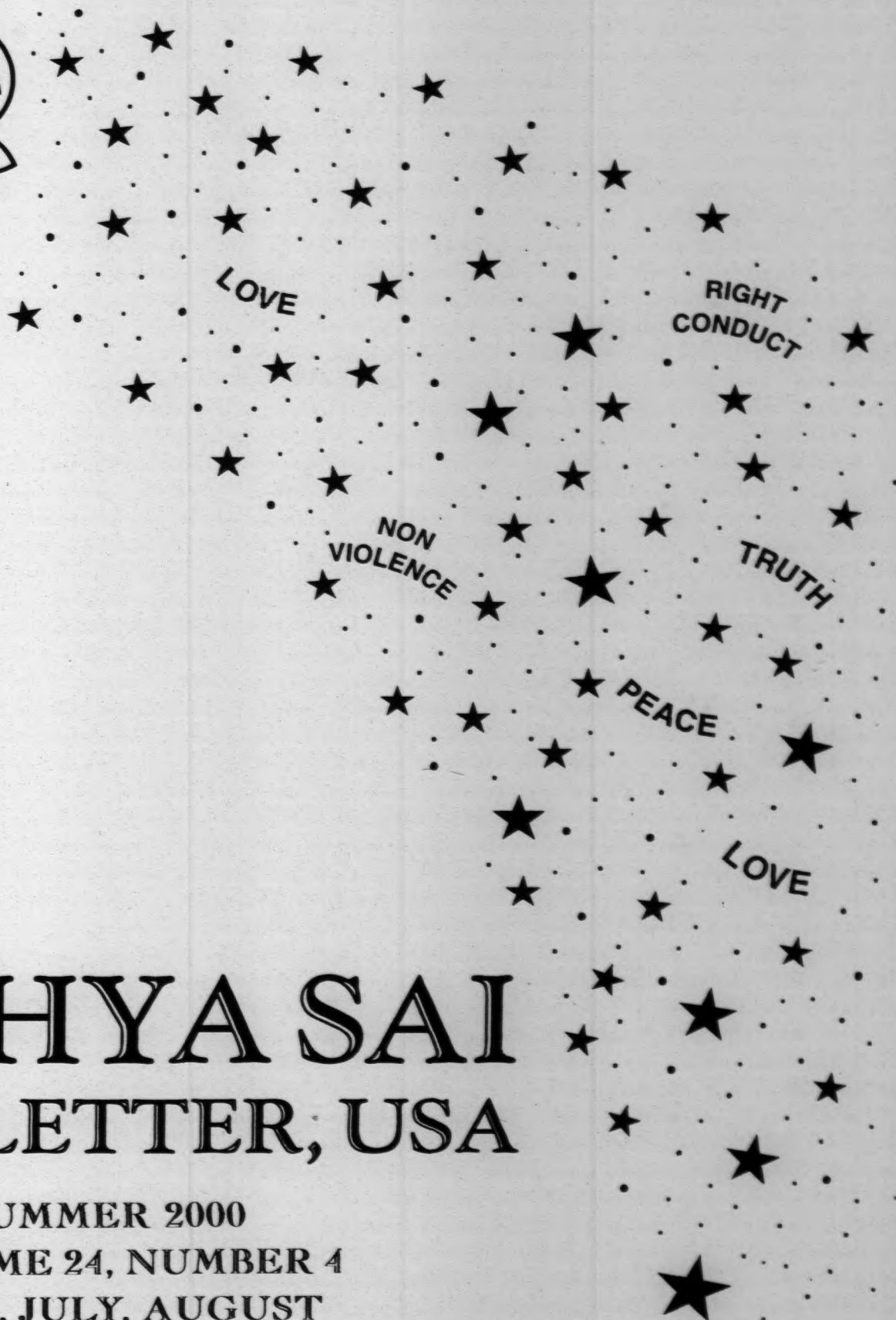
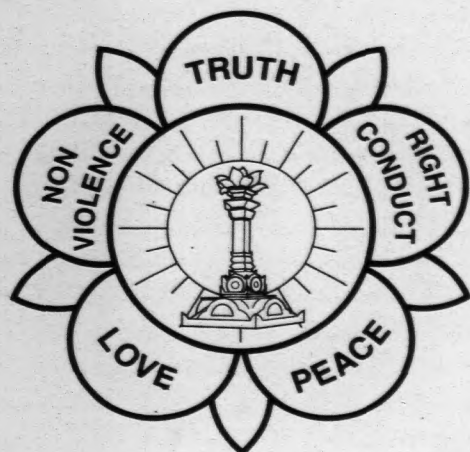




# SATHYA SAI

## NEWSLETTER, USA

SUMMER 2000  
VOLUME 24, NUMBER 4  
JUNE, JULY, AUGUST

June, July, August

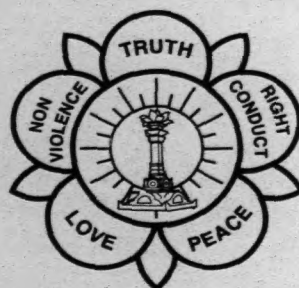
## ***Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA***

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

|                                         |                                 |    |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----|
| Sai's Message .....                     | Sathya Sai Baba                 | 1  |
| Love Is Our Life Force .....            | Bea Flaig                       | 2  |
| Sai Baba Speaks about Women .....       | Sathya Sai Baba                 | 4  |
| Seva—Highway to Bliss .....             | C. Rommel, IFS                  | 10 |
| Our Group Visit to Puttaparthi .....    | S. Subbarao                     | 12 |
| What about Surrender? .....             | Lucas Ralli                     | 17 |
| Interview with Sai on Health .....      | Venkat Kanubaddi, M.D., FACA    | 18 |
| Second World Youth Conference .....     | Sathya Sai Baba                 | 20 |
| Just Be .....                           | Judy Warner Scher               | 24 |
| Hearing the Inner Voice .....           | Edith M. Gregory                | 26 |
| Announcements .....                     | Sathya Sai Newsletter Staff     | 29 |
| Bits of This and That .....             | Dobby Sommer and L. Marsh       | 31 |
| Children's Corner .....                 | Smt. S. Subbulakshmi            | 32 |
| What Are the Children Doing? .....      | Vidya Murthy and Amrita Khoshoo | 33 |
| Recycled .....                          | F. Irani                        | 39 |
| Sathya Sai Book Center of America ..... | Book Center Volunteers          | 40 |

*Sathya Sai Service Opportunities Newsletter* ..... Edited by Judith Wechsler

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



The *Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA* welcomes photographs, drawings and literary contributions. Sorry, but we are unable to return any items which are sent to us, so please keep a copy for your files. We reserve the right of discrimination in selecting and editing for publication. Kindly send any material to: **Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA, c/o Sathya Sai Book Center of America, 305 West First Street, Tustin, California 92780-3108, or Fax to: (909) 337-5270.**

—Barbara Bozzani, Editor



## Sai's Message



**Swami holding the lingam he manifested on Mahashivarathri, 2000.**

The nights you experience at other times are ordinary nights. They are nights of darkness. But Mahashivarathri is an auspicious night. How is it auspicious? There are 16 aspects of the mind. The moon is the presiding deity of the mind. Of the 16 aspects [of the mind], today [on Mahashivarathri], 15 are absent. The remaining one can be merged in the divine by diverting the mind towards God. If you sing his glory throughout the night, wholeheartedly, the one remaining aspect can also merge with the divine. On this day, it is possible to get full control over the mind by contemplating on God, so it is considered auspicious. Unfortunately, in this Kali Age, people observe Mahashivarathri by seeing movies all through the night or by playing cards. That cannot be called Mahashivarathri. Every moment of the night should be devoted to thoughts of God and chanting his name. . . .

[Life] is very sacred, do not misuse it by indulging in limitless desires . . . Keep God uppermost in your mind. Do not get entangled in unnecessary activities and bondages which will cause restlessness. . . .

If you always want to remain young, you should have control over your senses. Swami is direct proof of this. I have all powers in me; there is absolutely no weakness whatsoever. Even now I can run fast. Can anyone imagine that Swami is [nearly] 75 years old? What is the secret behind Bhagavan's youthful look? Purity, patience and perseverance are mainly responsible for this. Swami's feelings are always calm and steady. Try to emulate Swami in this regard. You claim yourselves to be Bhagavan's devotees. Then is it not your duty to cultivate at least a fraction of Swami's purity? . . . When you are faced with difficulties do not become disheartened. Consider that they are for your own good.

**—Sathya Sai Baba**  
From Mahashivarathri Discourse  
March 4, 2000

# Love Is Our Life Force

---

*Love as thought is truth*

*Love as right action is right conduct*

*Love as feeling is peace*

*Love as understanding is nonviolence*

—Sathya Sai Baba

In many discourses, Swami says that love is the thread that runs through all human values. He goes on to say that the five major human values in the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV) program cannot be separated from one another. They are interdependent.

So let us remember to think of truth, right action, peace, love, and nonviolence as our five fingers, each having a role to play and each being a part of the whole, the hand or the SSEHV program. These attributes are contributing to the awakening of our character. We must go even farther. We must stir that love with which we were born. We must put into practice the harmony of head, heart and hand.

Perhaps then we would be able to be one with Swami's words: *Truth (sathya) is what I teach, righteousness (dharma) is the way I live, peace (shanti) is the mark of my personality, and love (prema) is my very nature.*

There is no religion which does not espouse love as the prime force of human life. You may wonder, and rightly so, that in spite of all the sermons why is the world so chaotic? Why are there so many wars and so many shootings? I cannot give you an answer, but I have learned that we can't spend our valuable time wondering about this mystery. Instead, let us spend our time reflecting on Baba's teachings and on some quotations from various sources that really offer similar wisdom.

The philosopher, Teilhard de Chardin writes: "Someday, after we have mastered the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity, we shall harness for God the energies of love. Then for the second time in the history of the world, humanity will have discovered fire."

Patty Harjo in *Who Am I* writes: "I am all the forces and objects with which I come in contact. I am the wind, the trees, and the birds and the darkness."

Yes, love as thought is truth.

Martin Luther King writes: "Everybody can be great, because anybody can serve. You don't have to have your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace, a soul generated by love."

Winston Churchill writes: "We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give."

Yes, love as right action is right conduct.

Charles Dickens writes: "Reflect upon your present blessings of which every man has many, not on your past misfortune, of which every person has some."

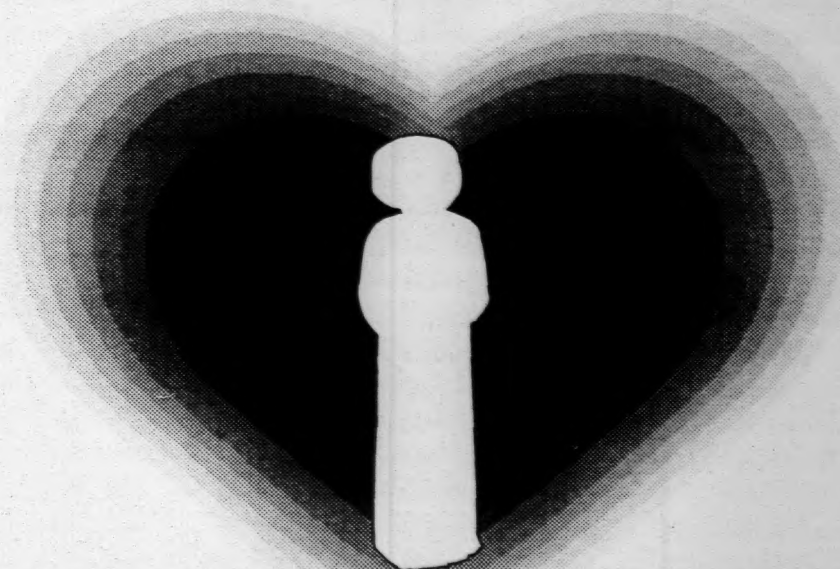
Sathya Sai Baba writes: *See with the eyes of love. Hear with the ears of love. Work with the hands of love. Think of love. Feel love in every nerve.*

Yes, love as feeling is peace.

Mother Theresa writes: "Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless."

Ignatius Loyola writes: "Love consists in sharing what one has and what one is, with those one loves. Love ought to show itself in deed more than in words."





**Audio Cassette Tapes  
of the Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA**

*suffers pollution. Those who deny religion can be noted as having distorted or polluted minds. Of course, religion should not be related to practices and prohibitions like, "Don't touch me! Don't touch this or that!" Every religion teaches only good principles and disciplines. When the mind of man is steadfast in the good, how can religion be bad?*

*Therefore, acquire the love that draws all into the one. By this means you can put down the fears and anxieties, the greed and envy, the hatred and haughtiness that are today infecting the people of the world and establish peace and joy. Let all the worlds be happy—this is the prayer that comes naturally from every human heart. This is the goal to which the eternal path (sanathana dharma) leads. Everyone must sing of this goal, live in the melody of that song, and merge through that melody into the highest bliss (Paramaatma).*

*Embodiments of Love! Do not seek to find differences between one person and another. Seek rather the ways and means to strengthen the bonds of kinship through love. Factions and fighting emerge among the members of the same family because they have not learned to love. From the self-same mind, many conflicting feelings emerge because love has not been nursed and grown therein.*

*You have to sow love and grow love, and destroy the weeds of fear and hatred that have spread over the world. Make the world the happy home of love.*

**—Sathya Sai Baba**  
*Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XI, Chapter 8*

## ***Cassette Tapes of the Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA***

Please check one

☐ New

☐ Renewal

☐ Address Change

I wish to receive the ***Cassette Tapes of the Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA***, at a cost of \$12.00 per year (postage included). Please find inclosed \$\_\_\_\_\_ for my subscription which will include four (4) **Audio Cassette Tapes** annually.

Send check or money order to: ***Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA, Cassette Tapes***

% Sathya Sai Book Cntr. of America, 305 West First St., Tustin, CA 92780-3108

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Sorry, offer good only in the USA. These cassette tapes are offered **free** to the blind.

a part of the whole, the hand or the SSEHV program. These attributes are contributing to the awakening of our character. We must go even farther. We must stir that love with which we were born. We must put into practice the harmony of head, heart and hand.

Perhaps then we would be able to be one with Swami's words: *Truth (sathya) is what I teach, righteousness (dharma) is the way I live, peace (shanti) is the mark of my personality, and love (prema) is my very nature.*

There is no religion which does not espouse love as the prime force of human life. You may wonder, and rightly so, that in spite of all the sermons why is the world so chaotic? Why are there so many wars and so many shootings? I cannot give you an answer, but I have learned that we can't spend our valuable time wondering about this mystery. Instead, let us spend our time reflecting on Baba's teachings and on some quotations from various sources that really offer similar wisdom.

love."

Winston Churchill writes: "We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give."

Yes, love as right action is right conduct.

Charles Dickens writes: "Reflect upon your present blessings of which every man has many, not on your past misfortune, of which every person has some."

Sathya Sai Baba writes: *See with the eyes of love. Hear with the ears of love. Work with the hands of love. Think of love. Feel love in every nerve.*

Yes, love as feeling is peace.

Mother Theresa writes: "Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless."

Ignatius Loyola writes: "Love consists in sharing what one has and what one is, with those one loves. Love ought to show itself in deed more than in words."



Yes, love is our nature, and it runs throughout our life.

Gandhi writes: "For a nonviolent person, the whole world is one family. He will thus fear none, nor will others fear him."

Rupert Stephens, an organic farmer, writes: "Leave the soil better than when you found it."

Yes, love as understanding is nonviolence.

Let us open the hearts of all those we meet. Let our own hearts be open. In this way, we can understand the life force of love and how all the values are interdependent; they work together to bring light to the world.

Ultimately, as Swami has told us, *Do everything with love.*

—Bea Flaig  
Tucson, Arizona



*Develop oneness and unity of love; hold it ever before you as the ideal. Religions arise from the minds of men; they are not external to him. When minds are polluted, religion, too, suffers pollution. Those who deny religion can be noted as having distorted or polluted minds. Of course, religion should not be related to practices and prohibitions like, "Don't touch me! Don't touch this or that!" Every religion teaches only good principles and disciplines. When the mind of man is steadfast in the good, how can religion be bad?*

*Therefore, acquire the love that draws all into the one. By this means you can put down the fears and anxieties, the greed and envy, the hatred and haughtiness that are today infecting the people of the world and establish peace and joy. Let all the worlds be happy—this is the prayer that comes naturally from every human heart. This is the goal to which the eternal path (sanathana dharma) leads. Everyone must sing of this goal, live in the melody of that song, and merge through that melody into the highest bliss (Paramaatma).*

*Embodiments of Love! Do not seek to find differences between one person and another. Seek rather the ways and means to strengthen the bonds of kinship through love. Factions and fighting emerge among the members of the same family because they have not learned to love. From the self-same mind, many conflicting feelings emerge because love has not been nursed and grown therein.*

*You have to sow love and grow love, and destroy the weeds of fear and hatred that have spread over the world. Make the world the happy home of love.*

—Sathya Sai Baba  
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XI, Chapter 8

# *Sai Baba Speaks about Women*

---

## *The Company You Keep*

At the time of birth, the human heart is pure, selfless, steady. But with the passage of time, humans lose their purity because of their association with various individuals. The environment and company are mainly responsible for the good or bad in human beings. A piece of paper does not have any smell of its own. But if the same paper is used to pack dry fish or jasmine flowers, it reproduces the smell associated with them. That is why I say, "Tell me the company you keep, I shall tell you what you are." As is your company, so you become. So people should always join good company. People are good at birth, but ruin themselves because of bad company. Today, people are not making any inquiry as to what is good and what is bad. Such an inquiry is essential before making friendship with others.

Vedanta declares: "By good company attain detachment [from material desire]. By detachment attain freedom [from delusion]. By freedom from delusion, attain a steadfast mind. By a steadfast mind attain freedom from bondage."

You can have sense control only when you join good company (*sathsang*). *Sath* is that which is permanent. In this world, everything is transitory. Only divinity is permanent. Your feelings will become noble and immortal only when you associate yourself with God. First and foremost, recognize the fact that bad company is the root cause of humanity's downfall. People want to accomplish various tasks, but are inhibited by the sense of fear lurking in their minds. It is only the association with God that will make people fearless. Every flower that blossoms will not grow into fruit. Every fruit will not become ripe. But

every ripened fruit is bound to fall from the tree.

The same thing can be said of life. Human beings develop desires and indulge in bad practices which will ultimately lead to their downfall.

## *The Body*

People have invented various wonderful gadgets, which can even take them to the moon. But the most wonderful and mysterious of all machines is the human body which is God's creation. God has created this machine not merely for eating, drinking and making merry. All these are also common for animals. This being the case, what is so unique about human birth? The body is the temple, and the indweller is God. You may own a car, but it will be of use to you only if you know how to drive. Otherwise, it may prove harmful. Likewise, you should know how to make proper use of your body which can be compared to a car. Such a body should not be misused. Today, people are deceived by attachment. They are unable to realize the sacredness of the human body. They are indulging in worldly pleasures just as birds and beasts do. The human body is gifted to experience divine love, not to indulge in mean acts. Truth, righteousness, peace and love are the form of God. Birds and beasts have only love, but not the remaining three. One having all these four qualities is a true human being. Humans should make proper use of the body; only then will their lives find fulfillment.

Embodiments of Love! Of all the gifts of God, time and love are the most precious. People have to make proper use of time in order to experience divine love. But today, everyone—student, householder or ascetic—is wasting three-



fourths of their time in worldly pursuits. Then how can they expect to have noble thoughts? They are unable to undertake any sacred activity as their minds are clouded with ego. The *Bhagavad Gita* declares: "Man has the right of action, but not the [right] to the results [of that action]." So perform all activities without expecting any reward. Duty is God. Divinity will manifest once you perform your duty with sincerity.

### *How to Serve*

It is a mistake to consider yourself a devotee if you undertake service activities expecting something in return. You have to render service with the feeling that God pervades the universe. You may have done rural service or served flood victims, but those cannot be termed as service in its true sense, if you have the feeling that you have served others. Serve with the feeling that you are serving God, for God is omnipresent.

Consider for example the sacred epic, *Bhagavatam*, which speaks of intense love and devotion that the *gopikas* (milkmaids) had for Lord Krishna. *Bhagavatam chadivithe*, *Bhagavatam* in Telegu means, "If we study the *Bhagavatam*, we shall be good." That is to say, *Bhagavatam* confers goodness on all. It contains the essence of the *Vedas*. The five syllables *bha*, *ga*, *va*, *ta*, *mu*, stand for devotion (*bhakti*), wisdom (*jnaana*), renunciation (*vair-aagya*), penance (*thapas*) and liberation (*muk-ti*), respectively. This sacred epic describes at length the *gopikas* yearning for Krishna when he left Gokulam [the name of the place where the cows were kept] for Mathura where he was actively involved in running the kingdom.

The *gopikas* were unable to bear the pangs of separation from their dear Lord, and they were anxiously awaiting his return. The entire Goku-

lam bore the look of a barren land. There was no dirth of food and comforts in Gokulam, yet the *gopikas* did not enjoy any of them, as they thought that life was not worth living without Krishna, whom they considered as their very life breath. They became weak both physically and mentally as they were unable to bear the pangs of separation. Krishna, being aware of the *gopikas* ' plight, summoned his friend, Uddhava, and asked him to proceed to Gokulam to console the *gopikas* and pass on his message to them. Uddhava was one of wisdom. He knew that Krishna was all-pervasive. As per the command of Krishna, he went to Gokulam and convened a meeting of the milkmaids and milkmen (*gopalas*) to convey Krishna's message. He told them that they should not limit Krishna to a small physical form thinking that he was present only in Mathura. He tried to explain to them that Krishna is God, and that he is omnipresent. He advised them that since Krishna was omnipresent, there was no need for them to feel sorry that he was away.

Since the *gopikas* had totally surrendered themselves to Krishna, they were not in the habit of looking at or talking to strangers. Their minds did not agree to the direct conversation with Uddhava. So they took a bee as an intermediary, and they talked to Uddhava through the bee. Having been in the habit of worshipping Krishna's beautiful form, they could not readily think of Krishna as a formless entity. Hearing Uddhava's preaching, they laughed mockingly and said, "Do you practice what you preach? You are enjoying the proximity of our Lord Krishna, but you are telling us to experience his attributeless and formless aspect. We don't want your preaching or philosophy. Bring Krishna and show him to us." They would not talk directly to Uddhava,

they were only addressing the bee. They said, "Krishna has stolen our hearts. We have only one mind and that has gone with him to Mathura. We do not have another mind to listen to what you are preaching."

The declaration of the *gopikas* that they had only one mind made Uddhava recognize their one-pointed devotion. He realized that the pure, unsullied and eternal divine principle can be attained only through fixing the mind on God. The milkmaids continued the conversation saying, "We want to see nothing but Krishna's beautiful form, hear nothing but his melodious songs on the flute and experience nothing but his divine love. We have cried for Krishna so much that our eyes are swollen and there is not a drop of tears left in them. How can the ship of your message sail in the barren sea of our hearts? So take your ship and go back to the place you have come from. We are not interested in the formless aspect of divinity. We want to see the enchanting form of our Lord."

Hearing those words, Uddhava realized he was not one of wisdom, as he had considered himself to be, but one of ignorance as he had underestimated the love and devotion of the *gopikas* for Krishna. He stopped preaching and tried to hand over a piece of paper to them saying that it contained Krishna's message to them. He wanted them to read it. The *gopikas* refused to accept the letter saying that they could not read it as they had no knowledge of the alphabet. Their minds were merged in the immortal form of Lord Krishna. Uddhava was a bit angry with them, thinking that they had no respect even for Krishna's message. Then one of the *gopikas* started explaining, "There is no point in accepting Krishna's letter as we being illiterate cannot read it. There may be one or two amongst

us who can read. But we are afraid that our tears may drop on the letter and make it unreadable. There is another reason too. Our bodies are heated-up on account of the separation from Krishna. So it is possible that the letter may be burned to ashes if our hands were to touch it. You are unable to understand our plight."

They sent a message to Krishna addressing the bee, "Oh bee why don't you go back and tell Krishna that he should look at us ... at least once? Can you tell Krishna to illumine our dark hearts with his resplendent form? Our life has become like a dried tree. Please tell Krishna to put some life in it." Radhika prayed, "Oh Krishna, we are going to die anyway because of the separation from you. Please allow us to be with you at least in your next incarnation. If you take the form of a tree, allow us to be creepers that will twine around you. If you assume the form of a flower, let us be the honeybees hovering over you. If you stand like Meru Mountain, let us be like a stream flowing across you. If you are the mighty ocean, let us be the rivers that merge in you."

Thus, the *gopikas* always craved for the divine proximity. That is the sign of true devotion. True philosophy is comprised of establishing a relationship between the individual and God.

### *Love and Serve*

The best way to love God is to love all and serve all. Have the firm conviction that God is present in everybody. There is no place that God does not exist. But you cannot see God, as long as there is the sense of "I" (ego) in you. The *gopikas* had absolutely no sense of ego. Their "I" had merged with Krishna. So long as there is ego in you, you will find only multiplicity. Once you realize that I and you are one, you will find unity everywhere which is true and eternal.



## *Alumni Women*

The old students' association of the Anantapur campus [known as] "Messengers of Sathya Sai," is celebrating its anniversary today. They are serving society and spreading Swami's message in accordance with the sacred name of their association. You have listened to the report of their activities. Truly speaking, they have done much more than what was mentioned in the report. In fact, I instructed them to make the report as brief as possible, lest it be misunderstood as an advertisement of their service activities. They are doing yeoman service to society. Not only here, but also in various other countries like Japan, Canada, America, Germany, etc. They are undertaking service activities, upholding the ideals of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. They are spending their earnings on service activities. When questioned by their parents, they reply, "Swami has given us free education and free medical care. We owe our wealth and health to Swami. So all our earnings should be directed to the service of society. We are not misusing even a penny." Thus they are bringing about transformation even in their parents.

You all know that there is a lady doctor, an eye specialist, by name of Vansa in our general hospital. She is a widow. Her daughter studied in our college, and she is now in Australia with her husband, who is also involved in various service activities. Both husband and wife spend their earnings in service to society. They do not have children. Dr. Vansa prayed to me that her daughter be blessed with a child. Her daughter said that Swami is everything for her, and she does not want to get entangled in bondage by having children. She considers all children as her own. She prayed that she should have the freedom to render service to her satisfaction.

## *Never Look Down on Women*

There are many women who have such noble desires, but among men, we hardly find anybody having such broad feelings. Since ancient times Bharat (India) has given birth to many noble women who set an ideal to the world with their exemplary character and devotion. You might have heard of Saavitri, who brought her dead husband back to life; Chandramati, who extinguished the wild fire in a trice demonstrating the power of truth; Sita, who came out of a blazing fire unscathed and Damayanti, who burned a wicked hunter to ashes with the power of her chastity. All these noble women have brought name and fame to this sacred land of Bharat. Not only Bharat, but the whole world will progress because of women of character and nobility. So never look down upon women.

## *By the Efforts of Women*

The 75th birthday of this body is approaching. The Messengers of Sathya Sai, have chalked out elaborate plans for the 75th birthday and have already started implementing them. They have purchased 1,000 bags of rice for the free distribution of food for 10 days to the devotees during the birthday celebrations. There are 3,000 members in their organization. Their faith is unwavering, and their devotion for Swami is becoming stronger day by day. They are preparing to distribute 75,000 saris. As they want all the saris to be of the same design, they have already placed an order. Such devotion and sincerity are present more among women than men. In fact, women symbolize devotion, and men stand for wisdom. The one with devotion has the right to enter even the inner chambers of the divine palace; whereas the one with wisdom has access only to the audience hall of God. You may be

aware that kings of yore would convene meetings in their royal audience hall where only men would assemble. Men had no entry into the inner chambers of the palace (*anthahpura*). Only the women who symbolized devotion have access to the *anthahpura* of God. What is *anthahpura*? *Antaraatma* (conscience) is the *anthahpura*. It is only devotion, not wisdom, that has entry into the inner chambers.

Most of the men who have assembled here today are here only because of the inspiration of their of their women. Women are responsible for men to tread along the path of devotion. In my opinion, the Messengers of Sathya Sai should take the lead in spreading the divine message throughout the country. Mainly by the efforts of women will the country progress. The ancient culture of our country should be revived.

The heart of Uddhava, who was considered one of wisdom, was transformed by seeing the love and devotion of the *gopikas* for Krishna. He approached Krishna with a prayer that he may be blessed with at least a fraction of their devotion. The milkmaids said that they had only one mind, and that was centered on Krishna. But men have many minds. The statement of the *gopikas* is in itself the highest philosophy.

Swami has already narrated to you the story of Janaka and Gaargi. In the court of Janaka there were very great scholars like Yaajnavalkya and others. There was also a lady called Gaargi. Gaargi put several questions to Yaajnavalkya for which he was unable to find adequate answers. For instance, she asked him, "What is it that is between the earth and the sky?" Yaajnavalkya could not answer. Then she asked him, "Can you name all the substances that are here on earth?" And again he had no answer. Then she explained, "All there is, in fact, is space *akaasha*. All that

is on earth, in between and above earth, is all *akaasha* only." There is only one truth, but the scholars call it by many names. We see diverse forms like mountains, lakes, trees, animals and human beings, but all these differences are only apparent, and they are in fact forms of divinity. If you look at the world with a material view, you see variety. If you look at the world with an understanding of divinity, all of it will appear to be the form of God. As is the mind, so you become. Allah, Jesus, Zoroaster—all these are names for the same divinity.

### *Christmas Is not just for Christians*

Today, Christmas is mainly celebrated by Christians, but do not make the mistake that it is only for Christians. It is a holy and happy occasion to be celebrated by all humankind. Get rid of religious and philosophical differences and enlarge your mind. When you house divinity in your heart, then all of humanity becomes a single race. There is only one religion in the universe and that is divine love (*prema*). Those without this principle of love in their hearts are not Christians, Muslims nor Sikhs. They are no better than demons.

This principle of complete unity of all religions is now manifested only in Prasanthi Nilayam. Imagine what a phenomenon it is that Christians from so many countries in the world have joined together here to celebrate Christmas. There are people from 64 countries assembled here. They are all of one heart. This is true devotion. Swami reiterates that it is not a celebration for Christians only, but it is a holy occasion for all of humanity. It is the desire of Swami that such differences be completely eradicated.

There are several tasks in front of the Messengers of Sathya Sai. Mere distribution of food,



medicines and conducting Sathya Sai Spiritual Education (formerly *Bala Vikas*) programs is not enough. Of course all these are necessary, but along with all these activities, infusing spiritual teachings is essential. If the spiritual element of life is lost, life is a waste. Therefore, all of you be sure that your spiritual life is in the forefront of all your activities. These words are addressed not only to the ladies of the Messengers of Sathya Sai but, equally, boys and young men should take up similar activities.

Girls generally have less freedom than boys. If only women had been given the level of freedom that is allowed men, the shape of society on the face of the earth would have been changed. They are constrained on all sides by husbands, fathers and children. In spite of severe pressures from all sides, they are advancing. On the other hand, men have hardly any such constraints. Such persons say, "shut up," to any advice from the wife, or, "It is not your concern," for similar advice from parents. Such is their freedom. It is a wonder that people with such [lack of] freedom enter into a spiritual quest or social service. What is the use of your education if you do not use it for the service to society? You might as well throw your books in the fire. It is more important to achieve character than to accumulate wealth.

Wealth is accumulated by many persons. But at the time of their passing, what have they taken with them? Nothing. Of course, one has to earn money, but accumulation of wealth should be within limits. All your faculties should be at the disposal of society. Only then, will your coun-

try advance. You know very well the kind of unrest that is prevalent all over the world today. Fear and terror haunt you wherever you turn. It is the duty of the youth of this generation to set right this situation. First of all, serve your parents. Then, look after your family. Serve your community. Then, you can enter into the service of your country. But do not be hankering after the results of your efforts. The appropriate reward for all your actions will be granted to you by God. Service to the country becomes worship of God.

Students of the Messengers of Sathya Sai, Swami is please with the service you have performed so far. But it is the desire of Swami that you should all perform much more. You know how a mother blesses you. It is necessary for you to act in such a way as to get your parents blessings and approval for, after all, you are also going to become mothers. Serve your parents today, so that in turn, your children may serve you in times of your need. As you sow, so shall you reap. Persist in divine love, the only worthwhile thing in this world is divine love. Once you obtain this divine love, all else in the world is yours for the asking. For this, immerse yourselves in social work. The divine desire to obtain higher and higher educational qualifications should be modified. Equally, you earn as much wealth as you can, but use it for the welfare of society. Contemplate on God with your whole mind and heart. Only then will you attain the meaningful goal of your life.

—**Sathya Sai Baba**

Christmas Day, December 25, 1999

"What a privilege to play an important and constructive role in the lives of others! If you have the opportunity today, don't pass it up, for you may not be able to give service tomorrow."

—**Bill Doulos**, Director of Union Station,

An organization which feeds the hungry. Pasadena, California

# Seva—Highway to Bliss

---

*Transmuting from man to God and experiencing that bliss is the one and only achievement for which life is to be devoted. Only people are capable of service (seva), that is their unique skill and special glory. Seva must flow in every nerve of the body, penetrate every bone and activate every cell.*

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba

What exactly is *seva*? Sai Baba explains that it is the highest spiritual discipline, the very essence of devotion, and the very breath of the spiritual aspirant. Love as action is *seva*. Through pure undefiled loving service, one can enjoy bliss. Lord Buddha said, “True happiness comes to those who live at peace serving their fellow beings.” If one were used to a soft, luxurious or easy life, he or she would be useless as a service volunteer (*sevadai*), or for anything else. Immortality can be attained—not by ritual deeds, nor by birth, nor by wealth—only by sacrifice and service.

There are many who come forward when there is a call for social service, but most of them crave publicity, seeking cameramen whenever they help others. They become very disappointed when they are not mentioned in the newspapers. In this *Kali Yuga* (this era, the most difficult of all eras), all are eager to take, but few are earnest about giving. The reason is absence of love. Sai Baba exhorts the countless millions who visit him to take up service as spiritual practice (*sadhana*) and constantly look around for chances to serve.

Human beings strive to provide themselves with food, clothing and housing for the sake of

their bodies. But people must also provide themselves with something to keep their minds healthy and happy, and that something is only possible by selfless service.

Swami Vivekananda once mentioned, “Religion is to feel God, to see God, to talk to God.” The Sai Seva Organization provides one with this unique opportunity to experience God and see God in whomsoever they serve. The universe is the body of God, and that God, without form, vibrates in every atom of the universe. With this conviction, the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organization the world over has become a symbol of supreme selfless service. Sai Baba devotees, a mixture of virtually all the major religions of the world, have dedicated themselves to service in villages, hospitals, homes for the aged, orphanages or wherever *seva* is needed to instill faith in man and God.

The Sri Sathya Sai Organization with over 18,000 centers in 185 countries across the continents, from Iceland to New Zealand, work together with a feeling of solidarity. As world citizens, they are selflessly serving humanity. They derive a loving attitude towards service from the teachings of Baba:

Self x Infinity = God  
Service + Ego = Hypocrisy  
Service - Love = Waste of Time  
Man + Kindness = Mankind  
Service + Love = True Worship  
Service + Sacrifice = Bliss

It has to be seen to be believed how the Sai followers—from different faiths, different cultures and languages, with no differences of high or low, considering all as children of God—



perform service as an act of worship and love. They consider service as their very life breath, firmly believing that they are born only to serve, and that life is meant only for God-realization. The Sai organization, through its multifaceted service activities, helps one to evolve the inner life, absorb eternal values, and it enables one to get spiritualized in divine love.

The manifestation of holy ash (*vibuthi*), *kumkum*, turmeric, and *amrita* (nectar) on the pictures of deities in the prayer shrines of service volunteers indicates the extraordinary power of Sai. These manifestations also draw the spiritual aspirants back to a life of selfless service and sacrifice.

Howard Murphet, in his book, *Man of Miracles*, recorded a number of events and miracles where Sai Baba had gone to the scene of an emergency in his subtle body in order to bring immediate help to devotees and the needy. Sai Baba's passion for the service of humanity knows no bounds.

The most miraculous aspect of Sai Baba's organizational glory is that many of his followers experience an unfolding of their inner vision, their inner voice, and experience the bliss of God's vision and love. Sai Baba's amazing divine play (*leelas*), and easy-to-follow service programs, simply give one self-confidence, strong spiritual vibrations, and an opportunity for all of us to transform a directionless existence into a life full of meaning and purpose.

Look at Sai Baba's splendorous service projects and the grandeur of his example. He and his charitable institutions are involved in various

philanthropic service activities. Wouldn't it be thrilling for us to join the Sai highway of service and drive in this love? His mission is totally selfless, without ego, and it exemplifies the pure, golden love of angels. Thousands of rural folk are being provided with blissful spiritual centers, free potable drinking water, free heart operations, and a character-building education for students—all free of charge! The Sai organization members understand spirituality as an outpouring of service beyond the confines of religion, region, culture or tradition.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba undoubtedly commenced a spiritual revolution. Service mixed with love is recommended by him in order to achieve the supreme task of uniting all of humanity as one family. This revolution is bound to happen during the lifetime of Sai Baba, and it is happening!

As Saint Sri Aurobindo said, "When the divine descends, he becomes human in order to show humanity how to become divine." It's indeed a great and rare opportunity, once in a millennium, to witness how the divine descends in human form. Let us not miss it, or be blind to Sai and his highway of *seva* which is leading humanity to divinity and bliss. Sai Baba's mission of loving service is pure, divine and has the healing touch of Christ, the compassion of Buddha and the love of Krishna. People will find how beautiful life can be once Sai Baba enters their life and gifts them with the art and heart of service.

—C. Rommel, IFS  
Head of Chancery  
Consulate General of India, Jeddah

*There is no discipline equal to service to smother the ego and fill the heart with genuine joy.*

—Sathya Sai Baba, *Voice of the Avatar II*

# Our Group Visit to Puttaparthi

---

Our group trips from the U.S. to Puttaparthi in 1998 and 1999 were remarkable because of the many lessons I learned as a group leader.

In each of our past group visits, Baba had granted us an interview. However, on one visit four years ago, Baba had asked me in the darshan line, *How many in your group?* When I replied, "Thirty-two," he murmured, *Too many, too many*, paused for a moment and walked on. We were not granted an interview that time, and my friends in Puttaparthi advised me that in the future I should limit my group to 18. I remembered that advice while making arrangements for the trip in 1998 and was determined to control the group size to 18.

The next decision that I had to make as group leader was in respect to the airline. I was prejudiced against one airline, we will call it "Airline A," because it tended to have too many crying babies on board and unclean toilets. I was determined not to use this airline and had decided in favor of two other airlines, "B" and "C" for negotiating group fares.

Usually, at the time of making preparations for a visit as group leader, several thoughts enter my mind. Will the crowd be excessive in Prasanthi Nilayam? Will we get suitable accommodations or be asked to go to the sheds? Should I get letters of introduction from friends who have rooms in Prasanthi Nilayam, so in the event of a shortage of accommodations, I can use their rooms for our group? Will Swami give us an interview? Should I approach the authorities at the ashram to get special permission to sit in the first row at darshan, so I can announce our arrival to Swami? In short, I was thinking of how

I, a capital "I," was going to control every situation. It was around this time that I happened to visit a neighboring Sathya Sai Baba Center. A study session was in progress, and a Sai devotee was narrating her experiences. She had just returned from Puttaparthi. She said that she had gone there with great expectations of *pad-namaskar* (touching the divine feet) and at least one interview, but had come back disappointed. She concluded her talk by saying, that in her view, to get the most from a visit to Prasanthi Nilayam, one should go without an agenda and leave everything to Swami. The words "no agenda" and "leave everything to Swami" caught my attention. I decided, we would go without an agenda, and leave everything to Swami.

Once that decision was made, my earlier thought of controlling every aspect of our group plans vanished. I was determined not to control anything, and let Baba decide on all matters including how many were to be in our group, which airline we were to take, what accommodations we would get at the ashram, and whether we would get an interview or not. The next task was to remove the constant focus of interview from the minds of our group members and to encourage them to think that receiving an interview was not the primary purpose of our visit to Prasanthi Nilayam. We were going there to see our Mother Sai, and that it was up to our mother whether or not to give us an interview. "No agenda" and "total surrender" were to be our catchwords and we were to have no expectations whatsoever. The minute that attitude was adopted, I began to see Baba's loving hand at play.



Applications for enrollment began to come in. The memory of that trip four years ago, when Baba did not grant us an interview... because of our large group, was still fresh in my mind. But I kept reminding myself that total surrender required that I should not control the number of persons in the group. The number of applications swelled to 28, far in excess of the magic number of 18 that had been recommended. With dismay I watched the number grow, but I kept reminding myself that I should not interfere in the enrollment. And then, as if by a swish of a magic wand, cancellations came in, and the group size closed at the magic number of 18.

When the airline was finalized, I was amused to see that it was the very one I was heavily prejudiced against. Airlines B and C were not very cooperative, they did not come up with satisfactory fares, whereas Airline A was most accommodating, and we were forced to choose Airline A. Baba was teaching me to eschew prejudice. What was beneficial was that there were no crying babies on board, and the toilets were perfectly clean. In fact, it was a very pleasant flight.

We arrived in Mumbai and proceeded to Dharmakshetra, Swami's residence in Mumbai. On our arrival there, past midnight, we received a very cordial welcome from Mr. Mohan Rao. Baba has made nice arrangements at Dharmakshetra for overseas devotees who arrive at night en route to Puttaparthi. There are spacious halls on every floor, separate for men and women, complete with beds, mattresses, pillows, and sheets with adjacent toilets and showers. We spent a restful night.

In Dharmakshetra, Sai bhajans are held every morning at 6:00 A.M., led by the local

designated singers. It is the wish of every Sai devotee to be given a chance to lead a bhajan in Swami's mandir, and our group was no exception. Swami granted us that wish! Fifteen minutes before 6:00 A.M. it began to rain. The downpour was so heavy that the local designated singers could not make it to the mandir. Mr. Mohan Rao came to me and asked if our group would like to conduct the bhajan. Much to our delight, our group sang devotional songs for a full hour. Swami had fulfilled our ardent wish! As soon as the bhajan ended, as if by magic, so did the rains.

Mr. Mohan Rao took us around Darmakshetra and explained how Baba had planned the various architectural details of the lotus-shaped building.

Soon, we were off to the airport. The airbus was waiting to take us to Puttaparthi. After a pleasant, short flight our aircraft made the approach for landing; our hearts leapt with joy as the mandir, Hill View Stadium, museum, university office building, colleges and hostels sprang into view below. My next concern was for an elderly lady in our group who had a knee problem and difficulty walking. I had tried in vain to get her a wheelchair at the airport in New York, but when we landed at Puttaparthi a volunteer with a wheelchair was waiting. The lady was briskly whisked off to the airport terminal. Our loving Mother Sai knew the lady's problem and had made arrangements for her.

At the Overseas Visitors' Accommodation Office, we were received cordially by the staff members and were given the required number of rooms. The rooms were excellent, with beds, foam mattresses and adjacent toilets. At every step, we felt graciously welcomed by Swami.

Morning dawned, bright and resplendent.

We were seated in the Sai Kulwant Hall. There was a hush and all eyes were turned in the direction of the Poornachandra Auditorium from where Swami was expected to emerge at any moment. Soft music started, and Swami entered the spacious hall. Within minutes I saw the women from our group making their way to the interview room. Called for an interview on the very first day, within the very first hour! Swami was responding to our “no agenda” and “total surrender” approach.

We trooped into the interview room. Swami materialized and distributed *vibuthi* (holy ash) to the women. He then settled down in his chair and spoke with each one of us. He was like a most loving parent. Sitting at his feet, we felt like much loved children. He spoke to us about many things. That interview was most instructive. When one of our group members said in answer to a question that he had retired, Swami quipped and asked, *Retired or re-tired?* He told us that it was not good to lead a retired life, and that we should always be *re-tired*, actively at work without wasting even a second. When someone in our group, with folded hands, asked Swami to bless her family, Swami sternly said, *Don't ask for blessings for only your family. Ask for the whole world to be blessed.*

Swami attaches great importance to *seva*, selfless service. He says that hands that serve are holier than lips that pray. Remembering that, as soon as we landed in Prasanthi Nilayam, I began to search for avenues of service for our group. Traditionally, women devotees exclusively run the Western Canteen at Prasanthi Nilayam. Previously, men were permitted to assist in peeling potatoes, onions, etc. But Swami has made a rule that men are not to enter the kitchen area in that canteen. There has, there-

fore, been an increasing need for women volunteers to help run the canteen. One woman in our group, I will call her Sally, devoted almost all of her time doing *seva* in the Western Canteen. Sally would do all the heavy jobs—washing large dishes, unloading huge potato sacks from the shelves, peeling onions and potatoes, sweeping the floor, helping at the serving line—and being available for whatever help was needed. Swami gave her a great deal of love and attention in the second interview, and we wondered whether that was because of the enormous selfless service she did at the canteen.

Later, I took another group to Puttaparthi in September 1999. “No agenda and total surrender,” were once again the catchwords for our group. I urged our group members to think of our visit to Prasanthi Nilayam as a pilgrimage and to make the proper mental preparation by reading Professor Kasturi's book, *Loving God*, or Dr. Samuel Sandweiss', *The Holy Man and the Psychiatrist*. They were urged to train their minds not to hanker for an interview, but rather to think that the purpose of our visit to Prasanthi Nilayam was to see our Mother Sai. If an interview was granted, then that would be icing on the cake.

Our group took off from Washington D.C. and on arrival at Mumbai, we headed for Dharmakshetra. Mr. Mohan Rao was there as usual with his broad welcoming smile. The next morning Mr. Mohan Rao told us, much to our delight, that the bhajan at Dharmakshetra was going to be led by our group members. Our surrender was already working, and Swami's welcome was already being felt!

The Indian Airlines airbus took us to Puttaparthi, and once again, we were received very cordially by the authorities at the Accommoda-



tion Office for overseas devotees, and given the required number of rooms for our group. They were so considerate that they even asked if any elderly members in our group needed rooms on the ground floor!

Knowing that Swami loves his devotees to do service, I began to explore possible *seva* avenues in Prasanthi Nilayam. The women had no difficulty plunging into *seva* at the Western Canteen, but such was not the case with the men. The computer department could not use the services of the computer experts because of the fact that we would be in the ashram for only a fortnight. The South Indian Canteen, and the North Indian Canteen were adequately helped by the *sevadals* (volunteers) and did not need any help. I spoke to Mr. V. K. Narasimhan, editor of *Sanathana Sarathi*. He suggested that I talk to the manager at the printing press where they might be able to use our services. I drew another blank.

I was feeling increasingly frustrated that I was not able to come up with even one idea for our men to do *seva*. Apart from that, I was having an increasing feeling that Swami's ashram was also ours, and that we had a responsibility to keep it clean. One day, while returning from the Indian Airlines office after reconfirming my air ticket, I happened to notice quite a bit of trash strewn on the lawn. Soon, equipped with plastic bags, our group got down to work picking up trash on the lawn. Whether our eyes were deceiving us or not, the lawn did seem to look much cleaner after our labor. Once, on our way from the museum to the ashram, we noticed that the roadside was littered with trash, so we got to work there also.

The plants and trees in our building were starved for water. The flower beds were dry; we

decided to do something about it. Soon every member of our group was busy collecting water in buckets from our bathrooms and watering the flower beds and plants.

Another day, an idea flashed in my mind to clean the public latrines. Swami has constructed beautiful latrines for public use, but because of inadequate cleaning the white tiles had turned yellow and dust had caked the tiled floor. We equipped ourselves with necessary quantities of acid, Vim, gloves, brushes, etc., and we got to work. Soon the ashram was abuzz with the news that an American group had come down and was cleaning the latrines!

I don't know whether it was because of our *seva* efforts or for any other reason, but Swami gave our group three interviews! Swami also materialized innumerable articles for our group members including a pair of huge diamond earrings for Sally who had done the maximum amount of *seva* at the Western Canteen.

Swami loves to answer spiritual questions. When asked how to increase one's concentration, Swami said that *namasmarana* (repetition of God's name) would help improve the mind to concentrate. He said that we could use any mantra such as *Gayatri*, *Sai Ram*, etc., and keep chanting the mantra, so that bad thoughts in the mind are replaced with good ones.

Swami mentioned that envy, jealousy, hatred and revenge are animal qualities, whereas love, compassion and righteousness are human qualities. He said that whenever we got caught in the trap of animal qualities, we should repeat to ourselves, "I am a human, not an animal." Swami told us that work was worship, and we should work hard. He gave himself as an example, and said that he receives 4,000 letters a day, and he personally opens and reads each letter. He made

a joke saying that he did not have a secretary. *I have no secrets, therefore no SECRET-ary*, he quipped.

*Live in the present, profit from the past. Past is gone; future is not here. It is the present you should concentrate on*, Swami said. He also said that meditation was good for spiritual progress and recommended the *so-hum* meditation. While inhaling to the sound of *so*, we should imagine that we are taking in the good from God, and while exhaling to the sound of *hum*, we are letting out the bad in us, such as ego.

When asked how one can get rid of bad thoughts, Swami said that it is impossible to eliminate all thoughts. Mind needs work and needs to be kept occupied, so that it does not have time for bad thoughts. Swami recommended that we replace negative thoughts with positive ones and guide the mind to good thoughts. He urged us to master the mind, saying, *Be a mastermind*.

When asked how we can have unwavering faith, Swami replied that three things were essential: *purity, perseverance and patience*. First, we should have purity. Then, we need to persevere in purity. Then, we need patience to wait [for unwavering faith]. Only then, will we be able to succeed.

Swami asked a young member of our group *How is your wife?* The person replied "She is here Swami." Swami repeated his question, *How is your wife?* The person said "She is good, Swami, she is here." Swami asked, *Why then do you fight with her?* "I don't, Swami," the person replied. Swami said, *You do. One month ago, at midnight, in your apartment in Washington you were fighting with your wife. She had tears in her eyes and prayed to me to intervene. I was present in your apartment. We*

gasped at Swami's omnipresence. In another context, Swami quipped that the word *WIFE* should stand for *Wisdom Installed For Ever*, rather than, *Worry Invited For Ever*.

Swami lovingly upbraided one of the women in our group by saying, *You talk too much, here and outside. Don't waste time, food and energy. Time is energy. Food is God. If you don't talk too much you will be able to concentrate better. Memory gets better. Silence is golden*.

Asked how to get rid of ego, Swami quickly mimicked *E-Go* stressing the first and second syllables, meaning *You there, go away*. He said that we should get rid of our identification with the individual self. *In this universe*, he said, *the earth is so small. On the earth, USA is so small. In USA, your state is so small. In your state, your town is so small. In your town your street is so small. In your street your house is so small. In your house you are so small. You should constantly impress yourself that you are not the big thing that your ego urges you to believe. Tell your ego, E-Go (You Go)*. Swami stressed several times during the interview the importance of coordinating thought, word and deed. *There should be no discord between your thought, speech and action. And it is important to keep your word*.

Asked how to purify our thoughts and activities, Swami said, *Visualize a reservoir full of water, which feeds the taps, and that the various taps represent the different activities that we do, such as work, family, etc. If the water in the reservoir is clean, then only clean water will flow through all the taps. If the water in the reservoir is muddy, only dirty water will flow from all the taps. Similarly, if*



*your heart is pure, all of our activities and thoughts will be pure.*

So we must first purify the heart. Swami said, *Love is everything. Start the day with love. Fill the day with love. Spend the day with love. End the day with love. That is the way to God. Where there is love, there is peace. Where there is peace, there is truth.*

*Where there is truth, there is God. Where there is God, there is bliss.*

Swami told us that we should replace our weaknesses with strength from within. He ended the interview with the assurance, *I am always with you, in you, around you, and beside you. My devotees are my property.*

—S. Subbarao, Clinton, Maryland



## *What about Surrender?*

---

Surrender does not mean or imply loss of personal freedom. It has a much deeper meaning. Surrender to the Lord is a lifetime experience, and you can only achieve total surrender over a long period, even many lifetimes. Surrender cannot be achieved by simply saying, “I surrender.” Those are just words. You have to understand the inner significance, then slowly, you will begin to change your whole attitude of yourself and of other people, in fact, your whole way of life.

Surrender is the acknowledgment of your true state of being. You are a child of the living God, and you are his instrument. He is your mother, and you should be like a young child who is always trying to get closer and closer to the mother. But as the child grows up, it slowly moves away from its mother and moves into a new world. But the child’s relationship with the Lord is permanent, for the Lord is the eternal mother of the entire universe, and he resides in your heart.

As you grow from childhood, you have the chance to become more enlightened. You can achieve this by drawing closer and closer to the Lord until you eventually become one with him.

That state of ecstasy takes time to achieve, but the path toward the divine state is right there in front of you. It is the path of surrender, the path to God, the path of love, the only path that can lead you out of the wilderness into the light.

Let that love flow incessantly and recognize the innate divinity in everyone you meet on the path. Light up the path for them through your own example, and purify yourselves through your own constant attunement with the Lord.

Surrender everything to him, and he will take care of you and all your needs.

—Lucas Ralli, London, England

Excerpted from *Sai Messages for Me and You*

# Interview with Sai on Health

---

In this particular interview, Sathya Sai Baba discussed certain health problems with Dr. Venkat Kanubaddi, as follows:

**Swami:** (Looking at Dr. N.R.) *What is the treatment for diabetes?*

**Dr. N.R.:** First diet, then exercise, next pills and insulin last, Swami.

**Swami:** *Insulin is not good. It can lower blood sugar very quickly. Then the patient can get sweating and decreased BP [blood pressure] and can even go into coma. It is best to avoid insulin; tablets are okay.*

*What is the cause of diabetes?*

**Dr. N.R.:** Pancreas is the problem, Swami.

**Swami:** *Pancreas is not the real problem. It is mainly wrong diet and lack of exercise. People in south India eat excess rice, people in north India eat excess wheat (as in chapatis). Both rice and wheat can increase blood sugar very quickly within half an hour after eating. That is why people in the south should eat less rice, and people in the north, less wheat. Because people in the south do not like wheat very much, they should eat chapatis. That way they don't overeat rice. Similarly, people in the north should eat [some] rice. That way they do not overeat, because they do not like rice that much.*

*On the other hand, if you eat corn or ragi (a type of grain grown in south India), blood sugar will rise slowly, over two to three hours. That is healthy. The body can manage such a slow increase very well. For those who eat grains like corn or ragi, diabetes is not a problem.*

*People should not eat as their tongues dictate. There are 40,000 taste buds in the tongue; improperly used, they can cause sugar cravings and lead to diabetes. The senses have to be controlled for good health.*

*Similarly, the eyes have to be used properly for the health of the body and the mind. The eyes can cognize 130 million types of light rays, as sunlight illumines the different cells of the retina. If the eyes are not controlled to see only good things, they can create cravings to see bad things, which in turn brings bad health. So the senses have to be regulated properly for good health. There are also some genetic cause for diabetes.*

**Dr. N.R.:** Yes, Swami. Latest research is also confirming this. Is there anything that Swami doesn't know?

**Swami:** *Doctors nowadays don't treat diabetes properly. Best thing is diet control and exercise. For diabetes, green leafy vegetables are good, except for cauliflower. Cabbage is good. All fruits with black seeds like apples, pears, grapes, watermelon, etc. are good except custard apple (as it has too much sugar). Papaya is very good. All roots, especially potatoes, have to be avoided.*

**Swami:** (Looking at a young devotee) *What are you doing?*

**Young Devotee:** Research for new medicines for treatment of diabetes, Swami.

**Swami:** *Best thing is diet and exercise. (Looking at Dr. N.R.) What is the cause of heart disease?*

**Dr. N.R.:** Increased cholesterol, increased blood pressure . . .



**Swami:** *No. It is hurry, worry, curry. Too much hurry causes worry and stress, not good for the heart! See, Swami [has] no health problems. Avoid too much oil in the foods. Eating garlic every day can reduce cholesterol. Almonds without the peels can also reduce cholesterol. Soak them in water overnight, remove the peel, and eat them in the early morning.*

**Dr. V.K:** *Isn't garlic a rajasic (causing excitement) food Swami? Is it not bad for spirituality?*

**Swami:** *Body health first; these gunas (qualities) and spiritual health next. Without a healthy body, you cannot proceed on the spiritual path.*

**Another Devotee:** *How to control blood pressure, Swami?*

**Swami:** *Reduce salt. Less salt, less BP, more salt, more BP. If your blood pressure is already low, you can add some salt to your diet to bring it to a normal level.*

**Dr. V.K:** *Nowadays, there is a new disease frequently diagnosed as Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. Patients complain that they don't have any energy to do anything. What is the cause, Swami?*

**Swami:** *It is not a disease of "no energy." It is low energy. Nobody can live with no energy.*

**Dr. V.K:** *Is there any cause [for chronic fatigue] like bacteria or virus?*

**Swami:** *No cause like that. It is low energy because those people waste a lot of energy through bad and polluted thoughts, improper and indiscriminate use of the senses. Thus their energy is drained, and they feel chronic fatigue. If they can replace their polluted thoughts with good thoughts, and divert their senses toward the divine—thinking good, seeing good, hearing good and doing good—they can recover the lost energy and get well.*

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

*Health is the prerequisite for success in all aspects of life and for realizing the four ideals that should guide humans: moral living, spiritual prosperity, fulfilling beneficial desires and liberation from grief. . . .*

*"Eat in moderation and live long." This is the advice handed down through the ages by the seers of the past. This advice is seldom heeded. People fill themselves with such large quantities of food that they find it hard to rise from the table. They are ruining their digestive system by consuming heavy, rich foods. The affluent are proud when they host costly banquets. Those who know that physical health is the greatest treasure take care to eat only satwic (pure, soothing) food.*

*Uncooked food, nuts, fruits and sprouted seeds are the best. Use these at least at one meal [per day], say for dinner at night. This will ensure long life to be strived for in order that the years may be utilized for serving one's fellow beings.*

—Sathya Sai Baba  
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XI, Chapter 25

# Second World Youth Conference

---

“There is no teacher greater than the conscience. There is no preceptor greater than time. The world verily is the greatest text. God is the only true friend.” (Telugu Poem)

## *Future Citizens of the World*

The future of the world, good or bad, depends on your conduct. The country will be safe, secure, peaceful and prosperous only when your conduct is good. What the world needs today is not affluence and material comforts, but young men and women of noble character. The country is bound to disintegrate if the behavior of the young men and women is not on the right lines.

A true human being is one who adheres to sathya (truth), dharma (righteousness) and *thyaaga* (sacrifice). Truth is *neethi* (morality), righteousness is *reethi* (procedure) and sacrifice is *khyaaathi* (fame). All these three constitute *maanava jaathi* (the human race). The human race has originated from truth.

“All of creation has originated from truth and ultimately merges in truth. There is no place where truth does not exist. Recognize this pure and unsullied truth.” (Telugu Poem)

It is based on this that the ancient sages and seers said, “Speak truth, speak pleasingly, do not speak truth which is unpalatable.” Truth refers to moral values. The human race cannot survive without morality. Today the whole world is engulfed in troubles and turmoil because of injustice, falsehood and unrighteousness. Only young men and women are capable of restoring declining human values. Only when humanity upholds morality can there be equality, fraternity and freedom in society. In order to uphold mor-

ality, **one should adhere to truth**. This is the primary duty of mankind. The second, to **speak pleasingly**, refers to righteous values. It is based on this that the *Bhagavad Gita* says, “Speak truth in a pleasing and wholesome manner.” Your speech should not excite others’ impulses and emotions. The third, **do not speak truth which is unpalatable**, refers to spiritual values. One has to adhere to these principles to progress on the spiritual path.

## *The Essence of India*

Embodiments of Love! The Himachala, the Himalayan Mountains, form the northern boundary for India. What is the inner meaning of Himachala? “Hima” means ice, which stands for purity and peace. “Achala” means that which is steady. So Himachala signifies purity, peace and steadiness. The perennial rivers—Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswathi—symbolize the continuous blood circulation in the human body. The great epics of this land—the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* and the *Bhagavata*—bring out the quintessence of human nature. One can be called a Bharatiya, in the true sense of the term, only when one puts into practice the ideals that Bharat (India) stands for. In the word Bharat, *Bha* refers to *bhaava* (feeling), *ra* refers to *raaga* (tune) and *ta* connotes *taala* (rhythm). Bharatiyas are those who worship God, harmonizing the three—*bhaava*, *raaga* and *taala*. *Bha* also stands for effulgence. So Bharatiyas are those who are in pursuit of divine effulgence. You should take pride in the fact that you are a Bharatiya. There is no greater qualification than this. Bharat is the country which propagates spiritual knowledge to the rest of the world and





*Control your senses. Sense control is essential for the success of any spiritual practice.  
Humanity can rise to divinity through sense control.*

wishes the well-being of the entire world—*Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu* (may the whole world be happy).

## *All Are One*

You are all one, irrespective of the countries you belong to. Light bulbs may vary, but the current is the same. Likewise, countries, bodies and feelings may vary, but the principle of Aatma (inner divinity) is one and the same in all. Therefore, give up all differences based on caste, religion and nationality, and spread the message of unity. Nations are many, but earth is one. Jewels are many, but gold is one. Stars are many, but sky is one. Cows are many, but milk is one. Bodies are many, but breath is one. You can experience bliss only when you render service keeping in mind the unity of all beings.

You are born in love, brought up in love and merge in love. The five elements\* are the embodiments of selflessness: The sun sustains creation by giving light and life. Trees accept the poisonous carbon dioxide and give life-supporting oxygen. Mother earth teaches a lesson in patience and sacrifice. All these elements help humanity without any expectation of reward. There is no greater example of selfless love than nature. It is a shame that human beings, having been born and brought up in nature, do not imbibe the ideals demonstrated by nature; but instead, they lead lives of selfishness and self-interest. Youth should resolve to eliminate selfishness and self-interest leaving no traces whatsoever.

Jesus declared, "All are one my dear son, be alike to everyone." All are born of the same mother earth, breathe in the same air and drink the same water. In such a case, why should there

be differences at all? Eschew all differences and live in unity. Recognize the unity in diversity and act accordingly.

## *The Point of Spiritual Practice*

You may go to villages, serve the needy and undertake various rural development programs. By doing so, you are not doing any great service. In fact, that is your duty. You are born to serve. So spend your life in serving others. Don't crave for power and position. One who is not a humble worker cannot become a leader. In fact, a true worker is a true leader. People are under the mistaken notion that repetition of a divine name (*japa*), spiritual discipline (*thapa*) and meditation (*dhyana*) constitute spiritual practice. They do meditation without knowing what it is. They feel that they are meditating on God not knowing who God really is. They chant Rama, Krishna, Jesus, Allah or Zoroaster as gods and meditate on them not realizing the fact that all are embodiments of God. They mistake concentration for meditation. Concentration is associated with the senses, whereas meditation is beyond the senses. Meditation should not be confined to a particular time and place; it is a way of life. Whatever is done with the spirit of love is meditation. Sitting in meditation for hours without expressing love for fellow beings is not meditation at all. True spiritual practice lies in joining hands with the rest of the community and working for the progress of society as a whole. Love is God, live in love. A heart bereft of love is like a barren land. All activities should be suffused with love. Just as it is impossible for a newborn babe to attend degree classes, so also it is not possible to attain the supreme state of love

\*The five elements are fire [in this case fire from the sun], air, earth, ether and water.



instantly. One has to gradually progress by undertaking spiritual practices. It is imperative to undertake these practices until one turns one's vision inward. Perform all activities with a spiritual outlook. There is no greater spiritual practice than adhering to the principles of truth and love. Truth and love are the synonyms for God. Without these two there is no point in undertaking spiritual practices.

### *Self-effort*

Young men and women! Consider love and sacrifice as your very life breath. Control your senses. Sense control is essential for the success of any spiritual practice. Humanity can rise to divinity through sense control. Anger is the quality of a dog. Monkeys are known for their wavering nature. When you are angry, remind yourself, "I am not a dog, I am a human being." Similarly, when your mind wavers, tell yourself repeatedly, "I am not a monkey, I am a human being." Truth, righteousness, peace, love and nonviolence are the true human values.

These are the five life principles of humanity: vital breath (*prana*), lower part of the body (*apana*), right part of the body (*vyana*), left part of the body (*udana*) and central part of the body (*samana*). Losing any one of these amounts to losing life itself, each cannot exist without the other. Today human beings have become living corpses as they have lost all five. Develop faith, uphold and experience the bliss derived therefrom.

Where there is faith, there is love.  
Where there is love, there is peace.  
Where there is peace, there is truth.  
Where there is truth, there is God.  
Where there is God, there is bliss.

Today, everyone aspires to be blissful. For that, faith is essential. Bliss cannot be attained

easily. Bliss is Brahman (Universal Absolute), which is steady, pure, eternal and beyond dualities. People cannot attain this supreme bliss without giving up bad qualities. The heart is the altar of God. Do not pollute it with bad thoughts and feelings.

Self-effort is essential to achieve success in any human endeavor. Even small activities like picking a flower or plucking fruit from a tree requires the cooperation and effort of various parts of the body: eyes, hands, legs, etc. The body is gifted to undertake righteous actions and set an ideal for society. It is not for sleeping, eating, drinking and making merry. God has gifted humanity with all the powers, but humans are unable to realize their innate potential.

Whenever you take up any activity, keep in mind the welfare of others. Do not lead a life of selfishness. Think in terms of collective benefits, not individual benefits alone. Often, spiritual practices like repetition of a divine name and meditation are done with a selfish motive. Instead, it is better to chant the Lord's name and serve society. This will confer benefits on the individual and the society at large. This constitutes real spiritual practice. Whomsoever you serve, serve with a feeling that you are serving God.

The sight of a dead body, a sick person and an old decrepit person, was enough for Buddha to get transformed and attain Nirvana because his heart was filled with compassion. Though you come across innumerable dead bodies, old persons and sick individuals, it is a pity there is no transformation in you whatsoever. Unfortunately, your heart has become as hard as a stone, indifferent to the sufferings of others. To attain Nirvana or liberation, one should identify oneself with others and make efforts to alleviate their suffering.



Please turn to page 34

# Just Be

---

*What makes you think that “doing” is so important? Be equal-minded. Then you will not be concerned about “doing” or “not doing,” success or failure; the balance will remain unaffected by either. Let the wave of memory, the storm of desire, the fire of emotion pass through without affecting your equanimity. Be a witness of these. Commitment engenders holding, narrowing, limiting. Be willing to be nothing. Let all dualities subside in your neutrality.*

—Sathya Sai Baba

When I became a devotee of Sathya Sai Baba in 1985, service became a major spiritual activity for me. I dedicated almost everything throughout the day to Swami, participated in bhajans, and meditated every morning.

After being involved in these activities for 12 years, suddenly, in the fall of 1996, I got the prompting to quit my job at the hospice. A few months later, I felt I needed to quit my volunteer work as a mediator. When I went to the ashram that Christmas, I got the definite message not to be involved in the Christmas festivities. Just to “be wife,” and “be quiet.” This was not easy for me. I was used to participating, and my nature is to do—not to be. I had always defined myself by what I did. So then, who was I? Of course, this is the real question we all have to ask ourselves. Finally, I adjusted to this new role, both in the ashram and at home. It is true that I still did some editing work but, curiously, there wasn’t much to do.

During the first year of not working and staying home, I was steeped in reading Advaita (focusing on the oneness of all), and found I was able to stay very centered and watch the play

of life. It was wonderful. When that time had passed, I realized what grace that year of watching and being was for me. Even during my two-month trip to Prasanthi Nilayam, again at Christmas time, in 1997, I was able to remain centered and detached without much outward attention from Swami.

After I had returned home, I found myself in an extremely uncomfortable place. I had very little motivation. Nothing seemed to matter. I was disinterested in reading spiritual books, participating in *sathsang*, or sitting at my altar. Swami tells us that everything that happens is for our own good, and I believe that. But I was still uncomfortable. What was going on? My old psychological analysis of this would say that I was depressed, but I didn’t feel that way.

I slowly began to realize that I must accept the way I am, remembering I am not the doer. I began to see that I must be quieter. I needed to slow down—both my mind and my actions. I had always moved and thought very quickly, which often made me impatient with others, particularly those I was most attached to. I needed to become more mindful of my relationship to my family.

I began reading a book entitled, *Voices of Silence*, about the lives of Trappist monks. The fact that I found the book at that time was a miracle. One of the abbots, speaking about a novice monk, wrote of “. . . the deceptively simple movement into solitude, free from distractions, but also devoid of all the props and comforts those distractions normally provide. We are now alone with the Self.” He talked of the “sweet satisfactions” that used to fill their prayers which became dry and empty. “The spiritual consolation ended, and they found them-



selves alone and empty-handed.” The abbot goes on to say, “It was disorienting and frightening, primarily because it looked as though it might go on forever. . . . No matter how hard the monks tried nothing changed. In fact, trying harder just intensified the nothingness, since it drained them of energy.” He says, “They had to learn to accept. They had to realize that God was there in a different way from any they had ever experienced.”

This passage spoke to me deeply, even causing tears, because I realized how necessary it is for me not to have a way to define myself, not to have ways to stoke my ego. I was forced to love myself as I am, which is exactly how Swami loves me. Of course, being human, I still have distractions, and if I don’t, I create them, which I often do in order to keep away this uncomfortable feeling.

One night, I realized that in the interview room with Swami in January 1998, alone with my husband, I just sat there with none of my usual questions, with no needs, with only peace and love in my heart. I knew my husband had a list of questions to ask Swami. I didn’t have to wait until he was finished to say something; I didn’t have to be supportive of him; I didn’t have to do

anything. I was, during that time, the ideal wife, truly loving because I was love; I was peace. This was a taste of what true service is, an effortless, spontaneous state.

The next morning, I realized how I have been trying to rid myself of this uncomfortable feeling, but nothing had worked. This resistance began to give way to accepting my discomfort more willingly. I saw how Swami has me in the perfect place for my growth. I still waver, have guilt that I should be doing service in society, meditating every morning, all the things I used to do, but I do see that I am in a different place for now, and I must be here.

One day I realized that the mental tape which said “I’m not being productive, not using my talents, being lazy. . .” had almost stopped. I am still not formally meditating and feel okay about it. I understand that he needs to break my rituals and habits in order to bring me to a new place. I feel, more and more, Swami is the doer, and I am just waiting and being until, at some time, a spontaneous prompting (not from the mind) will come, and lead me to do something. But now I know it is all God, and I can accept the way I am with greater equanimity.

—Judy Warner Scher, Faber, Virginia



*You are verily the embodiment of bliss and happiness. Is it not sheer ignorance on your part to search for bliss and happiness in the external world when they are very much present in you? True spiritual transformation lies in understanding one’s own real nature.*

—Sathya Sai Baba

Mahashivarathri Discourse, March 4, 2000

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba often tells us, *Only in the silence of the heart can the voice of God be heard.*

# Hearing the Inner Voice

---

Charles, my husband, and I were invited to participate in a conference on "Selfless Service" for our Northeast Region by sharing in a workshop. Our service experiences were working with the elderly. We accepted the task and prepared for it. The Sathya Sai Regional Retreat/Conference was a great success and our workshop did not fare too badly.

However, what induced me to write this article was neither the conference nor our workshop, but a question that was asked by Kevin Nelson, who was then our Regional Service Coordinator.

While sharing some of our experiences with our audience, both Charles and I mentioned a number of times that Swami was "telling or guiding us within," to do specific things, and that we were frequently communicating with Swami on the "inner" level. Quite understandable, as soon as we finished our talk, Kevin inquired, "How do you know that it was Swami who talked with you?"

It was not a question I would have anticipated at that point. But it was a very familiar question, one I have been asked many times. Even Charles used to press me on this subject, until eventually he too began hearing Swami's voice within himself.

At that particular moment, due to the fact that we were running out of time, I could only explain that I had always heard the voice within me and gradually learned to live by its guidance. Later, in interviews with Swami, he repeatedly confirmed

\*Lingam is an oval-shaped object which has no beginning or end; it symbolizes creation and the merging of the form with the formless.

to me that it was indeed his voice. It has happened on several occasions that Swami told me something very meaningful in my heart, and then repeated it verbatim to Charles and me a day or two later during a private interview.

Charles, relating from his own experiences, asked, "Swami, during the past year I have been asking you many questions on the inner level, and I feel that I received clear answers from you. Is that just my imagination, or is that really you?" Swami replied most reassuringly, *No, no, not imagination. I am in you* (his finger pointing directly at Charles' spiritual heart, located in the center of his chest). *I am your conscience. I answer all your questions.*"

Charles also mentioned that during an interview with Swami, he manifested a beautiful lingam\* for us which we regarded as additional confirmation as well as encouragement to continue fostering our inner contact with him. At that point, the time allowed for the workshop had run out, and we left it at that.

For days afterwards, Kevin's question kept lingering at the periphery of my mind. I began to see how confusing it must be for many people to hear someone say, "Oh, Swami told me so and so. . ." How often do we hear Swami's name or the word "conscience" misused as a justification for blatantly ignorant or selfish behavior? How often do we base our criticism of small defects in others on our own conscience which seems unwilling to accept those flaws? We often appear totally blind to far greater problems in ourselves.



I recall from my own experience, the rigorous examination I went through, and still do, regarding the indispensable process of making certain that I was accurately discriminating between the voice of God within my heart, and the wily suggestions of my crafty ego.

Ego, the personification of body consciousness, is the employer of all our lower emotions such as resentment, envy, jealousy, pride, dislike and anger. But of course, the ego is smart enough to know when we have become aware of the negativity of such undesirable qualities. It therefore brings into play all its capabilities to ensnare us. The ego works with admirable subtlety and willfulness to masquerade as the voice of God for the purpose of achieving its selfish ends.

It requires the purity of selfless motives, as we persistently practice the difficult art of discrimination. Unless we are sincere in our endeavor to control our restless mind and senses and become still within, success in our efforts to reach this goal is by no means assured.

Well then, how do we know when Swami is talking in our hearts as our conscience, and when it is our manipulative ego? What criteria should we use to distinguish the former from the latter?

Most of all, it is very important to understand that Swami is not just that beautiful form we see in India. For true Sai devotees, Swami is God, Universal Consciousness, permeating all that is. He is the divine spark in each one of us which, under his loving guidance, may blaze into a flame able to spread light all around. Action based on the voice of God in our hearts will always manifest itself as selfless and pure love, beneficial to everything and everyone around us. It will demonstrate unity, harmony and oneness.

The voice of the Lord, whom we have the privilege of knowing in the form of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, is the voice of divine love ever-teaching and inspiring us to "help ever, hurt never," no matter what the circumstances. Even if we feel that some situation (for which we may have responsibility) needs correction, the voice of God within, as our conscience, will counsel us to patiently wait for ways to accomplish this. The situation then will be resolved in a manner that will not cause unnecessary heartache to anyone; nor will it destroy the underlying unity and harmony which form the essential base of operation for the achievement of any worthy goals or projects.

When we are emotional, resentful or angry about an issue or a situation, we can be certain that as long as we entertain these emotions, we are unable to hear Swami's voice. At that point, we should make the effort of calmly and honestly analyzing our feelings and the voice we seem to hear. We must hold what we hear against the light of Swami's teachings, and if it still looks right, then view it with the lens of foresight to recognize its consequences. If the consequences spell discord and divisiveness, be willing to accept the likelihood that we are being fooled by the craftiness of the ego.

It is essential to understand that whenever we, even innocently, allow the ego to misrepresent itself as our conscience, we permit it to govern our action in the name of Swami. Thus, the ego tries to get away with whatever ignoble or selfish behavior it may be obsessed with. When discord and unhappiness begin to sprout up all around us as a result of our failure to identify the ego-trickster, we should then at least be humble enough to acknowledge our mistake, and do all we can to correct it.

Sometimes, we use Swami's name as the motivator of our action but fail to properly distinguish between God's voice and that of our ego. When our unity and harmony have been turned into ruins and chaos, we are then making Swami responsible for our actions and their consequences. Every time we misuse Swami's name as our conscience without repeated examination of the truth, we are undermining Baba's public reputation and his mission.

Swami is constantly at work to help each one of us become sufficiently still within, so that we may hear him. Once we have learned to distinguish his voice from all the other chatter in and

around us, he can teach and guide us from within our own hearts. But until we have become skilled at correctly making that distinction, we should voluntarily desist from employing Swami's name in any way that would make him appear responsible for our personal problems and misdeeds.

Swami has said, *The lights have to be switched on in the heart of man, rather than in the house where the image of the Lord is installed and worshiped.*

—Edith M. Gregory  
Lyme, New Hampshire



*As pilgrims to the holy temple of righteous action, keep away from your luggage (ego) and enter the shrine to purify your heart. Deposit your luggage in the vault of surrender. Remember that the persons whom you serve are temples where God is installed. Worship them with the flowers of sweet words, timely help and vigilant care.*

Thought for the Day Chalkboard  
Prasanthi Nilayam, November 19, 1979

**Dr. Hislop:** "Swami once said that the world emerges outward from mankind, just as human beings emerge outward from the body of the mother. Does that mean that the entire world, of which we are aware, is everything?"

**Baba:** *There is one exception. There is one thing that comes into man from the outside. That thing is ego which is formed by attachment to outside objects. With desires for the world gone, the ego automatically vanishes.*

**Dr. Hislop:** "What did Baba mean about the spiritual rays, that comprise a human being, projected into the vastness instead of the limited ego?"

**Baba:** *When the world melts away, when there is bliss, or even when there is a temporary feeling of happiness, hold to that state and stay with it, do not allow yourself to fall back into ego emotions and thoughts. From man comes a series of spiritual rays whose quality is delight and bliss. All man need do is to manifest that bliss. The idea of searching [for that bliss] is an error. The bliss is natural, and it lies within each of us.*

—From *Conversations with Sathya Sai Baba*  
Compiled by **John S. Hislop, Ph. Ed.**



# Announcements

---

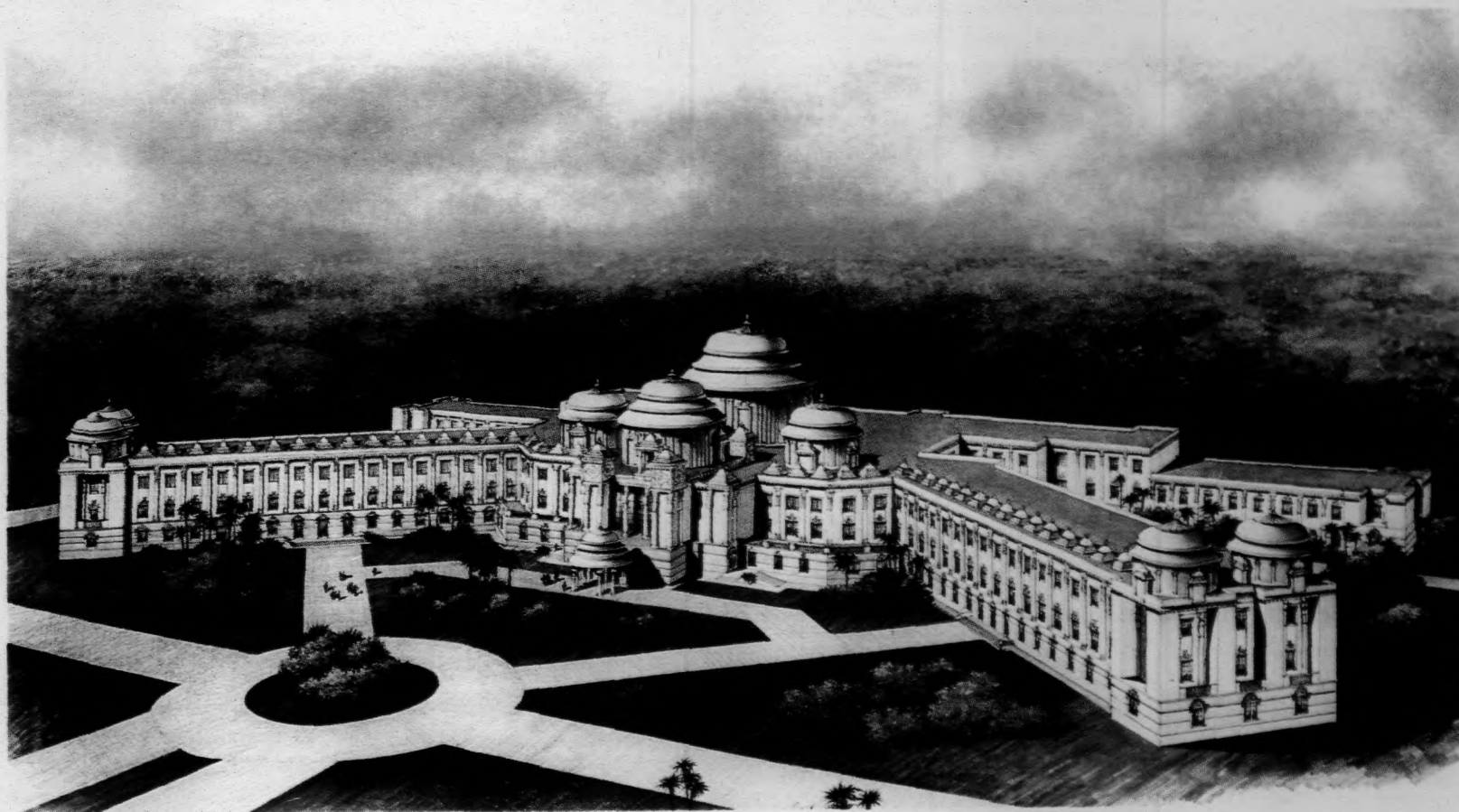
## *Vietnamese Translators Still Needed*

Last issue, the *Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA*, sent out a request for devotees who are literate in both English and Vietnamese to translate some of the Sai literature into Vietnamese.

However, we did an “oops!” We may have published the wrong e-mail address. To correct that wrong, the proper contact is: Thu or Phu Nguyen at e-mail [ttnguyen4@equilon.com](mailto:ttnguyen4@equilon.com) or telephone (925) 313-3295 (business hours) or (925) 946-9298 (evenings). All knowledgeable volunteers are welcome. Remember, there are no paid volunteers in the Sai Organization, but the reward of self-satisfaction is far greater.

## *The New Hospital*

The proposed hospital, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Science in Bangalore, India, will be a reality sometime in the near future, perhaps at the time of his birthday. It will be larger than the hospital in Puttaparthi, and is similar in appearance. It is being designed by the same architect, Keith Critchlow. The other good news is that it will be of the same high-quality, free care with state-of-the-art equipment and staffed by world-renowned physicians and technicians.



**An architectural rendering of the proposed Sathya Sai Hospital in Bangalore, India.**

## *Lastest Update on the Water Project*

The latest news on Jorja Kelley's fine article entitled, "Baba's Water Project—Here, at Home" (published in the *Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA*, Spring 2000) is that a local Florida newspaper, the *Northwest Florida Daily News* had printed some interesting facts on October 12, 1999. After the Sai group put lingam water in several of Florida's waterways, the paper published the following headline: "Goodbye Algae; Hello Beach." Here are some excerpts from the newspaper article:

"The Emerald Coast is emerald once again. Red tide—an organism that killed untold thousands of fish over the last few weeks and sent beach-goers packing—is leaving local waterways.

"Water samples taken last week show that the red tide has all but disappeared from Choctawhatchee Bay, Santa Rosa Sound, and local gulf waters," said Glenn Butts, marine biologist with the state Department of Environmental Protection. . . . Butts said that, "A large, dense strip of red tide, which had stretched offshore from Panama City to Pensacola, has dissipated. . . ."

Steve Hill, owner and manager of Holiday Isle Beach Service, said, "I'd say over the last couple days, it's been a thousand times better." Hill said Monday, "Nobody's coughing; there's no dead fish. Everything is back to normal."

Dear readers, do you suppose that they will ever know that Bhagavan's lingam water, and the efforts of Jorja Kelley and "The Baba Gang," was responsible for cleaning up those waterways?

## *Some Upcoming Events in the Year 2000*

**July 16, Guru Poornima Day** in which we pay homage to the guru, spiritual mentor or guide.

Many holy days will be recognized at Prasanthi Nilayam by Sai devotees between now and the end of the year. **Check your Spring 2000 issue of the *Sathya Sai Newsletter*, p. 31, for listings.**

In September there will be a **conference on Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV)\* for the benefit of educators who are affiliated with the United Nations.** These educators are from all over the world, and will take back the valuable SSEHV information to their various countries.

**October 2000**, promises to be the **inauguration of the new School of Music\*** as a part of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning.

November of this year will be bigger and busier than ever. **Ladies Day**, honoring all women, will once again be recognized on **November 19. And on 19 and 20 of that month, the Seventh World Conference of the Sathya Sai Baba Organization** will take place in Prasanthi Nilayam with the theme, "Information to Transformation." Don't forget the opening of the **new Super Specialty Hospital\*** in Bangalore. And of course the most auspicious day of all, on **November 23, the 75th Birthday of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.**

How grateful we all are to pay homage to the Avatar any time, but particularly on the day when he took human form, so that we may know him and learn from him.

\*The exact day(s) of these events is not known.



# Bits of This and That

---

## The Wedding Ring

I have been reading two of Howard Murphet's books about Sathya Sai Baba, and I've been watching Sai Baba on videos, and also have written to him. One evening, my daughter and I were relaxing with a video about an Indian community in Canada. One of the characters was a grandmother who prayed every day to Lord Krishna. Lo and behold, Krishna appeared on the grandmother's VCR and began talking to her. She acknowledged Krishna, but demanded a sign—a miracle as proof. Krishna became incensed. "A miracle!" he shouted, "You want a miracle?"

At that instant, my daughter bent down, asking, "What is this mother?" She had plucked a small object from the floor. I began to cry. She had just picked up my deceased mother's wedding ring which I had lost the year before, three towns away, buried under masses of lawn clippings while I was lawnmowing!



—Dobby Sommer, Albion, California

## Signs of Inner Peace

*Warning! One may experience any of these symptoms due to an attack of inner peace:*

- Frequent attacks of smiling
- A loss of interest in conflicts
- A loss of interest in judging self
- A loss of interest in judging other people
- An unmistakable ability to enjoy every moment
- A loss of interest in interpreting the actions of others
- Contented feelings of connectedness with others and with nature
- Loss of the ability to worry (This is a very serious symptom)
- Increased tendency to allow, rather than force things to happen
- Frequent, overwhelming episodes of appreciation
- A tendency to think and act spontaneously [with love]
- An increased susceptibility to the love extended by others
- And an uncontrollable urge to extend that love

—Author Unknown



## Bhagavan

*Silent perfect mystery*

*Revealed for all to see*

*Come closer, closer still . . . He says  
Come touch the heart of Me*

*For I am you, and you are Me  
We are truly One*

*And when you drink Me deeply  
Your life is just begun*

—L. Marsh, Duxbury, Massachusetts

## None Can Harm Him

Long ago, on a festival day in Puttaparthi, India, Baba took two devotees along with him and visited some of the houses around the village. The people were very happy to receive him. Swami accepted their offerings of food and blessed the people. He visited one house at the end. Strangely enough, Baba ate all the food offered by the householder without leaving anything for the devotees who accompanied him.

On reaching the mandir, he said that the last house he had visited had extened a special invitation to him. He then added, *Poison food can never harm me*. In a little while, he vomited all the food [he had taken at the last house].

By that time, the culprits had reached the mandir. Having come to know that Baba was aware of their evil plot, they fell at Swami's feet and pleaded guilty. Swami was the embodiment of peace and love. He was not at all angry with them.

*They wanted to examine my divinity and that is why they offered poisoned food to me, but not to kill me*, he said smilingly. Who else, other than God, can have such infinite compassion and forbearance?

—Smt. S. Subbulakshmi

From *Pearls of Wisdom*

Illustration by

—Christine Panushka





## *What Are the Children Doing? They're Doing Seva for Others!*

---

Growing up in a nice house, with a nice family that drives nice cars has all been very nice, and I am grateful for it. Unfortunately, I have been living in a bubble and have failed to see the people in this world who lack simple necessities which I take for granted such as eating three meals a day.

Since the time I began *Bal Vikas* (now known as Sathya Sai Spiritual Education or SSSE), and to this day, I have been learning about Swami and his teachings every Sunday. Growing up, I would always go with my family to the convalescent home for elderly people. I would clutch my mother because I was afraid to touch any of the patients. As time passed, I began to walk around with the other kids, and found myself giving what joy I had to those who needed it desperately.

When I entered group III girls [in SSSE], I participated in serving breakfast to poor people. Since I began this form of seva, I feel I

have gained more than words can express. Seeing someone's face light up with joy when they receive their meal has made me feel as if I really were helping a fellow human being. Giving my morning up and putting on a happy face has been rewarding to me in a couple of ways. By giving part of myself to benefit other people, I feel as if I am serving God. As I learned in *Bal Vikas*, there is God in everyone, and it is my duty to see it in them as well as in myself. Furthermore, I have had the opportunity to see what the real world is like, and to see what I can do in the future to make it a better place. Rather than attending a charity event at a fancy hotel, I can volunteer in the real world and see what happens. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve my fellow persons. I realize now that there are so many people who are suffering. I need to find them and help them through their hard times.

—Vidya Murthy, Written at age 14  
Group III, Tustin, California



## *Spiritual Education*

---

The visit to serve the homeless feels good because we are helping people that have barely anything. I love helping the homeless because I learn about Swami's teachings. Swami says, *Love All, Serve All*. I enjoy doing that. I also

love to go to the convalescent home because I like to sing, distribute bananas, blow up balloons and make the residents happy.

—Amrita Khoshoo  
Written at age 9  
Group II, Tustin California

As the Vice Chancellor mentioned in his speech, "Bend the body, mend the senses, end the mind." The mind will be nonexistent when the senses are controlled. The mind can be annihilated when noble thoughts are entertained. Today the world is in disarray because the thoughts of people have gone astray.

"Oh humanity! Inquire into what great happiness have you acquired by forgetting God and spending all your education and energy limitlessly eking out a livelihood from dawn to dusk." (Telugu Poem)

### *Everything Is God's Work*

Whatever you do, it is God's work. For example, the process of inhaling and exhaling is in itself a spiritual practice. The process of inhaling is associated with the sound "*so*" (that) and exhaling with the sound "*hum*" (I). "*Sohum*" means "I am that" (God). *So* symbolizes divinity and *aham* signifies *ahamkaara* (ego). Consequently, *sohum* drives home the lesson that you should take in only *phala*, that which is good, and eject *mala*, that which is filthy. This process of inhaling and exhaling repeats itself 21,600 times a day. It means your inner voice is reminding you 21,600 times a day that you are God. Unfortunately, you are not receptive to this message. It is to understand this reality that God has gifted you with the body. Don't limit God to your altar; God is your life breath.

Just as hands, eyes, ears, nose, etc., are parts of the body, likewise, human beings are part of society. Society is a part of nature, and nature is a part of God. Therefore, you can infer that there is an intimate relationship between the individual and God. When inanimate objects like telephones are connected, should there not be a connection between human beings and God? The former

relationship is artificial in nature, whereas the latter is heart to heart. There are two types of telephone calls: one, which can be answered by anybody, and the other which needs to be answered by the specific person for whom the call is intended. Similarly, your contacts should be directly with God like the personal call, and not with all and sundry like the number call. If you have the sincere feeling that you want God, then God himself will come and talk to you. You cannot expect God to respond when you make a number call. Number calls correspond to negative thoughts. So give up negative thoughts and develop positive feelings.

Body, mind, senses and intellect are all negative in nature. Only the conscience is positive. Just as the microphone is useless without the electrical current, so also are the body, mind, senses and intellect useless without the conscience. The conscience that exists in everyone is one and the same, just as the current that flows through different light bulbs is the same. All is one, be alike to everyone. Do not hate, harm or criticize anybody. Persons are noble when they conduct themselves without hurting others, and are themselves not troubled in the process. True spiritual practice lies in considering every work as God's work, not in only doing the repetition of a divine name and meditation. God is all-pervasive. It is based on this that the *Vedas* (spiritual text) declare, "With his hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth and ears pervading everything, God permeates the entire universe." You may hoodwink anyone, but not God. He is always watching you. He is the eternal witness. He is present in you, just as the power of vision resides in your eye. Not even a blade of grass can move without his will. It is foolishness to get carried away by the sense of doership. So do not feel



proud of your achievements. Develop the sacred feeling that God is the doer and the enjoyer too. Consider everything as God's will. Whatever happens to you, be it profit or loss, pain or pleasure, have faith that it is good for you.

### *No Need to Be a Recluse*

When a person suffering from malaria consults a doctor, he or she will be given bitter quinine medicine. Unless they take the bitter medicine, they cannot be cured of the fever. Likewise, have the firm conviction that difficulties and suffering are the ways and means by which God purifies you. There is a reason behind whatever God does. Without understanding the principle of cause and effect, people blame God for their suffering. Understand the truth that you yourself are responsible for the pain or pleasure that befalls you. Do not feel sad if someone criticizes you, because criticizing others amounts to criticizing oneself, as the same inner divinity (Aatma) exists in all. Identify yourself with the Aatma, not the body, which is like a water bubble. If someone were to beat you, do not retaliate. The same principle of Aatma exists in both of you. God is the one who beats, and also the one who gets beaten. All of creation is a mono action play of God, so do not hate anybody. Love all.

All that I say is for your own good and to make you aware of divinity. All my teachings and actions carry a profound inner meaning. Our college students have white clothing as their uniform. What is its inner significance? White color symbolizes purity. Similarly, when you see someone in ochre robes, it reminds you of renunciation. This is to convey the message that you should be pure and free from all attachments. Only then can you attain the divine.

As youngsters, you have too many desires, which cause physical as well as mental strain. Desires are the luggage in the journey of life. Less luggage, more comfort, makes travel a pleasure. Your destination is the abode of supreme peace, i.e., liberation. Why do you trouble yourselves with heavy luggage when you are going to the abode of supreme peace? Be satisfied with the minimum requirement of food, clothing and shelter. Food is meant to sustain your body, and clothing to protect you from cold. Modern youth are fascinated by fashion and clothe themselves gaudily. Youngsters, especially women, should not indulge in fashion fads. The dress you wear should be good and sober. Do not imitate the cinema culture. Imitation is animal nature and creation is divine.

Control of desires leads to sense control, which in turn leads to divinity. Sage Patanjali said, "Controlling the vagaries of the mind is yoga, and allowing the senses to have their own way is *roga* (disease). Today, people have become *rogis* or diseased because of lack of sense control. One should become a yogi, not a *rogi*. Yoga is not attained by *bhoga*, worldly pleasures, but by sacrifice. Once you attain yoga you will never be afflicted with *roga*. Yoga does not mean leading life as a recluse in a forest. Some people mistake physical exercises like sitting cross-legged, standing on one leg, etc. for yoga. True yoga lies in unifying your love with the divine.

### *Do not Ask*

God does not want anything from you. He never insists that you do meditation or yoga. He only wants you to fill your hearts with the principles of love and sacrifice. If you obey his commands with sincerity and devotion, he will

take care of all your needs without your asking. The lives of Sabari and the bird, Jatayu, bear ample testimony to this truth.

“Oh mind, do not ask for anything.  
Ask, and it shall be delayed.  
Do not ask, and it shall be granted soon.  
Did he not shower his grace on Sabari, who never asked?  
Did he not perform the last rites of Jatayu and grant him liberation, without his asking?”

So you do not need to ask God for anything. If you have purity of heart, he will take care of you, just like a mother who attends to the needs of the child without its asking. Be like a child, and the divine mother will take care of you. That is total surrender. Leave everything to the will of the mother. Do not ask for petty things lest you should lose her proximity. The one who asks for food will be directed to the kitchen, but the mother will feed the child who cannot ask. Only those with ego, and those immersed in worldly life ask. But the one, who surrenders to the will of the divine mother, like a child, will lead a peaceful life.

You have observed a dancer making rapid movements with her hands and legs while dancing, but her attention is always focused on the rhythm. Likewise, your mind should always be fixed on God while discharging your duties.

You might have heard the story of Rani Lakshmibai of Jhansi. She had a small child. When she was left with no other choice but to go to the battlefield, she tied the child to her back, took a sword and waged a fierce battle with her enemies, riding on horseback. But all the while, uppermost in her mind was the well-being of her child. Similarly, you must discharge your worldly duties, but at the same time, your mind should always be focused on God. This is the meaning of

the maxim, “Hands in society, head in the forest.” You do not need to do any specific spiritual activity. Do everything as an offering to God.

### *Waste not, Want not*

In order to have sacred thoughts, give up vices like consumption of nonvegetarian food, smoking and drinking intoxicants. **Do not waste food, money, time or energy.** Eat as much as you need, but do not waste, because millions are suffering for want of food. You all know what a miserable condition the people of Orissa are in after a severe cyclone devastated the state. In some places, people are scrambling even for a morsel of food. You may not know the value of food, but they know it very well. So do not waste food. Food is God.

Similarly, do not waste money. Some students waste a lot of money eating in hotels, playing cards and gambling. Misuse of money is evil. Do your work yourself; do not depend on others. Whenever you find time, wash your own clothes. Why do you give your clothes to a washerman when you can wash them yourself? You have no right to waste your parents' money.

Time is God. Time wasted is life wasted. Do not waste time in the pursuit of worldly pleasures. Instead, taste divinity by chanting his name.

Do not waste energy. Energy is God. Today students are wasting a lot of energy through unsacred vision, bad thoughts, bad hearing and excessive talk. Our bodies can be compared to a radio. When the radio is turned on continuously, the cells get discharged quickly. Likewise, if you indulge in excessive talk, you will be losing a lot of energy. That is why the ancient sages and seers used to observe silence. Conserve energy by observing silence at least one day in a week.



## *Use Your Mind, not the Computer*

I often tell the students, talk less and work more. Only then, their latent energy develops. This was the sole aim of sages and seers in undertaking various spiritual practices. Once the latent energy develops, your memory power as well as the power of concentration will increase. Some students are not able to perform well in the examinations because they are not able to concentrate even for a moment. They are constantly engaged in listening to radio news, cricket commentary, etc., with the textbook in their hand. With such distractions, how can they concentrate and retain their memory?

In the past, education was imparted to students in the *gurukulas* (spiritual schools). Students had to rely entirely on their memory power and concentration to acquire knowledge as there were no paper, pens, pencils, etc., to jot down what the teachers would teach. Their learning consisted of merely listening to the teachers, yet they could acquire high education. Though modern students have access to paper, pens, etc., they fail to excel in studies as they lack concentration and memory power.

Young men and women: You become divine once you safeguard your physical, mental and spiritual powers. Let your body be engaged in good actions, your mind entertain noble thoughts, and your intellect merge in the divine. Body, mind and intellect are merely instruments. Understand the principle that makes these instruments function. The modern system of education has become computer-oriented. There is a craze for computers everywhere. You are not a computer. You are a composer. After all, what does the computer do? It does whatever you program it to do. It cannot function on its own accord. The

God-gifted brain is the real computer. Make proper use of it. Unfortunately, the modern human being depends excessively on the machine to the exclusion of the God-gifted brain. The situation has deteriorated to such an extent that people depend on calculators even for simple arithmetic calculations. You should be self-reliant. Receive help from God only, none else. His work is only to help others. Emulate him. Help ever, hurt never.

## *Always Be Helpful*

Sage Vyasa said, "Helping others is merit; harming others is sin." This is the essence of all sacred texts. Do not give scope for misunderstandings and quarrels among yourselves. Unity is the greatest strength. Therefore, work in unison. Where there is unity, there is purity. Where there is purity, there is divinity. If you have purity of heart, God will certainly fulfill your wishes. For example, if you are in need of a pen, pray to God earnestly. A pen will definitely appear in your pocket. With purity of heart, you can accomplish anything. It is impossible to understand God. When you are unable to know your Self, how can you know God?

The other day Uma Bharati mentioned that people come here [Prasanthi Nilayam] to know God. It is a misconception. You do not need to come here to know God. First try to know yourself. None can ever comprehend me.

Character is of paramount importance for the spiritual growth of an individual. Sage Kanva established a *gurukula* in order to impart spiritual teachings to the residents of the ashram. Shakuntala was one such resident, who grew up under the loving care of Sage Kanva. One day King Dushyantha happened to visit the ashram of Kanva. There he met Shakuntala and married

her. Bharata was born to the couple. Having been born and brought up in a palace, king Dushyantha was inclined towards worldly pleasures. On the other hand, his son Bharata, who was born and brought up in Kanva's ashram was a repository of moral, spiritual and ethical values. Ashram education inculcates all noble values in human beings. Bharata became a paragon of all virtues because he received ideal education right from his childhood. On the other hand, Dushyantha had worldly and material wealth. He was a mighty emperor. What was the use of all that he possessed when he lacked character?

### *You Are the Future*

This clearly demonstrates the difference between urban education and ashram education. Urban education is associated with hardship, whereas ashram education is without any hardship. There is nothing wrong in enrolling as college students in towns, provided one keeps in mind the purpose of education. One should not develop unnecessary contacts and get distracted from the designated path. Your character depends on the environment around you. In olden times, people felt:

"If wealth is lost, nothing is lost,  
If health is lost, something is lost,  
If character is lost, everything is lost."

On the contrary, modern youth feel if wealth is lost, everything is lost, and if character is lost, nothing is lost.

I think that I am troubling you by talking too much. I can speak to you for any length of time, but I never indulge in unnecessary talk. Remember that you are the future torchbearers of the Sri Sathya Sai Organization. The elders of the organization today may be aged and have their own constraints. Youth have to take the initiative

to lead the organization from the front. Each state organization should have its own youth leader to take up major responsibilities. Ensure that you keep yourself distant from politics. Work for the welfare and progress of society. That is the greatest spiritual practice.

Let your behavior be exemplary wherever you are. As long as you are in Prasanthi Nilayam, you lead a disciplined life. Continue to do the same even after you leave this place. Be always immersed in the divine, not in deep wine. Only those who are immersed in the divine are dear to me and are my dear friends. If you want to be dear friends of Swami, conduct yourself in the divine manner. In such a case, you do not need to come here, I will come to you wherever you are. I will come there, wherever you stay. I am with you, in you, around you and behind you. I am not separate from you. You and I are one.

(Bhagavan sang two bhajans, and the devotees ecstatically joined him in chorus.)

*Vahe* guru means there is only one guru and he is God. He is the goal. Do not go hither and thither from one guru to another. Under all circumstances, hold on to God steadfastly. God is your true guru. You can call him by any name. In the word guru, "gu" stands for *gunaatheetha* (attributeless), and "ru" for *ruparahita* (formless). So guru is formless and beyond attributes. God is your true guru.

Having come here, spending lots of money and energy, put into practice whatever you have learned. Once you return homes, share the experiences and joy with your fellow youth. Only then the purpose of attending the Second World Youth Conference will be served. Serve your fellow beings and sanctify your lives.

"Neither by penance, nor by undertaking pilgrimages nor by going through sacred texts,



can one cross the ocean of samsara. Only through Youth Conference will be served. Serve your fellow beings and sanctify your lives.

“Neither by penance, nor by undertaking pilgrimages nor by going through sacred texts, service can one redeem himself.”

(Sanskrit Sloka)

Serve without any expectation of reward. That is *nishkama* yoga. No benefit accrues to you if you expect a reward for the service rendered in various villages. Do not boast that you have served in many villages. Work silently and

definitely, God will shower his grace on you.

I am very happy that you bore many inconveniences here with love and patience after having traveled long distances. You might not have had the food of your choice here. Never mind, what is important is a good head, which will lead you to God. You should eat to live, not live to eat.

Embodiments of Love! Hoping that you will lead a happy and ideal life, I bless you all and bring my discourse to a close.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Second World Youth Conference  
Valedictory Discourse, November 21, 1999



## Recycled

---

*Plummeting, pummeling  
To depths eternal,  
Bodies wrinkled, tortured, crazed,  
Die off slowly, fade away.  
As the wheel creaks round once more,  
We each don skins anew to play  
A game predestined,  
Or, so they say.  
Smaller skins to grow into,  
But baggage heavy, dark in hue.  
Each new turn completes the cycle.  
I wonder, I ponder,  
Who could I be?  
Fruitless action,*

*For me, a full tree.  
Is this the reason?  
Could it possibly be?  
Or is it reasons  
Of self or of id  
That hamper my return  
To a blissful state  
Somewhere between  
Asleep and awake.  
Why can't I stop it?  
Returning so soon,  
Each time I end up  
In the eternal womb.*

—F. Irani

La Mirada, California

# Sathya Sai Book Center of America

305 West First Street, Tustin, California 92780-3108

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

Book Center hours: Monday-Friday 10:00 to 4:00, Saturday 10:30 to 3:00

---

## For Children:

**Fables from the Hollow** by **J. F. Ziegler** with colorful, modern illustrations by **J. F. Ziegler** and **P. L. Blackwood**—This volume has large print, illustrations with games and quizzes to hold a child's interest. 62-pages BW-061 \$5.00

**Spiritual Stories, A compilation of stories to help develop human values in children**, compiled and rewritten by **Loraine Burrows**—This book of 14 short stories has colorful illustrations on nearly all of the 78-pages. BE-009 \$7.00

## Adult Reading:

**In His Image** by **Madeleine Guillemin**—The author says, "This book was born of the need to provide answers to the questions that plague many people—questions like: What makes people think and act the way they do? Is there any hidden meaning and purpose to the things that happen to us?" 251-pages BI-083 \$5.00

**Truth Is Only One** by **Ann Cleveland**—Ms. Cleveland's most recent book is liberally laced with quotations by Sathya Sai Baba with comments by the author who explains the loving philosophy of Bhagavan. 190-pages and an index BI-088 \$2.75

**Sri Sathya Sai Samarchanam** by "Santisri" **Jandhyala Venkateswara Sastry**—Mr. Narasimhan, the late editor of *Sanathana Sarathi*, explains this book in the foreword as, "... a work of two hundred slokas presented as a pious offering at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan Baba." The book is comprised of Sanskrit, then English pronunciation of the Sanskrit, then an English translation/explanation of the slokas. 67-pages BI-087 \$2.00

**Life, Death and Liberation, A Compilation of Divine Discourses** Compiled by **Valentina B. Patacsil**—The title of this book explains its well-presented contents in a clear and loving manner as the author has selected the text from Swami's discourses. 196-pages BI-084 \$5.00

**Anyadha Saranam Nasthi** [subtitle] **Other than You, Refuge there Is None** by **Smt. Vijaya-kumari**—This remarkable volume contains many never before told stories of the early years of Sathya Sai Baba, as well as, some unusual photos of his early life. This biography of Baba is often profound and sometimes amusing. 393-pages BI-006 \$4.00

*The seeker has to be very vigilant about his point of view. The objects he wishes to visualize, the things he longs to rest his eyes on. For it is vision that determines attachment, passion, sorrow or happiness.*

—Sathya Sai Baba



### Five Decades of Divine Discourses by Sathya Sai Baba

|                                                                          |             |        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|--------|
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. I</i> ..... (1953-1960, revised edition)..... | BA-001..... | \$4.00 |
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. II</i> .... (1960-1962).....                  | BA-002..... | 4.00   |
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. III</i> .... (1963-1964).....                 | BA-003..... | 2.50   |
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. IV</i> .... (1963-1965).....                  | BA-004..... | 3.50   |
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. V</i> .... (1964-1967).....                   | BA-005..... | 3.50   |
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. VI</i> .... (1967-1968).....                  | BA-006..... | 3.50   |
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. VII</i> .. (1966-1971).....                   | BA-007..... | 4.00   |
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. VIII</i> .. (1970-1973).....                  | BA-008..... | 3.00   |
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. IX</i> .... (1974-1975).....                  | BA-009..... | 3.00   |
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. X</i> .... (1975-1980).....                   | BA-010..... | 3.00   |
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XI</i> .. (1971-1972, revised edition).....   | BA-011..... | 4.50   |
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XII</i> .. (1973-1974, revised edition).....  | BA-012..... | 5.00   |
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XIII</i> .. (1975-1977, revised edition)..... | BA-013..... | 4.00   |
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XIV</i> .. (1978-1980, revised edition).....  | BA-014..... | 5.00   |
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XV</i> .. (1981-1982, new edition).....       | BA-015..... | 5.00   |
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XVI</i> .. (1983, new edition).....           | BA-016..... | 3.00   |
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XVII</i> .. (1984, new edition).....          | BA-017..... | 3.50   |
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XVIII</i> (1985, new edition).....            | BA-018..... | 3.50   |
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XIX</i> .. (1986, new edition).....           | BA-019..... | 3.50   |
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XX</i> ... (1987, new edition).....           | BA-020..... | 3.50   |
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XXI</i> .. (1988, new edition).....           | BA-021..... | 3.50   |
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XXII</i> .. (1989, new edition).....          | BA-022..... | 3.50   |
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XXIII</i> (1990, new edition).....            | BA-023..... | 3.50   |
| <i>Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XXIV</i> (1991, new edition).....             | BA-024..... | 4.50   |

### Divine Discourses Given to College Students by Sathya Sai Baba

|                                                                        |             |        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|--------|
| <i>Summer Showers in Brindavan, 1972</i> (revised edition).....        | BA-101..... | \$4.00 |
| <i>Summer Showers in Brindavan, 1973</i> .....                         | BA-102..... | 3.00   |
| <i>Summer Showers in Brindavan, 1974</i> .....                         | BA-103..... | 3.00   |
| <i>Summer Roses on the Blue Mountains, 1976</i> (revised edition)..... | BA-104..... | 3.50   |
| <i>Summer Showers in Brindavan, 1977</i> (revised edition).....        | BA-105..... | 4.50   |
| <i>Summer Showers in Brindavan, 1978</i> (revised edition).....        | BA-106..... | 4.50   |
| <i>Summer Showers in Brindavan, 1979</i> (revised edition).....        | BA-107..... | 3.50   |
| <i>Summer Course, Indian Culture and Spirituality, 1990</i> .....      | BA-108..... | 3.00   |
| <i>Summer Showers in Brindavan, 1993</i> .....                         | BA-109..... | 3.50   |

### This Series, Written by Sathya Sai Baba, Contains the Wisdom of the Ages

|                                                                 |             |        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|--------|
| <i>Bhagavatha Vahini</i> (on the life of Sri Krishna).....      | BA-301..... | \$5.00 |
| <i>Dharma Vahini</i> (on morality, revised edition).....        | BA-302..... | 3.00   |
| <i>Dhyana Vahini</i> (on meditation, revised edition).....      | BA-303..... | 2.00   |
| <i>Gita Vahini</i> (on the classic, <i>Bhagavad Gita</i> )..... | BA-304..... | 3.00   |
| <i>Jnana Vahini</i> (on wisdom).....                            | BA-305..... | 1.50   |
| <i>Prasanthi Vahini</i> (on divine peace).....                  | BA-307..... | 2.00   |
| <i>Prema Vahini</i> (on divine love).....                       | BA-309..... | 2.00   |

For a more complete book list, contact the Sathya Sai Book Center and request the **free** catalog.

# **SATHYA SAI NEWSLETTER, USA**

P. O. Box 660908  
Arcadia, California 91066-0908

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

**DATED MATERIAL**

**Nonprofit Org.**

**U.S. Postage**

**Paid**

**Arcadia, CA**

**Permit No. 71**

© *Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA*—Summer 2000, June, July, August  
Printed under the auspices of the Sathya Sai Book Center of America. **All rights reserved.**  
**Reproduction in whole or in part—without written permission—is prohibited.**



# Sathya Sai Service Opportunities



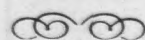
Vol. 16, No. 1 ♦ Summer 2000

## SAI SERVICE INTO THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

The U.S. Sai Organization has come a long way since it first started discussing service in the 1970s. One Center then reported, "We are just waiting to be called so that we may serve." Talk of service was widespread, and many members were making their first attempt at individual service. By the 1980s, the *Sathya Sai Newsletter* could report that "all 75 Sai Centers and study groups throughout the United States are collecting food and clothing for the needy in their communities." The decade also saw a proliferation of visits to institutions as well as holiday projects. Then came the 1990s, with its wide array of simple to complex Center projects—large-scale feedings, shelter improvement, highway cleanups, growing food for the hungry, sewing gifts for sick children...and the beginnings of regional and even national projects, such as the "Help Ever—Hurt Never" environmental service.

What will U.S. Sai Service be like in coming decades? To find out, *Sathya Sai*

*Service Opportunities* asked devotees across the country the question, What do you see as the future of Sai Service in the United States? Below are the answers we received—some of them focused on what Sai service should be like, others on ideas of what it would be like, but all offering food for thought as we move to consider the Sai Organization's future at the next World Conference.



I see a stronger focus on regional service, or even national service activities, such as a national disaster response. I would like to see Sai Centers become true service centers, with service given at least as much, or even more, weight than *bhajans* [devotional singing]. Service should be discussed at every Center meeting. In an interview I had, Baba asked, "What's the best way to reach God?" People responded to the question: "Meditation." "Thinking of you." "Saying the name." But Swami said the best way to

reach God is to "Love All, Serve All." I would like people when they hear the name of Sai Baba to think immediately of service. That connection will happen when the consciousness and identity of Center members is focused on service. It could also be promoted by public workshops on how to develop the service aspect of one's business.

—**Singer**, Nursing Home Project  
Santa Cruz, CA, Sai Center

I think service will be expanded. There's so many people of all ages interested in Sai today. The name is spreading. So naturally, more service will be done because that's His path—love and service. Just about everybody in groups I go to seems to know about Sai Baba. And people want to serve; they want to help. I think there will be worldwide service projects—just like the large projects they have throughout India.

—**Food Server**, Sai Feeding  
Brooklyn, NY, Sai Center

(Continued on page 2)



*The Sai organization has no room for distinctions of race, religion, caste, class, or community. All should regard themselves as children of the one God. When they are united by this sense of divine kinship, they will act with love towards all. They should shed all narrow and limited ideas and engage themselves in service with a heart full of love for all. True selfless service can come only out of a pure and loving heart.*

*There are any number of service organizations in the world. The uniqueness of the Sathya Sai Service Organization consists in the fact that it regards selfless service as a form of service to the Divinity that is in each being. The bliss that is derived from such service is incomparable. It is a spiritual experience.*

—**Sathya Sai Baba**  
*Sathya Sai Speaks*, Vol. 17, Chapter 27



## Sai Service into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

*Continued from page 1*

I think people in Centers are going to get directly involved in training underprivileged children to use computers. These kids need to learn about computers so they'll be much better prepared for the job market. And a lot of devotees who know about computers are looking for service projects. The devotees are going to go to schools to do the training because that's the easiest way to teach a bunch of kids.

—Cook, Soup Kitchen Project  
Memphis, TN, Sai Center

I see movement towards filling the needs of our particular culture. Many of the models Swami has given us are better suited for rural India or India in general. We're going to move toward areas of service more appropriate for this culture, such as prison projects, assistance to single-parent families, and focus on the needs of the elderly.

—Regional Service Coordinator,  
Northeast Region

Because of the expansion of the Education in Human Values program, there will be more programs with children. And devotees will go into more individual service, since they want to participate, but

the projects organized by the group are not always conducive to their lifestyle or schedule. Greater numbers of people are also becoming involved in group service projects. People don't feel so diffident about participating in activities now as they did when we started out. Today, there's more information and suggestions from the organization itself, so people in the groups are becoming more service-oriented. They have increased awareness. More awareness is leading to more action. Hopefully we will progress into making service an attitude and a way of life.

—Cook, Sai Shelter Feeding  
North Dallas, TX, Sai Center

## CHILDREN'S SERVICE: INSPIRING THE JOY OF GIVING

A new Sathya Sai Education (SSE) teacher once expressed her concern that a recent nursing home service project did not seem to inspire the children. They went from room to room, visiting the residents listlessly. How could they grow through the experience? she wondered.

Whether you're a teacher or a devotee whose offspring participate in Center or family service projects, you may at times have found yourself wondering the same thing. So how do you infuse children with the joy of service?

- Enjoy service yourself—it's contagious.
- Tell them stories of children like themselves, who are examples of helpers motivated by love.
- Select the kind of project that allows children to join in the planning, therefore ensuring their participation in the activity.
- Encourage them to talk about their feelings after the project.
- Begin by helping children to share material gifts (toys, food, etc.).
- Lead them into more abstract forms of sharing (e.g., listening to the elderly, spending time entertaining at hospitals).
- Enrich them, when appropriate, with the necessary skills for the activity (e.g., explaining visiting

etiquette before a trip to a nursing home).

- Help them discover their feelings as they walk the path of service.

Some children do service because they need the service hours for school, while others say that it makes them feel good. Then still others are like little Brian Farish, of Tulsa, Oklahoma, who serve because of an inner need to assuage the pain of those suffering.

Brian, six, had sat in his Tulsa home as his mother read a news story to him about a Philadelphia boy's personal crusade to help the homeless. Leah Farish hoped the story would be an example for her young son. It was. Brian had listened intently as she read, saying nothing. Three days later, Brian told his mother his plan: He would give all his money to the poor. At the time, Brian had only 45 cents. But he vowed that before Christmas he would raise \$50 for those less fortunate. He sold cans and bottles for recycling, peddled signs with anti-drug slogans to his neighbors, and performed chores and errands. After four months of hard work, he reached his goal.

Soon afterwards, Brian learned about a family of three brothers—aged four, five, and six—who would not have a real Christmas that year. During a 45-minute shopping spree, Brian picked out crayons

and sidewalk chalk, a large toy truck, a stuffed toy soldier, a walkie-talkie, and a sponge baseball and bat. Then he and his mother wrapped and delivered the gifts. "He's always been interested in the poor," his mother said, "I believe that is a gift from God."

Parents and teachers need to consciously inculcate that service is not just an activity, but an attitude. Any service project planned for children should first of all bring them joy; the enthusiasm thus generated will slowly but surely lead the children to realize the actual purpose of service as they grow older. Such an approach can help ensure that for them service becomes a way of life.

—SSE Teacher

North Dallas, TX, Sai Center

*Sathya Sai Service Opportunities* is published under the auspices of the Sathya Sai Baba Central Council of the United States of America. Articles and photographs on group or individual service projects are welcome. Please send all contributions to the editor, Judith Wechsler, 131 Joralemon Street, Apt. 66, Brooklyn, NY 11201. We reserve the right to use our discrimination in selecting and editing material for publication.



# SAI SERVICE FOR ALL SAI CENTERS AROUND THE WORLD

*A philosophic and practical overview of selfless service, presented in Puttaparthi, India, in November 1990 by J. Jagadeesan, Central Coordinator, Region 8 (Far East I), World Sai Organization, who has written several books on Baba. Here is the final installment of our four-part series.*

## What Type of Service?

The type of service that can be undertaken by Sai Centers depends on the environment and need. Broadly, the world can be divided into three major economic groupings:

1. Developing countries, or the Third World
2. Newly industrialized countries
3. Advanced countries of the developed world

Opportunities for service abound in all these environments, although often differing in degree and kind.

## Developing Countries

In developing, or Third World, nations, the poor, sick, and needy are highly visible and easily identifiable. Often in these areas both physical and spiritual needs must be catered to. Homes for the aged, the handicapped, and orphans need rebuilding and improvement, as well as provision of food and clothing. People living in urban squatters areas and outlying villages need similar assistance. Emergency aid during natural disasters, as well as medical camps, can bring great relief to the suffering. All these activities are essential services that will be welcomed as "God sent."

## Newly Industrialized Countries

In the newly industrialized nations, the rapid pace of industrial or economic development has created a veneer of prosperity in urban centers. Often this rapid growth results in tremendous socio-economic strains on the fabric of society. New slums develop near urban centers as a result of rural-urban migration, and the fabric of traditional family life is torn apart, leading to rapid degradation of traditional values. A tremendous amount of service can be performed here—not only by providing physical help, as in developing countries, but by launching human values programs for children, youth, and adults, reminding them of traditional values.

## Developed Countries

In the advanced or developed nations, some people believe that in a social welfare state the government looks after all the requirements of the needy. This assumption may well be generally correct, but many blind spots still exist—untouched by government programs. The slum areas and urban squatters of some highly developed nations equal the horrors of those in developing nations, although you may not be aware of them. If you live in a middle- or upper-class neighborhood, you will not see destitutes in your area. However, if you go out to poor neighborhoods, you will be able to see the plight of the needy—in slums, under bridges, along the roadside. In winter their suffering becomes all the more acute. Sai Centers can either help directly or through many of the halfway houses, food centers, and so forth of other organizations.

Another area where service can help in a social welfare state is the nightmare of loneliness and neglect (not physical, but emotional) of the old, youth, street kids, and so on. Here what you must be prepared to give may not be so much clothing, food, or funds—but more valuable than all this—your TIME. And through the time you give, the needy will also feel the love and kindness often absent in their lives.

In pockets of poverty, tremendous opportunities exist for human values programs to aid youth and children. The success of such programs in attracting these young people will depend on the degree of love and genuineness they feel emanating from you. However, once the young are convinced of your love, they will love you in return and will do anything for you, including transforming themselves to please you.

Of course, the normal Education in Human Values techniques may not apply here. In this environment, you must encourage young people to imbibe values

through a sports, drama, song, service, or other activity that will develop their talents while molding their character.

Thus it is that Sai Centers must activate themselves by eradicating the feeling that everything is difficult and launch programs of love in action. *The service of need must replace the service of convenience.* Two questions must guide every program of action:

1. Is the program noble?
2. Are your motives pure?

If the answer to both these questions is yes, then all you need to do is act and Sai will look after the rest. He will lead you to success.

*Adapted from "White Paper on Service: Sai Service—for All Sai Centers Around the World," by J. Jagadeesan, 1990.*

## ENERGYSAVERS

- Keep refrigerators and freezers away from heat-generating appliances, such as stoves, water heaters, and clothes dryers. The heat will make the cooling devices work harder.
- Put Turn Off signs above light switches to remind yourself or family members to flip the switch before leaving a room.
- Use lids on pots. Covering a pot traps steam, helping food cook faster.
- Clean out and unplug your refrigerator when you go away for more than a month. Be sure to leave the door open and place a box of baking soda inside for a fresh scent.
- Walk or use a bicycle instead of a car whenever possible. You'll not only save energy but become more fit as well.
- Turn off all televisions, radios and other appliances not being used.





# THE LETTER

*A short story about a situation that could happen to any one of us*

A woman went to her mailbox and found one letter there. She picked it up and looked at it before opening it; there was no stamp, no postmark, only her name and address. She read the letter.

Dear Madam:

I am going to be in your neighborhood this weekend, and I'd like to stop by for a visit.

Love always,

God

Her hands were shaking as she placed the letter on the table. "Why would the Lord want to visit me?" she said to herself. "I'm nobody special. I don't have anything to offer. I'll have to run to the store and buy something for a meal." She reached for her purse and counted out only two dollars and change. But she thought that maybe she could still get some bread, jam, and milk for that modest amount. So she threw on her coat and hurried out the door. A loaf of bread, a carton of milk, and a jar of jam left her

with a grand total of 10 cents to get her though to the end of the week, but she felt good as she headed home, her meager offerings tucked under her arm.

Suddenly, a man called out to her, "Hey lady, can you help us?" The woman had been so absorbed in her plans for the weekend visit that she hadn't even noticed two figures huddled in an alleyway. They were dressed in rags. "Look, lady, we have no jobs and we are really hungry and tired, so if you could help us, we would really appreciate it." She looked at the two people; they were dirty, smelled bad, and seemed like they could get some work if they wanted to. "Sir, I'd really like to help you," she said. "But I am a poor woman myself, and all I have is this food that I bought for a really important guest who is coming to my home for a meal."

"Well, OK, lady," the man said. "We understand. Thanks anyway." The man put his arm around his wife's shoulder and headed back into the alleyway. As she watched them leave, she felt a twinge in her heart. "Sir, wait!" the woman yelled after them. "Look, why don't you take

this food. I'll figure out something else to feed my guest." The man and his wife were very grateful and took the food.

The woman was starving and quite worried by the time she reached her home. The Lord was coming to visit, and she had nothing to offer Him. As she looked for her door key, she saw another letter in her mailbox. "That's odd," she thought. "The mailman doesn't usually come twice in one day." She took out the envelope, opened it, and read the letter.

Dear Madam:

It was so good to see you. Thank you for the lovely meal of bread, jam, and milk. I really enjoyed it.

Love always,

God

"The gift of food to the hungry is the noblest of all gifts." —Sathya Sai Baba

— Anonymous

Adapted from *Flowers at His Feet*,  
winter 1999

## LOVE ALL AND SERVE ALL

*You can serve God only through love and effort. The best way to serve God is to Love All and Serve All.*

*There was an old lady in Mathura. In the darkest hour of the night, she used to take blankets and distribute them to poor people who were shivering in the cold. One day she was bending her head as she served the poor. A few youths gathered there and asked her, "Oh, Lady, while you are doing such selfless work, why are you bending your head as you walk?" She replied, "God has given so much wealth to people with so many hands. But I am able to serve people with only my two hands. Is that not something about which I should be ashamed?"*

*We are not prepared to share with others and are only ready to receive whatever we can get. This is like one-way traffic. "There is no chance for immortality without sacrifice," say the Vedas. You should sacrifice and share what you have with others. Then only may you have peace. Make others happy. Do the discipline of sacrifice, and provide help to other devotees. Charity, not decoration with bangles, makes the hands beautiful.*

*... You should develop the feeling of May all the worlds be filled with peace and joy, and should aspire for world unity.... Now there is only community and enmity, which has to be eliminated.*

*Universal love is the binding factor that will unite all humanity. Therefore, cultivate universal love.*

☪ Sathya Sai Baba

*Sathya Sai Speaks*, Vol. 26, Chapter 3

