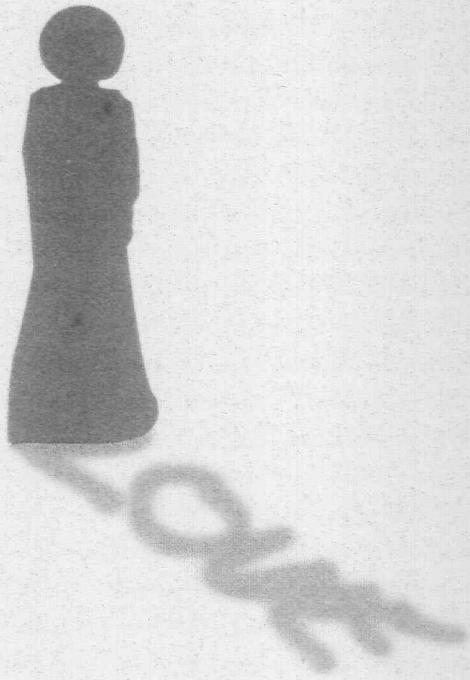


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Sathya Sai

Newsletter, USA

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Where Do We Find Joy?

He who has subdued his mind will be the same in good times and in bad. Grief and joy are but aberrations of the mind. It is only when the mind is associated with the senses and the body that it is affected, agitated, and modified. When one takes an intoxicant, one is not aware of pain, is it not so? How does this happen? The mind is then detached from the body, so it is not bothered by physical pain or discomfort. Similarly, the Jnani too has immersed his mind in the Atma (the Divinity within each of us); he can establish mental peace and quiet by disciplining the mind.*

The Jnani gets full bliss from his own Atma; he does not seek bliss anywhere outside himself. In fact, he will have no desire or plan to find joy in anything external. He is satisfied with the inner joy he gets. The greatness of a Jnani is beyond description, even beyond the imagination. . . .

The thief who has robbed us of the precious gem of Atma is no other than the mind; so if the robber is caught, threatened, and punished, the gem can be regained. The possessor of the gem is immediately honored by being installed as Brahman (the eternal absolute consciousness).

—Sathya Sai Baba

Jnana Vahini, pp 11-13

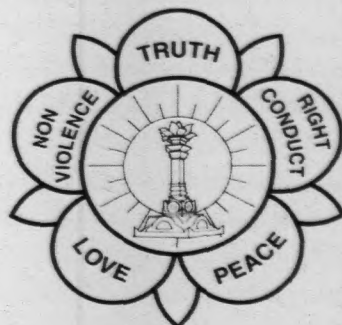
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* *Jnani* is a person who identifies with the basic truths of the universe; one who has reached the summit of spirituality; one who has knowledge of the Absolute.

Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA

*This publication is dedicated with Love and Devotion to
Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba*

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—Barbara Bozzani, Editor

Sai's Message



For me, all are good; there are no bad people. I love everybody. All are equally dear to me. Some people may harbor doubts, but they must be made to understand the reasons with proper explanation and counseling. Those who develop negative feelings without enquiring

into the good and bad of things in this objective world will only spoil their own lives.

As far as possible, you should not entertain doubts, for as long as doubts persist, you will not have peace of mind. Cultivate love. When your heart is filled with love, everything is love only. There will be no room for hatred at all. Where there is no hatred, there is no anger. When there is no anger, there will be no scope for violence.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Divine Discourse
November 4, 2002

A Presidential Visit

President of India speaks at 21st Convocation of Sri Sathya Sai Institutes

The President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, paid a state visit to Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba at His ashram in Puttaparthi, South India, on November 22, 2002. News media throughout the world picked up on this event.

In the United States, the New York Times (INTERNATIONAL, December 1, 2002) proclaimed in headlines, "A Friend in India to All the World: Leaders Flock to the Holy Man with an All-Embracing Creed."

In the San Antonio Express-News (WORLD, December 1, 2002), headlines read, "Even the Powerful Are Charmed by Tolerance-Preaching Swami: He Attracts Leaders from Outside India."

The catalyst for such exciting headlines was the visit of President Abdul Kalam, a nuclear physicist and Muslim, who was present at the 21st Convocation ceremonies for college students of both Sri Sathya Sai Institutes of Higher Learning—the women's university at Anantapur and the men's university at Prasanthi Nilayam.

Bhagavan's two Institutes of Higher

Learning are on separate campuses, and the women students from Anantapur had traveled to the ashram at Prasanthi Nilayam (Abode of the Highest Peace) to receive their

graduation certificates, have Sai Baba's *darshan* (opportunity to see a holy being), and receive His blessings.

It should be mentioned that the graduates of these two institutes have made their mark in the world during the past 21 years in a very positive way.

These graduates are

sought after as employees in all fields of endeavor. They are exceptional not only for their intelligence but also for their workplace ethics, compassionate service to society, honesty, and more—all as a result of the religious tolerance and values-based education that is given "free" at all the schools founded by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

President Abdul Kalam stated in his written speech (from which he deviated and spoke extemporaneously part of the time):

"I take this opportunity to congratulate the young graduates for their achievement. I greet the Vice Chancellor (Dr. Giri),



President Abdul Kalam, second from the right, follows Baba during the Convocation processional.



professors, teachers, and staff for their excellent contribution in shaping young

minds to contribute to the nation in multiple fields. It is a great honor for me that the Chancellor, Swamiji, has given me this opportunity to share my thoughts at this convocation.

“Is values-based education possible? The Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning has given an answer in the affirmative! Our ultimate goal is: All human beings should be prosperous and have all forms of security, such as food security, social security, and future security for their children. How to achieve these [goals]? National security and economic prosperity are interconnected.

“*Sathya* (truth), *Dharma* (right action), *Shanti* (peace), and *Prema* (divine love) are the eternal human values. Effort and endeavor are man’s duty. Success or failure is God’s domain. On this campus I see high caliber graduates bubbling with creativity. There is a virtual presence of divine blessings all around. I can sense intervention to relieve people’s pain, difficulties, and problems. The effect of this place shows how a *Guru* (spiritual teacher) can integrate spiritual wealth [into society].



“Who can illustrate such beautiful connectivity like this between heart, character, nation, and the world?”

—Dr. Abdul Kalam, speaking about Swami



“When I was contemplating what thoughts I could share with you young gra-

duates, a beautiful divine message [of Sathya Sai Baba’s] was ringing in me:

When there is righteousness in the heart, there is beauty in the character.

When there is beauty in the character, there is harmony in the home.

When there is harmony in the home, there is order in the nation.

When there is order in the nation, there is peace in the world.

“Who can illustrate such beautiful connectivity like this between heart, character, nation, and the world? This is a divine statement; this can come only from a divine personality who transforms religion into spirituality.... The purpose of real education is to initiate a learning process that transforms children into good human beings with knowledge and values. My dear young friends, you are truly blessed with this divine environment where the song I referred to is sung by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.”

—Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam,
President of India, from his speech of
November 22, 2002

The Responsibility of Women: Character Building

Develop virtuous conduct and reclaim the ideals of culture

Divinity shines resplendently throughout the entire universe, and the universe is encompassed by Divinity. There is an intimate and inseparable relationship between God and the universe. Listen to this truth, oh valorous sons of Bharat (India)! (Telugu Poem)

Birthplace of Spirituality

From time immemorial, India has demonstrated the pristine values of friendship and harmony. India is the very birthplace of spirituality, virtues, charity, and righteousness. It is the land of peace and prosperity. Since ancient times, Indians have worked intensively to establish these values on earth. No country equals the land of India in proclaiming and propagating the truth.

There are many in India who have made great progress in the field of spirituality. This is the sacred land that was ruled by Lord Rama. This is the land where Lord Krishna taught the *Bhagavad Gita*. This is also the land where the Sage Vyasa taught the *Vedas* and scriptures. It is the land where Sage Valmiki composed the *Ramayana* and taught the principles of truth and righteousness to humankind.

There is absolutely no equal to this country in spiritual values. Having been born in this sacred land of India, and having been called Indians, the people of India do not now come forward to propagate the ideals that this country stands for. Indians should respect

and revere their culture. They should follow their culture and set an ideal to others.

The wind that blows in India is suffused with truth. The very dust that rises from our feet is full of righteousness. The life of Indians is one of forbearance. The river Ganges that flows in this land is permeated with love. Why has India—the fountainhead of truth, righteousness, peace, love, and nonviolence—descended to such a deplorable state, despite the fact that since ancient times Indians have demonstrated these great ideals?

Ideals of Culture

Forbearance is the real beauty in this sacred land of Bharat. Of all rituals, adherence to truth is the greatest penance. The nectarine feeling in this country is like the feeling of love toward one's mother. (Telugu Poem)

Fortitude is the greatest virtue in this land; peace is its protective shield. What a pity it is that we who have been born in this land of India are unable to uphold our own heritage of cultural values. Young boys and

girls should study not to eke out a livelihood but with the sole purpose of demonstrating and propagating the ideals this country has stood for since ancient times. Modern boys and girls study for the sake of short-term benefits and not with the objective of experiencing and enjoying the tradition and culture of India.

Women's First Responsibility

If women go out for jobs, who will take care of the home? When husband and wife go out to offices, who will do the household work? If women go out to teach others' children, who will look after their own children? Just like men, if women also go to work, who will cook food in the kitchen? Earning money may solve some financial problems, but how will it resolve domestic problems? It seems unalloyed happiness is not the lot of womanhood.
(Telugu Poem)

Today's women, because they are educated, compete with men to take up jobs. There is nothing wrong in having a job; however, women must take care of their home needs before taking up additional work.

When both wife and husband go to offices, who will look after their children at home? As the mother is not at home to guide them properly, the children go astray. If both parents go out to jobs, they may be able to satisfy their desire for money, but there is every possibility that their children will get spoiled, because there will be no one at home to discipline them.

Whatever moral values you have learned, you must impart to your children.

Your education is worthwhile only when you tend to your children's progress.

Women must recognize their responsibilities and conduct themselves accordingly. There are many ideal examples of women in this regard. As Rajeswari Patel said, many women in the past developed virtues in themselves and led ideal lives. Savitri was one such example.

Women of those days not only discharged their household duties diligently but also brought up their children in a most ideal manner. They taught their children not merely by precept but by practice. However, we do not find many such ideal mothers today. They are more interested in earning money than in molding their children into ideal citizens. They can help the nation the most only by bringing up their children in an ideal manner. What is the point in women taking jobs and earning money when their children go astray with no one to restrain them?

So, first of all, women should look after their homes and children properly, devoting sufficient time to performing their household duties. The educated women of today employ cooks and maids to perform their household chores, thereby spending much of their earnings in paying their servants' salaries.

Ideal Examples

Chandramathi was a woman of sterling character. She always followed her husband, Harishchandra. When they encountered difficulties, she infused courage in him saying, "Oh king, you are highly intelligent and educated. Never give scope to weakness or

please turn to page 23

"He Knows Where to Find Me!"

A personal testimony of Sai's intervention

It was 1981 when I first saw Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba in a ten-minute clip at the end of Richard Bock's video, *The Lost Years of Jesus*. It was only a video. I wasn't prepared for what I felt. I commented to my friend, "Oh! My gosh! WHO IS THIS? I feel like I'm watching myself, but how can that be?"

Later, I realized that what I was experiencing was Atmic Consciousness, universal oneness with God, and that I was being called home. I began reading books about Him, but there was no Sathya Sai Baba Center where I lived at the time. I rationalized to myself that He was probably doing His work primarily on behalf of the people of India, anyway.

In 1984 I wrote and published *Your Spiritual Child* under my former name, Milicevic. It was a simple and successful little book on "educare" that emphasized respecting and encouraging the wisdom of children. I felt a presence while writing this book, yet when I inquired who it was I was told clearly, "It's not important."

The following year, my younger brother was killed hang-gliding. Grief immobilized me. Then in three successive dreams in one night,

Sai Baba chased me while I tried to hide from Him, ashamed that I was not a devotee. He didn't seem to care. He chased me all night long until I gave up, and He healed my broken heart by placing a wreath of honeysuckle on my head. I woke up totally renewed and rejuvenated. It was puzzling, though, why this amazing being was so persistent in periodically popping into my life.

The 1990s brought cancer deaths to most of my relatives—father, mother, younger sister, and aunt. I, too, had received an ominous cancer cell report from my doctor. It was during all of this that I received two invitations via strangers that I was to go see Sai Baba at His ashram in India. The first message, a third-party message, I flat out did not believe. In fact, at the time, I mumbled, "If Sai Baba is really who He says He is, He knows where to find me!"

The second message, however, got my attention. The summer of 1999, following my gloomy medical test results, I went camping alone in Chaco Canyon, New Mexico, homeland of the mysterious, ancient, ancestral Pueblo Indians, to plan my last will and testament. I had actually come into a neutral space of acceptance that I was going

to die, probably within a few months, based on the pattern of my relatives. I was tying up loose ends.

While sitting by my campfire with a cup of coffee and a notebook, a young female coyote approached me in my campsite. Knowing the background of animal omens, I knew something was up with this unusual visitation. She left and returned with a pilfered bread wrapper and began to eat the bread within about 50 feet of me. As it turned out,

the bread owner, a Japanese gentleman, walked by. I pointed out the coyote eating the bread, which he identified as his. At his approach, the

coyote ran away and we started to talk. I wasn't keen on socializing, yet something compelled me to speak; too many odd things were happening.

The conversation turned to the fact that he was a messenger and was trying to find someone who was in need of healing. I found this extremely synchronistic, yet I was cautious. When he questioned me as to whether I'd ever had a healing, I alluded to the dream when an unusual little Indian man with frizzy black hair and an orange robe healed me of a broken heart. He blurted out Sri Sathya Sai Baba's name and said, "You're the one I'm looking for!" From his backpack he retrieved a package of *vibhuti* (holy ash Sai Baba materializes for healing and blessing), put some on my forehead and tongue, and told me that whatever I had, I didn't have it anymore. I began to cry, hoping

he was right, yet afraid to get my hopes up. "And, by the way," he continued, "Sai Baba wants you to go see Him in India."

At that point I recalled my arrogant words, "If Sai Baba is really who He says He is, He knows where to find me." I began to feel a little nauseous.

This messenger explained that he had an arrangement to run errands, totally trusting Sai Baba, in exchange for [Baba's] healing of his daughter of cerebral palsy. He had left

upstate New York ten days previously on a bus, as directed telepathically by Sai Baba, to go to Chaco Canyon. I recalled I had not even thought

of coming to Chaco Canyon until two days before. This was more than I could fathom. How could Sai Baba know I was going to be there? I decided I would hold off my belief in the whole experience until the final test—the results of my next ultrasound and biopsy.

This messenger eventually went on to attend to further errands. I returned to my home and several days later, following my tests, the report came in that no trace of any cancer cells was found. A letter came from my doctor's office saying they didn't understand what had happened, and I didn't feel comfortable telling them about the healing! I booked my first journey to India in the spring of 2000, and my life has been vastly improved ever since.

There have been numerous incidents of Baba's interventions and interruptions both in my work and in my social environments.

"We can do much to promote human values in all walks of life, and we can be a light to everyone we encounter every day."

Sometimes these unexpected yet helpful nudges surprised me; occasionally they would shock me.

Communication and education are my areas of work. At age eleven I tutored my siblings. In adulthood I taught community courses in yoga, meditation, and creative visualization, and college courses in language arts. As an education reform advocate, I've worked on community education projects as a facilitator linking business people with educators in projects designed to support and empower youth. Communities that had been enemies for generations had healed their grudges and were actively working together. They worked as civic partners in the common goal of giving youth skills to become responsible citizens of integrity.

My local work in education reform successfully completed, I found myself guided to enroll in the diploma course at the Institute for Sathya Sai Education in Thailand. For eleven months I lived out of a suitcase, took cold showers daily, endured a seemingly unending bout with bronchitis, and dodged pythons crossing the road in this remote but

beautiful school. I loved the children, the kind-hearted staff, the visionary leadership of Dr. Art-Ong Jumsai, and the camaraderie of so many Sai devotees from around the world creating a network of Sathya Sai Schools.

In the United States, we are told, the time is not yet right for Sathya Sai Schools. We have to accept that there is good reason, of which we are not aware. Still, we can do much to promote human values in all walks of life, and we can be a light to everyone we encounter every day! How fortunate am I to have experienced such a profound personal transformation while working at the Sathya Sai School and at the Institute in Thailand. I know this training is extremely valuable for the coming times in these United States of America. We incarnated here for a reason.

—**Barbara Rousseau**
Mancos, Colorado

Life is a song, sing it. That is what Krishna taught by His life. Arjuna heard that song on the battlefield, where tensions were at their highest and when the fate of millions was to be decided by the sword....

You too must pass your days in song. Let your whole life be a bhajan (song of devotion). Believe that God is everywhere at all times, and derive strength, comfort, and joy by singing His glory in His presence. Let melody and harmony surge up from your hearts and let all take delight in the Love that you express through that song.

—**Sathya Sai Baba**
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. VIII, Ch. 24

Reflection

O Lord, make me a reflection of Your love
Polish me, smooth me, clean me bright

Till I shine with perfect light

Make me pure in heart and mind

Till Your image here you find

O Lord, make me a reflection of Your love

Make me clean and make me strong

A perfect instrument for Your song

Craft me, mold me, hold me true

Till I radiate only You

—Alova
Prasanthi Nilayam

Power of Baba's Vibhuti

"Take one step toward me..."

Swami has His own way of teaching. He is so playful; that is His *leela* (divine sport). Some time ago my husband and I went to Detroit for a three-day conference. Since it was a long weekend, the airports and hotels were all crowded, with long lines for everything including check-ins and check-outs. Hoping to avoid the crowds, we decided to take the afternoon flight to return to Los Angeles. Our flight was at 3:20 p.m. We came out of our 9th floor room at 10:30 a.m. to take the elevator to the lobby. Every time the elevator stopped, it was filled to capacity. I had never seen so many people in a hotel!

We went to the cafeteria, but brunch was canceled due to the excessive load of work and shortage of workers. We were seated for lunch. The server looked very red. When asked if she was okay, she said she had been working since 5:00 a.m. and was about to take a break. She took our simple order and left. We just sat there, since we still had plenty of time to get to the airport. Our waitress brought food around 1:30 p.m. She was friendly and inquired about Los Angeles, the weather, and so on. She also said that Detroit was having a heat spell and

that the temperature outside was 98 degrees and very humid. Since it might take more than an hour to go to the airport, we rushed out to the taxi stand. We got into a taxi with an elderly, black driver who was sort of a quiet type.

We did not realize how old, rugged, and worn out the taxi was until I asked the driver to turn on the air conditioner. He said in a very stern voice that the air conditioning was not working and to open the windows for fresh air. We opened the windows, but only hot air rushed in!

In situations like that, I always talk to Swami. I covered my ears and nose to block out the noise and fumes from the cars rushing by on either side at 90 mph. We were in the middle lane of a five-lane highway. I started chanting the *Gayathri* mantra (praising the Divine and invoking spiritual light), when suddenly we heard a very loud noise from the back of the car. We thought we had been hit by another automobile. The car started wobbling slowly, then stopped on the highway in the middle lane! Our good old driver said something, then coolly got out of the car, opened the trunk, and took out the jack, all

his rusted tools, and an old spare tire. He did all this in the middle of heavy, heavy traffic! We were baking inside the car.

I saw that poor old man try to lift the car with the jack, then take a break to stretch his aching back. Meanwhile, one motorist way across the other side yelled, "What the h— are you doing in the middle of the road! Move your——car to the side." So, our driver gathered all his tools, put the spare tire back in the trunk, and with the trunk still open started moving to the right curb without signaling!

My *Sai Rams* got more intense. I put out my arm, signaling toward the right curb. Some cars slowed, and those that couldn't passed on the wrong side! Still, our driver was cool and calm and never said a word. There was an area next to the curb where he could pull the car safely over and change the flat. I was clutching a packet of *vibhuti* (holy ash) and sprinkled some on the wheel, the tire, the driver's back, on all his tools, and even asked him to open his mouth, so I could put some on his tongue. I told him it

would make him feel better! He was very tired and thirsty. He replaced the tire but could only put back three lug nuts. My husband was helping him, but however they tried they couldn't get the last nut on.

The driver said, "It's okay; three nuts are enough." Then I thought, NO WAY! I rubbed some more *vibhuti* on my fingers and turned the lug nut. It went on very smoothly. The driver was very happy and said to my husband, "She did it! She did it, but I am sad I was not able to." He remained quiet until we reached the airport at 2:50 p.m. I checked in our luggage, and we went through security to our gate. When we got there we heard, "Now boarding numbers 50 to 70." Our boarding pass number was 50. We were right on time!

I can see Swami with His right hand raised, saying, "You took one step toward me, and I brought you all the way to your destination."

—Anonymous

Whoever one may be, in whatever condition one may be, if one gives no room for dispiritedness, if one has no fear at all, and if one remembers the Lord with unshaken faith and without any ulterior motive, all suffering and sorrow will fall away. ...With pure uninterrupted concentration on God, whatever one may be doing, feeling that everything is the Lord's creation and therefore One, unattached to sense objects, embracing all in equal love, dedicated to true speech—this is indeed the character of devotion.

...Whatever inconveniences one may encounter, one must try to carry on one's spiritual practice without any break or modification in the discipline.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 8, Ch. 20

The Body Is Just a "Motor-Car"

Give up identification with external appearances

"I am God come in human form to guide and show humankind that God resides in everyone and that you too will realize that you are God. This is the will of the Sai Avatar," declared Swami as a young lad in 1940. Later, Swami declared the purpose of His mission in many of His discourses: "To unite humankind into a single caste or family, through the realization of their common Divinity." Bhagavan has also said, "No one ignorant of the path can reach the goal, and no one unaware of the goal can choose the path."

The *Bhagavad Gita* declares in no ambiguous terms that the body is merely a vehicle: "There has never been a time when I, or you, or any of these kings and soldiers here did not exist—and there will never be a time when we cease to exist. Physical bodies appear and disappear, but not the *Atma* that lives within them." (*Gita*: Ch. 11, 12)

"This life force comes and dwells in a body for a while. While therein, it experiences infancy, childhood, youth, and old age, and

then, after death, passes eventually to a new body. Changes such as death pertain to the body, not the *Atma*. The wise person does not get caught up in the delusion that he or she is this body," Krishna said to Arjuna. "This

delusion is the very definition of ego." (*Gita*: Ch. 11, 13)

"Just as a person sheds a worn-out garment, the dweller within the body casts aside its time-worn

human frame and dons a new one. (*Gita*: Ch. 11, 22)

The real person is a spiritual being, an inextinguishable spark of God, and as such, that being is immortal. You cannot kill a part of God. This realization represents a big turnaround in a person's thinking, in identifying the self not as a body but as an immortal being who takes on a wonderfully designed vehicle—a body that is merely a sheath. This body enables the immortal being to live in the heavy density of matter on earth for a span of time. He who looks out from one set of eyes into another's, and in reverse, is an immortal, imperishable droplet of God

"When we embark on a spiritual journey it is important for us to recognize that the human body is merely a vehicle, analogous to a motorcar."

who cannot die. He or she always has been and always will be. Evolving through the experience of dipping into the earth plane, taking on a body again and again, the spiritual being evolves until the journey's end—the return to full consciousness or liberation.

When we embark on a spiritual journey it is important for us to recognize that the human body is merely a vehicle, analogous to a motorcar. Comparing the human body to a motorcar may affront our pride when we identify with the

outer world of this human drama subject to pride, ego, delusion, and attachment. Our bodies are but “motorcars” and our names but “license plates.” How? Just as a particular brand of

automobile—BMW, Honda, Rolls Royce, or Maruti—cannot roll off the production line of the factory of another make, so too babies of a particular genetic heritage cannot emerge from any other parent combination. Likewise, a motorcar cannot be on the road without a license plate, nor can an infant grow up and function without a name.

If the body is a motorcar and the name its license plate, then who is driving this motorcar? And, up to which point, on which roads? If the driver has an infinitely long journey to make and no single vehicle can complete the drive in its entirety, then the driver has to keep changing vehicles until the final destination is reached; isn't it so? Similarly, we have been through an enormous

number of bodies in previous lives and are bound to keep on reincarnating with new bodies until the goal is reached. It is complete ignorance to identify the driver with the car being driven, just as it is to identify the indweller or eternal spirit, the *jivatma* (individual soul), with the outer body.

The shape, size, and other features of a motorcar may be altered by a body shop specialist. Similarly, a plastic surgeon can change one's physical appearance after a

series of operations—even beyond recognition! A person may change license plate numbers at the Department of Motor Vehicles or his or her name with the help of an attorney. Suffice to say that the human

body is merely a vehicle for the individual soul's sojourn on earth, and the name is merely for identification of the individual. The body and name, like the motorcar and the license plate, apply only for a limited time until they get discarded. The eternal, undying spirit moves on to another body, just as the driver acquires a different motorcar when the previous one reaches the scrap heap.

Two consecutive motorcars from the same production line may find themselves driving along the roads of different continents. One may migrate to America, and a twin brother may make Australia his home. Without bodily identification, the entire drama of life would collapse. For continuation of this life-drama, which is merely a dream, the

*“The world today is torn apart
because of body-based external
identification, and childhood
conditioning that we are separate
from others on the basis of
affiliation with the body.”*

body and name must continue to be perceived as real. The identifying characteristics of race, religion, nationality, social status, affluence or poverty, culture, tradition, friends, relations, foes—all these belong only to the body. The world today is torn apart because of body-based external identification, and childhood conditioning that we are separate from others on the basis of affiliation with the body.

The inhabitants of this beautiful planet—the most spectacular of all floating celestial objects when viewed from afar, appearing like a shining diamond hurtling in space against the backdrop of the infinite blue space of Divinity—may self-destruct through the ignorance and separation caused by race, religion, or other pretenses, instead of

peacefully and happily sharing the earth's riches and resources.

We may memorize and repeat the scriptures and teachings of the prophets and Avatars, but to what avail? The sooner we transcend the limitations of the human frame and let our spirits soar high—for which purpose God has incarnated as Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba—the better things will be for ourselves and the planet. We have the power, through His mighty will, to enjoy the rare privilege of being truly human and becoming co-workers with our beloved Bhagavan for the redemption of this world through the injection of LOVE and UNITY.

—Dr. Sara Pavan
Prasanthi Nilayam

The body is the car in which you are riding to death. You may meet death at any moment while riding—some tree or truck or ditch or slush will bring it. Remember death. Remember that time is running out every moment; then, you will not be tempted to waste time in idle talk, or vain pursuits, or wanton mischief, or vulgar entertainment. Travel in the car carefully, slowly, with due regard to the needs of others on the road; do not greedily overtake others or compete in speed. Know the limitations of the vehicle and the road! Then you will not meet with any accident. Your journey will be a happy experience for you and the other drivers.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. III, Ch. 33



We Ask — Swami Answers

Guidance on conduct in Sai Centers

.....
Q We need some money for facilitating our service projects. How may we go about collecting funds?

A: You may say, “When Swami comes to our place, we must spend a lot on reception arrangements.” No! I do not need grand decorations, huge arches, flags, and such paraphernalia. I require only a microphone to communicate my advice to the people. Even a chair is superfluous; I can speak while standing. Spend sparingly for the minimum; do not involve yourselves in expensive luxuries. I would like you to spend any extra money that you have for the feeding of the poor or for any similar beneficial objective.

Attempts are being made in many places to build Sathya Sai *mandirs* (temples). But Sathya Sai will be happy only if He is installed in your hearts; that is the temple I like—not those others. When you seek to build those other temples, you have to go about seeking donations. Religion has declined in this land [and in other places] due to donation-seeking and donation-granting. Truly speaking, the most precious donation is a pure mind.

I shall tell you a method by which the extra funds needed for any undertaking of the centers may be collected. Estimate

beforehand what the expenses will be. Suppose it comes to about 1000 Rupees (\$400.00). Give that information to the members, and fix a day when they shall all meet. On that day, in an inner room keep a locked box with a slit in the lid. Let each go alone into the room and deposit into the box whatever he or she feels they can give. Members may also come away without depositing anything; they have the freedom to do so—there is no compulsion.

If funds are collected in the presence of the others, a person who is unable to give as much as another may feel humiliated, so this is the best method. When all have finished their turns, let the box be opened and the amount be counted. If it falls short of the estimate, divide the shortfall among all members equally, and collect the share from each of them. If there is some surplus, keep it for the next occasion.

Do not have lists, appeals, receipt books, and all the paraphernalia of fund-collecting campaigns. That will lead you to stratagems and falsehoods, competition and calumny. Do it in this quiet and sacred manner, suited to the holy objectives you have.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Sai Sarathi, January 2003

.....
Q Baba, how can I make my life easier and stop worrying?

A: Reduce the luggage you carry on the journey of life. Remember that all that is not you is luggage! You are not the body, so the body is an item of luggage. The mind, senses, intelligence, imagination, desires, plans, prejudices—the discontent and the distress—all are luggage! Jettison them soon to make your travel lighter, safer, and more comfortable. Learn this lesson from watching those who are humble and simple.

Offer to God the clear, calm lake of the mind. Even if the mind is wayward and freakish like a monkey, offer it to God. ... Give the mind to God; be sincere in your yearning [for God] and in your spiritual practice. ... Remember, formal scholarship and outward conformity are poor substitutes for real, genuine devotion.

—**Sathya Sai Baba,**

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. VII, Ch. 24

.....
Q Swami, how can we dedicate our lives to God and purify ourselves?

A: Recognizing the immanence of the Divine, one must dedicate all actions to the Divine. Dedication is to be carried out in various ways. Take the food that you consume. Offer it to God before you partake of it; that will make it pure and potent. Any act done for the glorification of God is rendered pure and potent thereby. Such acts are incapable of harming the doer, the beneficiary, or society, for they are saturated with Love, which is God.

God is the director of this puppet show, the manipulator of the strings. Go behind the screen and see Him. ... You have only to peep behind a flower or a cloud to see Him pulling the strings to show us the beauty within the drama of the elements. So also, you have only to peep behind your thoughts and feelings; there you will find the Inner Motivator! This process of looking inward is taught in the *Yogasastra* of India.... Keep the mind away from vice and greed. Keep the heart tender and compassionate.

One's age does not matter; a person may be old, but his or her heart must be fresh and tender, full of enthusiasm for service and a willingness to sacrifice. That will ensure one's passport to the spiritual realm.

Divinity is the end point of the journey of humanity. It is like the ripe fruit being the end of the journey from bud to blossom, from blossom to sour bitter fruit, from bitter fruit to sweet juicy ripeness. Grace is the sunlight that ripens the fruit. *Sadhana* (spiritual practice) is the sap that rises from the earth. Both are needed by the tree in order for it to yield fruit.

—**Sathya Sai Baba,**

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. VII, Ch. 24

SAI CONFERENCES AND RETREAT SCHEDULE FOR 2003

Date and Region	Location	Information
May 23-26 Memorial Day Weekend Mid-Atlantic Region 1	Russell Sage College Troy, New York (near Albany)	Rajan Govindan 12 Ludlowe Road New Canaan, CT 06840 (203) 966-8851 Fax: 203-966-5136
May 23-26 Memorial Day Weekend Mid-Atlantic Region 2	Pocono Valley Resort Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania	Arjun Chawla 12 Crestview Drive Cherry Hill, NJ 08003 (609) 381-7457 achawla@awsolutions.com
August 29-31 Labor Day Weekend South East Region 3	Contact Mr. Crowder for Location	Wayner P. Crowder 1220 M. L. King Drive, S. W. Atlanta, GA 30314 (404) 753-5157 wcrowd@aol.com
May 30-June 1 Mid-Central Region 4	Camp Mo-Val Union, Missouri (near St. Louis, MO)	Jack Feely 7490 Amherst Ave. St. Louis, MO 63130 (314) 862-1254 Fax: (314) 721-7574 jfeely@ta-stl.com
August 30-September 1 Labor Day Weekend North Central Region 5	Contact Mr. Garuda for Location (near Chicago)	Rao K. Garuda office: (800) 255-6086 (216) 751-6927 Fax: (216) 642-9213 raogaruda@aol.com raokgaruda@aol.com
October 24-26 Pacific Region North Region 6	Oregon State Park Silver Falls Conference Center, Oregon	Deborah Lewis 12139 S. E. 188 Street Renton, WA 98058 (425) 917-2265 dlewis750@cs.com
August One Day Only Pacific Region North Region 6	Seattle, Washington Call for Information	Deborah Lewis 12139 S. E. 188 Street Renton, WA 98058 (425) 917-2265 dlewis750@cs.com
August 30-September 1 Labor Day Weekend Northern California and Nevada Region 7	Walker Creek Ranch Petaluma, California (by car 45 minutes north of San Francisco)	Suzanne Slyman & Prema Rao 16398 Sanborn Road Saratoga, CA 95070 Suzanne: (510) 530-2670 Prema: (408) 868-9117 premsai@aol.com
May 23-25 Memorial Day Weekend Pacific Region South Region 8	Occidental College Los Angeles, California (near Glendale)	Harshad Patel 2447 Flintridge Glendale, CA 91206 (818) 952-9600 Fax: (818) 952-9060 hjp9@yahoo.com
August 29-31 Labor Day Weekend Pacific Region South Region 8	La Casa de Maria 800 El Bosque Road Montecito, California (near Santa Barbara)	Hemu Kalle 1685 Paseo Castille Camarillo, CA 93010 (805) 388-9360 hemukalle@yahoo.com
October 10-12 Southwest Region 9	YMCA Estes Park, Colorado	Jeremy Hoffer 2350 Holly Street Denver, CO 80207 (303) 377-7225
August 29-September 1 Labor Day Weekend Southwest Region 9	Bodhi Mandala Zen Center Jemez Springs, New Mexico (near Albuquerque)	Barbara Pepper 7320 Fourth Street N.W. Albuquerque, NM 87107 (505) 255-9545
May 23-25 Memorial Day Weekend Southwest Region 9	Camp Chapel Rock Prescott, Arizona	Panch Panchanathan 1498 W. Commerce Ave. Gilbert, AZ 85233 (480) 633-1196
Date: Not Established South Central Region 10	Location: Not Established	Nandini Mahadevan 26 Windward Court The Woodlands, TX 77381-4268 (281) 296-9223 Fax: (281) 419-4481

Announcements

Wishing Them Good Luck Mr. Arjun Chawla is now acting president of Mid-Atlantic Region 2, replacing Mr. Raj Sanmagalingam, who has been sent to Saudi Arabia. We thank Raj Sanmagalingam for the fine work he has done, and congratulate Arjun Chawla, wishing him a productive and pleasant term of office.

Sai Center Officers We also congratulate all new officers who have been selected (February, 2003) to serve in Sai Centers. The joy and responsibility of upholding the name and teachings of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is an awesome and spiritually rewarding responsibility. In answer to the question, "In what manner should a Sai Center Leader be chosen?," in *Sathya Sai Speaks*, Vol. VII, Swami said:

There must be an atmosphere of love and tolerance, not one of envy, excitement, or aggrandizement, when names are considered. Once a person is selected in an atmosphere of peace and love, cooperation and tolerance should prevail. Everyone must follow his or her directions and respect that person's guidance. It is only then that divine grace will be conferred upon you.

Open to All, So Mark Your Calendar On Saturday, February 1, 2003 and every **first Saturday of each month, from 3:30 to 5:30 pm**, the Northeast Region of Sathya Sai Baba Centers will be hosting an "Introduction to Sathya Sai Baba: His Life and his Teachings." The meetings will be held at the **Prasanthi Center, at 207 Oakwood Ave. in West Hartford, Connecticut**. Topics will include: "Who Is Sai Baba?" and "What Are His Principle Teachings and How Do They Affect Our Lives...?" Of course, there will be many more topics in the future. All are welcome; light refreshments will be served after the talks. **There is NO charge for the meetings; NO donations will be accepted.** For information contact: Chuck DiFazio at 860-613-0373.

Sai Young Adults Of course you know that the Sai Organization has a wonderful group of Young Adults, but did you know that they have their own publication? Not surprisingly, it is called the *Sai Young Adult Newsletter, USA* or *SYAN*. The publication is quarterly (four times a year) and is free. You have three choices for receiving *SYAN*: At their web site: www.syan.org, or e-mail at: subscriptions@syon.org, or order a hard copy at: **SYAN P.O. Box 4872, Cary, NC 27519-4872, USA**.

Warning Again! Swami continues to warn His devotees to be extremely careful of those who are raising funds using His name. Recently some Florida devotees were solicited by people claiming to be representatives of "Siddhi Shirdi Parthi Sai Trust." This has no

connection with the Sri Sathya Sai Baba Organizations. It is just another example of the many solicitations that devotees around the world have encountered from people using Bhagavan's name. It is always best to follow Swami's words and avoid unauthorized requests for money.

—**Phillip Gosselin, Ph.D.**, President, Sathya Sai Council, USA

We should be reminded that requests for funds are never made by or for the Sai Organization. (See page 16, "We Ask—Swami Answers," for the method of collecting moneys within the Sathya Sai Baba Centers for service activities only.) There are two authorized, tax-exempt trusts in the USA, and neither of them make requests for funds. They are:

Sathya Sai Society of America
P.O. Box 660908
Arcadia, CA 91066-0908
Tel: 909-337-7845 Fax: 909-337-5270

Sathya Sai Baba Society
305 West First Street
Tustin, CA 92780-3108
Tel: 714-669-0522 Fax: 714-669-9138

To receive the bimonthly (six issues a year)

Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA

305 West First Street, Tustin, California 92780-3108 USA

Please send a check or money order to: Sathya Sai Book Center of America.

- ☐ **Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA**, \$6.00 per year in USA. Mexico and Canada \$8.00 per year. All other countries \$16.00 per year.
- ☐ Audio Cassette Tapes of the **Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA** are available in the USA only. Six tapes per year \$18.00.
- ☐ **My friend or relative is blind** and would like to receive the cassette tapes at **no charge**.

Name: _____

Address: _____ Apt. # _____

City, State: _____ Zip Code: _____

All subscriptions start with the NEXT bimonthly issue.

It is not necessary to cut this out of your Newsletter. You may simply send your remittance and your address to the Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA, 305 West First Street, Tustin CA 92780-3108.

From Prasanthi Nilayam

To comply with Bhagavan's directions...

An important communication from Prasanthi Nilayam to all Central Coordinators and Sathya Sai Baba Centers around the world. All Sai Centers and devotees take note and put the following into effect:

Sai Ram. You are aware that the Charter of the Sathya Sai Organization provides that the organization is spiritually oriented and founded for the whole of mankind. It does not recognize any distinction or separation on the basis of religion, caste, color or creed, and it takes within its fold persons belonging to all religions in order to establish unity of all faiths.

It has come to our notice that some Sathya Sai Baba Centers are undertaking practices predominantly identifiable with a particular religion only. This will give the misleading impression to the public that the Sai Organization belongs to a particular religion, and that Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's teachings and the Sathya Sai Organization's activities are not universal in character.

You are requested to kindly advise all Sai Centers that they must suitably modify their practices where necessary in order to avoid creating such an impression.

Yours in the Service of Sai,
D. Hejmadi, Central Office
Prasanthi Nilayam
December 11, 2002

Let us take this important communication to heart. In this context, Sai Centers should review the content and conduct of their programs and activities. Let us reflect the spirit of universality in all our Sathya Sai Baba Centers with best wishes for the spiritual upliftment for all in the New Year.

Responsibility of Women

continued from page 6

waver from your chosen path. We are swimming in the ocean of truth. We should not give up our resolve until we reach the shore." In this manner, women of those days encouraged their husbands to follow the path of truth.

The women of India always upheld our sacred culture. Sita would not shed tears even in extremely trying circumstances. Though she was surrounded by demons, she was never afraid of them. She spent her time in the contemplation of her husband, Lord Rama, and in this she set an ideal. The same can be said of Damayanti also. She was a person of virtue. With her strong determination, she helped her husband to regain his kingdom. In this manner, women of those days earned a name for themselves with their sterling character and ideal motherhood. Women of today should make them role models.

Strive for Noble Character

The happiness that one derives from virtues is far superior to the happiness that can be gotten from the possession of wealth. Unfortunately, the educated youth are striving for wealth, physical strength, and friendship, but all these have little value without the wealth of character. For men or women, character is the foundation. If a person lacks character, he or she becomes feeble in all other respects.

People of ancient times strived for noble character. They were prepared to give up their very lives for a righteous cause. Women

strived to uphold the honor of their husbands. The strength of an individual lies in his or her character, not in the wealth earned. One should be prepared to face any hardship to lead a virtuous life.

The country is in dire straits due to the absence of men and women of character. Materialistic wealth is not what we need today. We need to earn the wealth of virtues. Wealth cannot confer true happiness. Women should develop the wealth of virtue and also safeguard the honor of their husbands. Both men and women should have good character. Without good character, all your learning will prove futile.

In spite of his education and intelligence, a foolish man will not know his true Self and an evil-minded person will not give up his wicked qualities. Modern education leads only to argumentation, not to true wisdom. What is the use of acquiring worldly education if it cannot lead you to immortality? Acquire the knowledge that will make you immortal."
(Telugu Poem)

Modern education can help you only to eke out a livelihood. It is meant for a living and not for life. In fact, it is responsible for the present decline of morality in society. In bygone days, people gave utmost priority to truth and righteousness. They considered divine love to be their very life. The women of India sacrificed even their lives for the sake of truth.

This land of Bharat has given birth to many noble women—such as Savitri, who brought her dead husband back to life; Chandramati, who extinguished a

wildfire with the power of truth; Sita, who proved her chastity by coming out of a blazing fire unscathed; and Damayanti, who reduced an evil-minded hunter to ashes with the power of her chastity. This land of piety and nobility attained plenty and prosperity and became the teacher of all the nations of the world because of such women of chastity. (Telegu Poem)

From time immemorial, the sacred land of India has occupied the exalted position of teacher to the rest of the world. It has been extolled as the land of action, the land of sacrifice, and the land of spirituality. You have to discharge your duty. You cannot progress in life if you do not follow the path of action.

Sanctify Your Actions

Embodiments of Love! You waste so much time in meaningless pursuits. Time wasted is life wasted. Our ancients never wasted even a minute. They considered God to be the embodiment of time and extolled Him thus: "Salutations to the Embodiment of time, to the One who has conquered time, to the One who transcends time, and to the One who ordains time."

Why have you forgotten the truth that time is verily God? You eagerly await a Sunday, looking forward to relaxing and enjoying yourself. In fact, you should feel sad that you are wasting time without doing any work on a Sunday. You must utilize time in a proper way. If you do not have any work, undertake social service. Help your fellow human beings.

Be prepared to make any sacrifice for the sake of your motherland. The *Bhagavad*

Gita says, "You have a right over actions but not their result." You have to sanctify your actions. People speak of *punya karma* (meritorious actions) and *papa karma* (sinful actions). When one's feelings are pure, one's actions become sanctified and one's work will be transformed into worship.

Proper Use of Time

Life becomes meaningful only when you make proper use of time. The *kaaya* (body) has been given in order to perform *karma* (action). Every *karma* is associated with a *karana* (cause) and *kala* (time). It is the foremost duty of man to understand the principles of *kala*, *karma*, *karana*, and *karthavya* (duty)—and act accordingly. This is the main teaching of Indian culture, the pristine culture that has safeguarded the land of India since ancient times.

What is culture? You think it is a way of life, but that is not so. Indian culture is something that transforms your life into an ideal one. Today we do not find many who are interested in teaching about the greatness of Indian culture. Even if people are ready to teach, few are interested in listening to them. Even if they listen, they are not prepared to put the teachings into practice. Then the few who want to practice lack proper support and encouragement.

Embodiments of Love! Perform all your actions with purity of heart. Actions performed without a pure heart are futile. If even a little work is done with a pure heart, it becomes fruitful.

Embodiments of Love! This day (November 19th) is being observed as Ladies Day.

What does that mean? You think that this day is meant for performing sacred acts, listening to Swami's discourse, and so on, but it is not merely that. You should spend time in a sacred manner. What you learn today should be an ideal for your entire lifetime.

Self-Confidence and Self-Respect

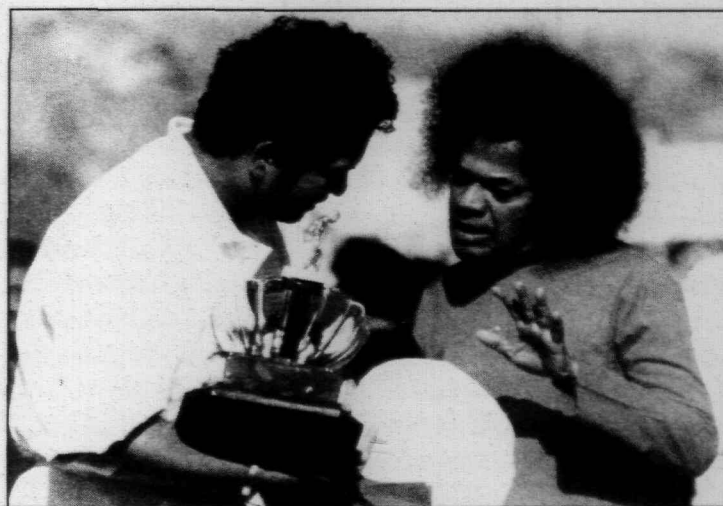
Develop self-confidence. Under any and all circumstances uphold your self-respect. What is the use of living a life bereft of these two ideals? You may not have money or strength, and you may be put to disrepute, but always maintain your self-respect. Abraham Lincoln lived a life of self-respect under all circumstances. His mother taught him, "People may mock and ridicule you, but never be perturbed. Always maintain your self-respect." Lincoln followed her teachings implicitly. He studied under streetlights, as they had no lights at home. Ultimately, he became the president of the United States. Due to his self-confidence and self-respect, he attained that exalted position.

The teachings of the mother play a vital role in shaping the future of her children. She should make every effort to drive out bad

qualities from her children and infuse human values such as truth, right action, peace, love, and nonviolence in them. Many give speeches at length about the importance of these values in daily life, but how many translate them into action? Very few. They do not utter truth, nor do they perform righteous deeds.

Harmonize Thoughts, Words, and Deeds

Our ancients never deviated from the



"You may not be able to see the results of your good deeds, but they confer on you all happiness and comforts in due course of time."

path of truth and righteousness under any circumstances. There is no *dharma* (righteousness) greater than adherence to truth. The *Vedas* teach "Speak truth, practice righteousness." Your thoughts, words, and deeds should be in harmony with each other. It is said, "The proper study of mankind is man." Today nobody knows what

man has in his mind, as his thoughts, words, and deeds are in total variance. He wastes his life with such unethical behavior.

The tongue is given to speak truth.

O tongue, the knower of taste! You are very sacred. Speak the truth in the most pleasing manner. Chant the divine names of Govinda, Madhava, and Damodara

incessantly. This is your foremost duty.
(Sanskrit Verse)

The tongue, which is meant to utter sacred words, is being used to criticize others. One cannot describe in words the fate of such a person. Our ancients had so much love for their motherland that they wanted to be born again and again in this sacred land, but today people have neither love for the country (*deshabhimana*) nor love for righteousness (*dharma-bhimana*). Instead they are developing love for the body (*dehabhimana*).

The body is like a water bubble. How long can you protect it? It will burst sooner or later. Hence, develop love for the *Atma* (*atma-bhimana*), which alone can protect the entire world. Develop faith that the same *Atma* (inherent divinity) exists in you and all others. When you have such a strong faith, the whole nation will prosper. One with love for the *Atma* is a true human being. If one does not have this love for the divine in all, one's life is wasted.

A Compassionate Heart

This day (November 19th) is very sacred. *Griham Ammayi* (Easwaramma), the mother of this body, used to speak to everyone with love. She could never stand to see others suffer. She would come upstairs and plead with me, saying, "Swami, they are in a sorrowful state. Please call them and talk to

them." Her heart was filled with compassion. That is why her fame has spread. In order to attain a good name, you have to utter sacred words and help others.

Whenever mother Easwaramma would come to me with such a plea, I used to pretend to be angry and chide her, saying, "Why are you coming here with such recommendations? I don't want to listen to them." But she would persist. She would

continue to plead, "Swami, please take pity on them. They are in dire need of Your help. Please talk to them one time." I used to think happily, "How compassionate and kind-

hearted she is!"

Hri + Daya = Hridaya. That which is filled with compassion is *Hridaya* (a sacred heart). But, today man does not possess such a compassionate heart. He utters harsh words and is thereby put to disrepute. One should talk softly and sweetly. Never hurt others' feelings with harsh talk.

Sacred Activities

Embodiments of Love! First of all, women must keep their tongues in check. As men are involved with many and varied activities, it may be difficult for them to control their tongues. Therefore, it is the duty of women to look after the home diligently and to conduct themselves in a pleasing manner. Treat guests in a cordial manner and to the

*"Truth is the true ornament for
the neck; charity is the true
ornament for the hand.*

*Your hands are useless if they do
not perform acts of charity."*

extent possible, extend your help to those who are in need.

Today people undertake only lip service, without translating their words into actions. Always empathize with those who are in difficulties and try to give them solace, comfort, and console them with soothing words. Those who speak harsh words are verily demons. If you hurt others' feelings, you will be hurt twice as much in turn. You cannot escape from the consequences of your actions. You have to bear this truth in mind. Your life will be sanctified when you conduct yourselves in a manner that does not hurt others.

People aspire to attain liberation. What is liberation? Help ever, hurt never. That is true liberation. To get rid of *moha* (attachment) is true *moksha* (liberation). Do not try to find faults with others. If you point an accusing finger at someone, remember that three fingers point back at you. Truth is the true ornament for the neck; charity is the true ornament for the hand. Your hands are useless if they do not perform acts of charity. You have to sanctify each limb of your body through sacred activities.

The eyes should look only at sacred things. Do you know what enormous power is latent in your eyes? They contain tens of thousands of light rays. In ancient times, people used to invoke the grace of the sun to have better vision. When you perform

Suryanamaskar (salutations to the sun) and invoke its grace, the light rays in your eyes will become more effulgent. On the other hand, if you look for mistakes in others, the sun will withdraw its rays from your eyes, making you blind. Hence, make proper use of all your limbs [and faculties], which are God-given.

The Path to Liberation

"You have to make every effort to earn divine grace. Whatever action you perform, do it as an offering to God; only then will your life be sanctified."

Embodiments of Love! These teachings are simple to practice in daily life, but just because they are simple, do not take them lightly. Though they appear simple, they lead you

to liberation. It is your good fortune (*adrishtam*) that you are blessed with eyes to see. What is *adrishtam*? *Adrishtam* [is that which cannot be seen]. You may not be able to see the results of your good deeds, but they confer on you all happiness and comforts in due course of time. That is *adrishtam*. Many things follow you that cannot be seen by the naked eye.

Embodiments of Love! This land of India is highly illustrious. It has given you the triple wealth of *vijnana* (intelligence), *sujnana* (wisdom) and *prajnana* (the ultimate form of knowledge). Unfortunately people are unable to receive the [benefit of such an inheritance]. The Upanishads extol *manava* (man) in several ways. *Manava* means one who is sacred, one who is endowed with infinite power, and one who imparts wisdom,

but man, unable to understand the meaning of his own name, takes to wrong paths.

Your fortune or misfortune depends on your actions. Without realizing this truth, you indulge in evil deeds. You feel sorry when the consequences of your sins haunt you, but what is the use? You have to take care right from the outset not to commit sins. You have to make every effort to earn divine grace. Whatever action you perform, do it as an offering to God; only then will your life be sanctified. What you must earn is not worldly wealth and comforts but the wealth of *sujnana*, *vijnana* and *prajnana*, which will follow you eternally. When you acquire such true and eternal wealth, you will have acquired God's grace.

Embodiments of Love! Many women have eagerly awaited November 19th to celebrate Ladies' Day. It is truly your good fortune to have such noble thoughts. Give up

all negative thoughts and develop sacred feelings. Lead an exemplary life.

The *Upanishads* have accorded great value to human life, and you should live up to that ideal. The *Upanishads* are a supreme storehouse of knowledge. The *Vedas* contain *mantras* such as the *Purusha Suktam*, *Sri Suktam*, and so on. One may have mastered the *Vedas*, but if one does not study the *Upanishads*, all one's learning will prove futile. That is why people begin studying the *Upanishads* after they complete the study of the *Vedas*. The *Upanishads* take you closer to God. I wish for you to follow the teachings of the *Upanishads* and manifest your latent divine power. I bless you all and bring my discourse to a close.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Discourse on Ladies Day,
November 19, 2002

She is not only the housewife; on her depends the glory of the entire country. That is why we say, "This is our motherland!" ...Indian culture has always awarded a high place to woman, since upon her rests the strength of the entire social fabric.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Gems of Wisdom, p. 197

Love has first to gladden the home. There is no love now between the elders and the young at home; children do not respect parents. This moral decline will certainly undermine unity and strength. Moral decline is worse than military decline; it will lead to greater disaster. If you always repeat the idea of "mine, mine," how can you be useful to others? Sacrifice is the salt of life; yajna (holy ritual) or thyaga (sacrifice) is the secret of peace and joy.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Gems of Wisdom, p. 200

The Meaning of Easter

Jesus' virtuous life reveals the triumph of Divine Love

Christianity centers around the life and message of Jesus, who was called *Christ* and *Messiah*. Jesus' birth was foretold in sacred literature, in what is called the Old Testament portion of the Bible. His birth was not an ordinary one, and most of you have heard the story that He was conceived immaculately by a virgin.

An angel appeared to Joseph, Jesus' father, in a dream, saying, "That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit and He will save His people from their sins."

Because King Herod, the ruler of the day, was afraid of the coming of this divine Child—much as the evil Kamsa feared the birth of Krishna—he ordered the killing of all babies two years of age and younger. An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream, warning him, so he, Mary, and their newborn baby fled into Egypt where Jesus spent most of His childhood.

The Bible is mostly silent about Jesus' childhood and young adulthood. It generally picks up His story when Jesus started His public ministry at about the age of 29 or 30,

but Baba tells us something of those years in Jesus' life. He says that Jesus wandered purposefully in lonely places for long years

as a young adult before beginning His ministry.

He engaged Himself in study, spiritual exercises, and meditation on God. Baba tells us that when Jesus began

His ministry, the priests had deteriorated into proud and selfish men, and the holy temples of Jerusalem had become corrupt and commercialized. Jesus condemned them and tried to root out their evil practices, for in His eyes, all forms were Divine, and He could not tolerate any action that belied this truth.

Jesus tried to teach everyone about the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. His only joy derived from spreading divine Love, offering divine Love, receiving divine Love, and living in divine Love. Jesus taught simple, practical lessons in spiritual advancement for the good of humankind. He manifested divine powers to instill faith in the validity of His teachings—much as Baba does today. He exhorted people by precept and

*Baba has said that Jesus was a
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hearts of mankind.*

example to cultivate the virtues of charity, compassion, forbearance, love, and faith.

Baba has said that Jesus was a master born for a purpose: the mission of restoring love, charity, and compassion in the hearts of humankind. When asked if Jesus was an Avatar, Baba has said "Yes," with the qualification that Jesus had some divine powers but not the powers of a full Avatar. Jesus had no attachment to the self. He paid no heed to sorrow, pain, joy, or gain. He had a heart that responded to the call of anguish, the cry of peace, and the ideal of brotherhood. He went about the land preaching the lessons of love, and in the end, he poured out His life as a libation of sacrifice to humanity.

Like Baba, Jesus could also assert that His life was His message, for He lived among men as He advised them to live. He demonstrated that one begins the spiritual pilgrimage by proclaiming oneself as a servant or messenger of God and then trying to live up to that high and responsible status—the stage of duality.

Then Jesus progressed to discover the Divine within Himself and realized that God was His precious heritage, and that one must claim and utilize this for oneself. At this stage, one identifies with being the son of God—of the same nature as God. Finally, Jesus merged in God-consciousness, as someday we will. At that time He declared, "The Father and I are One." This is the essence of Jesus' message and the aim and essence of all religious disciplines and teachings.

Jesus had the Light within Him, but tradition-minded, egoistic men of that era considered Jesus a false prophet and tried

by every means to thwart His mission. Jesus, however, did not waver. Faced with opposition, He continued to be an example of living Truth, working to purify society.

Those in power became jealous of Jesus' growing popularity. Established priests felt threatened by His work—such as teaching people to go directly to God instead of going through intermediaries. Those in power watched for an opportunity to silence Jesus and stop His work.

Baba has said that although many disciples followed Jesus—as was true for Rama, Krishna, and Muhammad—not all of Jesus' disciples were fully dedicated. Jesus had 12 disciples, who had varying degrees of faith in Him while striving to live His teachings, but one eventually yielded to falsehood and betrayed his Master to those who wished Him harm.

During the last days of His life, Jesus and His disciples ate together—an event known as the "Last Supper." Jesus revealed to them that He was aware of His coming betrayal and death. He washed the feet of His disciples to demonstrate the principles of humility and service. Jesus also exhorted His disciples to "love one another even as I have loved you."

Soon false charges were brought against Jesus and He was arrested one night in a garden where He had gone to pray and meditate. During the arrest, one of the soldiers was injured. Jesus healed him immediately and instructed His disciples to put down their weapons. He refused to resist—knowing that this was all a part of God's grand design.

Jesus was taken by the guards and beaten, mocked, and tortured. Jesus said nothing in His defense and was condemned to die. He was stoned nearly to death and at last taken to the hill, Golgotha, where He was nailed to a cross. As Jesus' life ebbed away, He asked God to forgive His tormentors because they did not realize what they were doing. Good Friday* is honored as the day Jesus gave up His life on the cross.

After death, Jesus' body was taken down, claimed by His friends and close followers, and placed in a tomb. On what is now known as Easter Sunday,* two women went to prepare His body for burial, but they found only an empty tomb. Jesus had returned to life, taken up His body, and disappeared. One of the women was astonished to see Jesus' illumined body, and later Jesus was seen by many of His followers.

Jesus sacrificed prosperity, comfort, safety, and position. He braved the enmity of the powerful and refused to yield or compromise. He renounced the ego and is honored and remembered for these accomplishments.

In death, Jesus demonstrated the principle of eternal life and the triumph of love over death. He showed that life continues eternally, despite the passing of the

body. His crucifixion was a clear and overwhelming victory—even over death. At the time of His crucifixion, Jesus was known to relatively few people. In the intervening 2000 years, Jesus has come to be revered by millions worldwide.

Baba has said, "The great teachers belong to all of humankind; it is wrong to believe that Jesus belongs only to the Christians. ... Christ, Rama, and Krishna are for all humans everywhere. Just as the various limbs and organs together form a body, and various states and communities together form the world, so does divine grace circulate in each one of us to make the world a place of peace and joy."

It will soon be Easter. In the popular and secular community, Easter is celebrated with eggs, baby chicks, and little bunnies—universal symbols of renewal and rebirth. For Christians all over the world, Easter Sunday is a remembrance of Jesus' life and the message of Love that He taught, and a remembrance of the sacrifices He made in life—sacrificing ego, comfort, and safety—and in death, sacrificing His very life in order to demonstrate that death is not the end of life but a triumph of life everlasting.

Jesus then, as Baba does now, taught us not to waste our precious lives pursuing the narrow interests of the self and the goals of the secular world. In truth, each and every one of us is Love—the embodiment of Love, nothing more and nothing less. Such is the meaning of Easter.

—**Kay Brooks**

Sathya Sai Baba Center,
South Houston, Texas

*The Easter holy days for 2003 are:

Palm Sunday, April 13—commemorating Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem, with the crowd strewing palm leaves in His path.

Good Friday, April 18—commemorating Christ's death on the cross.

Easter Sunday, April 20—commemorating Christ's rising from the dead and His ascent into heaven.

Siddhartha

The life of Gautama Buddha

Siddhartha Gautama was born into a royal family of the Kshatriya caste, near the current border of India and Nepal in 563 B.C. He led a sheltered life, knowing nothing of life's vicissitudes or tragedies until age 29, when He first saw a senile old man, a sick man, a corpse, and a wandering ascetic. With eyes newly opened to life's sufferings, He broke with His life of luxury and became an ascetic of strict discipline and firm restraint.

He became known as Buddha or Gautama Buddha and traveled searching for truth. After six years He abandoned the rigorous life of asceticism for deep meditation, which brought Him enlightenment. His conviction was that truth lies within—not in the world.

He soon collected many disciples and spent His remaining 45 years teaching and serving the poor. Gautama Buddha lived for about 80 years, or until 483 B.C. He is credited with having founded Buddhism, a religion that still attracts millions of followers throughout the world. Four of the basic concepts of Buddhism are: 1) Sorrow is the universal experience of mankind. 2) The cause of sorrow is desire, and the cycle of rebirths is perpetuated by the desire for existence. 3) The removal of sorrow can come only from the removal of desire. 4) Desire can be systematically abandoned by following the Noble Eightfold Path.*

Buddha's birthday is recognized by millions on the full moon day each May.**

He was born, attained *Nirvana* (Realization), and left His body, each in the month of May on the full moon. Last year, 2002, Swami observed *Buddha Poornima* in Brindavan on May 26.

Swami has said, "Buddha prescribed five duties: good vision, good thoughts, listening to good things, good speech, and good actions. These five duties constitute true *sadhana* (spiritual practice).... Speak the truth and avoid speaking what is unpleasant—even if it is the truth.

"It is a mark of ignorance to expect that another person will give you happiness. Buddha felt sad that people are subject to such ignorance. He practiced many spiritual exercises and came to a certain decision. He decided to go to Gaya, India and experience bliss in His own way. He found the source of bliss within Himself; He realized it could not be obtained from outside. Every person's heart is the dwelling place of God; hence everyone should take good care of the heart, cultivating it as the source of divine bliss."

—Editor

* The Eightfold Path: right understanding, right motive, right speech, right action, right means of livelihood, right effort, right intellectual activity, and right contemplation.

** The birthday and enlightenment of Gautama Buddha will be honored on Friday, May 16, 2003.

Children's Corner



Let Us Be . . .

Let us grow and live together in harmony;
Let us move together in mutual friendship;
Let us join our lives with others.
Let us spread the knowledge and wisdom
that we have attained together.
Let us be together and develop our
intelligence, skills, and wit.
Let us live together without discord
and develop each and everyone's
talents harmoniously.

—*Bal Vikas Magazine for Children 1 to 99, Italy*

Where Are We Going?

Study Circle Forum, Part III

When the Sathya Sai Baba Centers in America began to flourish in the 1970s and early 1980s, our programs were almost entirely focused on devotional singing. We had study circles and some basic service programs, but the activities of the centers were largely devotional. Most members considered the Sai Organization in America to be a devotional organization.

In the 1980s and 1990s the message of service arrived from Swami loud and clear. The centers recognized what Swami was telling us almost constantly: *Service to man is service to God*. Service guidelines were written, a service newsletter started, and service became a primary focus. Around the world, service became such a focus that many of the national Sai Organizations changed their name to "Sathya Sai Service Organization."

With His recent emphasis on Educare and self-understanding, Swami has asked us to go even further. Sai's program for our transformation requires not just devotion and service but also awareness of our inner truth. Particularly in recent years, Swami has asked us to look within and find our Divinity. He exhorts us to tread the path of Self-realization and oneness with all:

The organization must help people to realize the unity behind all this apparent multiplicity, which is but super-

imposed by the human mind on the One that is all this.

—*Sathya Sai Speaks*, Vol. X, Ch. 8

It is time that Self-understanding be taken up with the same earnestness as devotion and service. Awareness of the *Atma* (innate Divinity) within is the culmination of service and devotional activities. The principle is exemplified in the *Vedas*, where Swami tells us that the sections on *karma* (activity) and devotion are preparatory for the sections on *jnana*, Self-understanding.

Do We Need Study Circle Guidelines?

To encourage Self-understanding within the Sai Baba Centers, study circles must become a more effective tool. Practices across the country vary widely. Some circles follow established criteria and are very effective. Others are run without proper disciplines and are ill attended. A solid base of proven principles needs to be established as an organizational guideline for all centers.

Many study circles, usually with smaller memberships, have evolved their own practices, which work well for them. Where there is unanimity within the group and the purpose of the study circle is achieved in a manner consistent with Swami's principles, these circles should be allowed to continue as they wish.

Study circle guidelines are envisioned as an organizational standard for new groups and groups who do not have unanimous agreement on principles. These guidelines would be comprised of principles that are both based on Swami's directions to us and have proved effective over many years. They would comprise a standard recommended by the American Sai Organization, in cases where there is disagreement on principles within the study circle membership.

The outline for study circles, published in Study Circle Forum, Part II (*Sathya Sai*

Newsletter USA, January/February 2003 issue), is a proposed starting point. Do you have ideas for the guidelines? Do you have comments or suggestions for improvement?

—**Jonathan Roof**,
Tucson, Arizona

You are invited to respond to the National Study Circle Coordinator, Jonathan Roof, by mail: PMB 318, 3661 North Campbell Ave., Tucson, AZ 85719, or via email at jonroof@aol.com.



Turn your vision inward; external vision is useless.... Realize what is most precious within you. The three processes of Tharakam (the God-force combined with the life-force within), Sankhya (inquiry into the nature of creation and the facets of the human instrument), and Amanaska (realization that God is All and All is One) are extremely precious spiritual gems. They are within you, but you are not aware of their existence, because you have not identified yourself with the owner, the Master within you. That owner is the Paramatma (the Supreme Self).

—**Sathya Sai Baba**
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XXIX, Ch. 31

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Books Now Available

***Pathways to God, Volume II*, by Jonathan Roof.** Volume II of *Pathways...* continues to introduce readers to the teachings of Sathya Sai Baba with references to historical anecdotes in Vedic philosophy. It is noteworthy that Mr. Roof's *Pathways to God, Vol. I*, has been widely used in Sathya Sai Study Circles in the U.S. and abroad; we predict that Volume II will be equally popular and useful.

Bound in soft cover, 296 pages.

BW-123 \$4.00

***Sathya Sai Parenting*, by Rita Bruce.** This book has been made available once again by popular demand. In these turbulent times, many families have found this volume to be a handbook for the restoration of home, family and good values. *Parenting...* also offers useful quotations of Swami's teachings that will have a profound influence on all who desire a better world starting with family values.

Bound in soft cover, 249 pages.

BI-051 4.00

***Reprogramming Our Spiritual Sadhana*, by Indulal Shah.** From the wealth of his profound experience of serving the Avatar, Mr. Shah shares his knowledge of what Sathya Sai Baba expects from His devotees, how they can experience inner peace and become worthy instruments of the Divine. There is also a valuable section on the mission of the Sri Sathya Sai Organization.

Bound in soft cover, 214 pages.

BI-108 9.25

***Love and Purity*, by Ratan Lal.** This book offers a discussion accented with Baba's teachings on the essence of Atmic Consciousness, and the evolution of the spiritual aspirant from the ego personality to the true Self through spiritual practice. A section in question-and-answer format presenting helpful, short discussions on attachment, surrender, meditation and more.

Bound in hard cover, 78 pages.

BI-107 2.50

Compact Disc

***Paramatma, the Primal Source*, by Lightstorm.** This CD has the awe-inspiring discourse given by Bhagavan when He first announced His mission to the world on His 43rd birthday, November 23, 1968. The discourse is ably translated in the melodious voice of the late Prof. Kasturi. The CD also includes devotional compositions of Jonima and Kalassu Wintergate, professionally known as "Lightstorm."

One CD, 75 minutes.

SCE-77 9.00

The Vahinis

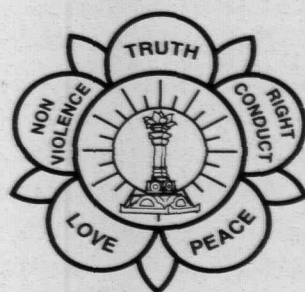
The *Vahinis* are a series of books containing the spiritual wisdom of the ages written by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Sai Baba honors all religions, and He has written about a variety of subjects from a spiritual point of view: righteousness, meditation, wisdom, peace, divine love, and the ancient *Vedic* teachings such as the *Bhagavad Githa*, the *Upanisads*, the story of Rama and more. In these texts, Baba has gifted us with modern day implications of these ancient wisdoms, and has made His words within reach of our understanding.*

Bhagavata Vahini This is an epic of the Mahabaratha War which was a war of righteousness against evil forces. Baba explains that this war represents the inner turmoil that we all experience. He indicates how the inner battle can be won, and we emerge victorious.

Dharma Vahini In this volume, Sathya Sai Baba clearly explains how to live in a *dharmic* (righteous) manner. The moral codes are outlined for men, women, and even children. The codes of conduct are applicable no matter what a person's status, or situation in life.

Dhyana Vahini Here Baba councils, consoles, and encourages the faltering spiritual seeker to march forward and attain the goal of living a joyful life of high standards and good values.

Githa Vahini This stream of divine teachings was given by the Avatar, Krishna, to His devotee, Arjuna, just before the launching of the Mahabaratha War. The war, as mentioned above, was a very real battle, but it is also symptomatic of today's complex life-style. Baba teaches that the inner war is caused by lack of control over the senses, mind, and desires. He describes methods for winning self-control over negative characteristics and thus attaining inner peace.**



* While Baba has written these books within the understanding of most of us, there remain many Sanskrit words and phrases that are not always explained by the translator. Because of this, we suggest the small *Sanskrit-English Dictionary* available at the Book Center for \$3.00 plus tax and shipping.

** For a complete list of the *Vahinis*, and *Sathya Sai Speaks*, and other books about Baba, please contact the Sathya Sai Book Center for a free catalog. The address, phone and fax numbers are always on the last one or two pages of each issue of the *Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA*.

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