate during that peaceful time. You should not hesitate to wake up at 4:00 A.M. I know some students who get up at 8:00 A.M. or 9:00 A.M. You can call them brothers of Kumbhakarna (belonging to the class of demons who are so full of *tamas* that they sleep for six months at a stretch. Kumbhakarna was the brother of Ravana who was the demon king described in the epic, *Ramayana*).

So get up at 4:00 A.M., wash your face to avoid sleepiness, and sit for meditation. If you observe all these disciplines, meditation will become very easy. In the evening, also, after you finish your classes and games at school, around 6:00 P.M., wash your face and sit for meditation at least for five minutes. You need only two minutes and 24 seconds for meditation, not hours.

Conclusion

Students, practice concentration and meditation, and experience the results. Your joy, your purity, and your brightness will be enhanced beyond measure. Now you look sickly because of all sorts of impurities in you. There is no shine on your faces. It is purity that imparts effulgence to the face. When there is purity in you, your face shines brightly. I am now 64 years old [in 1989]. (The clock in the temple chimed the hours and Baba remarked, "It is saying yes, yes, yes.") Look at me and look at yourselves, who are in your teens. You look worn out. You lose your brightness because of impure thoughts. The more you develop your purity, the more youthful you will be. No illness will affect you. This is what you should aim at, and it should be achieved through love. Without love, you cannot achieve anything. It is very important in our Institution (the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning). Along with worldly education, you should also partake of the nectar of spirituality. Develop steadfastness and devotion, and consider these to be a very important subject in your lives.

—Sathya Sai Baba
June 29, 1989

Meditation on the Flame

*Jyothi, jyothi, little flame
Imprinted on my mind
Guide your way down to my heart
And leave the dark behind
Soon the flame that shines without, will shine within
And I am in that light
Then the light of Sai will be in me
I am the light, the light of a thousand suns.*

—Susan Cal ery
Prasanthi Nilam

Teach Children Satisfaction

Young children and adolescents, too, need to understand the true meaning of work. Not necessarily paid work, but work undertaken so time does not hang heavily on them and they become bored. Work is the mission of everyone. Without it, we will get lost in the darkness of ignorance and will be overwhelmed. Ignorance will multiply doubts; wisdom can bring understanding as to how, what and why things occur in our lives. Wisdom comes through the discipline of the mind, such as studying, concentrating and the determination to grow. This is what children must apply to the meaning of work while they are young. As they grow older, with life's experiences, pieces of wisdom will then settle into their minds and hearts.

If we could instill in children that a four letter word, "work," is a good thing, they would easily comply. I see it every time I help second graders to create stories in school. They start out telling me they don't know how to write as they can't think of a thing to say even though their teacher has assigned a theme. "It's hard work, but that's your job," I tell them. "That is your work at school—to think and to listen." We brainstorm together at a table, and they start writing. Most times, they don't want to stop writing once they get going. "I want to write on the back of the page, too," they'll say.

Children who are given the task to read a book or a chapter of a book each night, have more active imaginations, increased vocabulary and feel more competent than children whose minds go unchallenged.

I remember telling my own children when they were in grade school that we all had work to

do, and their main job was school work first and foremost. If they didn't have homework to complete, then a half hour of reading was still required. Nobody but nobody got out of that job unless they were deathly sick. I was so determined that sometimes, it was harder on me than on them. If they argued, I added on five more minutes. I even went so far as to reinforce the importance of their work that I posted signs in each of their bedrooms which read, "No Dummies Allowed in Here."

I wish I could take home some of the slower students I help at school. I'd see to it that they were encouraged to read because they are literally lost if they don't get these basics early.

Some people blame the schools for kids' failing grades and lack of self-discipline. But if parents turn off the TV and provide quiet time, that is a better approach. These slower students are not lacking in intelligence. I find they try hard and cooperate when you *expect* work from them. They need time and direction from parents as if it's the most important thing in their lives, because it is.

That four letter word, "work," will take on the meaning of serving humanity intelligently, whether they're near or far away, whether it's paid work or volunteer work, whether it's cleaning out the garage, fixing a meal or preparing a speech. Later, life will never become dull, boring or a burden for them. They will know the meaning of satisfaction.

—Winnie Bolton
Silverton Appeal Tribune
Mt. Angel News, Oregon

Children's Corner

They're Really Doing Service!



Niharika Likes to Meet People

Once a month, every second Saturday, we go to a service center. There, we prepare breakfast. We put the food on a long table and then serve all the men and women who come to the center. These people are not as fortunate as you and I. Once, I overheard one man talking about his job to a friend. He digs through the dumpster every day and looks for things to sell. And his bed is a sleeping bag.

The people who go to the center are the less fortunate members of the community. Serving them is no burden; it's actually quite fun. But every kind of fun is at least some work. The work is basically waking up and making the food.

When we go there and make these people food, it makes us feel like we are doing something for the community and actually making a difference. We meet new people there. I, for example, met a very kind young lady; I became friends with her and amazingly, my brother became friends with her husband. I got her phone number; she and my cousin soon became very good friends. Going to the service is not just helping them but also helping ourselves.

—**Niharika Hablani**, age 13 at the time of
this writing

Sai Spiritual Education, Group III
Tustin, California



At First, Maggie Wasn't Sure

When I go to the second Saturday breakfast, I feel overjoyed with myself because I'm doing something to make others feel good. At first, I

was not too sure about it because I live far away and would have to get up early. But it all pays off when I see the smiles on the faces of people who are eating a good, healthy breakfast.

—**Maggie**, age 12 at the time of this writing
Sai Spiritual Education, Group III
Tustin, California



Prasanthi Likes to Greet People

When I go to serve breakfast on the second Saturday of every month, I feel pretty good because we do work for ourselves. I feel that when we go there as a group, we are helping each other as well as doing something for someone else. When we make the food, we do it with love and not just because our Sathya Sai Spiritual Education teacher told us to. I believe that if you are going to do something, do it for yourself as well as for others.

When we serve the food, I love to see the faces of the people as they receive the food, and especially when I say, "Good morning, how are you doing? How's your morning been?" It's the same thing as when you talk nicely to someone at school, the mall or even at home. It brightens up their day and makes everyone feel better about themselves. The breakfast is a great way to start the day and to end the week!

—**Prasanthi Patel**, age 13 at the time of
this writing
Sai Spiritual Education, Group III
Tustin, California

Nine-Point Code of Conduct For Pure and Perfect Health

The Nine-Point Code of Conduct is a gift from Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba for all his devotees, and all the spiritual seekers who wish to rise above mediocrity into a fulfilled life—physically, mentally and spiritually—by improving their health at all levels.

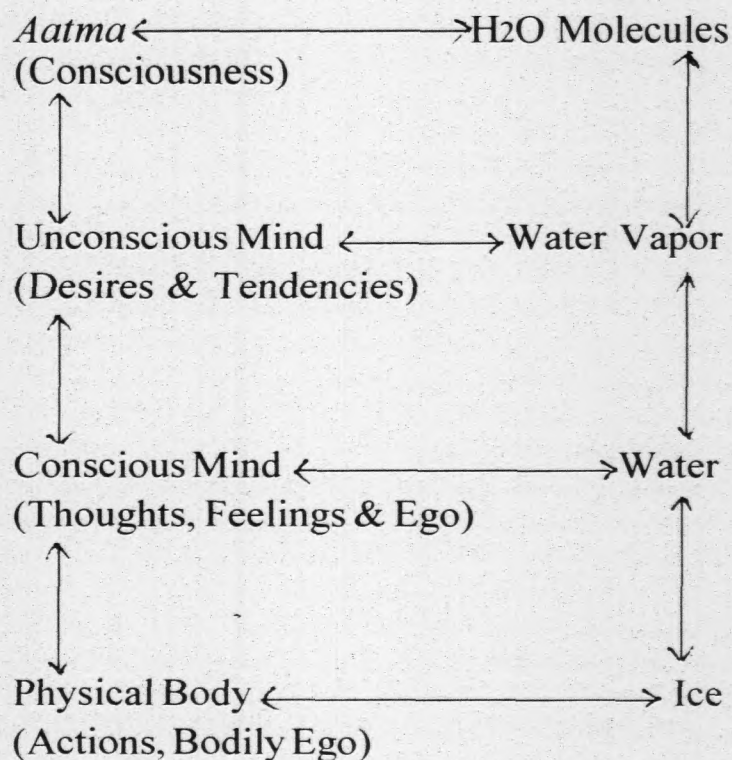
It is important for us to understand that at the level of the Spirit (*Aatma*), we are in “perfect health.” Then, what has happened that we are not anywhere close to that perfect health at the mind or body level? Let us understand how this invisible *Aatma* has unfolded itself into various components of human beings, before we can understand what happened to its pureness.

The *Aatma* or consciousness unfolds itself into the “unconscious mind” which is the seat of desires and all thoughts in seed form. This, in turn, unfolds into the “conscious mind” (emotional and intellectual mind) which is the seat of ego, and where the thoughts gain momentum. This conscious mind unfolds itself into the “physical body” which is the playground of the world (other human beings and the rest of the created universe).

This can be understood with the following analogy.

If the invisible H₂O (hydrogen and oxygen molecules) is comparable to *Aatma*, then water vapor is comparable to the unconscious mind, water is comparable to the conscious mind, and ice is comparable to the physical body. As the water vapor in the atmosphere gets condensed, it can pick up the impurities in the atmosphere, and comes down as rain water that is somewhat con-

taminated. This rainwater again picks up some more impurities from the earth. Finally, when this water becomes ice, it has all the impurities of the atmosphere and the earth. These impurities are comparable to the *vasanas* or residue of accumulated karma from past lives. So when the Soul (individualized Spirit) takes birth, its components are already contaminated with these tendencies or *vasanas*.



After taking the physical form, further contamination can happen due to wrong habits—excessive talking, speaking ill of others, negative emotions, lust, greed, anger, jealousy, attachment, ego and wrong food habits—along with the pollution of air and water. That is why our health

is not perfect. Some of the diseases are manifestations of our past karma, and they are comparable to impurities of water vapor from the atmosphere. Others are due to present pollution of our thoughts, speech and actions along with pollution of food, water and air; they are comparable to the impurities of water from earth.

So the secret of perfect health is in the purification of the unconscious mind (thoughts), conscious mind (speech) and the physical body (actions). The purification of contaminated water is through the process of distillation, whereby all the contaminants acquired from the atmosphere and the earth are removed. So, too, the Nine-Point Code of Conduct, given by Swami, removes all impurities. It brings us back to where the perfect health of *Aatma* or Spirit is experienced at both mind and body levels.

The following Nine-Point Code of Conduct helps us to clean up at different levels:

1. Meditation and prayer
2. Family *bhajans*, devotional songs
3. *Bhajans* at the Sathya Sai Baba Centers

These first three codes help us to purify the unconscious mind and sublimate our thoughts to become noble and divine.

4. Study Circle (study of Sai's teachings)
5. Sathya Sai Spiritual Education (formerly *Bal Vikas*) and Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV)
6. Speaking lovingly and softly
7. Not speaking ill of others

These four codes (4, 5, 6 & 7), along with re-

ducing excessive talk, will help us to purify the conscious mind by bringing greater understanding. Thus, our speech becomes sweet and divine.

8. Selfless service (community and individual)
9. Ceiling on desires (curbing the waste of food, energy, time, money and knowledge)

The last two codes, when diligently practiced, will help purify the body as we begin to pay attention to purity of air, water and food. Selfless service helps to sublimate the concrete ego of the body and to accelerate the purification process.

When the thoughts, speech and actions are purified through the path of psycho-neuro-endocrine-immune pathways (PNEI), wonderful changes happen inside the brain (mind) and all the physiological systems of the body. All the diseases, at that point, begin to be reversed and we will begin to enjoy the benefits of pure and perfect health. All this knowledge is being validated through research in the medical science of mind-body medicine. The grace of Swami will reverse illness due to past karma.

Thus, we can clearly see how urgent and how important it is for us to begin to practice these nine-points. They were given by Sai for our own benefit of enjoying perfect health, enjoying life in a pure way and, at the same time, attaining absolute freedom (liberation) from sorrow, suffering and all limitations. That is the gift of divine love from the Avatar of the *Kali* Age, Sri Sathya Sai Baba. *Om Sai Ram*.

—**Venkat Kanubaddi, M.D., FACA**
Fort Wayne, Indiana

If you want to remain young and healthy always, you should control the senses.

Sathya Sai Baba

Computer Class Service Project

An Opportunity to Serve

It has been surprising to say the least. Very much like each visit to the Divine Presence, there is always something new and rewarding to experience when we find a real need and dedicate all of our efforts to Him. The results are in His hands and they are, in this case, unexpectedly expanding and very good.

It began with the idea of teaching computers to needy, inner city, New York teens. Having used a devotee's office in the financial district, our center members put together a new program, largely with young adults, that combines specific skills with Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV).

Youth today have technical knowledge that elders rarely have. The use of computers is second nature to them. Nevertheless, there are great numbers of high school students, as well as those who have dropped out of school, who have not had that advantage which is increasingly important in getting a job.

There are three levels of classes—Basic Computer/Internet, Microsoft Word, and Microsoft Excel—taught in an unusual way. The teachers have many knowledgeable Sai youth working as TAs (teaching assistants) who serve as coaches, tutors and mentors to the students. Most of the students have come either through an agency that deals with homeless or disadvantaged teens or through high schools that work with problem students. Another population group is new teen immigrants who have now been added. There is an English language problem there that we are working with; we're encour-

aged by the seriousness and enthusiasm of the students who come from so many parts of the world. Both student groups are mixed together. There is, of course, no charge for the classes, and we provide transportation costs. Breakfast is there on arrival, and a home cooked, hot lunch is served. The feeling is very cheerful, happy and

“Most of the students have come either through an agency that deals with homeless or disadvantaged teens, or through high schools that work with problem students.”

aging. The unity and harmony of the Sai devotees sets a wonderful example.

The classes have gradually been developed with Sathya Sai Education in Human Values component as an integral part of the technical teachings. A “Thought for the Week” is used and skillfully woven into the lesson. The number of qualified TAs is growing. Very significant is the fact that new teaching assistants who are not devotees have started to come through schools, jobs or friends of those involved. They are enthusiastic about helping students in need. We frequently have one teaching assistant for each student.

The program started in February 1999, and has now completed more than one full year. The curriculum has been refined, the SSEHV is more skillfully interwoven and, surprisingly, students

who have completed the course have volunteered to act as teaching assistants. They are working out very well, and all of them experience an important increase in self-confidence. Some have joined with other young adults in community service. A few are attending our Sai Center meetings. All of this has developed in a very natural way as a result of their own interest.

At the conclusion of each seven-week course, certificates are awarded and special events planned, such as a dinner, a weekend out of the city, etc. Healthy relationships are growing. One evening a week, special classes are held to give students an opportunity to work on the computers, and receive tutoring in math and English as well as putting together a resumé and filling out college applications. From this, successful mentoring relationships have been formed. The next step is the development of a Global Values Club for those who have completed the courses.

Recently, the principal of one of the high schools paid an unannounced visit. He knew he would be impressed because his students [who are in the program] are so pleased with the results. In fact, friends of those students have

signed up, and are on long waiting lists for future classes. However, the principal was surprised to see some of his students acting as teaching assistants and, most important for him, was the fine feeling that he experienced. "Such good people," he said. The feeling was warm, welcoming and loving.

Very important is the fact that most of our teachers and TAs are Sathya Sai Young Adults themselves. As Swami reminds us, *Youth is best equipped to transform youth.*

Built on the unity and harmony of our Sathya Sai Baba Center members and their friends, this project is fast developing, and new possibilities are beginning to take shape for the future.

We have, "Computer Class Start-up Kits" which provide information should anyone out there wish to start a similar program. These suggestions are based on our experience and may be useful to you. All of us here are most happy to help.

—**Hal Honig**, New York, New York
Coordinator, Computer Class Project
Sathya Sai Baba Center of New York City
E-mail: comclass@maestro.com
Web site: <http://maestro.com/~comclass>

Service in all its forms, all the world over, is primarily spiritual discipline—mental clean-up. Without the inspiration given by that attitude, the urge is bound to ebb and go dry, or it may meander into pride and pomp. Just think for a moment: Are you serving God? Or is God serving you?

When you offer milk to a hungry child, or a blanket to a shivering brother on the pavement, you are but placing a gift of God into the hands of another gift of God. You are reposing the gift of God in a repository of the Divine Principle. God serves; He allows you to claim that you have served. Without His will, no single blade of grass can quiver in the breeze. Fill every moment with gratitude to the Giver and the Recipient of all gifts.

—**Sathya Sai Baba**
My Baba and I by **Dr. John S. Hislop**

Y A Retreat in San Diego

The Sathya Sai Young Adults had a retreat in San Diego, organized by Srinivas and the other YAs of San Diego. Dilanga, Kanuja, Kathy, Avikar, Shikash, Sunesh and Pavan came from Los Angeles. It was great fun and we had a chance to meet a lot of people from different centers. YAs had come all the way from New Jersey, Ohio and Northern California. Also attending were some senior YAs who were instrumental in initiating the group in the USA. They were very happy to see how the young adult program has evolved.

The program was well-organized with *bhajans*, games, skits, experience sharing and a lot of food. The *bhajans* were spaced at regular intervals between other activities. We had the opportunity of having a good time, while thinking of Swami and feeling his presence.

We met new Sai friends, and all of us worked as a team. We discussed several issues on how to improve the Young Adults' branch of the Sai Organization.

Details

The program started off in the morning with devotional songs, followed by Srinivas welcoming everyone. Next, there was an ice-breaking session where each of us had to introduce ourselves with adjectives to go with our names; the first letter of the adjective had to correspond to the first letter of our name. We had interesting adjectives like dangerous Dilanga, keen Kathy, classy Kanuja, amazing Avikar, powerful Pavan which was a nice way of remembering the names of the people.

This was followed by a speech from Srikanth who had been a student at Sathya Sai Baba's

school and had studied there for approximately 14 years. He had a lot of amazing experiences that he shared. We were thrilled by his stories; they made us realize how much Swami loves his students and how he takes care of them.

This was followed by a game organized by the Los Angeles YAs called, "Who Wants To Be Liberated?" (along the lines of "Who Wants To Be a Millionaire?"). The hosts were Dilanga, and Kanuja and Kathy. The whole game was composed of questions from Swami's life and teachings, and was intended to help liberate people from the cycle of birth and death. Guess what! We did manage to liberate one of the YAs in a matter of minutes. Only Swami could liberate someone that fast. It was exciting, thought provoking and great fun.

This was followed by devotional songs and a break. After that, we split into five study circles. Each study circle was given a topic. We were to discuss our topic as if we were speaking to a group of school children and trying to help them understand the effectiveness of the subject. Topics included "Self-confidence," "Chanting of the Name(s) of God," "Songs and Devotion," and "Grace and *Satsang* (keeping good and godly company)." Each group was given half an hour to prepare and discuss how they would deliver their message. A great deal of creativity was used as each group did a skit, sang a *bhajan* or delivered a short talk about the significance of their topic. The audience then asked the presenters questions about their topic. That was a very interesting part of the program; it brought everyone together, and helped us to know each other better. All the topics were based on love,

and how each group conveyed the message was really interesting to watch.

When it was time for dinner, we had good Indian food. After that, we watched a video of Swami's discourse at the 1997 World Youth Conference, which was screened on a projector. Then we sang for about two hours after which we were given Swami's *prasad* (consecrated food) in the form of dessert. Then Srikanth again shared a few of his experiences with Swami, which were really nice to hear. It was like a good bedtime story after which we retired.

On Sunday we had *Suprabhatam* at 6:30 A.M. followed by holy songs and breakfast. Later, all of us went on an exciting hike to nearby Torrey Pines and for a beach cleanup. We had a chance to see San Diego's coastal scenic beauty. The weather was perfect. It was bright and sunny with cool breezes. We did not have much to clean up at the beach. But by the time we left, we had to clean ourselves. The beach was great fun. Most of us got drenched, and some of us had the dubious pleasure of being thrown into the ocean.

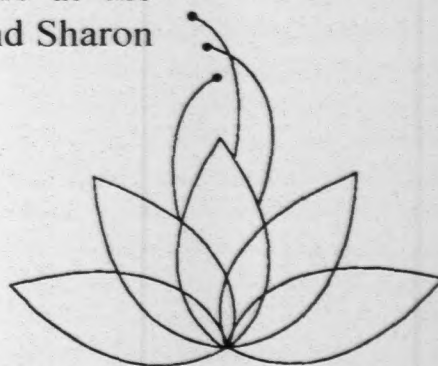
After spending about three hours at the beach, we went to Dr. Sam's [Sam and Sharon

Sandweiss] house for lunch. It is a beautiful house with a really nice backyard and a big *bhajan* room with a view of the ocean. Dr. Sam's wife, Sharon, made an incredible lunch. We ate in the garden while drying off from our morning dip in the ocean.

We concluded the retreat with more devotional singing, and a talk by Dr. Sandweiss and Sharon who started the Sathya Sai Baba Center in their home 28 years ago. They shared their experiences with Swami, and the difficulties they had in starting the center. They gave us good advice on how to balance our lives by doing things at the right pace, not putting too much pressure on ourselves or slacking off. Each one of us shared our views of the Sathya Sai Young Adults Organization. We talked about what motivated us and how we could achieve our goals.

With that, the program ended. We all learned a lot and further strengthened our faith that Swami is always with us at every step we take. We agreed that Swami will unite us in achieving the goals he has set for us.

—**Pavan Kumar**
California, USA



Youth must carefully select proper company if they have a choice. Even if they are forced to work in a group of evil people to earn a living, they can still avoid being affected, just as the tongue is never bitten by the 32 teeth, though the tongue is moving about continuously.

—**Sathya Sai Baba**
Sai Student Bulletin

Announcements

Values Education by and for UNESCO

We are happy to announce that from **September 25-29, 2000** there will be a conference for teachers. The objectives are: Teacher Education for Values; Teacher Education for Peace; Teacher Education for Mutual and International Understanding. The venue is to be Prasanthi Nilayam; the conference is being given by and for members of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). This is the first conference of its kind to be held at the ashram in Prasanthi Nilayam.

Please do not apply unless you are under the auspices of UNESCO.

Our Apologies

In the last issue of the *Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA*, we thought we had given the correct information that the new Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences building in Whitefield, was designed by the same architect, Mr. Keith Critchlow, who designed the first hospital, the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences, Puttaparthi. However, that was incorrect. The second hospital is being designed by a group of Indians who wish to remain anonymous. We apologize to Mr. Critchlow for our misunderstanding.

It is interesting to note that the new hospital, located near Bangalore, will be three times larger than the existing hospital in Puttaparthi.

The Sathya Sai Council Convened

The Sathya Sai Council of USA met the weekend of June 24-25, 2000, in the community of Livermore, not far from the bay area of San Francisco, northern California. Several weeks earlier, Dr. Michael Goldstein had sent a letter, to all 10 regional presidents, outlining items for the agenda to be discussed at the local, regional Sai retreats and conferences. The theme for the conferences was, "Information to Transformation." Dr. Goldstein indicated that the purpose of these meetings was for the 10 regions to present to the Sathya Sai Council, USA their recommendations for possible topics to be discussed at the Sri Sathya Sai World Council meeting in Prasanthi Nilayam in July, 2000. Both Dr. Goldstein and Dr. William Harvey took the local recommendations to the Sathya Sai World Council at Prasanthi Nilayam in July.

In this way, the grass roots members of the Sai Organization were participants in the decision making process. With each step there was unity, Swami advocates, "cooperation not operation."

"Sai World," A Publication for Children

This is a popular quarterly magazine for children and youth. It has games puzzles, stories, drawings based on the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The focus of *Sai World* is for children, but adults also enjoy it. To obtain a subscription for the USA, send \$5.00 check or money order, Canada and Mexico \$8.00, air mail to all other countries \$12.00, all checks in U.S. dollars please. Send to:

Sai World, P.O. Box 7722, San Diego, CA 92167, USA

Do You Receive "Sanathana Sarathi"?

As you may know, *Sanathana Sarathi* is the monthly Sai publication from India. It offers pictures, Bhagavan's discourses, articles and more. It is easily obtained from India:

The air mail cost from the U.S. is Rs 480 or \$11.00 per year.

Subscriptions are accepted for 1, 2 or 3 years only.

Make your personal checks payable to, and send to:

**The Convenor, Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust
Prasanthi Nilayam, Anantapur Dist. (A.P.) 515 134, INDIA**

World Leaders

Are you remembering to pray for good, *dharmic* world leaders? Many months ago, Bhagavan announced that people everywhere should include this request in their prayers. Sri Sathya Sai Baba said that if we do ask the Lord for righteous people to lead, he will send them.

The Key To Patience

"Only patience, tolerance and love can bring success."

—*Sathya Sai Speaks*, Vol. VIII

"Love is patient, love is kind."

—Corinthians 13:4

"Be still before the Lord, and wait patiently for Him."

—Psalm 37:7

"Patience is the only strength man needs."

—Sathya Sai Baba

This and That

Dear Lord,

So far today, I am doing all right. I have not gossiped, lost my temper, been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish or self-indulgent. I have not whined, cursed or eaten chocolates. I have not charged on my credit card. However, I am going to get out of bed in a few minutes, and I will need a lot more help after that. Amen, *Sai Ram*.

—Author Unknown

Accept yourself and everything in your life as an opportunity for growth and learning. Be grateful for the abundance in your life, give thanks for all that you have. When you make a mistake, forgive yourself, learn what you can from the experience and then move on without regrets.

—Author Unknown

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba has told us many times, "Whatever happens, you must say, 'It is good for me; it is good for me.'"

They are related only to the waking state. But *Brahmananda* can be experienced in all the three states—waking, dreaming and deep sleep. It is changeless in all the three periods of time. Human beings aspire to be blissful always, but they are subjected to misery because of narrow feelings and unsacred thoughts. People can experience *Brahmananda*,* only when they give up narrow feelings, become broad-minded and free from prejudice.

Physical Life Is But a Dream

Embodiments of Love! You can experience the eternal bliss only through love. There is no bliss greater than love. Divinity is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient. The *Vedas* declare, “Divinity is truth, wisdom and is eternal.” This infinite wisdom is latent in human beings, but they fail to understand this truth. They have become weak-minded due to defects in their food and habits. They are totally entangled in body attachment. All their thoughts, words and deeds are engulfed in it. They should get rid of this attachment and develop attachment towards the Self to realize their innate divinity. The body is not permanent. It is bound to perish one day or another. None can predict with any degree of certainty when one will leave one’s mortal coil. Physical life is but a dream. So do not develop undue attachment to the body. As long as you are alive, discharge your duties sincerely, suffuse your thoughts, words and deeds with divine feelings. Then you will, verily, become God.

The Tasks Before You

Youth should resolve to eradicate poverty, suffering and injustice in this country. This can

be accomplished only by developing sacred thoughts, adhering to truth, righteousness, justice, and realizing that God is omnipresent.

You are the emancipators of Bharat. Take refuge in divinity, serve the nation and resolve to script a golden chapter in the history of Bharat. That is the essence of true education. Do not take pride in the mere acquisition of book knowledge. Book knowledge only helps in eking out a livelihood. It will not confer total wisdom. Perform your activities with unflinching faith in God. Then, you are bound to be successful. Do not study just for the sake of acquiring degrees.

“In spite of education and intelligence, ignorant people will not know their true Self, and mean-minded persons will not give up their wicked qualities. Modern education leads only to argumentation, not to total wisdom. What is the use of acquiring worldly education if it cannot save you from death? Acquire the knowledge that will make you immortal.”

Telugu poem

True education is knowledge of God. There can be no greater bliss than realizing the truth that God is all-pervasive. No doubt, worldly education is also essential, but it should be under certain limits, otherwise, it will corrupt the mind. When you are thirsty, is it not foolish to desire for the whole Ganges? A glass of water is enough to quench your thirst. Likewise, it is foolish to entertain excessive desires. Virtue cannot be attained without discipline. Everything should be under certain limits. Proper discipline has to be maintained in eating, earning and spending. Only then will your life be blissful.

* There are 7 levels of *ananda* (bliss) beginning at the bodily level as human joy (*maanavananda*), and every successive level is one hundred times greater than human joy. *Brahmananda* is bliss that goes beyond verbal description; all one can say is that it is the Highest Bliss; there is nothing greater to compare with it.

Body Attachment

Sports and games are essential to keep your body and mind in good shape. There is no point in having a healthy body if it is not used in the service to society. Likewise, all your intelligence will be wasted if it is not used to discriminate between good and bad. Before undertaking any activity, inquire whether it is good or bad. Dedicate your physical, mental and spiritual powers to divinity.

God is the giver and also the receiver. God is the one who experiences, and also, the one who is experienced. Understand the truth that everything, be it good or bad, happens according to divine will. Do not develop a craze for acquiring degrees, going abroad and amassing wealth. True wealth is within you. Never forsake your motherland. For the simple reason that your mother is not beautiful, can you forsake her and consider another lady who is beautiful to be your mother? Preferring a foreign land to one's own motherland amounts to doing the same. The mother and the motherland are superior even to heaven. So, one should have love for one's motherland. Develop love for the motherland, not attachment to the body.

"The physical body, made of five elements, is weak and no one knows when it will perish. Though a one-hundred-year life span is prescribed, you cannot take it for granted. You may have to leave your body at any point in time—either in childhood, or in youth, or in old age, either in town, in the forest or in the deep sea. Understand, death is certain; use your intellect to know your true nature while you are alive."

Telugu poem

Don't Imitate

If you do not know the purpose of your birth, you will become a burden to Mother Earth. The

purpose of human birth is to know divinity. Try to understand your true nature. Do not compare yourself with others. Do not imitate others. Imitation is the quality of the weak-minded. For instance, you have come to know that someone found a wallet on the road while passing through a particular locality. If you go to the same locality expecting to find another wallet on the road, your own wallet may be lost. In order to progress in the field of education, imitation is desirable to a certain extent, but in all other fields imitation is deplorable. Imitation is human; creation is divine. Let your thoughts be sacred and the result will also be sacred.

Life Is a Game

This "Sports and Cultural Meet" has given immense joy to one and all. Do not consider sports and games as merely an annual affair. Your life itself is a game. Each moment that you spend is a part of this game of life. Play this game in the true spirit and emerge victorious. Human life is highly valuable and noble. Do not squander it in mundane activities. Don't waste time. Time wasted is life wasted. Undertake righteous actions. Render service to society. Strive for the welfare of your fellow humans. The *Puranas* affirm that helping others is meritorious, and hurting others is a sin. So, "Help ever, hurt never." This is the essence of the 18 *Puranas*.

The Kauravas and Pandavas

The Kauravas always indulged in hurting the Pandavas. Consequently, not even one out of the 100 Kaurava brothers survived the Kurukshetra War. Lord Krishna foretold this before the commencement of the war. He told Dharmaraja, "Do not give scope to worry. Follow right conduct and do your duty sincerely. You will certainly emerge victorious." He infused cour-

age and confidence in Arjuna, saying, “Arise Dhananjaya. None can escape destiny. Justice will prevail and selfishness will perish. This has been the case in every *yuga* (era). You will see for yourself, King Dhritarashtra, father of 100 sons, will not be left with even one son to perform his last rites.”

Telugu poem

The Kauravas ruined themselves because they neglected God and reposed their faith in the world. I do not advise you to forsake the world, but do not get yourself totally immersed in worldly life. Have faith in God. Respect your parents and make them happy. The *Vedas* say, “Revere the father and mother as God. Do not hurt their feelings. Perform all your activities as offerings to God. Then you will certainly emerge victorious in all your endeavors.”

Please God, Not the World

Students! You gave immense joy to thousands of people with your performances. However, pleasing the entire world without pleasing God is of no use. Even if the whole world is opposed to you, so long as God is with you, you need not fear. With God in your dominion the entire universe becomes yours. When God is pleased, the whole world is happy. Therefore, let all your efforts be towards pleasing God.

A True Devotee

Duupaati Tirumalacharya, the author of Sri Sathya Sai *Suprabhatam** used to live here [Prasanthi Nilayam]. He had served in the royal court of Venkatagiri. He was a great scholar in Sanskrit and *Sastras* (scripture). He accompa-

nied Bhagavan to Badri at the advanced age of 90. Bhagavan asked him whether he was fit enough to undertake such an arduous journey. He affirmed that with Swami by his side, he would travel any distance without discomfort. He said, “Sai Matha (Sai Mother), if you forsake me, my entire existence is a waste. If you accept me as yours, it is as if I have everything at my command.” This was the state of devotion (*bhakti*) and surrender in which Tirumalacharya spent his life. He was constantly meditating on Sai Matha. He spent all his time in Swami’s proximity, whether it was here or in Brindavan. His devotion was beyond measure. Consequently, his end was peaceful. He knew very well that his end was approaching, and one day he expressed his feeling. On being questioned as to how he knew about it, he replied, “Swami is telling me from within.”

So saying, he went and had his bath, brought some water, washed Swami’s feet and sipped a few drops of the sanctified water and said, “Swami, my life has found fulfillment. Now the time has come for me to merge in you.” Thereafter, he cast off his mortal coil and merged in Swami. There is no shortage of people filled with devotion of this kind in the world. It is only because of the presence of such persons that the world is able to sustain itself.

Never Forget

Students, wherever you may go, never forget truth. The only form of gratitude that you can express towards this University is adherence to truth. Earn a good name for the Institute through your good conduct. That is all I expect from you.

**Suprabhatam* is the beautiful musical rendering done in the early morning with the idea of awakening God, and awakening the divinity within each of us. The song is symbolic; for Swami says, *If God were to sleep, the whole world would collapse.*

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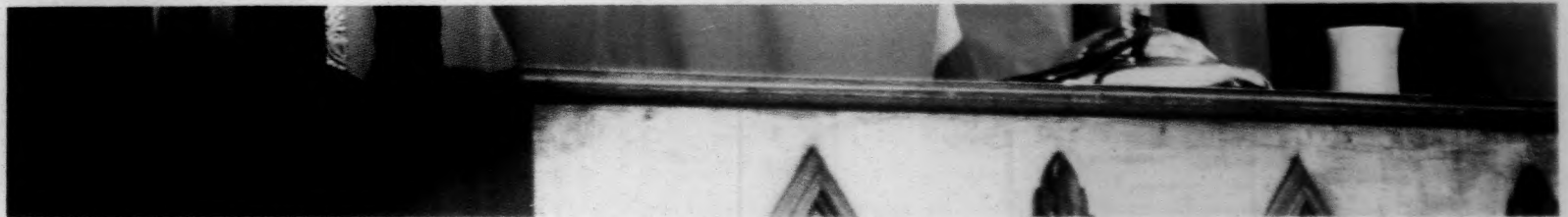
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Recently, Swami sent a few students to Bangalore for training in horseback riding and driving of go carts. Lt. Gen. Mehta gave them all help and facilities. He brought horses and arranged for trainers. The trainers were very happy with the performance of our boys. They were astonished at the skill and dexterity displayed by those who learned the art of horseback riding within a short time. They extolled the character of the students of the Institute, saying they are knowledgeable, smart and intelligent. Such a good name is what Swami expects you to earn for yourself and the Institute.

There are a lot of people in the outside world who wear white clothing, but their minds are

polluted. Students of our Institute are “white” [pure], both internally and externally. They not only wear white clothing, but are pure in their minds and hearts.

Swami is always near you, with you, in you and around you. You should become people of character and propagate spiritual values. You know the state of the country; there is strife, misery and pain everywhere. Strive to alleviate this misery. This is what Swami expects from you. Perform your daily activities with diligence and constantly contemplate on God. Sanctify your life with divine love.

—Sathya Sai Baba

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