



Self-transformation **AWARENESS & REFLECTION** MONTH



STUDY & SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY Guide

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TRANSFORM YOURSELF INTO
LOVE, & BECOME BLISS
OCTOBER, 1971



Self-transformation, Awareness & Reflection Month

On October 2nd, 1987, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba said:

"You have listened to hundreds of discourses for the past forty years or so. But your mind remains where it was. There is little change in your attitudes or actions. The heads are filled with spiritual lore and book knowledge, but no attempt is made to fill the heart with love. Many have been residing in this ashram (hermitage) for years and have been attending various festivals and functions here. But there is no change in their lives. They have not inscribed Swami's message in their hearts. If there is no spiritual transformation in your way of life over the years, you would be guilty of having wasted all your energies, time and opportunities."

"I do not want to know that you have listened to my discourses well. I want to know that you have thoroughly transformed yourselves. It is such transformation that is the mark of true devotion. If the ground is not wet, what is the use in saying there has been a downpour? Those who claim to be devotees should show in their actions some evidence of their faith. They must truly live up to their profession. "Sai Ram" in words and dishonesty in thoughts is brazen deception. "Sai Ram" must emanate from the depth of one's being. Whether in the Sai organization or elsewhere, there must be sincerity and unity of thought, word and deed. Develop fraternal feelings towards all. Differences of opinion can be resolved by compromise. If egoistic pride is given up, all difficulties can be overcome. From today make a bonfire of your ignorance and egoism and develop love in your hearts. Live up to Swami's teachings as far as possible and thereby redeem your lives."

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks: Vol 20

The goal of the Sathya Sai Organization *is to help people realize the Divine Principle innate in every human being*. Swami has stressed the importance of introspection as a path to self-transformation.

In loving remembrance of Swami's Avatar Declaration and the transformative purpose of His mission, **SSSIO USA is observing October as Self-Transformation Awareness and Reflection (STAR) Month** - an opportunity for every member and Sai Center to refresh our spiritual focus, deepen our connection with our innate Divinity, and renew our commitment to living the Human Values.

Let us honor Swami's life and message by creating opportunities to reflect, renew, and deepen our journey of self - transformation.

We will explore this journey of transformation through a **July 1970 discourse (Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 10, Chapter 16)**, in which Swami shared **five points of spiritual discipline as essential paths to self-transformation**. *"They are:*

1. *Silence. This is the first step in sadhana; it makes the other steps easy. It promotes self - control; it lessens chances of anger, hate, malice, greed, pride. Besides, you can hear His Footsteps, only when silence reigns in the mind.*
2. *Cleanliness: It is the doorway to Godliness. Inner and outer cleanliness are essential, if you desire to install God in your heart.*
3. *Service: Service saves you from the agony you get when another suffers; it broadens your vision, widens your awareness, deepens your compassion. All waves are on the same sea, from the same sea, merge in the same sea. Seva teaches you to be firm in this knowledge.*
4. *Love: Do not calculate or weigh the reaction, result or reward. Love calls; love responds. Love is God, live in Love.*
5. *Hate-lessness: Adhweshta Sarva Bhoothanam - No being is to be looked down upon as secondary, inferior, unimportant, or expendable. Each has its allotted role in the drama designed by the Almighty. Do not slight, insult or injure any being; for, He is in every being, and your slight becomes a sacrilege.*

You are deriving exaltation, while worshipping a carved stone idol in the temple. How much more exalted you should be, while worshipping the selfsame God, residing in the temple – hearts of the men and women around you! And, not merely in the human frames; in every bird, beast, tree, pebble and speck of dust!”

Over the next five weeks, we will reflect on these **five points of spiritual discipline**, share Swami’s words, engage in personal spiritual practice, and come together as families, Sai Centers, and a nation. Let us pray to Swami to bless our intentions and efforts and guide us towards the ultimate goal of self-realization, through the constancy of self-transformation.



This booklet is an offering of love and gratitude as we commemorate the timeless anniversary of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s Avatar Declaration Day, October 20. Over the course of five weeks, we will journey together through the five points of spiritual discipline shared by Swami in this discourse. Each chapter is devoted to one point and unfolds in three sections: first, a selection of Swami’s timeless words to inspire contemplation and self-reflection, with suggested questions that may enrich Sai Center study circles; second, loving suggestions for simple yet profound personal sadhanas through which His teachings may be brought into our daily lives; and third, opportunities to come together as families, Sai Centers, and as a nation on designated days throughout October, so that we may collectively reflect upon His message and experience the strength and sweetness of shared spiritual practice.

With utmost humility and devotion, we place this booklet at the Lotus Feet of our beloved Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, as a humble expression of our love and gratitude for His Divine teachings and boundless Grace.

On this sacred anniversary of His Avatar Declaration, may He bless our efforts, guide our hearts, and lead us ever closer to the goal of self-transformation and the realization of the Divine within.



WEEK 1

Silence

A: Inspiration from the Source

Silence: The Voice Within

"Practice silence. For the Voice of God can be heard in the region of your heart only when the tongue is stilled and the storm is stilled, and the waves are calm. There will be no temptation for others to shout when you talk to them in whispers. Set the level of the tone yourself: as low as possible, as high as necessary to reach to outermost boundary of the circle you are addressing. Conserve sound, since it is the treasure of the element Akasha (space), an emanation from God Himself. Reason can prevail only when arguments are advanced without the whipping up of sound. Silence is the speech of the spiritual seeker. Soft sweet speech is the expression of genuine Love."

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks: Volume 10, Chapter 4

Speak Less, Speak Sweetly

"The tongue is liable for four big errors: uttering falsehood, scandalizing, finding fault with others, and excessive articulation. These have to be avoided if there is to be peace for the individual as well as for society. The bond of brotherhood will be tightened if people speak less and speak sweetly. That is why silence was prescribed as a vow for spiritual aspirants by the scriptures. You are all spiritual aspirants at various stages of the road, and so this discipline is valuable for you also."

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks: Volume 1, Chapter 10

Meditate on Swami's Teachings during Silence

"Promote love in your hearts and share it with others. That is the best form of worship. Love is the only property of Sai. My life is love. That is what I offer to one and all. I go on giving, giving. But to what extent are you putting into practice Swami's teachings? Practice silence for at least ten minutes in a day. Meditate on Swami's teachings at that time. Realize that in this transient world the Eternal is immanent. Hold fast onto God. Experience the bliss of union with the Divine. Make love your life - breath. With love of God in their hearts the ancient sages could transform even the wild animals in the forests."

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks: Volume 29, Chapter 11

Be Silent and Induce Silence in Others

"Be silent yourself; that will induce silence in others. Do not fall into the habit of shouting, talking long and loud. Reduce contacts to a minimum. Carry with you an atmosphere of quiet contemplation, wherever you happen to be."

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks: Volume 29, Chapter 21

Questions for Self-Reflection and Center Study Circle Discussion

1. How often do I create enough silence – in my speech and in my mind – to hear the Voice of God within?
2. When I speak, are my words necessary, truthful, and sweet? How could I speak less and listen more, and meet Swami's T – H – I – N – K (T – Is it truthful?; H – Will it hurt anyone?; I – Will it improve silence (or is it better left unsaid)?; N – Is it necessary?; K – Is it kind?) standards on speech?
3. How can I use a few minutes of silence each day to reflect on Swami's teachings and put one teaching more fully into practice?
4. What situations, people, or habits create the most "noise" in my life – and what is one practical way I can create more silence in those moments?
5. Can I practice being fully present in a conversation – listening without interrupting, preparing my response, or feeling the need to fill the silence?

B. Personal Spiritual Practice

Daily Spiritual Practice: Silence & Reflection

Each day during the first week, set aside at least 10 minutes for silence and reflection, as Swami has encouraged us to do. Quiet the tongue, calm the mind, and use this time to meditate on Swami's teachings and reflect on how we are putting them into practice in our daily lives. Whether together as a family or individually, let these ten minutes be a daily opportunity to turn within, hold fast to God, and listen for the Voice of God in the heart.

C. Community Spiritual Practice

An Hour of Silence

On **Monday, October 5, from 6:00 – 7:00 PM PT**, let us come together from across the country for an hour of shared spiritual practice. We will begin with light meditation, followed by silence for the remainder of the hour – an opportunity to turn inward, reflect on Swami's teachings, and experience the power of collective silence. Please share with family and friends and let us all share the peace that arises from community meditation and silence!

Join here: <https://sssio.info/join-star>

Similarly, on **Saturday, October 10, from 5:00 – 5:45 AM PT**, let us come together from across the country for an hour of shared spiritual practice. We will begin with OMs, Suprabhatam (the morning prayer to awaken the Divine), light meditation, followed by silence for the remainder of the time – an opportunity to turn inward, reflect on Swami's teachings, and experience the power of collective silence.

Join here: <https://sssio.info/join-star>



Week 2

Cleanliness

A. Inspiration from the Source

"Students have to pay great attention to another important quality: cleanliness, both outer and inner. When either of these is absent, the person becomes useless for any task. The clothes one wears, the books one reads, and the surrounding environment must be clean. This is the outer cleanliness. That is to say, every material object one has to deal with for living has to be kept clean. The teeth and eyes, food and drink, all should be free from dirt. One can be healthy as a result of all this. The body has to be scrubbed and washed every day, or else layers of dust will cause itching and boils will emerge. Not only will one's condition be rendered miserable, but it may cause infections in others. One may possess only one or two sets of clothing, but care should be taken to wash them before wearing. They should not gather dirt.

Next, we consider inner cleanliness – that is to say, keeping the mind and the intellect free from dirt, serene and sacred. When thoughts and feelings are impure and agitated, one cannot be calm and happy. When the mind is polluted, reactions are polluted. To keep the mind clean, one has to analyse sympathetically situations involving others and their activities, and then decide on how to react to them. One should not rush to draw conclusions."

Vidya Vahini , Chapter 16

"A person might be an expert in any field of knowledge or a master of many material skills and accomplishments. But without inner cleanliness his brain is a desert waste."

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks: Volume 13, Chapter 29

"You cannot be fresh and feeling fine, wearing a washed vest under an unwashed shirt; or, an unwashed vest over a washed shirt. Both have to be clean, to provide a sense of tingling joy. So too outer and inner cleanliness is but the reflection of the inner achievement."

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks: Volume 10, Chapter 4

Questions for Self-Reflection and Center Study Circle Discussion

1. What in my physical surroundings or daily habits could I clean, simplify, or better care for as part of my spiritual discipline? Develop a list to tackle over the next month.
2. What “dirt” am I allowing to accumulate within – judgment, resentment, agitation, negative thoughts, or assumptions about others? What is the source of each of these accumulated tendencies and how can I use Swami’s guidance to clean them out?
3. When faced with a difficult person or situation, do I pause and understand with sympathy – or rush to judgment and react from an unsettled mind? Think of 3 techniques you can use to improve your approach in these situations.
4. How can I use Swami’s guidance to “analyze sympathetically” before reacting? When I feel disturbed by someone’s actions, can I pause, consider their situation and perspective with sympathy, and avoid rushing to conclusions?
5. Swami asks us to keep both our outer and inner worlds clean. What simple “cleanliness routine” can I create – one for my physical surroundings and one for my mind – and practice consistently each day?

B. Personal Spiritual Practice

Daily Spiritual Practice: Clean Space, Clean Heart

Make the outer environment worthy of God – and the inner heart ready for Him. Each day, add 10 minutes of cleansing to your Silence practice:

- 5 minutes – Clean Space

Choose one small space in your daily life – your prayer space, desk, room, car, or surroundings and clean it consciously as an offering to God, practicing care, order, and reverence.

- 5 minutes – Clean Heart

Sit quietly and ask yourself: What am I carrying in my heart that I would not want to place before God? Notice one impure thought, resentment, judgment, or attachment. Offer it to God and consciously replace it with a purer thought – love, gratitude, forgiveness, or prayer.

C. Community Spiritual Practice

Combine the personal practice above to make a larger offering. Join with members of your family or Sai center and activate the “Clean Space, Clean Heart” concept above. As a family or Sai center, jointly cleanup up or reorganize a place of common meaning to us (e.g. our Sai Centers, the premises where we meet, our home, the park that surrounds us) and offer prayers with a clean heart once done with the activity.



The background of the entire page is a photograph. It shows two hands, one from the top right and one from the left, reaching towards a bright, glowing sun. The sun is positioned in the center-left of the frame, creating a lens flare effect. Below the sun, there is a dark, silhouetted horizon line, possibly representing a body of water or a distant shore. The overall color palette is warm, with yellows, oranges, and dark silhouettes.

Week 3

Service

A. Inspiration from the Source

Serve the One in All

"The human being is born to render selfless service and not to indulge in selfishness. Selfless service alone can achieve unity of humankind. Only through unity can humanity attain Divinity. Hence, service is very essential to understand this unity in humanity. People are under the impression that service means merely to help the poor, the weak and forlorn. It is a big mistake to think that you are rendering service to others. In fact, you are serving yourself because the same principle of the Atma, the same Principle of Love, is present in all. All human beings are essentially one. The differences lie only in their feelings. So, a person should change his or her feelings and try to recognize the truth that the same Divinity is immanent in all. Only then can there be transformation in the human being."

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks: Volume 33; Chapter 19

Make Service an Offering

"On a dry leaf, floating on the waves of the sea, an ant desperately struggled to cling. A dove noticed it, flew over, and clasping the leaf in its beak it transferred it to dry ground. The ant too is Divinity encased in that infinitesimal sheath. It is as important in God's eyes as many a monstrous denizen of the jungle or the sea. God weighs the love that prompts you to save, the compassion that urges you to alleviate pain. Sathya Sai Organizations must take up seva (service) as sadhana (spiritual discipline), the members must see Me as Sarvantharyami (indweller of all) and do seva as puja."

Sri Sathya Sai Baba: November 21, 1968

Transform Love into Service

"You men and women! Your life is a long journey, and your desires are the luggage. "Less luggage, more comfort makes travel a pleasure." So, reduce your desires. Human birth is gifted to serve others, not just to eat, drink, sleep and make merry. The best way to love God is to love all and serve all. Man's foremost duty is to serve his fellow men and make them happy. Your life will be redeemed only when you involve yourself

in the service of society. The highest sadhana (spiritual practice) is to transform love into service. Service will lead you to devotion.”

Sri Sathya Sai Baba: November 18, 1999

Let Service Transform You

“Through sevā (selfless service) you realize that all beings are waves of the ocean of Divinity. No other sādhanā (spiritual discipline) can bring you into the incessant contemplation of the one – ness of all living beings. You feel another’s pain as your own. You share another’s success as your own. To see everyone else as yourself and your – self in everyone, that is the core of the sādhanā of sevā. Again, sevā makes the ego languish for want of food. It makes you humble before the suffering of others; and when you rush to render help, you do not calculate how high or low a person’s social or economic status is. The hardest heart is slowly softened into the softness of butter by the opportunities that the sevādal (volunteer service corps) offers.”

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks: Volume 13, Chapter 18

Questions for Self-Reflection and Center Study Circle Discussion

1. When I serve, do I still see myself as the one who is “helping”? What can I do to consistently recognize the same Divinity in the one serving, the one being served, and the act of service itself?
2. How can I transform more of my love into action – moving beyond my own desires, convenience, and preferences to respond to the needs of others with compassion?
3. How is service transforming me? Is it softening my heart, reducing my ego, and helping me experience the joys and struggles of others as my own? Do I need to refine my approach to service and if so, what specific steps should I take?
4. Swami teaches, “Less luggage, more comfort” and asks us to reduce our desires. What is one desire, comfort, or personal preference I can consciously give up so that I have more time, energy, or resources to serve others?
5. How can I practice seeing Swami as the Indweller in all and make each act of service into a devotional offering? Before serving, can I consciously remind myself, “I am serving the Divine in this person,” and then reflect afterward on whether that awareness changed the way I served?

B. Personal & Community Spiritual Practice:

October 17: National Service Day

As part of STAR Month, Sai Centers across the country will come together for National Service Day, putting Swami's message of "Love All, Serve All" into action. Through loving service in our local communities, we have an opportunity to see service not simply as something we do for others, but as a personal spiritual practice and a path to self-transformation. All are encouraged to participate and to invite friends and family to join in this shared offering of love.

October 20: Avatar Declaration Day

On **Tuesday, October 20, from 6:00 – 7:00 PM PT**, let us come together from across the country to commemorate **Avatar Declaration Day** and reflect on the spirit of selfless service that Swami embodied. Through inspiring stories from Sai Centers and Regions across the country, personal reflections, and conversations with guest speakers, we will explore how service constitutes the royal path to self-transformation and how serving others becomes an expression of our love for Swami and His mission.

Join here: <https://sssio.info/join-star>



WEEK 4

Love

A. Inspiration from the Source

Love: Our True Nature

“Love is the form of the Divine. Love alone can merge in love. When one is filled with Divine love, He can experience oneness with the Divine. Happiness arises from pure love Which is also the source of Truth, Righteousness, Peace and Forbearance.

At the human level, this love assumes many forms. The word love is used in common parlance in the context of the relations between mother and child, husband and wife, master and servant, the preceptor and the pupil. But this is not true love. It cannot be termed prema (love). It is only anurāga (attachment). Prema can be applied only to the total love towards the Divine. It is utterly selfless. It has not come from the world nor has it fallen from the sky. It is the essence of one's nature that expresses itself spontaneously without external promptings.”

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks: Volume 25, Chapter 21

Nurture the Love Within

“How is love to be fostered? Only through love can you foster love. There is no other way. For a plant to grow, you have to use manure and water. Students should realise that to foster love of God, they have to apply the manure of faith and the water of love. Only thus can the plant of devotion grow.”

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks: Volume 31, Chapter 27

Let Love Guide Your Actions

“If you wish to become eligible for God's love, then your actions must be consistent with love. It is impossible to secure God's love without appropriate and sacred actions. Can the one who is always hankering after rewards ever be truly happy? The only compensation you ought to seek is the pleasure and joy of doing your duty properly. The joy of service is the true reward. If you go against the command of God, then everything is bound to go wrong.”

Summer Showers 2000: Chapter 11

Love Without Expectation

"Love cannot exist if there is a feeling of duality. Ekātma prema (non-dual love) is true love. Give-and-take relationship does not reflect the true spirit of love. One should keep giving and giving, without expecting anything in return. That is true love."

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks: Volume 38, Chapter 9

Questions for Self-Reflection and Center Study Circle Discussion

1. Is my love limited by preference and expectation, or am I learning to love without conditions? What are the tangible results of expanding myself in unconditional love?
2. Do my thoughts, words, and actions consistently reflect love – especially when I am challenged or disagree with someone? What methods can I use to further develop in this path?
3. Who is currently difficult for me to love, and what would change if I consciously tried to see the Divine in them?
4. At the end of each day, ask yourself: Did I allow Divine Love to flow through me today? What allowed it or prevented it? In cases where Divine Love did not flow through, close your eyes and visualize Swami in that person or amidst that event. Soften the glance and allow His love to flow through!
5. If love is already my true nature, what am I holding onto that prevents it from expressing itself fully? Think about all your desires that came up during the day, and all the times you let your ego take charge of the situation. Offer it to Swami and ask Him to guide you through the next day.

B. Personal Spiritual Practice

Being Inspired by Love

We will explore the Sadhana of Love through a series of short video presentations that offer inspiration and reflection on how we can cultivate and express love in our daily lives. Topics will include loving and caring for our environment, choosing love through difficult circumstances, and ultimately seeing the world through a lens of love.

View here: <https://sssio.info/see-love>

C. Community Spiritual Practice

Sharing Stories of Love

On **October 27, 6:00 PM PT**, let us come together from across the country to share and reflect on stories of love, Swami's boundless love, as well as moments when the selfless love of a fellow human being has deeply touched or inspired us. Through personal experiences and reflections, we will explore how love transforms us, inspires us to love more deeply, and helps us recognize the Divine in one another.

Join here: <https://sssio.info/join-star>



WEEK 5



Hate-lessness

A. Inspiration from the Source

Expand the Circle of Love

"The heart, meaning not the physical heart but the spiritual heart, is inherently broad. It is one with cosmic consciousness. There is no need to broaden it. Only a broad mind is needed to recognise the vastness of the spiritual heart. Narrow-mindedness should go. Narrow ideas of "me" and "mine" should be totally given up in all forms. On the contrary, starting from the "I", you should go on expanding your consciousness to embrace your family, your village, your nation and the entire world. Then your divinity will shine forth in all its brilliance."

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks: Volume 26, Chapter 22

Let Another's Pain Be Your Own

"Do not have hatred toward anybody. Start loving even those that abuse you. It is only through love that you can bring transformation in them."

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks: Volume 31, Chapter 32

Pause, Reflect, then Act

"You should not plunge into action spurred by momentary impulse; ponder deeply over the pros and cons; weigh the expected benefits against the likely harm; then act so that you escape pain and you do not inflict pain. This is true in worldly matters as well as it, the spiritual field."

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks Volume 5, Chapter 40

Questions for Self-Reflection and Center Study Circle Discussion

1. Where do I still draw boundaries between "me" and "them"—and how can I expand my circle of love to include those I find difficult to understand or accept?
2. Can I recognize someone in pain and find a meaningful way to help? Is a smile I can offer or company or food or something else that is meaningful for them?
3. Before I think, speak, or act toward someone, especially in moments of disagreement— how can I pause and ask: Will this create greater separation, or greater unity and love?

B. Personal Spiritual Practice

Formulating the lens of Love

As the Sadhana of Love expands into Hate-lessness, we will explore how to broaden our vision, see the Divine in all, and strive to “hurt never” in our daily lives. Through a series of short videos, we will reflect on moving beyond “me” and “mine,” responding to the suffering of others with compassion, and choosing thoughts, words, and actions that foster unity rather than division.

[View here:](https://sssio.info/see-love) <https://sssio.info/see-love>

Key Reflection Activity

On **November 3, 6:00 – 7:00 PM PT**, let us come together from across the country to reflect on our journey through STAR Month and the transformational value of the spiritual practices we engaged in throughout October. Through personal experiences and shared reflections, we will explore what touched us, what changed within us, and how we can carry the practices of Silence, Cleanliness, Service, Love, and Hatelessness forward, allowing STAR Month to become a continuing journey of self-transformation.





sathyasai.us

Love All ♦ Serve All
Help Ever ♦ Hurt Never