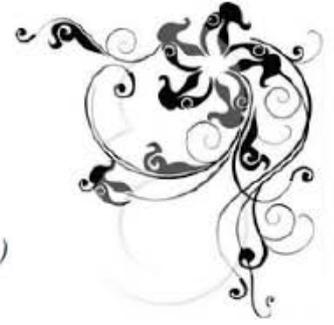




PROTECT THE PLANET

Sai Sarathi 2017



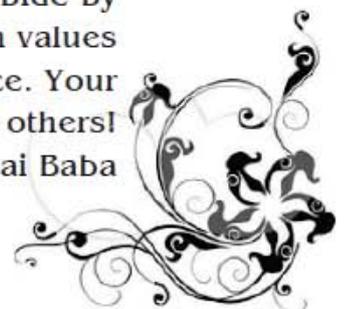
The Ten Principles

(For members of the Organisation and others)

1. Treat as sacred the land in which you were born. Have patriotism to your nation - but do not criticise other nations or put others down. Not even in your thoughts or dreams should you think of bringing grief to your country.
2. Respect all religions equally.
3. Recognise the Brotherhood of Man - treat all as brothers. Love All.
4. Keep your house and surroundings clean - for this will promote hygiene and health and help you.
5. Practice charity - but do not encourage beggars by giving money. Provide food and clothing and help them in other ways (do not encourage laziness).
6. Never give a bribe or take bribe.
7. Curb envy and jealousy, expand your vision and outlook, treat all equally regardless of caste or creed.
8. Try and do as much as possible by yourself. You may be wealthy and have servants - your servants can help - but service to society must be done personally - by yourself.
9. Have and cultivate "Love for God and fear of sin". Have hatred for sin.
10. Never go against the laws of the land; follow these diligently - both in word and in spirit.

All members of SAI BABA Centres should be an example to others in respect of the above. All members should abide by the above principles and adhere to the 5 basic human values of Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love and Non-Violence. Your first principle should be Love! Do not look for faults in others!

- Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba



PROTECT THE PLANET

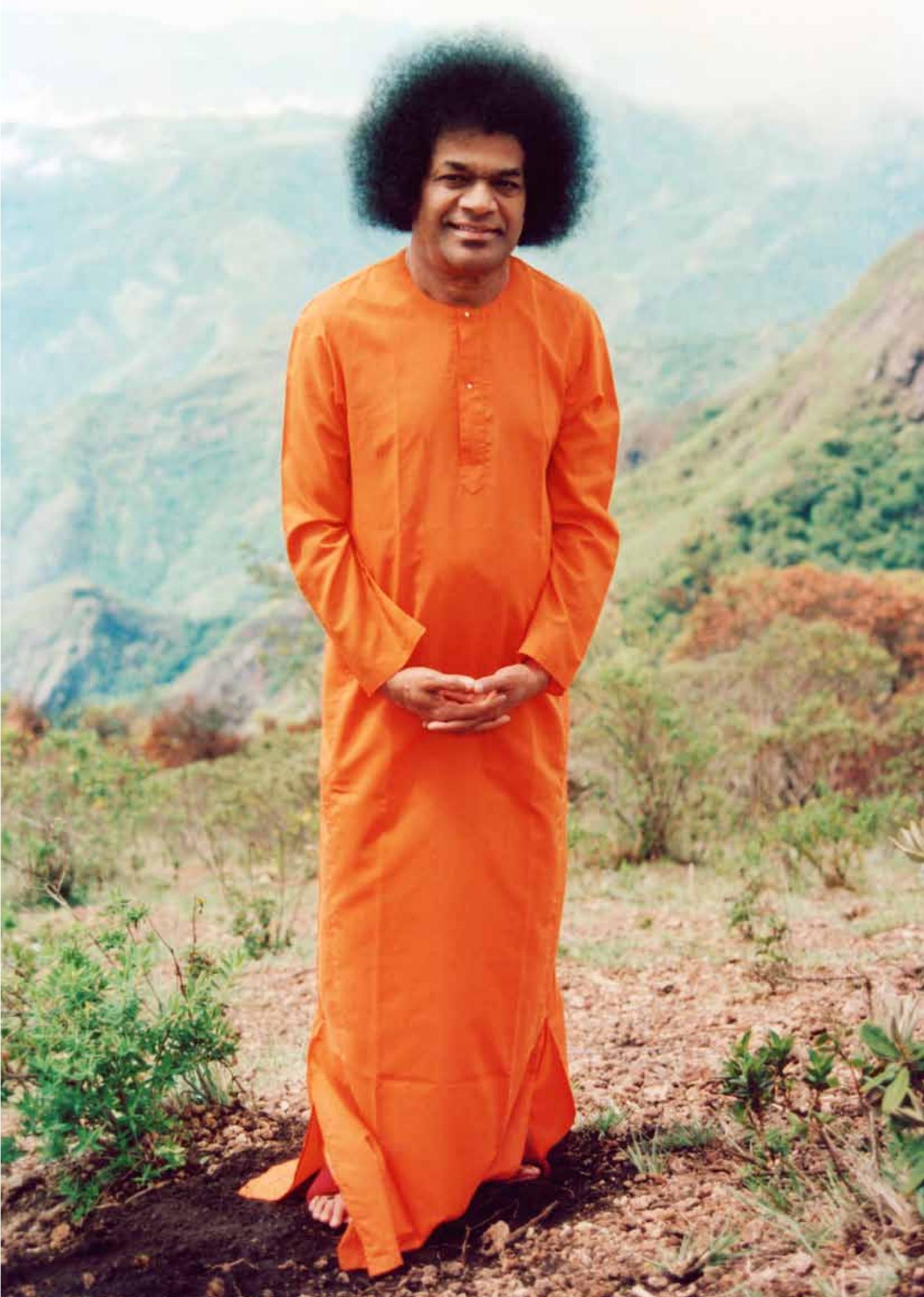
SAI SARATHI

November 2017

Published by
Sathya Sai International Organisation
Hong Kong

Sai Sarathi is an annual magazine of the Sathya Sai International Organisation, Hong Kong.

Views, explanations and experiences contained in the published articles
are those of the authors and not of the Organisation.



ORGANISATION MESSAGE

When we analyse creation, we come to the understanding that God has created everything and that everything is a manifestation of God Himself, only in another form. The scriptures declare, “*All Nature is God and the Lord is in all beings.*” In the Hindu tradition, we regard the earth as Mother for she sustains and nourishes us. Our planet, like everything else in the universe, vibrates with divine energy and sustains us.

But looking at the state of the earth today, with all its degradation – air, water and soil pollution, unpredictable weather patterns, diminishing essential resources such as clean water and nutrient-rich soil, and rapidly increasing numbers of near-extinct animal species – we find that it certainly appears far from divine.

According to Sri Sathya Sai Baba, the environment we see is both a direct and indirect manifestation of the quality of our thoughts. “*It is the pollution in our mind that is the source of our problems, including that of environmental pollution,*” Swami says. “*Correct the mind and the environmental pollution is also corrected.*”

The truth of that statement cannot be debated, because its logic is clear. It is the values we abide by that influence our desires and the lifestyle we yearn for. These shape our consumption patterns. Mahatma Gandhi once said, “*The Earth provides enough to satisfy every man’s need, but not every man’s greed.*”

Sadly, even after attaining a level of comfort in life that millions of others in the world can only dream of, we are still not satisfied and continue to contribute to the destruction of the planet. We may not realise it but we are literally eating away at our own life-support systems. So what kind of planet do we intend to leave to the next generation?

In the daily rat-race, marked by the desire to equal or even outdo others and the ‘I-against-him’ mentality, we easily forget that we are part of one larger family – the family of humanity, in fact the whole of creation. The planet we live on is ultimately one home that we all share, no matter our faith, colour, history, culture and station in life. It is this crucial idea that inspired the Walk for Values which the Sathya Sai International Organisation of Hong Kong co-hosted in March 2017.

In line with the idea ‘One planet, One family’, we need to remember that our actions in one part of the world have a domino effect on other parts of the world. Whether we accept it or not, we are all interconnected. So it is vital that we bring about a shift in our understanding and accept that the earth belongs to everyone, including future generations. Since the planet vibrates with divine energy, it is no less a spiritual obligation to protect this planet that the Lord has given us. “*Samastha Lokah Sukhino Bhavantu*” (May all beings in all the worlds be happy).

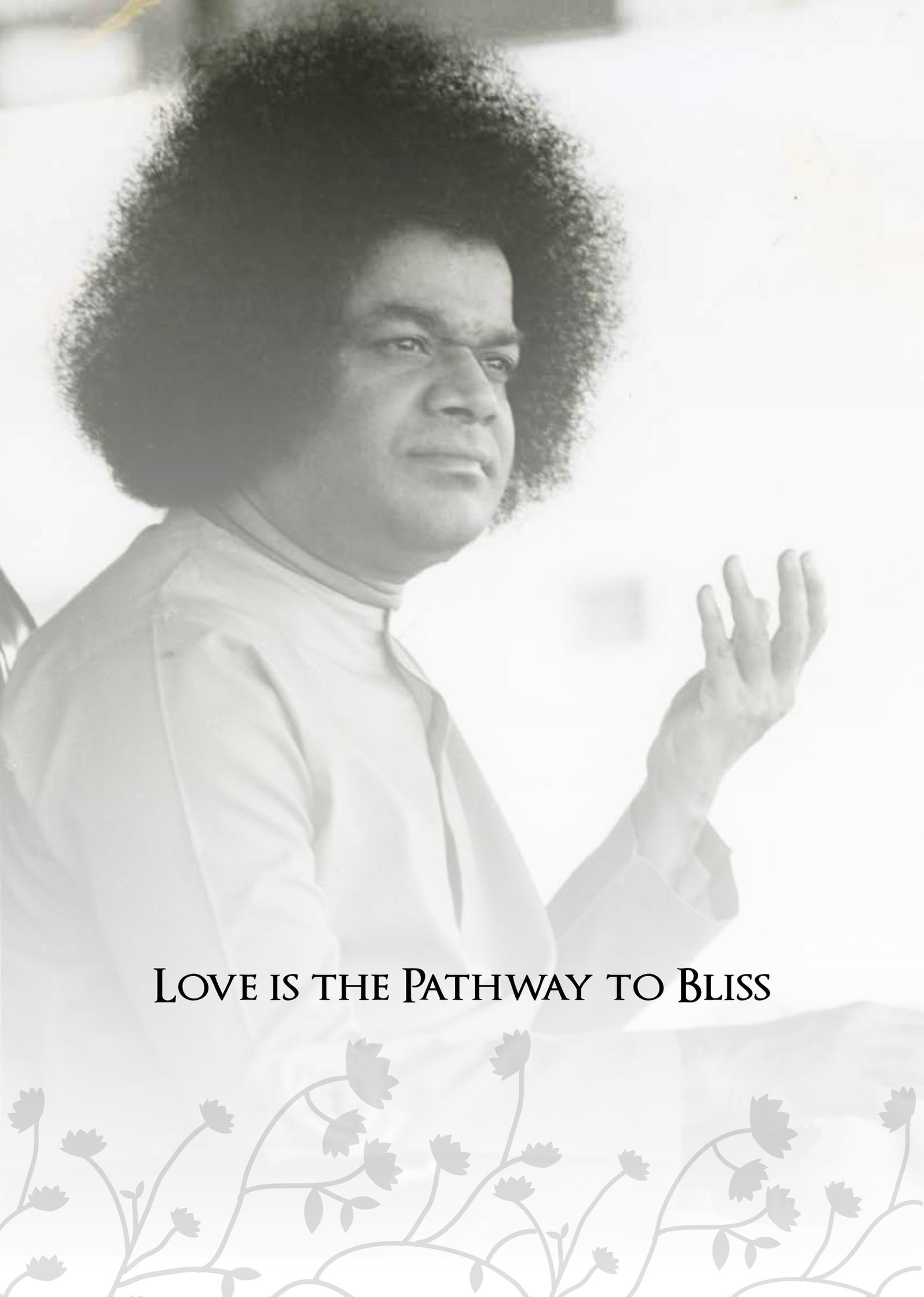
This spiritual dimension cannot be over-stated. How do we claim to love and worship God when we desecrate His creation, which is a manifestation of His will and which is sustained by His love? We cannot. Our spiritual practices (*sadhana*) require not only that we remove the inner enemies and replace them with divine qualities such as Truth, Love, Right Conduct, Peace and Non-violence, it also requires that we live in harmony with the rest of God’s creation and that we use what this earth provides with humility, moderation and gratitude. Living with this higher consciousness is a true offering to Swami.

Whichever way we look at it, secular or spiritual, protecting the planet is urgent and demands purity and dedication in our thoughts and actions.

Jai Sai Ram
Poonam Samtani
National Council President

CONTENTS

Divine Discourse - Love is the Pathway to Bliss	1
Nature is the Effect and God is the Cause	6
The Intimate Relationship between Man, Nature and God	9
Tread Softly, Move Reverentially and Utilise Gratefully	11
Divine Discourse - Education Should Foster Values	14
Impurity Within gets Reflected as Pollution Without	17
Love for Nature is Fundamental to all Faiths	19
Sow the Seeds for Spiritual Transformation	27
Stand Upright for Your Values to Protect the Planet	30
In Memoriam of Allen Yao	33
Swami Says - A Spiritual Hotline	35
In Tune with God and Nature	41
Earth - I Am Not Separate From You	44
Your Planet needs You	47
Nepali Section	51
Chinese Section	54
2017 : The Year in Photos	60
Wing Reports 2017	64
Activity Chart	79



LOVE IS THE PATHWAY TO BLISS



“Understand the principle of trinity, the mother, father and the preceptor. Know the eternal truth that God is in you, you are God, He is within you. That is Sathyam (truth), Shivam (auspiciousness), and Sundaram (beauty).”

Mother, the Most Adorable Name

Embodiments of Love

Mother is responsible for the birth of everyone. Just as Brahma is the Creator of all that is created, it is the mother who is the creator of all. You should always respect this motherly feeling. This is motherland. This is Mother Earth. For this Rama said *Janani Janma Bhoomischa Swargaadapi Gariyasi* (mother and motherland are superior to heaven). It is our responsibility to revere our mother and motherland. That is the goal of your life.

It may be due to the defective educational system or the company that you keep that you have no respect for your own country while you follow other lands. It does not matter if you go anywhere. You do a job in any country, you earn money anywhere but never forget your own motherland: This is my motherland — this is my mother tongue. One who cannot declare that this is my motherland and this is my mother tongue is a living corpse. So, first we should not forget our motherland.

Sugriva prayed, holding the feet of Rama after the victory, and Hanuman also repeated the same: *“Bharata is already ruling over the kingdom. It would be better if you take charge of Lanka and rule it and teach the Rakshasas the righteous path.”* Lakshmana also said the same thing. He said *“Swami, Ayodhya is being ruled by Bharata. Lanka is golden. There is no dearth of wealth. It has all comforts and conveniences. All have surrendered to you. It is better you rule Lanka.”*

Then, Rama said: *“Mad man, for the simple reason that one is healthy and so beautiful, I cannot call anyone else as my mother. She may be weak and ugly, but my mother continues to be my mother. That is the only faith I have. Bharata may be in any condition but this country is my mother.”*

Students, you should have all these moral and ethical values and follow the path given to us by the ancient rishis, and set an ideal to the rest of the society.

Peace for the Body, Mind and Soul

The ancient sages have given us sacred texts. They had no iota of selfishness. They had broad mindedness. That is the declaration in the Veda: *Sahanavavatu Sahanau Bhunaktu, Sahaveeryam Karavavahai*. What a broad feeling it is! The heart should be as vast as the world. Love expands if your heart is wide. Then there will be one human family in this world.

That is why the Vedas taught in the first instance: Let us live together. Let us move together. Let us uphold and improve the intelligence that we have come to know together. Let us live together. Let us grow together. Let us mingle and live together without any conflict and misunderstanding and, finally, in desired peace.

Why do we say *shanti* thrice? Peace at the body level, mental level and Atmic level – *adhidaivik, adhi bhautik* and *adhyatmic*. Peace is needed in the three levels of body, mind, and spirit.

The whole world is represented by the body. The country is the reflection of the body. Therefore, everybody and every country should be happy and peaceful. *Lokaa Samasthaa Sukhino Bhavantu* – let everybody in the world be happy. We have forgotten such broad mindedness and Divine principles. We go by the individual feeling. We have forgotten the very teaching of the Vedas here.

Embodiments of Love, you don't need to do any spiritual practice: You don't need to read, you don't need to worship. First, respect your parents; therein lies your happiness. You love them. Follow their commands. If their command is not acceptable to you, try to convince and explain to them. Do

not pride yourself and be egoistic because your parents are illiterate and that you are educated.

What is your education? A foolish man does not know his true wealth with all formal learning and education, a mean man will not change his mean mentality. All this education leads to argumentation, difference and not complete knowledge. Why should you face death finally having studied so much. You should study to attain immortality. It is all secular, physical, worldly, bookish knowledge. It is useful for our living but not to achieve the goal of life.

Love and Service – The Two Wings

Our life is a bird with two wings. We should have the two wings of love and service. Just as birds fly high with their wings, we should reach noble heights with the two wings of love and service. You cannot reach the goal with only one of the wings. What sort of wings are they? They are like the strings of a Veena instrument. The strings are separate but the musical instrument is one.

The whole country is a Veena. The strings are our religions. All religions are unified in one Veena. The music from the instrument will not be melodious even if one of the strings is broken. We should expect and desire for the welfare of all the religions. We should expect the good for all religions. We should also experience the welfare of everybody.

What is to be done for the welfare of the society? In what way are we proceeding? We serve with intentions of selfishness and for name in the society. I am born in society. I cannot live for a moment without the society. My happiness and pleasure depend on the society. Service to society is service to one's own self. We should understand this unity. It is ego if you say I am serving society.

What is the gain to the world by your service? There is no loss sustained if you don't serve. The gain and loss go to you, not to the world. The youth of today should understand this principle of equanimity.

We do not understand the spirit of youth. What is the stage of youth? The stage of youth is that

which comes in between and passes off. It is not there from the beginning. It does not last till the end. We pride ourselves because of this youth, which comes in between and passes off like a passing cloud. This stage of youth is sacred and is the golden age. You should gather all sacred equipment in this sacred stage.

Inquire the Real 'I'

We celebrate birthday. What is this birthday? Whose birthday? We say my birthday. Who am I? You don't ask that question. You say my birthday because you identify yourself with the body. But later you say it is my stomach. If you say my stomach, then who are you? You are separate.

When you say my body, you and the body are different. Therefore, the body, mind, senses, intellect, all are instruments. But you are the master for all these. That is I. Make an effort to recognise that I.

Embodiments of Love, there are two types of I, the one lettered I and the three lettered Eye. The three lettered I is eye. That is the body. It has three attributes. One lettered I is *Atma*. The movable and the immovable is divinity. God does not receive or give. It originates from your heart. Therefore, enter into activities of help, render service. Service is our life. There is nothing higher than service.

From Kinkara to Shankara

We should render service. Wherever there is need, we should surrender our body, money, mind and intellect. You can be a leader with only the spirit of service. You cannot be a leader without being a servant. How can you be a leader without being a servant? Consider yourself as *kinkara*, the servant, and not *Sankara*, the leader. Only a *kinkara* can become a *Sankara*.

Today we pray to the river, "River, you flow and fill up the tanks." We need not pray to rivers. We have to pray to the rain. Let us pray to the rain. The tanks will automatically be filled. Understand that society is God and that if you serve society all your desires will be fulfilled. We expect God to

grant us many boons because of our love for God and our sense of devotion.

It is the 70th birthday of this body. You have to know one important thing. Swami does not need anything. He does not expect any dress. Swami belongs to you. Swami is not separate from you. You are not separate from Swami. That is the intimate relation between Swami and you.

You should all encourage service in villages and backward areas. You must have listened to the list of names read out. Some brought some jewels for decoration. What are precious jewels to God? Bliss is His jewel. Love is His jewel. He Himself is the very embodiment of beauty. Then why do you bring all these jewels and hide that real beauty?

A beautiful idol is made by a sculptor. How beautiful it is to look at the idol! You go on decorating, garlanding and hide the very beauty of the idol. These are all artificial. The natural form is the bliss. Never bring such things. Do not entertain such thoughts. So, those who have given, don't feel. What Swami has told the Central Trust is that all the jewels that have been brought here will be auctioned right now and the money realised should be utilised in the best possible manner for water supply. Prasanthi Nilayam will not accept anything.

Swami will be happy only if you serve in any other way. Spend your money for service. Where there is water shortage, try to solve that problem. Where health care, education, and medicines are required, participate in that activity. Do everything for society and not for the individual.

Water is Life

Our country Bharat is a collective form. Everything is cosmic form. Keep in view the welfare of the society. Individuals cannot be a society. We have to make an effort to serve many people in society. Not only jewels, they have brought some money also today. There are certain areas, certain places where some work is yet to be done in Anantapur District.

All problems of Rayalaseema should be solved completely. What sort of a place is this? It is a

desert area. There is no drinking water supply. How do you expect plants to grow here? You cannot live without these things. This is the position today.

Water is life for man. Swami planned many things in recognition of this truth. Heart is important for life. Head is important for education. Water is essential for body. All these three should be supplied free. It should not be a business. It is God's property. Just as oil is the life for the lamp, love is essential for life. A lamp without oil and life without love are useless.

Let everybody be happy along with you. Let everybody be in peace along with you. Do appropriate service keeping this in view. Embodiments of Love, God is within you in the form of three attributes of *Satva*, *Rajo* and *Thamas*. God is Brahma, Vishnu, Maheswara within you. You forget the God within you and are after God who is not in your reach. Can't you understand Him when He is within you?

When God is in you, you are mighty and God is so small in you. You have to prove your majesty and never be weak. Do majestic deeds when you are majestic.

Expansion Through Seva

Right from this day our Organisation should expand and spread all over the world. We should forget individual differences, keep in view the welfare of the society. The welfare of the society is our welfare. Let it be in any village, region or country, we should participate in all activities in all areas, regions, and countries.

Embodiments of love, participants from 175 countries have assembled here today. So many have congregated. What work are we doing now? We have to inquire clearly. Our quality lies in our work. There are bound to be poor people in your respective countries. They are the *Daridra Narayanas* – God in the form of poor people. You serve that Narayana. What is the use of serving *Sriman Narayan*, God, who has everything? God has so many servants to serve Him. You don't need to serve Him. There are the poor and the needy, who are the embodiments of God. Serve them.

Sathyam, Shivam, Sundaram

Impant such noble ideas in your heart and let them grow into huge trees, and you give comfort under their shade to the needy. This is the only birthday gift Swami is asking from you. Swami does not need anything else. You will be happy and secure, that is your gift to Swami. You should set an ideal and example to others.

Improve and expand our Organisation as you go back to your places. Just don't stop here. You should develop further day after day. Then only you can call yourselves as true devotees. Don't waste the principles of the creator, sustainer and destroyer in you. Don't hurt them. Do not misuse them. Then you will be committing a sin.

Understand the principle of trinity, the mother, father and the preceptor. Know the eternal truth that God is in you, you are God, He is within you. That is *Sathyam* (truth), *Shivam* (auspiciousness), and *Sundaram* (beauty). That is God. That is what Plato also said: Truth, goodness, and beauty. These three are life principles, let anybody from any country proclaim. Lead your life with these principles and keep up the sanctity and greatness of this country.

Water should be there in Rayalaseema throughout the year. Rayalaseema is a place of stone so far. Rayalaseema should be converted to Pranaseema – land of life – and Ratnaseema – land of diamonds. It is the collective and not individual responsibility.

Devotees Flowers, Swami The Thread

One flower does not make a garland. Many flowers make a garland. So all of you should mould into a garland. Then Swami is the inherent, latent thread in between passing through the flowers.

What is the use of the string without the flower? Consider yourselves as children of one mother. You should consider others as brothers every time and as one human race.

Do not give any room for differences of nationality and religion. All belong to the human race; the caste of humanity, religion of love, language of the heart, that is the spirit. This is what you have to learn; let it be any language for that matter. Here is water. Telugu people call it Neeru, Tamilians call it Thanneer, Hindi speaking people call Paani, and English people call it Water. Names are different but water is the same. Likewise, God is one. You call Him Allah, Jesus, Buddha. Develop that faith.

Love, The Pathway to Bliss

We should not hate any religion. The followers of all religions should behave like brothers and sisters. You practice such an ideal and give happiness to Swami. Many foreigners said 'Happy Birthday' in the morning. Swami is always happy. Swami does not need your happiness. You be happy. Happiness is union with God. If you want to be happy, join God. Then you can be happy.

You should follow a new path right from this day. You should spend a happy time in unity, coordination, and integration. You should experience divinity in all. That is true bliss. It is not happiness if it is from comforts and conveniences. They are just passing clouds, coming and going. You should achieve that bliss that neither comes nor goes. Love is the only path to reach that goal of bliss.

Divine Discourse
23rd November 1995



NATURE IS THE EFFECT AND GOD IS THE CAUSE

“Whosoever worships the Supreme Lord should also worship Nature (Prakriti). He should love and adore Nature because Nature is not different from the Supreme Self.”

– Sathya Sai Baba

Before the Beginning

Before the beginning, before creation began, there was God – The One and only One. He existed – without cause, effect, or reason. Hence, in the scriptures, a primary attribute of God is *Sat* – absolute Truth – that which is beyond the attributes of time, space, and causation. The other two attributes of divinity, *Chit* – consciousness, and *Ananda* – bliss, comprise *Satchitananda*.

Then, the One became many – “*Ekoham Bahushyam*” – and the universe was created from the Absolute One. Sathya Sai Baba says that the reason the One became many is to love Himself – “*I separated myself from Myself so that I can love myself.*” Multiplicity is inherent in the One. Lord Krishna has declared in the Bhagawad Gita, Chapter 15:7, that all creation in the world is pervaded by God.

Creation, of which Nature is an integral part, originated from the Master, the source of love. Nature, the manifested aspect of creation, exists in love, is sustained by love, and merges back into love – completing the cycle. Its relationship to

man is one of love. God is the basis of both Nature and Man.

“Just as there is oil in the sesame seed, butter in milk, fragrance in the flower, tasty juice in the fruit, fire in wood, there is divinity in this vast universe. The divine is all pervasive and is present in everything. It is the divine power inside that makes it possible for the eye to see and ears to hear. The entire creation is the expression of the will power of God. Nature is a manifestation of the supreme divine. Man is born to manifest and reflect divinity. All constituents of nature reflect their inherent qualities.” – Sathya Sai Baba, 19 July 1997

Since God is the cause and Nature is the effect, it behoves us to take a deeper look at the relationship between the two. Man, from ancient times, has explored his relationship with God, trying to understand the five basic questions posed by life – Where did I come from? Where am I going? How long will I be here? What is the meaning of all this? And, finally, who made all this?

Our ancient sages considered the earth as a mother that sustained life and so was worshipped as *Bhumata* (earthly mother). They recognised that the human body, derived from earth, contains the natural elements, water, air, space, fire and earthly matter. The gross body, thus, arises from the earth, is sustained by Nature, and returns to the earth after our short stay.

In modern times, society has been treating Nature and natural resources as inanimate, insentient objects – without life and feeling – to satiate our demands. This behaviour arises out of ignorance and our inability to realise the unity and indivisibility between God, Nature and Man. If God is the cause, and Nature and Man are both manifestations of the Divine, then the two must coexist with love, harmony and compassion to support one another.

Just as a family is nurtured and supported by the loving relationship between brothers and sisters, Man and Nature need to co-exist under the fatherhood of God. We must see, worship, and treat Nature as an extension of God for our own benefit.

Nature is a manifestation of God

Sathya Sai Baba reminds us that there is an intimate and inseparable relationship between Man and Nature, based on the Divinity latent in all that exists. The Upanishads declare, *“Isa vasya idam sarvam”* (all this is manifestation of God). There is absolutely nothing in creation that is not pervaded by Divinity – however this truth has eluded modern man.

Society has not realised that Nature is a manifestation of God and therefore has many attributes of the Divine. Nature supports life and is an integral part of our earthly existence. There is much to learn from Nature, but there is also much to lose by disregarding, disrespecting, and abusing Nature. Baba advises that Nature is not only the best teacher, it is the best exemplar of divine qualities that should be emulated by man.

“People ask, ‘Where is God?’ The answer is provided by Nature. Who is it that created the five elements, the five life-breaths, the five

external sense organs, and the five organs of action, which are ceaselessly carrying out their prescribed roles? The seasons in their regular cycles are teaching a lesson to man. Therefore, Nature is demonstrable proof of the existence of God. Nature is not under any obligation to any man; it takes no orders from any man; it operates according to the will of the divine.” – Sathya Sai Baba, 12 July 1988

Man mistreats Nature

Western civilisation has assumed and practised the belief that natural resources are insentient objects for mankind to exploit and consume to satisfy their wants and desires to the fullest extent possible. We often forget that Nature gives us not only the gross body – composed of space, air, water, fire and earth – and all that is needed to sustain life, such as food and habitat, but also gifts to enrich our lives – rivers, mountains, lakes, plains and natural habitats.

We share the planet with other life forms – animals, birds, fish, insects, trees and plants – that co-exist and support us. In addition, Nature provides natural resources such as coal, oil, gas, minerals and other materials that can be utilised by Man. But these are now being exploited to support modern civilisation and our increasingly lofty living standards.

Tremendous advances in science and technology have made it possible for man to extract natural resources at an alarmingly increasing rate for greater material benefits and higher living standards to satiate our selfish needs. This has created an imbalance in Nature, causing harm to our natural environment and the flora and fauna, with which we share mother earth.

Sathya Sai Baba warned us about this imbalance and disharmony between Man and Nature many decades ago. He also told us to prepare for the resultant consequences of such irresponsible behaviour by mankind – rampant diseases and so-called ‘natural disasters’, such as devastating floods, hurricanes, typhoons, tornadoes, earthquakes and wildfires.



Nature, like its master, God, is essentially an eternal witness – it does not act or cause an action – it simply reflects, resounds, and reacts to man’s actions along the lines laid down by natural laws, which scientists are still discovering. Humanity is now being punished for the results of its own actions in the past, which are rebounding with increased vengeance.

See God in Nature

Sathya Sai Baba urges us to see God in Nature, because Nature is the purest handiwork of God. All the wonderful, natural, and awe-inspiring natural phenomenon – from the twinkling stars to the revolving planets, to the energy from the Sun – proclaim the grandeur, beauty and presence of the creator, God.

When we feel inspired by the ecstasy of a gushing torrent, the grand scenery of lofty mountain ranges, the gentle beauty of rolling plains – we feel the presence of God, since the beauty of Nature testifies to the presence of the Divine. We can appreciate the handiwork of God

if we have an attitude of gratitude and an open mind to receive the message of Nature.

Baba reminds us that much can be learned from Nature if it is seen from the spiritual point of view, and not from a simple physical angle. When seen as a manifestation of the Divine, its sweetness will become apparent. If seen with the inner eye, the beauty of the Lord’s handiwork leads one to the glory of the Lord, and ultimately to the Truth.

Sathya Sai Baba says that this Truth, when grasped, confers bliss that is auspiciousness itself. Thus, the effect, Nature, leads one to the cause, God. Therein lies one of the greatest benefits of Nature.

***Jai Sai Ram
Anupom Ganguli
Los Angeles***

(The author is Co-Chair of the Environmental Committee of the Sathya Sai International Organisation. He is a retired environmental specialist who worked in air quality management for the local government of Southern California, USA.)



THE INTIMATE *Relationship* BETWEEN MAN, NATURE AND GOD

The Rishi of the Taittiriya Upanishad narrates the story of the birth of the five elements, which make up this whole universe of names and forms. He says: “From that which is Atman is space born, from space air, from air fire, from fire water, from water earth, from earth herbs, from herbs food and from food man.”

The five elements and the three gunas that go to make up the whole universe of names and forms are an effect of the cause, which is Brahman, the Absolute. The effects are nothing but the cause in a different name and form. The cause pervades the effects entirely. For example, gold is the cause and the different ornaments are the effects. The necklace or the ring that I love are nothing but gold. Gold pervades the entire ornament which can only exist in gold.

There are countless waves, bubbles and foam in the sea. Essentially they are all water. Water is the cause and these different forms are the effects. Water pervades all effects which can exist only in water. They cannot be independent of water, the cause.

Likewise, God is the cause and creation the effect. The creation (effect) is nothing but God (cause) in a different name and form. God pervades the entire creation which lives in God and cannot be independent of God.

We seekers have to lift our attention from the effects, which are temporary and limited, to the Cause that is Permanent and Unlimited. It is the Cause that is One, that has become the effect, which are many. So all that we perceive through our five senses is nothing but God. Yet, are we really experiencing God?

Identifying with the body-mind entity, I have limited myself and my vision and, hence, will never be able to experience my Godhood. We can go on doing umpteenth number of righteous actions but so long as I remain the doer of my actions I remain

in bondage. I will still be earth bound. Righteous activity will turn the chains binding me from iron to gold but I will remain bound, no matter how beautiful the chain is.

I am not saying that one should stop righteous activity, but only that one needs to go beyond activity, Dharmic (righteousness) and adharmic (unrighteousness), beyond knowledge and ignorance, beyond all that is known and turn towards the Knower, for That experience to take place.

This physical creation is the physical body of the Lord, the infinite number of beings and Nature included. The One who has manifested as all these countless bodies certainly cannot be limited to one body. That One must necessarily transcend all bodies. Man and Nature have manifested in God who is bodyless and who pervades the entire creation.

We do not live independent of Ishwara (God). We live in *Ishwara*. We use His energy to function. He is breathing, thinking, talking and acting through us all. Wherever we go we are with Him, in Him. There is no God forsaken place. What is it that we can call ours? Even the body-mind is His. We must begin to feel Him, in and around ourselves, and all that is coming our way. Bliss alone will fill us up thereafter and nothing shall take us away from Him. In fact, the 'me' will melt in Him on finding Him. Hence, Kabir, a renowned poet saint, sang:-

*Prem ki gali ati saakri,
jaame do na samaye.
Hari hai toh main nahi,
Main hoon toh Hari nahi.*

(Meaning: The lane of Love is very narrow. Two people cannot walk together. Only One can. So if the Lord is there then I am not, and if I am there then the Lord is not.)

There can be only one 'I' in the body-mind entity. Either it is mine – finite and limited as it is now, crying and laughing with life's ever changing situations and going up and down with them – or it is God's – Infinite, Eternal and Unlimited, ever Blissful and all inclusive in Its Love, like Swami's.

There are two ways of reaching It. Either I reduce my 'I' to the bare minimum by practicing "Not mine, oh Lord, all is thine and I bow down to Thy will." Or, I grow it to its maximum to feel "All is Me". For real *vairagya* (dispassion) is not giving up of home and relationships but a joyful acceptance of all that happens.

I can only give up what is really mine. What is really mine? Is anything mine? The home and relationships were given to me. If they were mine they would be there with me forever and not be able to disobey me. But that is not the case. Even the body mind were given to me. They come and go by His Divine Will, not mine.

I have no control on them even while living in them. I merely am doing and fulfilling what I recognise as its need. For example, when my body is tired I go along with it and rest. When it is hungry I give it food. When it needs to relieve itself I merely oblige as it is beyond my control.

Who really is directing this massive, eternal play and controlling It? He is the *Antaryamin* (The Inner Controller) and so nothing and no one can disobey Him, as everything belongs to Him. He is aware of all that goes on, even the ant and the minutest of living organisms. Sitting within all, He controls all, living and the non-living, moving and the unmoving. For all is His *Aishwarya*, His Divine Glory. Our Beloved Swami demonstrated that and continues to show that He transcends both and, hence, controls man and Nature both, as He alone is both.

The only thing that does belong to me is this sense of false 'I'. If I can place that at His Lotus Feet and feel Him through all my thoughts, words, and actions, I will become His forever and continue to live in Him as Him, empty of all dross and soaked in Divine Bliss.

May Bhagawan's Grace be on us all in this noble pursuit of discovering Him alone as Man and Nature.

***Jai Sai Ram
Ritoo Ahuja***

TREAD SOFTLY, MOVE REVERENTIALLY AND UTILISE GRATEFULLY

Although most, if not all, of the time we take it for granted, we are blessed this planet earth is a hospitable home. It provides everything we need to live, yes live and not just survive. Of course, there are parts that are not as hospitable, but Man had been endowed with the capacity to adjust to his environment and the intelligence to overcome the effects of extreme elements, and this has enabled him to occupy just about every major land mass on earth.



The air we breathe, the water we drink, the fertile soil and the sun we bask under enable us to thrive. In truth, Man did nothing to earn these conditions; he was gifted it. All the leading religions speak of the earth as God's creation. Sathya Sai Baba said, "*Creation proclaims the Will of the Lord.*" Nature, it is said, is a manifestation of God. Since God is omnipresent in His creation, the earth vibrates with Divine Consciousness – this is how sacred the earth is. The reality is that Man's relationship with the earth, indeed the whole creation, is in God.

Sathya Sai Baba said that Man, Nature and God are intimately interrelated. Man is a visitor on this earth, a trustee of the riches that the earth offers. It follows that the earth's treasures, its gifts of God, are to be used wisely, with moderation and humility, and with deep gratitude; the gift of the earth's resources are not for Man to wantonly exploit.

Man has thrived at a greatly accelerated pace in the past century. But it is at the height of his seeming dominance of the earth and its resources, when he considers his powers to be unassailable, that it is clear Man has lost himself in his mindless greed, oblivious to the harm that he is doing to the earth and to himself. Man's desecration of Nature has been laid bare.

The problem is that Man sees himself as the conqueror rather than a visitor and so has lost sight

of his obligation to offer his humble gratitude to God, the Provider of his wondrous home. Man has become absorbed in the illusion that this is all his and he owes nothing in return. How did we come to lose all sense of responsibility for the earth?

“Man has the rare good fortune of adoring Nature as the Body of God and offering grateful worship to God. But, is he conscious of God being the Source and Sustenance? Does he give God the first place in his thoughts which is His due? Or, is he engaged in the activities of life in total disregard of God?” - Sathya Sai Baba

Man craves the boons of the Creator, often acting like a thief, but he neglects the Creator Himself. In his delusion, Man has even turned on himself – he lives by a false law: Survival of the fittest.

As a consequence, some nations have prospered and some individuals have accumulated inordinate material wealth – the earth’s riches are not justly shared. There is exploitation. But the so-called victors have lost their peace; it has buried them in ignorance of who they are and what the true purpose of their lives is. Their endless pursuits have taken a heavy toll on their physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

Man is not protected from the retribution of Nature for his excesses. One needs only look around today and bear witness to the havoc that Nature is causing as a consequence. No one is spared.

Of course, there are enlightened people who understand the mutual inter-dependence of all creation, and they live accordingly. Sadly, in many instances, their voices have been drowned out and not enough people listen to them.

“It is a pity that, instead of paying attention to God, Nature and Man, in that order, men today are concerned most with themselves, more with Nature and very much less with God. From birth to death, from dawn till night, man pursues fleeting pleasures by the exploitation, the despoiling, the desecration of Nature, ignoring the truth that it is the property of

*God, the Creator, and any injury caused to it is a sacrilege which merits dire punishment.”
- Sathya Sai Baba*

There is a way back, there is redemption. A life of peace and happiness is actually within easy reach and the solution is glaringly simple: We need to let go of all the material pleasures that we madly crave for and the attachments that bind us, so that we may be unburdened to experience the simple joys that life offers. The joys that touch our hearts are really simple ones that give us proper perspective about our own lives: the alluring smile of a newborn child, the loving embrace of one’s daughter on her wedding day, the serenity of a stream in the quiet forest, etc. Yes, less is really more!

We need to live simply again, knowing that a life lived righteously and lived well, free from the inner enemies of greed, lust, attachment, anger, ego, jealousy, etc. – which rob us of our humanity – provides true self-satisfaction. The removal of our inner enemies makes space for the purity of heart and mind needed to live in God’s Will, where real peace and happiness is found.

That’s right, it is time to give up false notions about where to find peace and happiness and know that by living in God’s Will we actually live true to our inner selves. We need not seek peace and happiness, these will come naturally when we live in this way.

When we live simply, we inevitably thread softly, move reverentially and utilise gratefully. Nothing is taken for granted; everything is seen as a gift from God, which all are entitled to. We switch off what we don’t need, we consume only what we need, we don’t kill to satisfy our palate, we walk and benefit from the exercise that it brings to our bodies and minds, and we take the bus because it reminds us how most people really live. By these simple steps, we learn humility and gratitude.

When the cravings of the mind and senses are stilled and the false ego is diminished, we actually experience our inter-connectedness to everything around us. This will nourish the sense of responsibility towards the earth and all living beings, including animals and plants.

None of us will be here permanently. Nowadays, 80-85 years is considered a full life span. Since everything is so temporary, why give so much time and energy to accumulate what we cannot take with us when we leave this earth plane? Why sacrifice the potential to live mindfully with higher thinking just so that we may accumulate more and more money and live mindlessly?

Are we not better served by seeking and manifesting the best within us and living more wisely, more productively, and in service of others, so that we may deserve to have the Truth revealed to us? Our material possessions are, by comparison, like sand castles on a beach.

Living simply reminds us that our sense of being comes not from what or who we possess in

the world outside us but rather from what *is* inside us. The deep conviction that one's life is precious because it is inextricably connected to God is truly empowering. So is the knowledge that we are really Divine. Once gained, nothing can take away this self-realisation. Then we can thrive on this earth with a light carbon footprint.

Our purpose is not to be slaves to the mind and the senses, it is to go beyond these trappings to realise our true identity. That is why we took birth. Living simply and protecting the planet is an important part of that journey.

Jai Sai Ram
Ashok K. Sakhrani

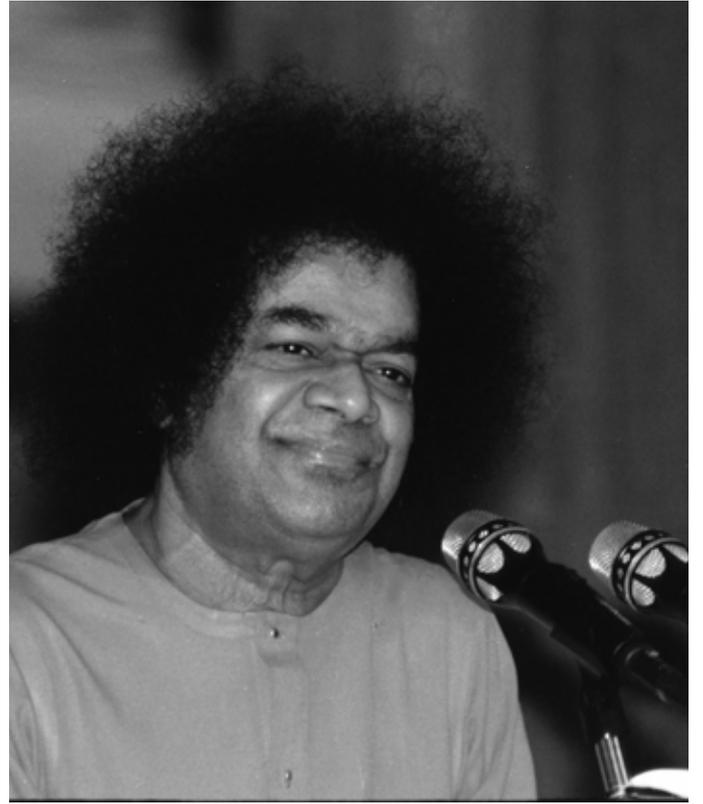
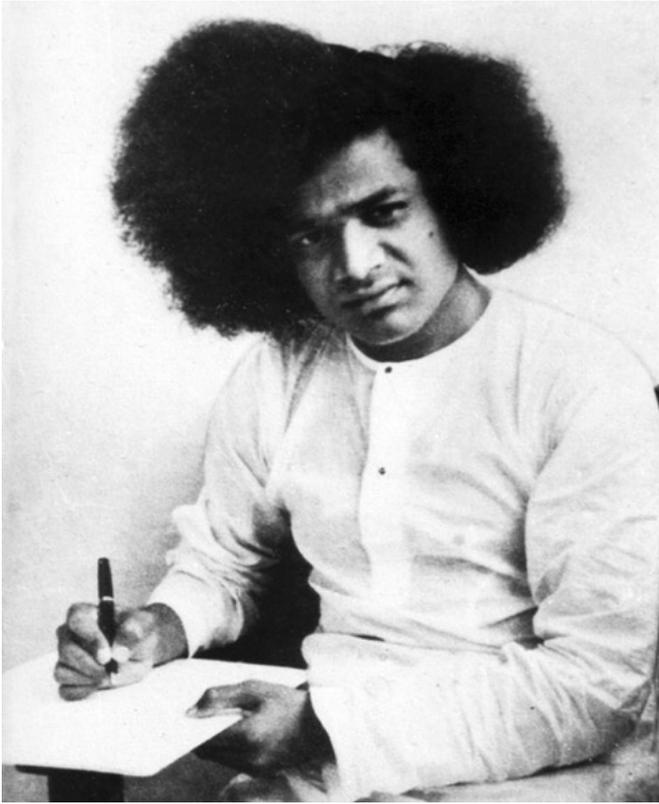
When we live simply, we inevitably thread softly,
move reverentially and utilise gratefully.

Nothing is taken for granted;
everything is seen as a gift from God,
which all are entitled to.

- We switch off what we don't need,
- we consume only what we need,
- we don't kill to satisfy our palate,
- we walk and benefit from the exercise that it brings to our bodies and minds,
- and we take the bus because it reminds us how most people really live.

By these simple steps,
we learn humility and gratitude.





EDUCATION SHOULD FOSTER VALUES

***Modern education fosters only intelligence, not virtues.
Of what avail is education if it does not inculcate virtues in man?***

(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

Since ancient times, the *Bharatiyas* have been using the word '*Prapancha*' while referring to this world consisting of mobile and immobile objects. It is constituted by the five elements, namely earth, water, fire, air and ether.

The *Bharatiyas* have been worshipping these five elements as the manifestations of divinity. They called earth as *Bhudevi* (goddess Earth), water as *Gangadevi* (goddess of Ganga), fire as *Agnideva* (fire god), wind as *Vayudeva* (wind god) and *Akasha* (ether) as *Sabda Brahman* (primordial sound).

The five elements relate to five senses of perceptions in man and their attributes are sight,

taste, touch, smell and hearing. The true meaning of the worship of the elements is that man should not only make proper use of these elements but should also sanctify his senses of sight, taste, touch, smell and hearing.

But the students are not making any effort to understand the divine nature of these five elements and neither are the teachers making them aware of this truth. The students are interested in acquiring merely bookish knowledge and not in understanding the sanctity of these elements. The teachers are also interested in imparting only bookish knowledge to the students and not the spiritual aspect of education. True education is that which confers virtues, good intellect, devotion, duty and discipline.

“ Today, even marine life is in danger due to so-called advancement in science. Advancement in science is welcome but it should not lead to ecological imbalance. The people and the world at large should be benefited from science. But today everyone is interested in selfish gains. No one seems to care for society.

Convert Your Knowledge Into Skill

Today, all the five elements are polluted and, consequently, man is mired in insecurity. Mere acquisition of degrees should not be the objective of students. They should make proper use of the five elements. This is the true value-oriented education the world needs today. Values are for education, education is for life, life is for love, love is for man, man is for spirituality, spirituality is for the world and the world is for peace. So, one should travel from values to peace.

Today, the students are acquiring education with selfishness and self-interest in mind. They are craving for money. Money comes and goes but morality comes and grows. The students should strive hard to cultivate morality. They should convert their knowledge into skill and bring about balance in their lives. But modern students are actually killing their knowledge, i.e., they are putting it to misuse. Consequently, they have completely lost their mental power and their inner reality is also eclipsed.

Modern education cannot be called education in its true sense. What is the use of intelligence if one lacks power of discrimination? And of what avail is knowledge if it is not converted into skill? True education is that which develops in you love for your fellow-beings and motivates you to serve the community.

Modern system of education has undergone many changes but no change has brought about any worthwhile results. First of all, the mind of man should be transformed. Then the entire world will be transformed because the mind forms the basis of the entire world, *Mano Moolam Idam Jagat*.

Maintain Ecological Balance

Today the students do not know how to convert their knowledge into skill. Where does the mistake lie? Does it lie with the parents or the teachers or the leaders? It is the mistake of everybody. The students are pure and tender hearted. It is the responsibility of the parents to teach them the importance of human values like truth, righteousness, and love. But the parents are not making any effort to teach the children to speak the truth. In fact, some parents misguide their children in this regard.

For example, if the father does not want to attend a particular telephone call, he tells his son to utter a lie, saying his father is not available. In this manner, children are taught to speak untruth. As a result, they lead a life of untruth after they grow up. Under any circumstances, one should not utter a lie. The students should learn to practise this maxim: Help ever, Hurt never. Those who adhere to this dictum will certainly progress in life.

Today boys and girls acquire education with an eye on the external world. They do not realise that all that is seen in the external world is transient. One can develop inner vision in life only when one makes proper use of one's knowledge. Humanness has declined because man lacks balance in life. If human values are to be fostered, man should convert his knowledge into skill and maintain proper balance in life.

Today the world is losing its ecological balance as man, out of utter selfishness, is robbing Mother Earth of her resources like coal, petroleum, iron, etc. As a result, we find earthquakes, floods, and such other devastating natural calamities. Human

life will find fulfilment only when ecological balance is maintained.

Balance in human life and balance in nature, both are equally important. Today, even marine life is in danger due to so-called advancement in science. Advancement in science is welcome but it should not lead to ecological imbalance. The people and the world at large should be benefited from science. But today everyone is interested in selfish gains. No one seems to care for society.

The Foremost Duty Of The Students

The food that we eat, the water that we drink, the air that we breathe are all polluted. In fact, all five elements, which are of utmost importance for man, are polluted. It is the foremost duty of the students to cleanse the world of pollution. Keep your body and mind clean. Cleanliness is godliness. Purify your actions and feelings.

Speak sweetly and softly to everybody. The culture of Bharat teaches *Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara* (speak the truth and adhere to righteousness). Love everybody because God is present in all. The Vedas teach, *Easwara Sarva Bhutanam* (God dwells in all beings). God has another name *Viswa*. It means that the entire universe is His form.

One does not find unity among students as they lack the virtue of love. You should consider love as your very life. I often tell My students: “*When the electric current of truth flows through the wire of righteousness and enters the bulb of peace, you get the light of love. In order to cultivate love, you should adhere to the values of Sathya and dharma.*” *Sathyam Bruyath, Priyam Bruyath, Na Bruyath Sathyamapriyam* (speak the truth, speak it in a pleasant way and do not speak the truth that is unpleasant). *Sathyam Bruyath* is the moral value, *Priyam Bruyath* is the social value and *Na Bruyath Sathyamapriyam* is the spiritual value. But modern man is not interested in spirituality.

Who Is A True Human Being?

Today, the rich and the educated are neglecting spirituality. They consider money as the be-

all and end-all of life. Money can never give peace and bliss. Devotion is most essential. The country is facing hardships because people lack devotion to God. They do not think of God who is manifest in the form of five elements. We know water is essential for life. But values like truth and righteousness are as essential for man as water.

Who is a human being? Is he merely the body? No. One with purity, love, and devotion alone is a true human being. Today people are in mad pursuit of money. No doubt, money is essential but it should be within limits. Once you have love for God, money will follow you of its own accord. People are ready to sacrifice even their lives for the sake of money but do not spend even a minute in the contemplation of God. They do not undertake even a single sacred activity during the day in the 24 hours given to them by God.

Each one has to enquire whether he is making proper use of time. People waste a lot of time in vain gossip and in watching television, etc. What is it that you get out of these activities? You just waste time. Time is God. Time wasted is life wasted.

One may be wealthy but wealth is useless if one lacks character. After death, are you able to carry your bank balance with you? No. It will remain in the bank only. You cannot carry even a fistful of sand with you. So, character is most essential, not money. True education is that which removes the pollution of the mind and develops character. It is not enough if the students get good marks; they should take care that they do not get bad remarks. Only then will their marks have value.

***Divine Discourse
Sathya Sai Baba***



IMPURITY WITHIN GETS REFLECTED AS POLLUTION WITHOUT

The sun, the moon, the rivers and oceans, the mountains and the trees were all revered and worshipped by our ancestors as vestures of God. Man used to live happily and peacefully in harmony with Nature. He understood that these were all part of God's wondrous creation and that they serve to sustain creation. Such was man's spiritual maturity.

The perfect balance in Nature that maintained life for millions of years is disturbed today by the advanced technology (that has certainly transformed our lives in many positive ways). Yet, it has brought along in its wake new threats to our lives and the environment. In many ways, we are less secure – the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the earth that sustains us with food are getting more and more polluted. Nature is reacting and its fury is experienced in dramatic climate change and natural calamities taking place all over the world.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba says, *“Today all the five elements (Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Space) are polluted and consequently man is mired in insecurity. The world is losing its ecological balance as man, out of utter selfishness, is robbing Mother Earth of her resources like coal, petroleum, iron, etc. As a result, we find earthquakes, floods and other devastating calamities. Human life will find fulfillment only when ecological balance is*

maintained. Balance in human life and balance in Nature, both are equally important.”

Pope Francis recently said, *“As stewards of God's creation, we are called to make the earth a beautiful garden for the human family. When we destroy our forests, ravage our soil and pollute our seas, we betray that noble calling.”* (18 January 2015)

There is an increasing awareness and concern in all nations of the need to control our exploitation of the earth's resources and the pollution that we have created, whether it be in the water, in the atmosphere, on land, etc. Although the damage is external, the solution is not to be found externally.

Sathya Sai Baba brings to light that the very root cause of pollution lies **within** man. It is the *inner pollution* that ultimately manifests as pollution outside. He explains that just as the natural state of the five elements is being contaminated by harmful actions that cause pollution, the balance of the five elements is also disturbed within man. Just like pollution of the environment, man's natural state of *Love, Peace and Joy* is polluted by *excessive desires, greed and selfishness*.

Man has forgotten his true Self, which by nature is the Pure Love that lives as one with all, sharing all of Nature's bounties with others. Deluded as to one's true Self and led astray by his uncontrolled

desires, man has become selfish. To feed his ego, greed and selfishness, man relentlessly cuts trees and decimates the forests that help maintain ecological balance, he kills animals for pleasure and so reaps a heavy burden of bad karmic consequences, and he indiscriminately uses the earth's natural resources for his own personal benefit, without considering the effects on others or the environment.

With this inner pollution, man is moving further and further from his true spiritual Self, and in so doing he is no longer capable of loving others, and he is never at peace with his own self too.

The inner pollution of negative thoughts is the real cause of the outer pollution of the environment.

Sathya Sai Baba introduced a very useful, practical programme called "Ceiling on Desires", wherein He advised us to use our resources of food, money, time and energy discriminately and to serve others with the savings. He urged us to live a simple life, using natural resources only as much as we need and to share the rest with others. This is social justice as a natural outcome of higher living!

He introduced, the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values programme, where the inherent human values of Truth, Righteous Conduct, Peace, Love and Non-violence are carefully nurtured so that they are reflected in one's character and thoughts, words and deeds. These values, which are part of man's innate nature, have been polluted by the dust of lust, anger, ego, attachment, etc., and in turn they pollute the environment.

Sathya Sai Baba also emphasises the importance of chanting the name of God and of group devotional singing, which sends out positive, healing vibrations into the atmosphere. He says, "*If you constantly chant the name of God, the polluted atmosphere would automatically get purified. The divine vibrations originating from the chant of the divine Name mix with the atmosphere and spread everywhere, indeed throughout the world.*" Through such efforts one gets closer to his/her own true spiritual Self.

There is urgency to create awareness of the need to eradicate the *inner pollution* in man, and also make a conscious effort to realise that we are spiritual beings living in a physical body. One's *sadhana* (spiritual practices), including, selflessly serving society and meditation, will make a big difference to achieving this Self-realisation. An awareness that all creation is One Universal Consciousness pervading everywhere will bring tremendous change to the way we live and to the world around us.

The great poet philosopher Khalil Gibran said, "*Everything in creation exists within you, and everything in you exists in creation.*" Until we work towards understanding this, until we realise and act with the understanding that all the world – all living creatures and all Nature – is a vesture of One Supreme Consciousness, all our anti-pollution laws and all our efforts will have an essential understanding missing.

Let us make a special and united effort to create awareness of the importance of eradicating the *inner pollution* and living with awareness of the underlying unity as our ancient seers and sages did. They taught us *Vasudaiva Kutumbakam*, meaning the world is one family.

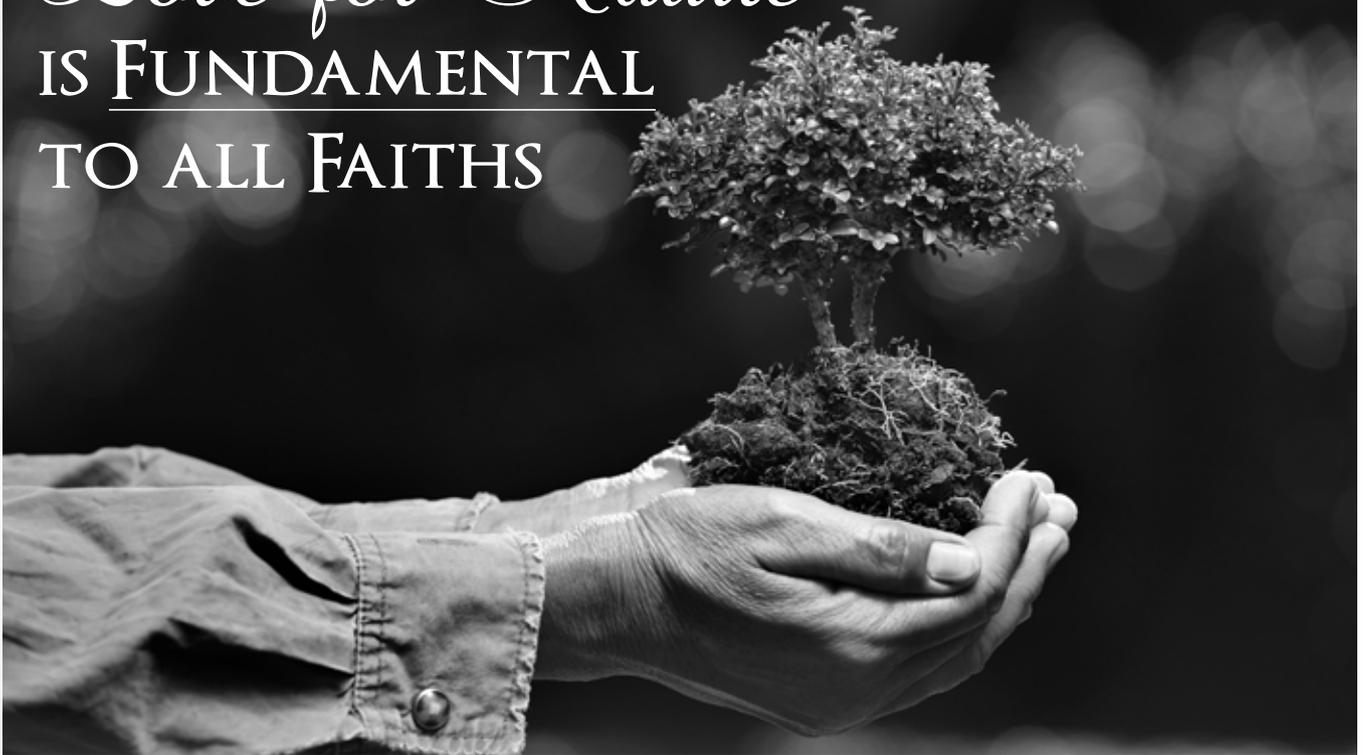
Let us make universal efforts to live on this earth with love for each other. There will then be harmony. As advised by our beloved Swami, let us expand our circle of love to all. He says, "*Foster the tiny seed of love that clings to 'me' and 'mine'. Let it sprout into love for the group around you and grow into love for all mankind, spread out its branches over animals, birds, and those that creep and crawl and let the love enfold all things and beings in all the world. Proceed from less love to more love, narrow love to expanded love.*"

Pope Francis expressed a similar thought:

"May the relationship between man and nature not be driven by greed, to manipulate and exploit, but may the divine harmony between beings and creation be conserved in the logic of respect and care."

Jai Sai Ram
Kalpana Bhojwani

Love for Nature IS FUNDAMENTAL TO ALL FAITHS



***“No one person can claim to be religious
if he merely observes the sacraments and rules,
and fails to be upright and compassionate.”***

- Sathya Sai Baba

The shortcomings of religion

While there is no doubt that religion gives solace, there are also some negatives associated with becoming too caught up in a religion. According to McSwain (2011):

- Instead of a bridge to God, religion is often a barrier to God.
- Instead of freeing people from their burdens, religion itself is the burden.
- Instead of knowing God, religion is obsessed with knowing about God.
- Instead of divine acceptance, religion is pre-occupied with guilt and failure, and the depiction of God as a deity displeased about both.
- Instead of bringing unity to humanity, religion is the principal cause of most disunity, with its endlessly expanding hard-drive of beliefs, dogmas, and doctrines around which little egos collect to argue, debate, and ultimately divide.
- Instead of peace and tranquility, religion is, for many of its practitioners, a circus of endless activity, programmes, and meetings, all of which are time-consuming and exhausting.

The title of this article, nevertheless, suggests that we have a simple solution available to us that can help us to avoid the pitfalls of being caught in the many prescriptions of a religion – it is to remember that the real purpose of all religions is to return to what our forbearers, the ancient people indigenous to most of the world’s civilisation, did. They had love and respect for Nature and a willingness to learn from that love about themselves and their inner divinity. From this experience with Nature, they discovered God; they were not lost in the sacraments and rules of religion.

Sathya Sai Baba reminds us that *“The purpose of life is to experience the sacredness of Nature as a projection of the Divine.”*

As McSwain rightly claims, religion is the principal cause of most disunity, often fueled by a collection of small egos. But when we connect to the enormity and timelessness of Nature there can be no ego, for it diminishes into insignificance.

While McSwain says that religions can be a burden, consider the energy of a bird in flight as symbolic of our own capacity to fly freely beyond these constraints. We can leave the constraining rules behind whenever we choose, to soar with the wind behind and beneath us. When we have the strength to fly, we can leave behind those thoughts of “if” and “but”. If we fly amongst the birds, we can let our spirits be free.

McSwain also says that religion is pre-occupied with guilt and failure, and the depiction of God as a deity displeased about both. Nature, however, is not concerned with guilt or failure. All just is; there is just beingness. The plants and animals go on with their cycles. Flowers represent life in its full bloom.

When we concentrate on them we will feel that we are also in the full bloom of our own lives. We are filled with the beauty of being alive, and ready to show our inner beauty to the outside world. We can allow that beauty to shine through, just as the flower does, and share it with the rest of humanity. We can let our inner beauty bring pleasure to others so that they too can experience some beauty in their daily lives. Share with them the precious gift of love that comes from the beauty within.

If, as McSwain suggests, religion can become an exhausting cycle of rituals and activities, rather than a source of peace and tranquility, we can turn again to Nature for the solution. In the first light of dawn we can see our own cycle of birth, growth, death and rebirth, and we are reminded of the immortality of our spirits. We can allow ourselves to draw the energy of renewal into our hearts and carry it with us throughout the day.

When the moon reflects on water it gives a mystical power that draws us like a magnet to our connection with God. The fiery sun reminds us to burn away what we don’t need in our lives and to nourish the growth of new strengths and ideas. Through all of these we can re-connect whenever we want to our source of peace and tranquility.

According to McSwain, instead of knowing God, religion is obsessed with knowing about God. How can Nature help us to know God? By listening to the silence, by connecting to the timelessness that is Nature.

God manifests Himself in Nature

Sathya Sai Baba tells us that “*God manifests himself in Nature*”. He goes on to explain that:

“ *The trees give shelter to all, irrespective of caste and creed, and proclaim that all men are equal. The plants teach us not to be over fond of the body, and the birds that are content with the food they get for the day tell us not to worry about the morrow. Mother Nature exhorts us to discard attachment to ourselves and our earthly possessions.*

When we watch the clouds we can see that they are symbolic of life, in the way they form patterns for a short time, then break up and re-form into something new. In their continual movement we can experience the feeling of constant change. As we watch them we can feel the increase in our own capacity to adapt to the changes that happen in our lives, rather than trying to stop them from happening. We see our capacity to let go of the past and of limited notions of ourselves, so that we may thrive in the present and the future and in the new person reborn each day.

As we look between the clouds we can catch an occasional glimpse of the world beyond, like the glimpses we catch of our own selves before we are immersed again in the flow.

The true purposes of religion

Let us look further at ways in which we can achieve many of the aims of religion – the true purposes – by strengthening our engagement with Nature. First, I will draw out some of the common core tenets of all religious faiths, and then explore some of the experiences of Nature described by ancient cultures and from my own experience, which have helped me to find God in ways that organised religion has too often failed to do.

Tenet 1: Cleansing

“All religions exhort man to cleanse the heart of malice, greed, hate and anger. All religions hold out the gift of Grace as the prize for success in the cleansing process.”

- McSwain, 2011

In Nature, the sea brings great cleansing and renewal. As the tide flows inwards, it brings with it the energies of the Divine, and as it flows out it carries away the negativities and burdens of my daily life. In the tides I can feel myself being cleansed and my strength renewed. In the constant flow, in and out, I can feel acceptance of my own ability to float with the ebbs and flows of life and to accept the good and bad without being affected by either.

Reflections on water are mirrored reflections of my own inner self. Watching reflections allows me to look truthfully at myself without any distractions; a reflection that strips away the walls that I have built and leaves my inner self to be appraised in truth and honesty.

As I ponder on my reflection I can forgive myself for any bad habits or things that I do not like about what I see. I can send love to myself. As I stare deeply into a reflection, I can listen carefully to the messages it is bringing about my inner self.

Tenet 2: Union with God

“Reuniting with God is religion.” - Sathya Sai Baba

“Every religion teaches man to fill his being with the glory of God.”

- Sathya Sai Baba

I can do this when I contemplate on the ageless strengths of rock formations. The rock reminds me that God is my foundation, on which I can build my strength. I can always be my strongest when I have my feet planted firmly on rock. Like God, the rock is the one thing that stands strongly even when everything around it is crumbling or collapsing.

I can imagine my oneness with the rock, that its strength and mine are one and the same; when I draw my strength from the rock, nothing will weaken it.

“God is not separate from you.” - Sathya Sai Baba

A shell, half-buried in the sand of a beach, can lead me back to my inner connection to God. Looking deeply into its interior can remind me of the inner essence which is there – the essence of my own spirit. By looking deeply within a shell I can look deeply within myself. Inside the shell, there is a whirl of colour, sounds and life, just as I have within myself; at the core is a place where the Divine lives.

When I allow myself to touch that place within, I am at peace. I can use this contemplation of the shell to take me to this place. And I can feel God’s strength when I am there.

Mist is soft and delicate like a shroud of protection. I can lose myself in the mist when I need to withdraw and reflect on my own inner being; I am able to close myself off from my problems and reflect inwardly. Inside this safe haven, I can be truly alone with my inner divinity for a while, becoming as one with the mist as I become as one with God.

Tenet 3: Strength in Unity

“The fundamental purpose animating the Faith of God and His Religion is to safeguard the interests and promote the unity of the human race, and to foster the spirit of love and fellowship amongst men.”

(<https://myriadlives.wordpress.com/2011/12/01/the-fundamental-purpose-of-religion/>)

“The Avatars come to teach humanity this principle of Oneness so that they may get rid of the idea of diversity and manifest their inherent Divinity.” - Sathya Sai Baba

“Unity, fellow-feeling and devotion are essential for every human being.... Live in harmony with his fellow men.” - Sathya Sai Baba

“No one can live in this world all by himself. He has to cultivate the sense of community if he wishes to live in peace and happiness. Let us live together, let us struggle together, let us grow together in joy and harmony.” - Sathya Sai Baba

“The essence of all religions is the principle of Oneness, the principle of Love. When you cultivate the principle of Love, there is no room for hatred.” - Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Baba reminds us that *“All things in creation are equal in the eyes of God.”*

The feeling of oneness existed for ancient indigenous cultures through their connections to Nature in ways that we have almost forgotten. This is illustrated by the following example of North American Indian culture:

“All creatures – whether they walked, ran, swam, crawled or winged their way in the air – were Earth’s children. So were trees and plants... To sit or lie upon the ground is to be able to think more deeply into the mysteries of life and come closer to a kinship to all other lives about him... Kinship with all creatures of the earth, sky and water, was a real and active principle... They knew that man’s heart away from Nature becomes hard; they knew that lack of respect for growing, living things soon led to lack of respect for humans too. - Meadows, 1991, pp. 4-5

The essence of Oneness exists in Nature. Species are in tune with each other simply by feeling the oneness – birds just “know” when to migrate. We know the story of the 100th monkey – one group decided to wash the potatoes they had collected and before long, through some kind of intuitive communication and behaviour as one, the habit spread to other monkeys they may never even have met.

When I sit in Nature and really listen to the silence, I can also feel this sense of being in tune.

Tenet 4: Love and Peace

“People must first of all get rid of self-interest and self-centredness. They must develop love, forbearance and compassion. They must try to live harmoniously. Only then can we claim to be lovers of peace in the nation and the well-being of the world.”

- Sathya Sai Baba

“All [religions] have Love as the fundamental discipline of the mind in order to merge man with the Divine.” - Sathya Sai Baba

A seed is the source of creation and it reminds me of my own source of true love and compassion, which lies dormant within me and which must be allowed to grow and bloom. I can feel the new growth that is projected from the seed and allow this same energy to spark the growth within my own being. I can feel the softness of Nature as she

helps the young seedling to push its way to the light and allow her softness to help me in the same way.

On the pinnacle of a mountain, I can feel closer to the source of my creation than I can in any other place. If I allow my heart and mind to be uplifted I can reach from here to the highest goals of peace and love.

Tenet 5: Selfless Service

“Service should be the guiding principle. There should be no room for any kind of differences in rendering service.” - Sathya Sai Baba

“Neither by penances nor baths in sacred waters, the study of scriptures nor through meditation, can the ocean of Samsara be crossed without rendering service to the good.” - Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Baba tells us clearly about the countless examples of selfless service that can be observed in Nature:

“ Sun, moon, rivers and mountains all offer service. Mountains help man to build houses by providing stone slabs, quarried from them. Trees provide the timber for constructing houses and also firewood for domestic use. Every creature, from an ant to an elephant, is of assistance to man in one way or another. Cows provide nourishing milk. Bullocks are useful for ploughing the fields and helping to grow food crops. All other creatures, like birds, fish, sheep and others, are serving man in their different ways. Seen in this light it will be clear that all things in creation are helpful to man in leading his life. Even the Sun and the Moon are serving man. Thus, man is deriving innumerable benefits from Nature and enjoying the amenities provided by Nature in various ways.

In Sathya Sai Education in Human Values, we teach children a song called “Take a Lesson From the Sun”, which epitomizes the selfless service given by the sun and rain:

Take a lesson from the sun, that shines its light on everyone
And the rain that falls on every single shore.
No distinction about place, or the colour of their face,
Nature’s gifts are there for one and all to share.

Tenet 6: Truth

“Truth is common to all religions.” - Sathya Sai Baba

“Truth is a fundamental principle. All religions have declared that no one should break his plighted word.” - Sathya Sai Baba

“All religions have emphasized the greatness of Truth, sacrifice and unity. Learn to live in love and harmony with all the members of your society.”

- Sathya Sai Baba

Truth never changes. I know that on this earthly plane everything changes eventually. Nevertheless, for me, the closest physical example of Truth is in ancient sacred places, like Australia’s Flinders Ranges, Uluru and Kata Tjuta, which are believed to have been there for 600 million years, and some escarpments in Western Arnhem Land that have been there for one billion years.

In these places I feel that I can connect to their timelessness, to the collective wisdom of the ancient people who walked there once.

Tenet 7: Silence

“The result of the silence is general peace.” - Sathya Sai Baba

Nowhere else can I find the deep, intense, soul-permeating silence that I can find in Nature. Ancient people connected to the land through the silence. In the silence of the forest, the inner silence within me can grow. In deep canyons or on top of towering rocks I can hear permeating silence, permeating stillness, permeating peace that leaves space for my soul to be heard. By taking this silence into my mind and heart and my being I can be at peace.

Tenet 8: Detachment

“Every religion teaches man to fill his being with the glory of God and evict the pettiness of conceit. It trains him in the methods of detachment and discrimination so that he may aim high and attain Liberation.”

- Sathya Sai Baba

Contemplating on a tree can help me to understand the meaning of detachment, and to surrender my burdens. Trees hold an abundance of love and peace from the Earth’s very heart. The trunk takes the weight of the tree and this is symbolic of the Earth taking the weight of my burdens. The withered leaves remind me that time moves on and even my deepest troubles will fall away, to be replaced by new hope.

When the sun is setting at the end of the day, I can give thanks to God for the gift of another day of experience, learning, and growth. Even if it has been a bad day and things have not happened as I would have liked them to, the time is a special way to discriminate and detach.

In a spider’s lifetime, it will go through the process of spinning an intricate web many, many times and when it is damaged or destroyed it does not become attached to it, but simply begins again with patient acceptance that it has a goal to meet or a duty to perform.

As a waterfall cascades from a great height it is symbolic of the choices I have. One is to allow the flow to wash over us and cleanse us of stress and dis-ease. The other choice is to try to battle against the force.

Conclusion

I have attempted to share here some of my own reflections on Nature, to show how it teaches me about the true essence that religions – all religions – were intended to offer. Certainly, in my experience, to connect to Nature is to connect to God. I would like to think that a deep appreciation of Nature can help us all to rise above the differences between religions that are causing so much grief in the world today, and to take us all back to the core tenets of religion that have too often been forgotten.

I invite you to stop and reflect too, the next time you are in a place where you can connect to Nature. But here I will leave the final reflection to Sai Baba:

“ *Marvellous are the beauties presented by Nature. They are sacred as well as wondrous. What Nature promotes or destroys, what it bestows or takes away, are equally amazing. God is immanent in all of them. Hence God and Nature should not be regarded as distinct entities... Man, however, looking at Nature externally, considers it as purely physical and intended to provide the amenities he seeks.*

***Jai Sai Ram
Margaret Taplin***

References

Cleveland, A. (1997). ...And the Word was God: A Compilation of Quotes Taken from the Discourses of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Hong Kong: Global Egelstar Co. Ltd.

Meadows, K. (1991). The Medicine Way, UK: Longmead, pp.4-5

McSwain (2011). The Supreme Purpose in All Religions (and Their Shared Failure), Part 2 (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/steve-mcswain/religion-purpose-failure_b_775969.html The Blog 12/17/2010 11:35 am ET Updated May 25, 2011).

SOW THE SEEDS FOR *Spiritual* TRANSFORMATION



“The Universe is the body of God; every particle in it is filled with God, His Glory, His Might, His Inscrutability. Believe that God is the Inner Truth in everything and being. He is Truth. He is Wisdom. He is Eternal. Be humble, before the evidences of His Power and Majesty.”

– Sathya Sai Speaks 12:34

The essential questions for us to reflect upon are: What lessons can we learn from nature to sow our seeds of spiritual transformation and how do we plant the seeds of being a ‘Caretaker of the Environment’ to help protect the planet? With the power of his intellect, man has the rare good fortune of being able to adore Mother Nature as the body of God and offer grateful worship to God.

Swami often reminded us that God permeates all creation and that the Lord is resident in all beings. To address the first question above, from the sublime lives of trees we can learn to appreciate the Creator and strive to understand the principles behind living spiritually. Trees are held firm by the deep roots that feed it, which for us humans are faith and self-confidence. Just as water nourishes every leaf, faith and self-confidence nurture purity in thoughts, words, and deeds in human beings.

To achieve spiritual transformation, only allow Dharmic thoughts and wash away pollutants in the mind – such as anger, greed, fear and anxiety – as important steps to achieving a life full beautiful fragrant flowers of *amrit* (exhilar).

During one of the SSEHV teacher-training trips to Guangxi, China, I was hesitant to walk on uneven hilly surfaces because of my earlier knee surgery. My fellow trainer, Margaret Taplin, gave me a beautiful lesson on walking confidently. She reminded me that just as the roots of the tree hold it firmly through stormy conditions, similarly, I need to visualise my feet being safely rooted to the ground by Mother Earth and walk with courage. Wherever I walk, no matter what the terrain is, I visualise Mother Earth protecting and holding me safely. This was one of my first seeds of personal transformation given by Mother Earth!

Water is also Nature's great teacher. By examining even a drop of water, one comes to know the nature of the Ganges. Just as water falls from a high point to a low level, thoughts arising in our minds should originate from our Higher Self. Our life can follow the words of Bruce Lee: 'Be like water' – gently flow around the obstacles that life throws at you to reach the ocean of life, one's Higher Self, that is God. This natural flow of water allows us to witness Ganga Mata's patience and perseverance to reach the ocean and merge with it.

By understanding the true nature of Mother Earth one can understand one's *Maanavathvam* (humanness) and, thereby, understand one's divine connection with nature. This connection with Nature is integral to our realisation that the universe is the body of God and the source of life and sustenance.

We must pay heed to Swami's words about proper use of the five elements of *Prakriti* – ether, air, fire, water and earth – which are the vestures of God's creation, including man. The urgency is to start today to use them moderately and with wisdom, with respect and humility. If not now, then when will we treat our Mother Nature with the love she deserves? If not now, when we learn to live in love?

Let us examine the second question: The planting of a seed as a caretaker of the Earth is achieved by our *sadhana* (spiritual practices) so that by our spiritual transformation we each can help nurture Earth and sanctify our own lives in the process. It is said: To get something you never had, you have to do something you never did.

The one thing that stops us from protecting Mother Earth is our complacency and resistance to changing old habits, particularly our wasteful habits. It is very similar to letting go of the unnecessary things / thoughts in our lives, this happens by giving up our resistance to change.

One way of breaking down complacency is to learn not take our precious five elements and natural resources for granted. We can start by regularly planting seeds of actions that reduce our waste and, instead, nurture Mother Earth. It takes mindfulness in our daily activities to realise the harm our piles of waste are causing and to realise ways of preserving the Earth's resources. Thus, switching / turning off what is not needed, consuming less and avoiding waste, walking and not relying on cars that require fossil fuels, etc. are simple ways of living more mindfully.

My personal first step in turning my waste and over-consumption is to plant seeds for the food I want my grandchildren to enjoy on Mother Earth. Although planting a whole garden can seem daunting, all one has to do is to start by planting one seed, and gradually more. Take care of those seeds and before long little leafy green vegetables will be part of your daily food.

But this is also true of everything in life, taking the first step towards living simply and wanting less will bring transformation within as we seek our joys not from excessiveness and exploitation.

A change in our consciousness will stir within. Nothing is more exciting than seeing a seed bloom into changes in the human mind and heart, the prerequisites for spiritual growth.

Just as we learn from the lap of our mothers, so do we learn from the bosom of Mother Nature.

“Whosoever worships the Supreme Lord should also worship Nature (Prakriti). He should love and adore Nature because Nature is not different from the Supreme Self. Nature is the effect and God is the Cause.” - Sathya Sai Baba

Here are a few things to keep in mind as one starts planting seeds in one’s own life to worship Mother Nature. **Remember seeds take time to grow.** By focusing on the positives and seeing the little seeds that start to peek out from the earth in the form of something new, we can start to see the progress we are making in our journey to start living life in harmony with nature.

Be the change you want to see. Seeds must change to grow. A seed cannot stay a seed forever. When cared for with nourishing soil, rays of sunlight, and water they change shape and start to become whatever it is they were meant to be. To really experience positive change, one must let go of your past and embrace the transformation that’s

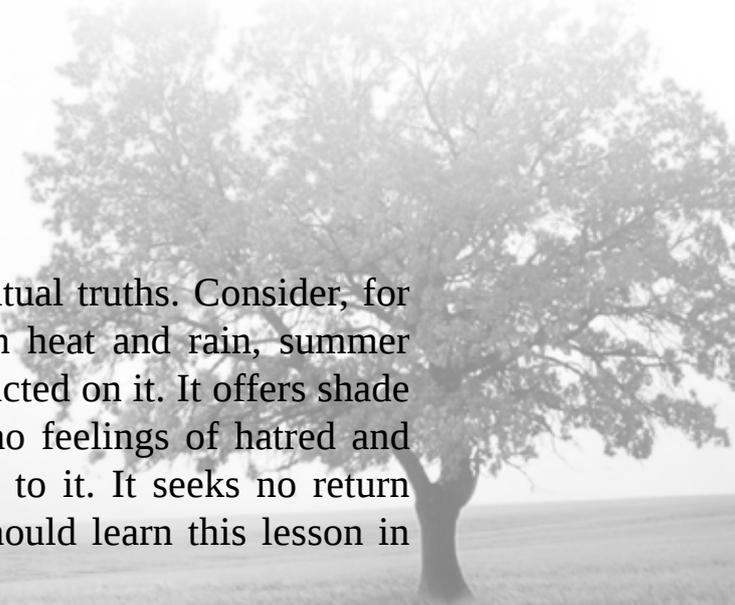
about to take place. Have confidence knowing you will take on a better form, even if it takes time.

Our humanness is Sathyam, Shivam, and Sundaram. When a seed flowers, everyone recognises its beauty. After a seed undergoes transformation and takes on a new form, everyone appreciates it for whatever it has to offer, whether it’s a radiant smile like a sunflower or a fragrant rose of words. The sweetness of *amrit* is known to all. My dear ones, let each seed of a pure thought germinate into a new life, serving society.

The challenge for us is to go into society and start planting seeds, no matter how hard or pointless it may seem right now. With a little time, patience and conscious effort, what now seems like an empty dirt plot will be filled with beauty and growth. The greatest change will take place within.

Just like a beautiful flower attracts honey bees, make your life like a magnet of purity in thought word, and deeds to cleanse an already toxic atmosphere. Let’s do our part to truly make our mother earth beautiful for our future grandchildren!

***Om Sai Ram
Mogi Nayagar***



Nature is a great preacher of spiritual truths. Consider, for instance, a tree. It puts up with heat and rain, summer and winter, and all the harm inflicted on it. It offers shade and fruits to whoever approaches it. It has no feelings of hatred and vengeance towards those who cause injuries to it. It seeks no return from those who benefit from it. Everyone should learn this lesson in selfless service and forbearance from the tree.

- Sathya Sai Baba

STAND UPRIGHT FOR YOUR VALUES TO PROTECT THE PLANET

THE SHARP DECLINE OF VIRTUES like love, compassion, and forbearance is directly responsible for the widespread pollution that one sees today. In response to a question put to Swami as to how man can maintain the balance of the five elements in nature, Swami said that “*Man can achieve this only by practising Human Values*”. In this brief answer, Swami revealed the means of protecting the planet.

***Religions are many,
but goal is one.
Stars are many,
but sky is one.
Cows are many,
but milk is one.
Beings are many,
but breath is one.
Nations are many,
but Earth is one.
Flowers are many,
but worship is one.***

- Sathya Sai Baba,
16 July 2000

that climate change is happening, causing unusually strong reactions such as major hurricanes, droughts, melting snowcaps and rising sea-levels.

We feel so helpless! How can we as individuals slow this global change? It is said: “To change the world, start with yourself.” But how? Will it make an impact if I alone decide to consume less and more carefully, to recycle trash and save water?

The Earth is our Mother

We have one planet Earth which nourishes and sustains us in every way. Everything is connected, interrelated, interdependent. All is One. Realising oneness is the essence of our spiritual practice, the goal of all our spiritual yearning and effort. On this path, discovering the unity on Earth and in Nature is surprisingly simple and can be an important step in our spiritual transformation.

Sathya Sai Baba says that “*God is immanent in the entire Cosmos. The Universe does not exist apart from God. In every object there is a divine element.*”

Unfortunately, we do not seem to be aware of this unity and divinity. Instead, competition for resources, reckless exploitation of forests and minerals, and pollution of our planet threaten both our health and the source of all of our food, water, air and raw materials. Globally we know

Nature shows Man the way

Sathya Sai Baba says that “*Nature’s role is to help man, the crowning achievement of the evolutionary process, to realise the Divinity immanent in creation.*”

Sathya Sai Baba said that Nature is the best teacher: The sun shines equally for all beings, it does not have preferences, it does not choose to give its beneficial light and warmth to any one creature and withhold it from another. Similarly, rain nourishes every plant without distinction. Our Mother Earth supports all beings, even those who harm her. Air flows everywhere for us to breathe, its gentle breeze cooling and soothing all.

By observing Nature, from the tiniest insect to the vast starry night sky, we can experience a direct inner connection to it, one that commands respect and gratitude, and creates awe and wonder.

There are so many qualities that we can learn by observing and exploring the planet.

- The unfailing rotation of the globe brings day and night and teaches the importance of discipline and consistency.
- The colours of the rainbow teach unity.
- To learn where food comes from, that it takes time to grow and that it has special qualities to nourish the body and, on a subtle level, the mind engenders gratitude and the will to reduce waste.

By developing love for Nature, respect and care for it will follow. Often, we come into direct contact with Nature in our outings and activities. Other times, inspiring films or even small experiments in the home or classroom, such as planting seeds or caring for worms to see them make compost, reveal its awesomeness, thus inspiring wonder in us that focuses our attention on what we all need to do to live in harmony with this beautiful planet.

There are so many qualities that we can learn by observing and exploring the planet. The unfailing rotation of the globe brings day and night and teaches the importance of discipline and consistency. The colours of the rainbow teach unity. To learn where food comes from, that it takes time to grow and that it has special qualities to nourish the body and, on a subtle level, the mind, engenders gratitude and the will to reduce waste.

The cow generously gives her milk and no fruit tree will keep its fruits for itself. Nature gives selflessly all it has. The examples are endless.

We have what it takes: The 5 Human Values

A seed contains all it needs to grow into a mighty tree. Human beings are born with the seed of divine qualities, of Truth, Right Action, Peace, Love and Non-violence. These human values are natural qualities of our human existence. They enable us to make positive choices and to realise our true nature. They also give us the faculties to

care for Mother Earth and to promote harmonious living.

However, we may not be aware of these inherent values. Just like the sun is hidden by clouds, the values are hidden by our desires, fears, worries and our thoughts generally. Sadly, our personal inner enemies have become the planet's outer enemies, causing destruction. Greed, lust, selfishness, attachment and lack of respect can only be countered by developing the qualities that make us truly human, the human values!

We need to plow the field of our heart, tend the seeds of virtue by watering them with love, weed out the negative tendencies, support the saplings with the fortitude of discipline and right action, prune the young tree with detachment and sacrifice. Then only will we be able to enjoy the fragrant flowers of peace, the sweet fruits of brotherly love, and the cooling shade of non-violence.

We can practice the human values and serve the planet

Sathya Sai Baba has come to remind us who we truly are. To discover the **Truth** of who we are and the inherent divinity of all creation is the goal of life. Truth is divine, unchanging, beyond the multiplicity of names and forms. To develop this realisation we need to inquire deeply. Nature exhibits so many inexplicable and miraculous powers and qualities through which the Divine makes Itself known. We need to develop the eyes to see, a heart to feel, and the humility to accept

our role as human beings in order to love and care for Divinity in all forms.

What is **Right Action** in the context of the environment? For example, to use only what we really need reduces the tendency for greed and saves resources. When unsure, ask your conscience. You'll be surprised how little we truly need for good health, energy, and a pleasant life. Simplicity frees up our time and resources, and it greatly helps the environment by reducing the burden of polluting industries that are needed to produce, transport and eventually dispose of all things. Ceiling on desires is key. Reduce, reuse, recycle and refuse to waste and consume unnecessarily; these noble actions can become a dedicated family or group activity.

Peace appears when desires decline. Putting on a sweater when it gets cold instead of immediately turning up the heat, taking shorter showers, and making the effort to walk or bike instead of choosing the car for short distances help us become more conscientious and responsible for the planet. Learning to be content and sharing available resources brings happiness and peace. It enables us to live justly. Enjoying nature, even looking at a house plant, the sky or a tree, can help us to relax and feel peaceful.

Love expresses itself as respect, caring and compassion for all living creatures. We can see love in action in the generosity of the Earth, sun and rain, in the gentleness of a mother cow with her calf, in the dedication of a bird to feed its young, the sharing by wild animals at a watering point, etc.

Our love for the environment can take many forms. The following group activities may be taken up: tree planting, caring for animals, planting a vegetable garden, repairing leaks to prevent water wastage, a neighbourhood or riverbank clean-up, or helping baby turtles reach the sea. Avoiding waste, damage and pollution is a good way to develop attention and care. By extending our love and compassion in ever widening circles, Universal, Divine love will reveal itself to us.

Non-violence results from recognising the unity and divinity of all that exists. Reflecting

on unity and trying to picture it in as many places and situations as possible will greatly help us feel connected to all that is alive. All life is interconnected; what we need, others need as well. For example, becoming a vegetarian changes our view of animals, even down to tiny insects. It develops respect for all life; it generates respect not just for the form but for life itself and the right to be here. This understanding of our interconnectedness is the best guarantee for respecting nature and the environment.

Service is also an active way to develop this feeling of unity. One can take positive action for the greater good, such as planting flowers and putting up bee-hives in the city. One can also serve by ensuring our actions avoid negative consequences on the planet.

On a personal level, we can promote 'non-violence' by adopting a healthy life-style, choosing the products we use with care, paying attention to the working conditions of people who produce them, the pollution caused, the health hazards involved, etc. We can reduce our personal 'carbon footprint', keep noise levels down and learn how to avoid wastage.

To achieve our goal of recognising the Divine in all that is and to live in harmony with Nature, let us use all the tools that Sathya Sai Baba has revealed to us: living with higher consciousness, the human values, Ceiling on Desires and selfless service.

May our love for God and for all creation express itself in right action, love and non-violence, bringing peace and revealing the truth of the immanent divinity. Then we will not need to make special efforts to protect our planet and the environment, for it will be the natural consequence of a life lived in harmony.

We may follow different paths, but let us have one goal: love for God, for His creation, for our fellow beings and for our Mother Earth.

Jai Sai Ram
Katinka van Lamsweerde
Holland

IN MEMORIAM

He left with a smile on his face.

Like a cat: silent, mysterious, sly.

As if to say in farewell to all the world:

I have a secret.

It is a secret that some might find very great,
but some might find hardly worth anything at all.

If you knew it, you might understand why dogs run to you when you call them,
while cats pretend they never heard you at all.

If you knew my secret you would laugh,
because it would tell you why sometimes nothing gives you so much,
while sometimes everything leaves you with nothing at all.

You see, now that I am free, I know
ALL THE SECRETS OF THE UNIVERSE.

But ALL THE SECRETS OF THE UNIVERSE
are nothing compared to the secret of the little arc that my lips make.

It is a secret that I take with me as I now become SMOKE and ASHES,
and return to whence I came.

I now become the smell of OLD BOOKS that line my bookshelves,
who stared drowsily at me while I used to sit at my computer late at night,
dozing off into the early morning.

I am the HIDDEN MEMORIES, locked away in the drawers of my table,
and the SECRETS that once upon a time I buried so deep
amongst the clothes piled up in my closet that I forgot that they existed.

I am the SCENT OF MY HOUSE, a delicate wine fermented over the years,
made of clean sheets, cushions, morning coffee and incense.

I am the SHADOWS, dancing on the walls of the house I grew up in,
along Mentri Lane in Ipoh, a place that now exists only in dreams.

I have now vanished into the clouds.

I have become the MOISTURE ON YOUR GLASS OF COLD BEER
on a warm day.

I have become PIECES OF RAINBOW,
shattering across the horizon after the rain.

I have become the WIND, rustling through the trees
when you stand on the 12th floor balcony and look out
at the lush hills of Kowloon on a bright summer day.

I have become the RIVER, flowing past Ma On Shan,
along whose banks I once took long walks with my son
and to whose waters I now return.

I am now the STARS that glimmer brightly in the darkness,
lighting up the sky like diamonds, looking down silently upon you as you sleep.

And when you miss me, look up into the NIGHT,
and I will wash away your tears with the rivers of the Milky Way;
and your tears will become droplets of dew, sleeping on flower petals,
and I will be there with you each morning,
in those last moments of precious silence before a busy day.

I have succumbed to time, Destroyer of Worlds.

I am with you between dreaming and consciousness,
between laughter and sadness.

I am now the air that you breathe, the first cry of a newborn,
the last breath of an expiring man, the first sound of the universe,
the beginning and the end, I am now OM.

And when you rest your head on your pillow and can hear the sound of your heart,
I am there within you, for it is I that you hear – your heart –
marching you forward to the beat of my drum, whispering in your ear:

Live proudly! Live strongly!

Live with endless hope and unbounded optimism for the future!
For hope is the only thing that even Death himself
cannot crush beneath his feet.

And when the sound of your heart begins to fade, and when years from now,
you can no longer hear the sound of your heartbeat, do not be afraid.
For as the darkness begins to descend, I will be there at the very end,
just as I was there at the very beginning,
to meet you once again, with open arms, a big smile, a great hug,
and it will be as if we never parted at all.

And when we finally meet again, you will want to ask me:

What is that secret you knew, that made you smile like a cat:
silent, mysterious, sly, when you first left, so many years ago?

I will not tell you. I will not say a word.
For then, you too, shall know the secret yourself.

**In loving memory of my father
Allen Lee-Nam Yau (1940 – 2017)
whose strange quirks and even stranger sense of humor
will be deeply missed.**

Alexander Lishan Yao, 27 July 2017



SWAMI SAYS

A Spiritual Hotline

Swami says ... The Six Arishadvarga: Drop 'em

Kama – Desire

Desire for riches, property, honour, status, fame, children; why list the lot? Attachment to all things of this sensory world, this false, temporary, impure world.

Krodha – Anger

Yearning to harm others and causing ruin to them.

Lobha – Greed

Determination that no one else should partake of even a small fraction of what one has earned or what one has; also, that even in times of distress, one's possessions should not be diminished by use.

Moha – Attachment

The delusion that some people are nearer to some than others and the desire to please them more than others, leading to exertions for earning and accumulating for their sake.

Mada – Pride

Mada means the swagger that develops when one feels that he has either scholarship or strength or riches or fame, more than others. Even when one has not got these, *Mada* makes men move about without reverence for elders and consideration for others' feelings and craving only for one's own comfort and security. *Mada* is extreme egoism.

Maathsarya – Envy

When others are as happy as yourself, *Maathsarya* makes one miserable; one cannot tolerate it.



Swami says ...

Vibhuti is symbolic of Divinity and is Sacred

When you seek to learn swimming, you will have to enter the water and struggle with the strokes. When *Bhasma* (vibhuti) is given, doubt may haunt some people whether Swami is wishing that the recipient should be a Sai-vite! But it is a symbol of the indestructible basic substance which every being is. All things become ash; but ash remains ash, however much you may burn it.

It is also a sign of renunciation, of sacrifice and of *Jnana*, which burns all *Karma* – consequently into ineffective ash. It is a sign of *Ishwara*, and I apply it on your brow to remind you that you too are Divine. It is a valuable ‘*Upadesa*’ about your identity. It also reminds you that the body is liable any moment to be reduced into a handful of ash. Ash is a lesson in detachment and renunciation.

Vibhuti is a Symbol of Divinity: Traditionally, vibhuti symbolises divinity, which is obvious from the various ways that Easwara (Shiva or God) is described. One of these descriptions is that his entire body is smeared with greyish-white (*sashivarnam*) vibhuti. *Sashivarnam* stands for the colour ... neither pure white nor dark but a combination of these. This simply means that among the several strengths that Easwara possesses is the power of *maya* (illusion, a mixture of the real and the unreal).

Yet there is another significant meaning for vibhuti. What remains of the human body when burnt away is a small quantity of ash. The human body, consisting of different organs and senses, undertaking ever-so-many activities while alive, gets burnt away after death like a piece of firewood and reduced to a small quantity of ash. You can purify or transform any matter with fire; it all reduces ultimately to ash.

Vibhuti is sacred. Its colour or form does not change further. If you burn iron, it reduces to ash; if you burn wood, it reduces to ash; if you burn the human body, it reduces to ash; if you burn anything, it reduces to ash. Thus, ash is the ultimate substance, which does not change its form. When it is burnt, it still remains as ash. The one thing that remains permanent and does not change is ash.

This is the lesson one must learn and constantly remember. It is in this context that pundits take this ash in the name of the five elements and wear it in the center of their brow. This signifies that all the elements are equivalent to ash. What remains ultimately as an unchanging substance is ash, and this is why Easwara himself wears ash all over his body. Ash is the only substance symbolically equivalent to God and that is the reason I create and give vibhuti to the devotees who come to me. This is to convey to them that ash is permanent and even liked by Easwara.

Sathya Sai Baba

**(*Summer Showers in Brindavan,*
1974-2:31)**

Benefits - In the Brihad Jabala Upanishad (one of the ancient scriptures) the following benefits have been described. It is named Vibhuti since it endows one with prosperity.

1. Bhasma – “ashes” because it burns away all sins;
2. Bhasitam – “brightened” because it increases one’s spiritual splendor;
3. Ksharam – “destruction” since it removes danger; and
4. Raksha – “protector” for it is an armor against the machinations of evil spirits.

(*Sathyam Sivam Sundram, volume 1. The Wave of the Hand*)



Swami Says ... Eschew Meat, Liquor and Smoking

Today, let it be anyone, whether one deems oneself a devotee or not, he should give up meat eating. Why? Meat eating promotes only animal qualities. It has been well said that the food one consumes determines one's thoughts. By consuming the flesh of various animals, the qualities of these animals are imbibed.

How sinful is it to feed on animals, which are sustained by the same five elements as human beings! This leads to demonic tendencies, besides committing the sin of inflicting cruelty on animals. Hence, those who genuinely seek to become devotees of God have to give up non-vegetarian food. Calling themselves Sai devotees or devotees of Rama and Krishna, they fatten on chicken. How can they be deemed Sai devotees? Therefore, whether they are devotees in India or outside, they should give up from this instant meat eating.

Next, there is the question of drink. The water that one drinks is life-giving. It issues from the head of Shiva. It is sacred. Instead of such wholesome drink, it is wrong to drink intoxicants. It makes a man forget his true nature. Alcoholic drink is utterly obnoxious. It degrades the addict. It makes him forget God. The drink addict is not conscious of what he says or does.

The very sight of such a person is revolting. The drink evil has ruined innumerable families. Alcoholics have caused misery to their wives and children by wasting all their money on liquor. Of what use to the world are such derelicts?

In addition to liquor, many are addicted to smoking tobacco. Today cigarette smoking is the cause of many diseases, like asthma, lung cancer, and heart ailments. The evil effects of smoking can be easily demonstrated. If a whiff of cigarette smoke is blown at a handkerchief the cloth turns red at the spot. If smoke can cause such damage to a piece of cloth, how much damage will it not do when it gets into the blood stream?

It ruins one's health and shortens one's life-span. Therefore, those who aspire to become true devotees of God have to give up meat, liquor, and smoking.

Swami Says ... Each One Has to Reform Himself

“... meat, drinking and smoking are the causes of many evils. But no government can stop this. The change must take place at the individual level. This can take place only through a mental transformation and not as a result of preaching by others. Each one has to recognise the truth and reform himself.

Embodiments of Love! You are deeming this day as the birthday of Swami. I have no desire to celebrate such birthdays. As I was coming I was greeted by many wishing Me ‘Happy Birthday’ I am always happy, Why should anyone wish ‘Happy Birthday’ for Me? Be happy yourselves. Your happiness is My happiness.”

Poornachandhra Auditorium on Bhagawan’s Birthday 1994

“Today, as an offering to Swami, give up meat eating, consuming liquor, and smoking.

By renouncing these three, you will benefit yourselves as well as society and the nation. Swami’s sole aim is to promote the welfare of the family, the society, and the nation.

If you wish to carry out Swami’s aim, renounce from this moment itself these three bad practices. Do not put it off to tomorrow. Take the resolve from this moment. Expecting that you will carry out Swami’s wish and thereby promote the well-being of your family and the nation, I bless all of you.”

Divine Discourse on 23 November 1994

Swami says ... Concentration and Meditation are not the same

Many people think that concentration is the same thing as meditation, but there is no such connection between concentration and meditation. Concentration is something which is below your senses, whereas meditation is something which is above your senses. But many are under the false impression that concentration is identical to meditation, and they take to a wrong path. Concentration is something which we use involuntarily in our daily, normal routine life.

Why should we Meditate, Swami?

There are two roads to fulfillment: prayer and meditation. Prayer makes you a supplicant at the feet of God. Meditation (*dhyana*) induces God to come down to you and inspires you to raise yourselves to Him; it tends to make you come together, not place one in a lower level and the other on a higher.

***Sathya Sai Speaks V,
‘Lamps Lit from the Same Flame’***

Additionally, scientific studies around the world have shown that the practice of meditation can:

1. alleviate anxiety and depression;
2. promote focus and concentration, especially in stressful situations;
3. enhances learning, self-awareness, creativity and memory; and
4. reduces the risk of heart disease and inflammatory disorders.



Swami Says ... Understand God and the Divinity within us

God has four qualities and it is only when you cultivate them that you can understand Him. They are: *Prema* (Love), *Soundarya* (Beauty), *Madhurya* (Sweetness) and *Shoba* (Splendor). The development of *Prema* is enough to add into you the other three. When you are full of *Prema* for the Divine in all creation, that stage is beauty; when you are immersed in the sea of universal Love, you reach the acme of sweetness; when your mind loses its identity and merges with the universal Mind, then there is splendor indescribable.

Three disciplines are essential to become aware of the Divinity in all and in the Avatar: no activity should be taken up with individual aggrandisement in view; intellect and emotion must be directed to the revelation of the resident of the Heart, *Atma*; and every act should be done sincerely with Love, with no yearning for acquiring personal profit, fame, or benefit.

Above all, listen to the voice of God within. As soon as one contemplates a wrong act, the voice warns, protests, and advises giving up. It pictures the shame that has to be suffered, the punishment that has to be faced and the disgrace it entails.

THE FOUR STEPS: JUST KNOWING WE ARE GOD TO REALISING THAT WE ALL GOD

Knowing that we are God means to have the firm and steady conviction that our real nature is the divine Self. This is called Self-confidence. Realising that we are God means to have the actual experience of our true nature as Divine Love. This is called Self-realisation. Between Self-confidence and Self-realisation there are two major steps to be taken: Self-satisfaction and Self-sacrifice.

Swami gives a simple 4-step formula to proceed from knowledge to realisation:

- Self - confidence
- Self - satisfaction
- self - sacrifice
- Self - realisation

When the little self is thus set aside, the radiant sun of Self-realisation will illumine the mansion of our lives. Swami says:

“Embodiments of Love! Whatever other beliefs you may cherish, have firm faith in God. All things in the world are liable to perish. The Self alone is eternal and changeless. It is unfortunate that the vast majority of mankind lead mundane lives forgetting God. Make God the foundation of your life. Carry on your normal duties. Duty is God. Work is worship. Spiritualise all your actions and treat whatever happens as actions for your good. Learn to experience perennial bliss by seeking union with God. Never forget God. Do not go after the things of the world. Have no fear of death. When your life is rooted in these three maxims, you will realise the Atman.”

Divine Discourse 9 October 1997

Swami Says ... Only Self-Confidence can help us in life

“One who lacks faith can never understand God. *Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavathi* (as are the thoughts so will be the result). How can one who has no faith in himself trust others? What is the use of one’s life if one cannot believe anybody? So, first and foremost, develop self-confidence. When you have self-confidence, you will love society. One who loves society will be loved by God. If you do not love society, how can you expect society to love you?”

“Build the mansion of your life on the firm foundation of self-confidence. On the foundation of self-confidence, you can raise the walls of self-satisfaction. On the walls of self-satisfaction, you can lay the roof of self-sacrifice. Only then can you lead a life of self-realisation.”





“You have to realise that Nature is a manifestation of God.”

- Sathya Sai Baba

God and Nature

Everything in Lord’s creation is intertwined, interconnected and inter-dependent. Man claims to have inventions, innovations, and discoveries but this simply means that man has found what was already existing and yet claims such a find as his own creation! What folly!

The fundamental basis for all worldly existence are the five elements – Space, Air, Fire, Water and Earth. Nature is a gift from God. In fact, many things that are necessary for life are not in our control and do not come from our effort, although we take them for granted. For example, breathing is not done deliberately but just occurs naturally and continuously, our digestive system is not something we consciously set in motion, and we do not deliberately regulate the blood circulation in our body.

Sathya Sai Baba said *“Whosoever worships the Supreme Lord should also worship Nature (Prakruti). He should love and adore Nature because Nature is not different from the Supreme Self. Nature is the effect and God is the Cause.”*

God given Nature and God given body are to be utilised for the purpose and in the manner they were intended to be, then we are in tune with Nature and in tune with God. Understanding and practicing that purpose in the right manner is the process of Self-realisation.

Nature as a Teacher

The sun appears to rise and set every day and the rivers flow towards the ocean without seeking a reason to do so. They are relentless in performing their prescribed functions. And what is human being's duty and prescribed role? To understand that Truth is the very basis of our conduct and to lead a Godly way of life without requiring a reason. To achieve this, we observe what Nature is constantly teaching us, i.e. to serve all selflessly.

On 21st September 1979, Swami said *“There are four pollutants against which man has to be vigilant – of the body (removable by water); of the mind (removable by truthfulness), of reason (removable by correct knowledge); and of the self (removable by yearning for God). Vaidyo Narayano Harih, the Sruthis declare, which means God is the doctor. Seek Him, rely on Him, you will be free from disease.”*

The five human values of truth, right conduct, peace, love and non-violence are an integral part

of nature, which is the result of humans using Nature's resources with scant respect.

Swami says, *“In controlling the forces of Nature, the balance should not be upset. In dealing with Nature, there are three requirements. The first is knowledge of the laws of Nature. The second is the skill to utilise the powers of Nature for human needs. The third is to maintain the balance among natural forces. It is the disturbance of the balance that has led to such consequences as soil erosion, pollution of the atmosphere, etc.”*

In Tune with Nature

We have been given the gift of the body with five external sense organs, five internal sense organs, the five sheaths and the five life-breaths based on the five elements, which ceaselessly carry out their functions. The least that we can do is to let them do their duty without polluting them. Human beings are given *buddhi* (power of discrimination) to rise from humanness to Godliness, but mostly humans use the power

Swami says that in Kali Yuga the best path to Self-realisation is Namasmaran. Keeping God as the basis and essence of our thoughts, words, and deeds, we can lead a harmonious life with all other existence, which also are God's creation.

of man's very own nature. If we fill our hearts with pure and divine feelings, these human values naturally flow from our own inner self. They will lead us on the path of selflessness by associating with good people, earning righteously, and living in union with Nature and all creation.

Polluting the Nature and The Peril

Human beings do not seem to appreciate what comes for free. The feeling of gratitude is missing. If we are benefitting from Nature, then we are obliged not to pollute it. Natural calamities like earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions, etc. are all brought out by the imbalance of forces

to raise the false ego and get trapped in their own actions.

Swami says that in Kali Yuga the best path to Self-realisation (all is God / Brahman / Universal consciousness) is Namasmaran. Keeping God as the basis and essence of our thoughts, words, and deeds, we can lead a harmonious life with all existence, which also are God's creation. All of us originate from the same Divinity and the goal is to realise that Divinity and the oneness of creation.

Swami said *“The environment and the elements should be pure to ensure purity of heart. The cause of this pollution lies nowhere else except in our own actions. Whatever words we utter, they*

spread to the entire atmosphere. We can purify the atmosphere of the world by chanting the Vedas and singing the glory of God.

“If you constantly chant the name of God, the polluted atmosphere will automatically get purified. The divine vibrations originating from the chant of the divine Name mix with the atmosphere and spread everywhere, indeed throughout the world, because of the propagation of vibrations. When you breathe purified air, it also helps to keep out bad thoughts.”

In Tune with God and Nature

On 22nd August 2001, Swami said, “If you are good, your body will be full of good and divine vibrations. Bad thoughts give rise to bad vibrations. All that you see is the reflection of what is inside you. Good or bad is the reflection of your inner being. Never consider that good or bad exists separately from you.”

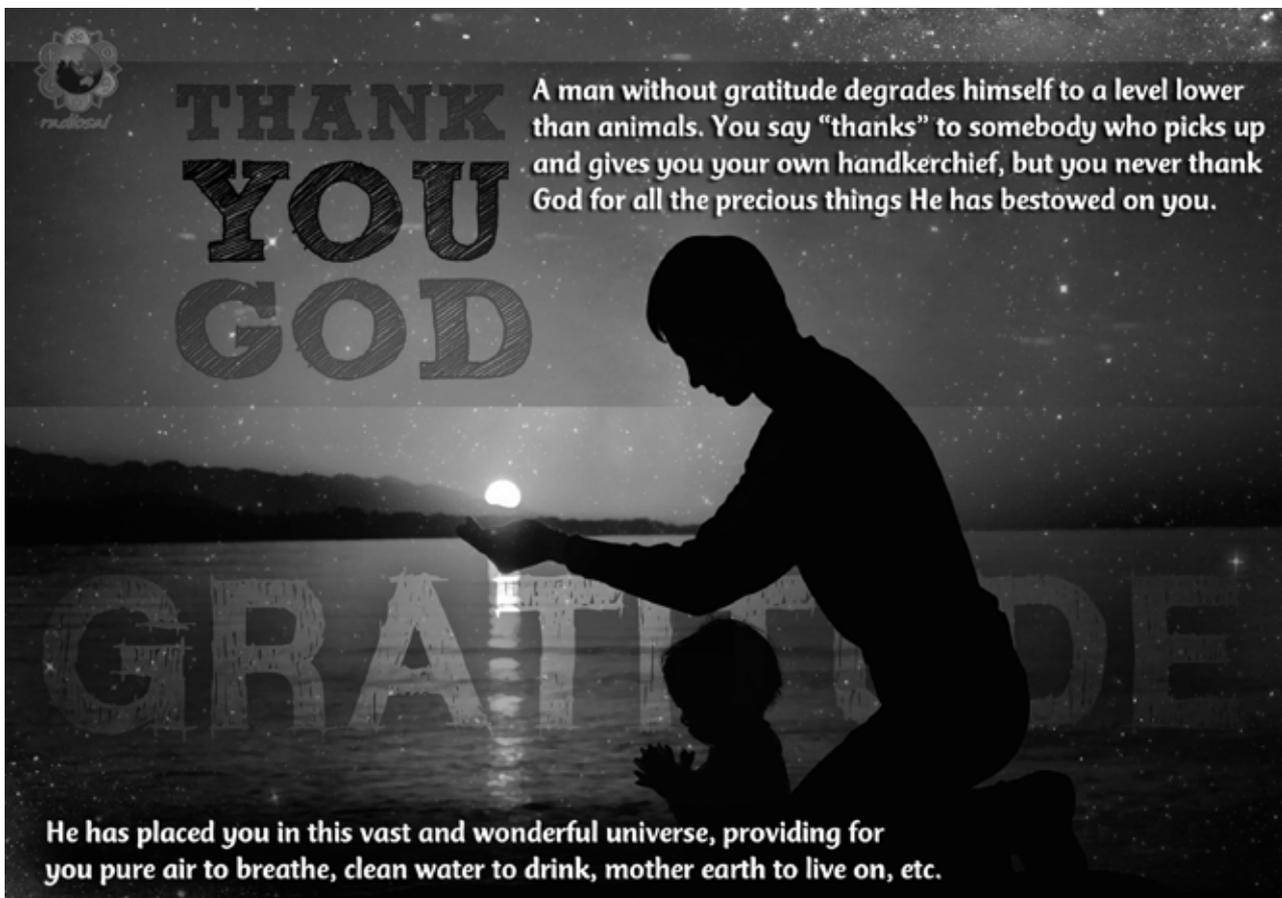
In another discourse, Swami said, “The scriptures (Upanishads and Bhagavad Gita)

declare, ‘All Nature is God’ and ‘The Lord is in all beings’. When learning about the sublime secrets of the trees, appreciate the Creator and strive to understand the principles behind creation. Life is a tree. The mutual relationship we cultivate and cherish are symbolised by the branches, twigs and leaves; the thoughts arising in the mind are the flowers; Ananda (Joy) is in the fruit, Dharma is the sweet juice it contains. The tree is held firm by the very roots which fed it... roots that symbolise faith and self-confidence. Nurture the roots well.

“Nature is the purest handiwork of God. If you are able to love Nature and feel in tune with it, you are that much closer to God. It is very easy to know God through Nature, for in Nature there is goodness, simplicity, purity and selflessness.”

If we are in tune with our Divine nature, which is God’s Will, then just like Nature which performs its own function ceaselessly as God’s Will, we are in tune with God and with Nature.

Jai Sai Ram
Offered at His Lotus Feet
Seetha Subramaniam



EARTH - I AM NOT SEPARATE FROM YOU



“You are not separate from nature. We are all part of the One Life that manifests itself in countless forms throughout the universe, forms that all completely interconnected.”

– Eckhart Tolle

From the moment we are born, we are dependent on the resources provided by Mother Earth for our existence. We need food to eat, which grows with sun, soil and rain, we need air to breathe and water to drink. The earth and its resources provide us with countless modern-day conveniences.

Notwithstanding how dependent we are on nature and its generosity, we are trained to believe that it is something external to us. We consider this layer of skin that coats our bodies is a boundary within which everything that is ‘me’ exists, and is distinct and separate from everything else that is outside. Protecting and securing this ‘me’ then becomes a natural priority.

Once we have this perspective, nature becomes a resource to use, to satisfy our needs and desires. Trees are just wood, oil is just power, rivers are dumping grounds. We may enjoy a walk in the lush greenery of the mountains or admire a breathtaking sunset but, once again, it is just to meet another desire, the desire for beauty.

Thankfully, in recent times, the consciousness of humankind has been evolving from the excesses that began with the industrial revolution. Scientists have shocked us with predictions that the earth’s resources may not be able to regenerate as fast as we are using them. Pollution is causing problems from toxins in our water and air, to global warming, and the imbalance of whole ecosystems.

The food we have been mass producing with all kinds of chemicals is infecting us with disease. And the changing weather patterns are giving rise to natural disasters at an alarming pace. Awareness is growing that we need to change the way we use the earth's resources – the very survival and existence of our future generations depends on us making this change.

While this is great progress, the move to change is still motivated by a sense of selfishness – a feeling that we must look after the environment for the sake of our survival. But this thinking that scares us into preserving the environment or shames us for abusing it can only get us so far. For there to be fundamental and lasting progress, we need to re-learn our connection to the world around us.

Spiritual traditions have a completely different understanding of our inter-relationship with this earth. Our modern day *Avatar*, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, has articulated this ancient wisdom clearly for us. He says that it is not enough for us to realise that we are interdependent with the earth, at a deeper level we must realise that **we are the earth and the earth is us**. We are not separate entities.

The artificial barrier that divides us only exists at a gross, physical level. This only scratches the surface of reality, yet we focus on it so much! The truth is that Divinity is the basis of all creation and, on a personal level, whatever is happening inside of me is being reflected in the environment, and vice-versa. I am the microcosm and the earth is the macrocosm.

This may seem abstract but Swami explains it simply through the five elements of creation. He says that everything in this whole universe is made up of some composition of the five elements, the building blocks of Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Space.

While it may be obvious that these exist in nature, they exist within each one of us too. For example, on a purely physical level, the Earth element is expressed through our flesh and muscles. The Water element is represented in fluids that make up 60% of our bodies. Fire is present

through our digestive system, which has the transformational power to turn food into nutrition. The Air we breathe so effortlessly passes through our lungs allowing oxygen to enter our bodies and keep us alive. And, perhaps the most subtle of all, Space allows us place to exist and enables sound vibrations to travel through us.

Both within us and in the world around us these five elements must remain pure and in balance for everything to function smoothly. When human activities cause pollution in the world outside, that pollution eventually enters our food, our water and our air, and impacts not just our physical health but also our thought patterns. Eventually, our negative thoughts result in more pollution in the atmosphere and a buildup of negative vibrations of disharmony. Unfortunately, the cycle continues and becomes worse.

The ancient traditions understood this connection on a very deep level. Therefore, the elements of nature were revered and worshipped.

“The five elements are all aspects of God. Because of their Divine origin, our ancestors worshipped them as the embodiments of Divinity. They adored them as the goddess of Earth, and the various goddesses representing God of Rivers, God of Fire, God of Wind and God of Space. Only use the five elements to the extent necessary. Do not misuse them.” – Sri Sathya Sai Baba

In modern times, this has become looked down upon as primitive thinking, lacking in scientific knowledge, but actually it is based on a very sophisticated understanding of the secrets of the creation, that till today conventional science has not fully grasped.

The native Americans, the ancient Chinese, and the traditional Hindus all worshipped the Sun, the Moon, the Wind and Water as gods with awesome powers. They understood that when you worship something, you develop love and respect for it and you will not abuse it, but instead treasure it and be grateful for it.

Prayer and worship raise our level of vibration to that which we are praying to and we begin to

Even in our poojas, the elements are always integrated, they are vital ingredients to any holy rituals. We pray over **water** because water can absorb the holy vibrations and has healing properties when we drink it. Every prayer ritual will have a holy **fire** to clear the atmosphere's vibrations and symbolise the transformative process of the pooja. Fruits and flowers of the **earth** will always be present as offerings. The long, deep and mindful breaths we take during meditation can help us to purify the **air** we breathe. And the mantras and chants utilise the divinity imminent in the **space** element by channeling the power of sound vibrations to cleanse and clear.

gain its power, energy and qualities. Each aspect of nature is really a manifestation of the creative energy of the Divine, and Swami has often said that nature is our best teacher, our true Guru. As we meditate on it, we will pick up these qualities.

This is the reason why Swami emphasises meditation on the light for us to gain the wisdom and the clarity of light, which removes all confusion and darkness. It is also the reason why, in the Gayatri Mantra, we pray to the Sun to illumine our intellect. When we pray to water, we learn to go with the flow and to be flexible. When we pray to the earth, the mountains and the trees, we feel grounded, strong and courageous and we can give support to others.

Even in our poojas, the elements are always integrated, they are vital ingredients to any holy rituals. We pray over water because water can absorb the holy vibrations and has healing properties when we drink it. Every prayer ritual will have a holy fire to clear the atmosphere's vibrations and symbolise the transformative process of the pooja. Fruits and flowers of the earth will always be present as offerings.

The long, deep and mindful breaths we take during meditation can help us to purify the air we breathe. And the mantras and chants utilise the divinity imminent in the space element by channeling the power of sound vibrations to cleanse and clear.

In Ayurveda or Traditional Chinese Medicine, the elements and seasons make up the building blocks for diagnosing and treating any ailments in the body or mind because it is understood that disease is just a manifestation of some imbalance of these elements.

Balancing ourselves, our thoughts, words and deeds, will make a huge contribution to balancing the elements within us and ultimately the world around us. When we look at nature this way, we automatically realise that nature is not something distinct from us, it is an integral part of who we are.

“Human life will find fulfilment only when ecological balance is maintained. The five elements — ether, air, fire, water and earth — are the vesture of God, as well as of man. Use them moderately and with wisdom, with fear and humility.” — Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Human beings have been endowed with a privileged place in God's creation because it is only the human being that has been given the consciousness to realise the divinity inherent in him. Baba has famously said, *“I separated myself from myself, so that I could love myself.”* Loving nature, connecting with it, identifying with it, realising the divine within it, is a holy path to self-realisation.

“Nature is very close to God, closer than man is. For in man there is a veil of ignorance clouding his vision and marring his sight. But, Nature is the purest handiwork of God. If you are able to love Nature and feel in tune with it, you are that much closer to God. It is very easy to know God through Nature, for in Nature there is goodness, simplicity, purity and selflessness.” — Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Jai Sai Ram
Kamni Bharwani

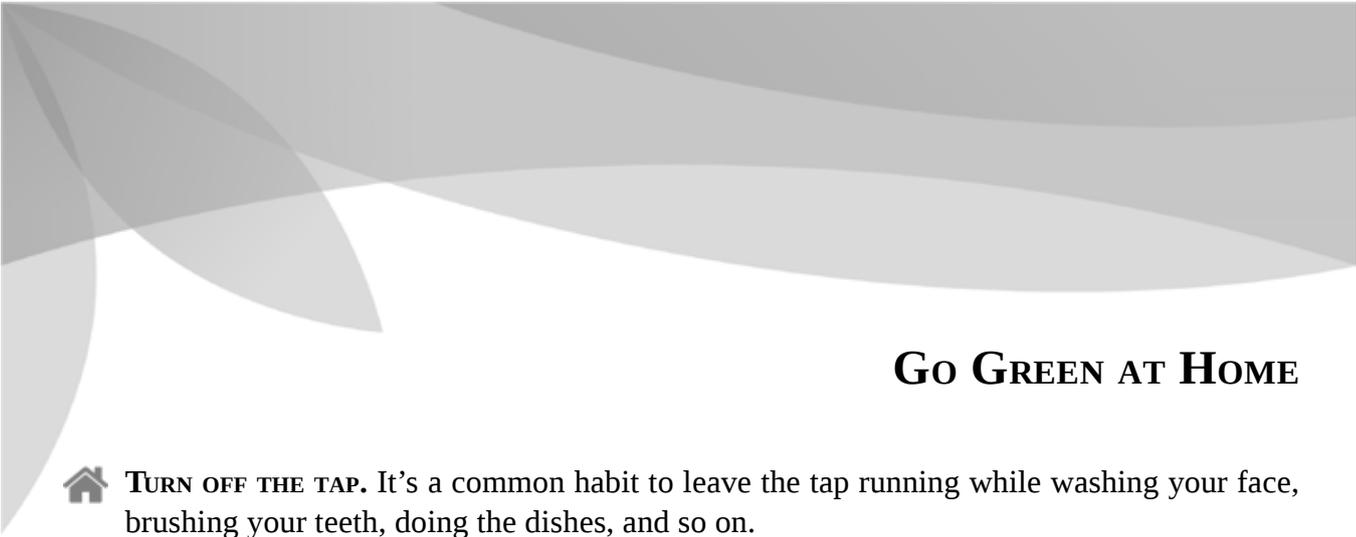


Your PLANET
NEEDS YOU

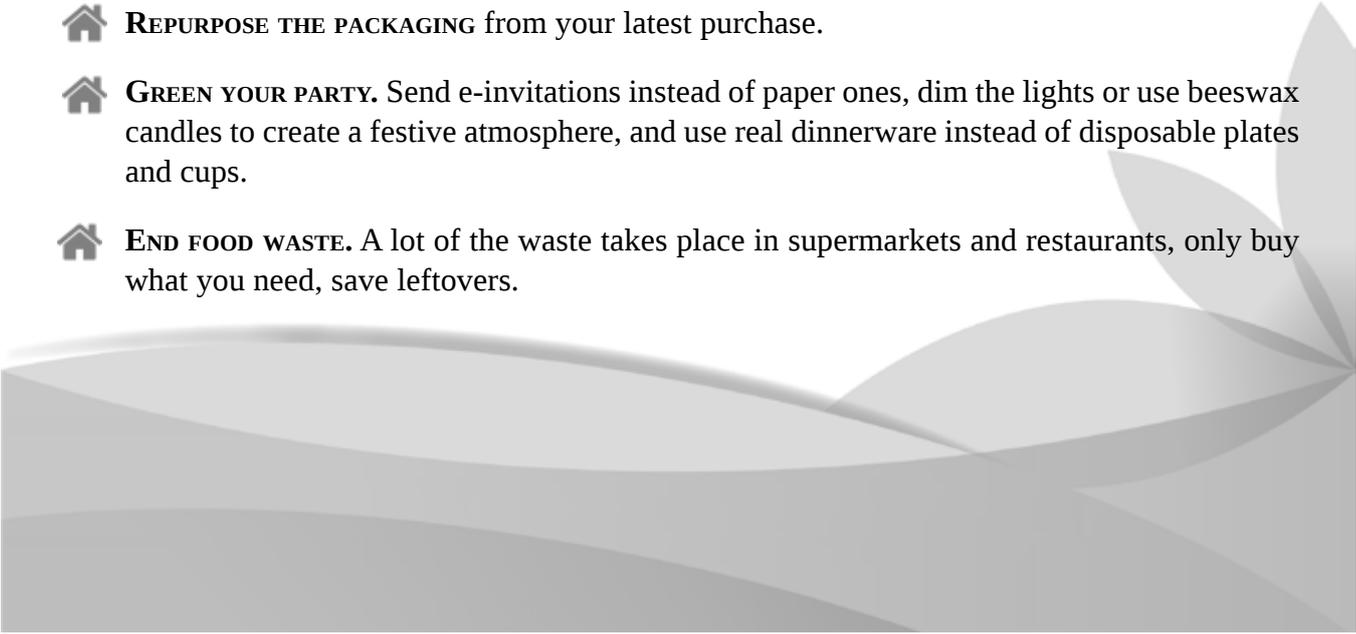
Submitted by Rajni Bharwaney

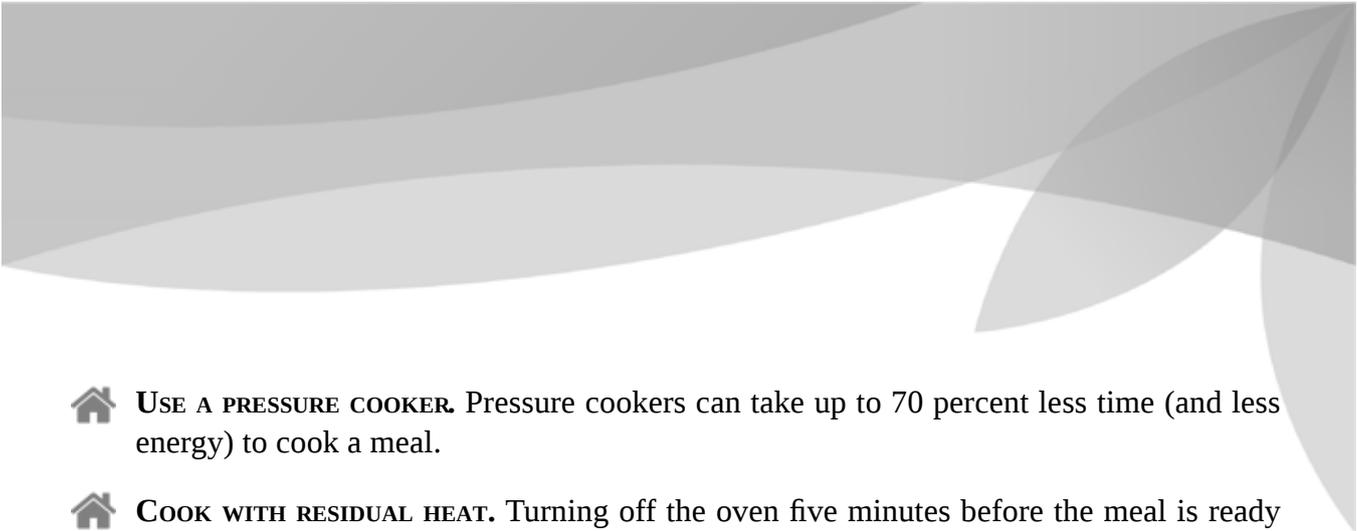
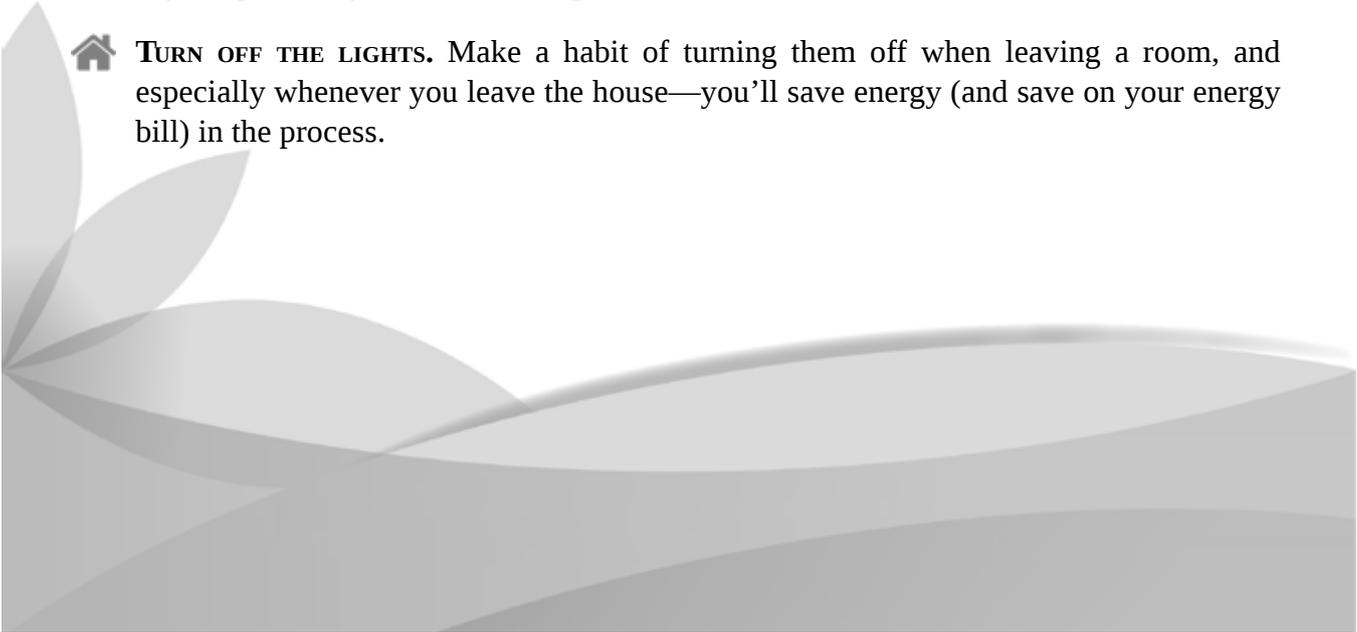
Sources:

The Nature Conservancy, <https://www.tnc.org.hk/>
41 Eco-Friendly Tips to Save Cash, <https://greatist.com>



GO GREEN AT HOME

-  **TURN OFF THE TAP.** It's a common habit to leave the tap running while washing your face, brushing your teeth, doing the dishes, and so on.
 -  **TAKE SHORTER SHOWERS.** Saving even one minute of the daily shower will save nearly a thousand gallons of water every year, which saves money and is better for the planet.
 -  **WASH VEGETABLES AND SAVE THE WATER** for watering the garden or potted plants.
 -  **SAVE WATER.** Running a maximum-load wash in your washing machine is more efficient than two half-loads.
 -  **FIX STUFF WHEN IT BREAKS.** If the washing machine breaks down, try getting it fixed – it reduces wastes.
 -  **BE ENERGY WISE.** Replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs). They use a quarter of the energy and last up to 10 times longer. And for every bulb you replace, you can save 45 kilos of carbon over the life of the light bulb.
 -  **EAT LESS MEAT.** Livestock generates more greenhouse gas emissions than all the planes, trains, and automobiles on the planet. The water that goes into producing just one hamburger equals 2,400 liters, which is 18 days' worth of normal usage for the average person in Hong Kong.
 -  **REPURPOSE THE PACKAGING** from your latest purchase.
 -  **GREEN YOUR PARTY.** Send e-invitations instead of paper ones, dim the lights or use beeswax candles to create a festive atmosphere, and use real dinnerware instead of disposable plates and cups.
 -  **END FOOD WASTE.** A lot of the waste takes place in supermarkets and restaurants, only buy what you need, save leftovers.
- 

- 
-  **USE A PRESSURE COOKER.** Pressure cookers can take up to 70 percent less time (and less energy) to cook a meal.
 -  **COOK WITH RESIDUAL HEAT.** Turning off the oven five minutes before the meal is ready will allow the food to continue cooking while also saving some energy.
 -  **BE “STUFF” WISE.** Swap clothes you no longer wear with a friend instead of buying new items or donate them to the less privileged. 217 tonnes of textiles wind up in Hong Kong landfills every day!
 -  **WATCH THOSE WINDOWS.** When running heat or air-conditioning, keep all windows and doors closed as tight as possible so air doesn't escape the room.
 -  **TURN OFF YOUR COMPUTER WHEN YOU'RE NOT USING IT.** For every 32 hours your computer runs, you produce one kilo of carbon.
 -  **TURN OFF YOUR TV AT THE MAIN SWITCH.** When on standby mode, your TV could consume up to 25 per cent of its total power requirement.
 -  **BUY SMART.** When buying appliances, look for energy efficiency. They cost a bit more money to buy initially, but are more durable, more environmentally friendly, and will save cash on utility bills.
 -  **LINE DRY.** If you have a clothes dryer, there's a good chance it uses more energy than anything else in your home. Set up a clothes line outside.
 -  **TURN OFF THE LIGHTS.** Make a habit of turning them off when leaving a room, and especially whenever you leave the house—you'll save energy (and save on your energy bill) in the process.
- 

Go GREEN AT THE OFFICE



TELECONFERENCE INSTEAD OF FLYING. Airplanes produce 12% of all transportation sector emissions.



GET A PLANT FOR YOUR DESK. Indoor plants act as filters that suck up the pollutants created by your computer equipment while also cooling the air in your office! Through transpiration, indoor plants act as natural air conditioners.



SAVE PAPER. Print on both sides of each page, use recycled paper, and make sure your used paper is recycled — not headed to the landfill.



SAVE ELECTRICITY. Make sure computers and lights are switched off at the end of the day—around your desk, in conference rooms and even restrooms.



GO PAPERLESS. Switching to paperless billing cuts down on paper, which cuts down on tree deaths.

Go GREEN OUT AND ABOUT TOWN



WALK OR BIKE INSTEAD OF DRIVING IN A CAR OR TAKING A TAXI. For every three kilometers you travel less, you can save one kilo of carbon from being released into the atmosphere.



Wherever you go — home, work, a rooftop bar — **TAKE THE STAIRS INSTEAD OF THE ELEVATOR.** You can save carbon and get more fit at the same time.



ALWAYS CARRY A REUSABLE BAG WITH YOU. Every year, 100,000 sea turtles and other marine mammals are harmed or killed by plastic bags in our oceans.



TRY TO PICK UP A FEW PIECES OF LITTER EVERY TIME YOU'RE OUT and about and put them in the proper recycling or trash bins. In Hong Kong, we throw away 16,000 tonnes of trash every day, including enough plastic bottles that, when laid end-to-end, are longer than all the underground train tracks in Hong Kong!

धर्तीलाई बचाउ

श्री सत्य साई अन्तराष्ट्रिय सेवा संगठन द्वारा अक्टोबर २०१३ बाट “धर्तीलाई बचाऔं” कार्यक्रम शुरु गरिएको हो । विश्वभरी रहेका समस्त साई सदस्यहरु स्थानिय समाजका मानिसहरूसँग मिलेर यो विशेष कार्यक्रम गरिरहेका छन् । आफ्नो दैविक प्रेमलाई पुर्ण रुपमा व्यवहारमा उतारेर समस्त मानव समुदायका प्रेम, एकता र शान्तीको विकास गर अनि धर्तीलाई सुन्दर बनाउ भन्ने भगवान बाबाको दिव्य उपदेशलाई यसै कार्यक्रम मार्फत रुपान्तरण गर्ने प्रयास गरिएको छ । “मानिसले आफ्ना ईच्छाहरु कटौती गर्ने, आन्तरिक र बाह्य प्रदुषण हटाउने, धर्तीमा रहेका साधना र श्रोतलाई आवश्यक मात्रामा मात्रै उपभोग गर्ने, वातावरण र जैविक विविधतालाई सन्तुलन गर्ने भगवान बाबाले दिनु भएका दिव्य महावाणीलाई नै यस कार्यक्रममा विशेष रुपले लागु गरिएको छ । प्रकृती, जिवात्मा र परमात्माको पारस्परिक सम्बन्धको अज्ञानबाट गुञ्जिरहेको आजको मानिसलाई बाबा भन्नुहुन्छ “यो ब्रम्हाण्ड ईश्वरको एक अभिन्न अंग हो, विश्वास गर उनै ईश्वर समस्त प्राणी तथा पदार्थका आन्तरिक सत्य हुन । प्रकृती परमेश्वरको एउटा रूप हो । प्रकृति प्रभाव हो भने ईश्वर यसका कारण हुन । सबै उपनिषदहरु र भागवत गीताले “समस्त प्रकृति नै ईश्वर हो” भनि घोषणा गरेका छन् । त्यहि परमेश्वर, परमात्मा प्रत्येक जिवमा अन्तर्यामीको रुपमा विद्यमान छन् । यसैले प्रकृती, जिवात्मा र परमात्मामा कुनै फरक छैन । परमात्मा र प्रकृतिको सम्बन्ध आमा र शिशुको जस्तो छ भने मानिस र समाजको सम्बन्ध मौरी र फुलको जस्तो छ । त्यसैले मानिस समाजको अभिन्न अंग हो, समाज प्रकृतिको अनि प्रकृति परमात्माको” ।

भगवान बाबा भन्नुहुन्छ प्रत्येक मानवलाई सृष्टिकर्ता (परमेश्वर), उसको अभिन्न अंगको रुपमा रहेको प्रकृतिलाई श्रद्धा गर्ने, पुजा आराधना गर्ने मौका दिँदा पनि उसले जहिले पनि आफुलाई प्रमुख स्थान दिएको छ । आफुभित्र रहेका आन्तरिक प्रदुषणले उसले सृष्टिकर्ता (ईश्वर) लाई भुलेको छ, प्रकृतिलाई बिर्सेको छ । यो नै आजको समस्त मानव जाति र यो धर्तीको दुःखको मुल कारण हो । भौतिक प्रगतिले अगाडी बढ्दै गएको महत्वकांक्षी, काम, क्रोध, लोभ र मोह आदीले पूर्ण रुपमा दुषित भएको आजको मानवले आफ्नो समस्त समुदायको लागि प्रकृति र यो सुन्दर धर्तीको लागि ध्यान दिएको छैन । त्यसैले समस्त मानवमा भै भगडा, अशान्ती छ भने धर्ती असन्तुलित छ, दैवी प्रकोपहरु, भुकम्पहरु, बाढीपहिरो, समुन्द्री तुफानहरु आईरहेका छन् । याद गर यो समस्त दुःखका कारण तिमी नै हो, तिमीद्वारा नै सारा मानव समुदायमा शान्ति छाउन सक्छ, धर्ती सुन्दर र शान्त बनाउन सक्छौं ।

भगवान बाबा भन्नुहुन्छ “सानो ग्रह पृथ्वी अति सुन्दर छ । यो ब्रम्हाण्डमा अरु भन्दा पृथक र अनौठो छ । यसको आफ्नै धेरै विशेषता छ” । यो धर्ती पंचतत्व धर्ती, आकाश, वायु, पानी, आगोबाट बनेको छ । मानिस पनि यिनै पञ्च तत्वहरुबाट बनेको छ । प्रकृतिमा रहेका यी पाँच तत्वहरुमा सामञ्जस्य, सन्तुलन छ तर बिडम्बना मानिसमा यिनीहरुको सन्तुलन बिग्रेको छ परिणाम स्वरुप धर्ती नै असन्तुलित रहेको छ दैवी प्रकोपहरु भैरहेको छ । यसको सन्तुलनको लागि ५(पाँच) मानविय मुल्यको व्यवहारमा निरन्तर प्रयोग गर्नुपर्छ । मानिसले सत्य, धर्म, शान्ति, प्रेम र अहिंसाको अभ्यासबाट आफुलाई रुपान्तरण गर्न सक्छ, धर्तीमा असन्तुलित भएको पंच तत्वलाई सन्तुलित बनाउन सकिन्छ । यो नै भगवान बाबाको “एडुकेयर” हो ।

आज मानव आफ्नो वास्तविक स्वरुप सत्, चित आनन्दलाई बिर्सेको छ । आफ्नो प्रेम स्वरुपको दिव्यतालाई अज्ञान र अहंकारले ढाकेको छ । आन्तरिक प्रदुषणको कारणले मानिसले लोभी, स्वार्थी र अहंकारी भएर जिवन व्यतित गरेको छ । विज्ञान र प्रवृधिलाई मानवियहितको लागि भन्दा पनि स्वार्थको लागि प्रयोग गरिरहेको छ । आज हामीले हाम्रा कर्मका प्रकृतिलाई भन्दा यसका परिणामलाई निकै

महत्व र प्राथमिकता दिएका छौं । यो स्वामीको शिक्षा विपरित छ । यसको परिणामले सम्पूर्ण पंच तत्वहरु पनि असन्तुलित र दुषित छन्, मानिसहरु असुरक्षित छन् ।

धर्ती पुर्णरूपमा असन्तुलित छ, प्रदुषित छ, मानिस स्वार्थ, लोभले, यश र धन कमाउनको लागि धर्तीलाई खोतलीरहेको छ, खनिरहेको छ । धर्ती भित्र रहेका खनिजहरु, तेल, फलाम र कोईला निकाल्नको लागि मानव सभ्यता र सुरक्षालाई वास्ता नगरी जघाभावी गरेकोले जैविक विविधताको सन्तुलन गुमेको छ । यस्तो व्यवहारको कारणले दैवि प्रकोपहरु भुकम्प, बाढीपहिरो र सुनामी आदी आएको हो । धर्तीमा रहेको साधन र श्रोतलाई तथाभावी निकाल्ने, उपयोग र उपभोग गर्ने कारणले नै प्रकोप बाढीरहेका छन् । रासायनिक पदार्थहरुको अत्यधिक प्रयोग, प्लाष्टिकको उपयोग, अत्याधुनिक हात हतियारको उत्पादन आदीले भयावह स्थिति सृजना गरको छ । त्यस्तै हावा पनि प्रदुषित छ । विभिन्न कलकारखानाबाट निस्कने धुवाहरु, खान पकाउदा दाउराबाट निस्कने धुवा, यातायातका साधनबाट निस्कने धुलो धुवाबाट सल्फरडाई अक्साईड, नाइट्रोजन अक्साईड जस्ता हानिकारक ग्यासको मात्रा हाम्रो शुद्ध वातावरणमा बढेको छ । यस्तै अत्यधिक वन जंग अतिक्रमण, फडानीबाट कार्वनडाईअक्साईडको मात्रा अत्यन्तै बढेको छ । यसले गर्दा ओजनतहमा प्वाल पर्नाले सूर्यबाट आएका हानिकारक किरणहरु पृथ्वीसम्म आएर असर पर्न सक्छ, भने अर्कोतर्फ समुन्द्रमा पानीको तह बढेर बाढी, प्रकोप आउन सक्छ । यसरी हावा अशुद्ध भएकै कारणले मानिसको स्वास्थ्यमा जस्तै फोक्सोको क्यान्सर, छाला सम्बन्धी, मुटु सम्बन्धी अत्यन्तै गम्भीर प्रकृतिका रोगहरु देखा पर्दछ । त्यस्तै अम्लय वर्षा (Acid Rain) हुने खतरा पर्न सक्छ । यो सबै प्रकारको प्रकोपकै कारणले आज विश्वमा “Global Warming” बढेको छ ।

यसरी नै पानी दुषित भैरहेको छ, ध्वनी दुषित भैरहेको छ । समग्रमा सम्पूर्ण धर्ती (पंच तत्व) हरू नै दुषित भएका छन् । यस्ता प्रदुषणबाट जोगाउन सकेमात्र यो धर्तीलाई जोगाउन सकिन्छ । त्यसैले सामान्यतया धर्तीको जैविक विभिततालाई सन्तुलित गर्दै यसबाट प्राप्त साधन र श्रोतलाई सुमुचित उपभोग गर्ने, वातावरण सम्बन्धी अत्यन्तै संयमीत भै सबै मानिसले वातावरण मैत्री व्यवहार गर्नाले यो वाह्य प्रदुषण, दैवी प्रकोपहरु अवश्य कम हुन्छ । लोभ र स्वार्थ नाम र यशबाट माथी उठेर धर्तीलाई प्रेम गर्न सके अवश्य हामीले धर्तीलाई जोगाउन सक्छौं ।

स्वामी भन्नुहुन्छ, “मानिसमा रहेको वाह्य प्रदुषण (Outer Pollution) भित्री प्रदुषणको परिवर्तित रूप हो । जबसम्म तिमीमा आन्तरिक शुद्धता हुदैन तबसम्म तिम्रा वाह्य व्यवहारहरु खराब नै रहन्छन् । त्यसकारण आन्तरिक शुद्धता, पवित्रता नै समस्त सुख र आनन्दको कारण हो” । मनुष्य जन्मको सार्थकता पनि यही हो । पाँच मानविय मुल्यहरुको प्रयोगबाट नै पंच तत्वहरुमा सन्तुलन र सामञ्जस्य ल्याउन सकिन्छ । पाँच मानविय मुल्य सत्य, धर्म, शान्ति, प्रेम र अहिंसा हुन । यी मध्ये प्रेम नै सबैको आधार हो । प्रेमपूर्वक सोच्नु, बोल्नु सत्य हो, प्रेमपूर्वक गरेको कार्य धर्म, प्रेमपूर्वक बस्नु शान्ति हो भने प्रेम पूर्वक मनन गर्नु, अनुभव गर्नु अहिंसा हो । यसैले प्रेमलाई नै आधारमानि गरेका समस्त कार्यले सबै प्रेममय हुन्छ । आनन्दमय हुन्छ ।

भगवान बाबा भन्नुहुन्छ तिम्रो आन्तरिक शुद्धताको लागि तन, मन, बचन, जिब्रो र हृदय शुद्ध हुनुपर्छ । अज्ञान र अहंकारले ग्रस्त भएका मानिसले आन्तरिक शुद्धताको लागि निरन्तर प्रयास गर्नुपर्छ । यो नै आधात्मिक साधना हो । शरीर (तन) लाई शुद्ध पवित्र पार्नको लागि तिमिले आफुलाई हिंसाबाट टाढा राख । कहिल्यै पनि यो भौतिक शरीरबाट कसैको हिंसा नगर । यो शरीरलाई सदैव अरुको सेवामा, सहयोगमा उपयोग गर । मनको स्वभाव चञ्चल छ । यसलाई रोक्न सकिदैन । तिमिले आफ्नो मनलाई बुझाउ की भगवान नै आन्तरिक प्रेरणाका एक मात्र श्रोत हुन । भगवानका नाम, संकृतनमा मन लगाउ । जय ध्यानमा यो मनलाई एकाकार गर भगवानको महिमा, सर्वव्यापकता र गरिमाको

ध्यानमा मनलाई अडाउ तब मन शान्त र स्थिर हुन्छ । भगवानको कृपाले तिम्रो मनमा भएका नराम्रा विचार, भावना, उत्तेजना, ईच्छाहरु बिस्तारै हराएर जान्छन् । बचनको शुद्धताका लागि हामीले जहिले पनि मिठो, नरम बोल्ने, सत्य बोल्ने, प्रेम पूर्वक बोल्ने । हाम्रो बचनले कसैलाई उत्तेजना बनाउने, दुःखी बनाउने नहोस् । यस्तो सम्भावनाको प्रयास द्वारा बचनको शुद्धता बढाउन सकिन्छ । जिब्रोद्वारा कहिल्यै झुटा कुरा नगर, धेरै नबोल, अरुको बारेमा पछाडी कुरा काट्ने नगर । सत्य सत्य बोल्ने, थोरै बोल्ने, शान्त रहने, कसैको पछाडी कहिल्यै कुरा नगर्ने प्रयासद्वारा जिब्रोलाई शुद्ध बनाउन सकिन्छ ” ।

मानिसले जुनसुकै बेला जस्तो सुकै परिस्थितिमा पनि पहिले भगवान अनि प्रकृति र अन्तमा आफुलाई स्थान र महत्व दिनुपर्छ । हामीले यो समस्त प्रकृतिको सुन्दरतालाई र हाम्रो दिव्य शरीरको मव्यतालाई मात्र जानेर हुदैन यसका मालिक परमसत्ता परमेश्वरलाई अनुभूति गर्नुपर्छ । स्वामी यही चाहानुहुन्छ । भगवान बाबाले दिनुभएको दिव्य मार्ग प्रेमको मार्गबाट समस्त मानव समुदायले आफुभिन्न रहेको आन्तरिक अशुद्धिलाई शुद्ध पाउँदै व्यवहारिक जिवनमा पूर्ण रुपमा उपयोगमा ल्याएमा सबैमा प्रेम शान्ति आनन्द छाउने छ अनि पवित्र मन, बचन र कर्मबाट गरिएका हरेक कार्यहरु दैविक हुनेछन् । त्यस्ता दैविक कार्यहरुले यो धर्तिलाई पनि रक्षा गर्ने छ । सम्पूर्ण जगत नै प्रेममय, साईमय हुनेछ ।

जय साईराम ।



體認萬物一體是真正教育的標志

人忙忙碌碌，日以繼夜，無非為了賺錢。
為什麼他把所有的時間都浪費於此無謂的追求上？（泰盧固詩）

愛的化身們！

人不應該忽視他份內該做的事而從事不必要的追求以致於浪費他的時間與精力。光陰是聖潔的、永恆的。浪費光陰即浪費生命。你們是學生，必須立志成為他人的領導者。

人類價值象征人的真正本質

人人都有欲望。學生的義務就是控制他們的欲望。欲望的控制即一個學生的標志。欲望一個接一個地川流不息。控制這些欲望應該成為一個學生的目標。‘Vidya’這個字來自字根‘Vid’，意為‘知識之光’。因此，‘Vidya’就是那提供我們‘知識之光’者，並指示我們何處是‘無知的黑暗’。是故，同學們！你們應該成為大家的模範。我們以崇高的愛去照顧我們的學生們，以便他們成長為理想的國民。其他機構所辦的教育，收費高昂。我們的教育是免費的，不收分文。非但教育，我們所提供的食水和健康照顧也是免費的，造福數以百計的老百姓。事實上，對學生們，我們只付出而不收取他們任何東西。我們竭盡所能幫助貧苦的學生。如果你明白這真相，這道理而自發自律，你才可以成為一個真正的學生。我們視我們的學生為自己的孩子。教育是你的資產。不要視教育為謀生之計和維生之計。教育並不意味著只協助你過一個世俗的生活。就算是目不識丁者，他們還不是一樣地過其生活。如果你利用你的教育去過跟文盲一樣的生活，那麼你所考獲的碩士博士學位又有何用？現代教育對人的外在物質生活或有所助益，但對內在精神生活則毫無幫助。對真理、正義、愛、平和與非暴力的依附支撐著人的內在生活。這五大人類價值象征人類的真正本質。真理是所有這些價值的根基。

萬物出自真理而融於真理，
在這宇宙中，何處無真理？
想象這純淨而無瑕的真理吧！（泰盧固詩）

神是一切眾生的創造者。從螞蟻而至大象，都是神創造的。若非神的旨意，一切不會發生。就連你所看到的小螞蟻也因神的旨意而誕生。因此，泰格羅遮（Thyagaraja）說，“Cheemalo Brahmalo Shiva Kesavadulalo Prema Meera Velasi Unde Birudhu Vahin China Rama Nannu Brovara”（羅摩啊！在您純淨無瑕的愛方式之中，您寓於眾生，從一隻螞蟻而至梵天也寓於濕婆和三位一體之大神之中。請您也成為我的護佑者吧！）。

不要忘記萬物的基本原則

你是了解這首詩歌的真義的。但當一隻螞蟻咬到你時，你毫不猶豫地置它於死地。另一方面，梵天（Brahma）在你面前顯靈時，你雙手合十，向祂頂禮。你應該了解，同樣的阿特瑪出現於一切眾生之中，雖然他們呈現不同的形相。那些對阿特瑪的‘單一’深具信心者，他們在任何地方，任何時刻，都不會面臨任何麻煩。具有自信者，無往而不利，無物而不得。人的一切欲望僅服務他的小我。他要一切歸他所有，為他所使。“這是我的身體，這是我的頭，這是我的心念。”那麼，誰又是這個‘我的’呢？當你說‘我的身體’時，它只是你今天和明天的身體。你後天的身體在哪兒？你那麼地信賴和執著那不屬於你的身體！身體是神所賜的禮物。其實，一切都

是神所賜的禮物。(薄伽梵出示祂的手帕)這是一條手帕。它來自何處?從天而降?不,不。它來自棉。棉制成棉線,而棉線制成棉布。所以,無棉則無線,無線則無布。所以,欲得手帕,我們非有棉和線不可。就如棉是布的根基一樣!凡物皆有其根基。我們不應該忘記萬物的基本原則。忘了這基本原則,我們就會淪為所有問題和困難的犧牲者了。

我們重復念誦神的名號。但你可知道祂確實在哪兒?神與你同在,在你之內,在你周圍和在你後面。你是神。對這真相你應該培育起堅定的信心。神不會離開你而到別的地方去。祂以阿特瑪的形式出現於一切眾生之中。我們看到的是不同的名和相。但在眾生之內的阿特瑪原則只有一個,儘管名相眾多。Ekam Sath Viprah Bahudha Vadanti (真理是一個,但智者以不同的名字稱呼它)。首飾眾多,黃金是一。你或擁有各式各樣的裝飾品,但如果你把它們熔化,它們都會還原回黃金。職是之故,神聖阿特瑪的化身們!要盡力去認知基本的原則啊!

我的言、行和生命本身都是為了你的福祉

你或許會認為你,你母親和你父親是不同的。其實,你們三人是一個。因此,你不應該認為你們彼此是不同的。一個懷有二元心念的人是個半盲者。所以不要懷有二元心念。你今天所受的教育不僅你一人獲益,所有人類與一切眾生皆從中獲益才對。你應該幫助一切眾生。只有如此,你才能自稱是個真正受教育者。即便你遇到對你懷有敵意的人,你應該以愛去歡迎他,說,“哈嘍,哈嘍”。愛每一個人。不要恨任何人。沒有人憎恨斯瓦米。你可以問一問,斯瓦米是否有不喜歡的人。所有人都是我的愛的接受者。我的愛存在於所有人之內。我不憎恨任何人也不傷害任何人。我也不出賣任何人。由於我持有堅強的一體性感覺,每一個人都愛我。其實,整個人類都愛我,而我也愛整個人類。只有缺乏信心者才想到斯瓦米或有憎恨的是不真實的。我的一切言、行和我的生命本身,無非為了你的福祉。你應該了解這原則並建立起對它的信心。當你建立起信心後,愛自然流露。當你有了愛和信心。你所有的渴望就得到究竟了。所以,人的一生最重要的就是愛與信心。其他穿插於其間的僅是過眼雲煙,來而有所往。不要太在意它們。你應該好好保養愛與信心。信心是愛的影象。愛是神的形相。愛是神。要活在愛之中。真理是真理,而它決不改變。所以,真理是神。千萬別認為神和你是分開的。神和世界是不分開的,因為整個世界是祂的相。你該牢記這一體性原則,不可須臾離也。

要了解阿特瑪原則的單一性

同學們!

你或博覽群書。所有這些書籍都含有同樣的字母。厚厚的一本書只由二十六個字母寫成。你一定看過律師提著大大厚厚的書籍。同樣的字母就是所有書籍的根基。同樣,每一物的根基就是神,不論它是健康,幸福,舒暢或適宜。只有神才是萬物的根基,不論是好的和壞的。說真的,在這世上,你看不到壞的。你觸目所及,只有好的。由於你不徹底了解‘好’的真義,你於是看到壞的於其內。你看到‘壞的’只因為時間的不同而已。你今天吃下好的食物,明天早上就變成糞便排出。今天的Phala (果實)就是明天的Mala (排泄物)。如果你明白這種關係,你就明白好壞的一體性。一體性即神性。神寓於每一物之中。神無處不在。無人有權說神在這兒而不在那兒。只有一樣東西存在,那就是聖靈(神)。我們想象一個聖靈有諸多相並因此而造成迷惑。迷惑的原因就在於我們認為大家是分開的。在某種程度上,我們應該捨棄這些個體分殊。我們所受的教育就是幫助我們捨棄這些個體分殊。如果你在這關係中看到一體性(單一性),那麼,一切就是‘一’了。

宗教眾多，目標是一。
布料眾多，紗線是一。
生命眾多，呼吸是一。（泰盧固詩）

那麼多的人坐在這裡，他們不是分開的個體。只有肉身是分開的，但寓於肉身之內的聖靈只有一個，同樣的一個。因此，不論你看誰，你都應該視他為神聖的。要愛每一個人，視他為聖靈的化身。由於肉身執著所引起的假象，致使你看到個體的差異。你的一切煩惱只是這假象或虛幻所引起的。所以說，你自己才是你的煩惱的起因。好與壞都原自你的心念。心念只有一個，但它卻跟你耍各類的把戲。你所受的教育和你所獲得的學位只是要你了解‘阿特瑪原則’是一個。Ekameva Adviteeyam Brahma（神是一而不二）。你應該在你內心維護和保存著這真相。你或以為有一些人對你有敵意。那是因為你自己的感覺，認為改變會在他人之內進行。否則，在他們之內是沒有改變的。世上的一切只是反應、反映和反響而已，但真實本性只有一個。如果我們懷持這樣的一種感覺，我們就會洋溢著無限的福樂了。你或感到奇怪，為何斯瓦米總是笑口常開，和樂融融。我常保持笑容，因為我視人人為一，大家一體。你的福樂是我的糧食。你也應該獲得這福樂才是。那一天，我們的孩子們表演一出戲劇，在欣賞時，我福樂洋溢。

萬物一體。我們說，‘我和我們’。‘我們’來自何處？它來自‘我’。沒有‘我’就沒有‘我們’。因此，‘我’只有一個。當你把‘I’（我）從中間橫劃，它成‘+’。十字架是什麼意思？它意味著破除個別的‘I’（我）。所以，我們視每一個人為‘一’。我們應該培育一體性的感覺並視大家為兄弟姐妹。四海之內皆兄弟。再者，兄弟姐妹是不分開的；大家是一體。如果你作如是想，你會看到萬物一體，世界大同。你或認為世界存有多樣性或分殊性。但多樣性或分殊性是不存在的。存在的只有一體性。如果我們把一體性原則烙印在心坎裡，我們觸目所及無非一體了。比如，你愛一個女孩。但這女孩是誰？她和你是不分開的。這不就等於你愛你自己！如你認為她跟你是分開的，你就稱她為你的妻子。但如你以一體性來看，你們兩人是為一體。你應該清楚了解這一體性原則。雖然形相各異，基本的一體性還是存在的。

真正受教育者體認萬物一體

愛的化身們！同學們！

你們大家都應該成為典范。若你成為典范，他人也會成為典范。所以，不要持有‘我的’和‘你的’的這種差別。萬物一體，大家是一。要一視同仁。你應該永遠記得這一點。這樣，你才配稱為一個真正的學生。否則，充其量，你只能被稱為一個識字者而不是一個受教育者。一個受教育者與一個識字者之間有很大的不同。何謂受教育者？認知萬物一體者是也。現代教育只授與書本知識。使我們了解一體性原則並照亮前路的就是Vidya（識之光）。缺少Vidya，我們就必須生活在無知的黑暗之中。

愛的化身們！

要培育起對神的愛。如果你把你的愛轉移到世俗的物質，它會時時改變。愛只有一個。把它聚焦於一體性原則並體驗至福。不論你所遇何人都應該視他為你的兄弟姐妹。有人向群眾致詞，稱群眾為兄弟姐妹，但有一人不包括在內。有人問他那是何人，他答說是他的妻子。因為你為她系上姻緣線（Mangal Sutra），她便成為你的妻子。沒有姻緣線就不成夫妻。所以，

大家都是一體。要活在一體之中，不要看到或存有任何差異。即便你擁有的是那麼的稀少，
。。。。也要與同胞們分享。

阿周那 (Arjuna) 在Swayamvara (選婿儀禮) 上，獲得黑公主 (Draupati) 的允婚。當般度五子 (Pandava般達瓦) 帶著黑公主回家時，他們告訴母親貢蒂 (Kunti) 說，他們帶了一個美妙的水果回來。貢蒂沒看到任何人就從屋內說，“寶貝！你們五人就均分這水果吧！”那就是為什麼黑公主成為般度五子的共妻的原因了。基於這原因，基士拿公開宣稱：

黑公主有義務遵從她丈夫們的指令。
她決不對任何一個丈夫說，
她沒有時間服務他。
她滿足於她在生活中所擁有的一切。
她是貞德的至高典范，無人可以匹比。(泰盧固詩)

黑公主與般度五子的感情深篤，關係密切，就像她在他們之中而他們在她之中一樣。那就是她忠誠地服侍所有五兄弟的心態。所有五兄弟恪守正確適當的規矩。由於自律，他們生活得非常愉快。為了過一個快樂的生活，你也應該遵守一體性原因。若遵守這一體性原則，任何分殊和任何忿怒或差誤都不會產生。

對我而言，一切都沒問題；不僅是我的身體而是每一樣東西。我的心念不會搖擺不定。身體或有所改變，但我一直保持不變。有些人問，“斯瓦米！您怎麼老是春風滿面，笑口常開？您難道沒有任何哀傷？”任何哀傷都觸動不了我。該來的總會來。不必要的擔心和掛慮能使你避開它嗎？若開始擔心，你的擔心就變得多樣化了。是故，切莫讓擔心走近你。一旦你讓擔心進入你的心念，它就不會離開你了。考期近時，你開始擔心，“我如何回答試卷呢？”為何如此操心？你知道的，你就會寫上去。那麼，你為什麼害怕呢？當你停止擔心時，你就能好好地回答你的考卷了。不要懷持任何恐懼，即便有人持槍要射擊你。他只能射擊你的肉身，但他能射擊你的心念，智能或阿特瑪嗎？沒有人能動阿特瑪。阿特瑪有多遙遠？天空非常遼闊遙遠。無人能告訴你它有多遠。之所以說‘天空是藍的’就是這個原因。海洋有多深？無人能測量。所以，他們說‘海洋是藍的’。由於無人能道出天空與海洋的高度，寬度和深度，於是人們就以同樣的手法對兩者加以描述。同樣，無人能描繪聖靈的形相。因此，藍色就歸屬於神。但實際上，神不是藍色的。若神呈現藍色，你就會把祂當作展覽品了。無人能給聖靈帶來任何改變。你或會改變，但絕不是在你之內的阿特瑪。Nirgunam, Niranjanam, Sanathana Niketanam, Nitya, Shuddha, Buddha, Mukta, Nirmala Swarupinam (它是無屬性的，無瑕疵的，是最終歸屬，是永恆的，純淨的，正覺的，超脫的及聖潔之化身。所以說，Buddhi Grahyamatheendriyam (阿特瑪超越感官範圍之外而只能以智去理解之)。不要作無謂的努力去改變阿特瑪原則。

學生應該為父母和母校爭光

贏取一個好的聲譽也給你父母及社會帶來一個好的聲譽。有好的學生才有好的社會。從各個方面，我聽說我們的學生表現不俗，到哪兒都獲得好評。你應該依據這好的名聲而生活並且維系之。這是我唯一的期望。凡你所要的，我會賜予。其實，我已把‘我自己’給了你。要常常保持快樂。千萬不要彼此鬥爭和辱罵。要像兄弟般共睦相處。教育就是要培育這

平等心於你之內。只有在你抱持這平等心時，你才配稱為真正受教育者。最終人難免一死，這教育又有何用？一個卑鄙小人，即便受了教育也不會放棄他邪惡的品質。你應該常常作一個好學生。首先要使你的父母快樂幸福。如你不能使你父母快樂，你怎能使我快樂？當你快樂地跟父母生活在一個屋檐下時，我也感到欣慰、快樂。若人們說，這些學生是來自沙迪亞賽學院的，那麼，我們的學校就獲得好聲譽而你也贏取一個好聲譽。若你到德里去問一問，你會發現沙迪亞賽學校與沙迪亞賽學院頗受當地政府器重與贊賞。我們大學所受到的承認是其他院校所得不到的。很多學院已經操作了好多年，但仍未受到承認。而我們的學院開辦至今一至兩年，但當瑪杜裡沙 (Madhuri Shah, 擔任‘大學贈款委員會UGC主席’) 從德里到來並說我們的學院有資格晉升為大學，很多人反對她的看法。“我們怎麼能夠承認一所開辦不到兩年的學院？” 他們爭辯說。那時薄伽梵譚姆 (Bhagavantham) 就在我身邊；他經常翻譯我的講道。他是一個科學家。他也在我身邊輕聲地說，“斯瓦米！這是不可能。”但我堅定地說，“這是可能的。”第二年，委員會派人來考察與審核。他們一致認為這是一所一流的學院，應該晉升為大學。瑪杜裡沙又再次前來主持晉升典禮。然後她公開對薄伽梵譚姆說，“薄伽梵譚姆，你說這是不可能的，但現在卻變成可能了，怎麼說呢？”其實，對其他學院來說，這是不可能的。

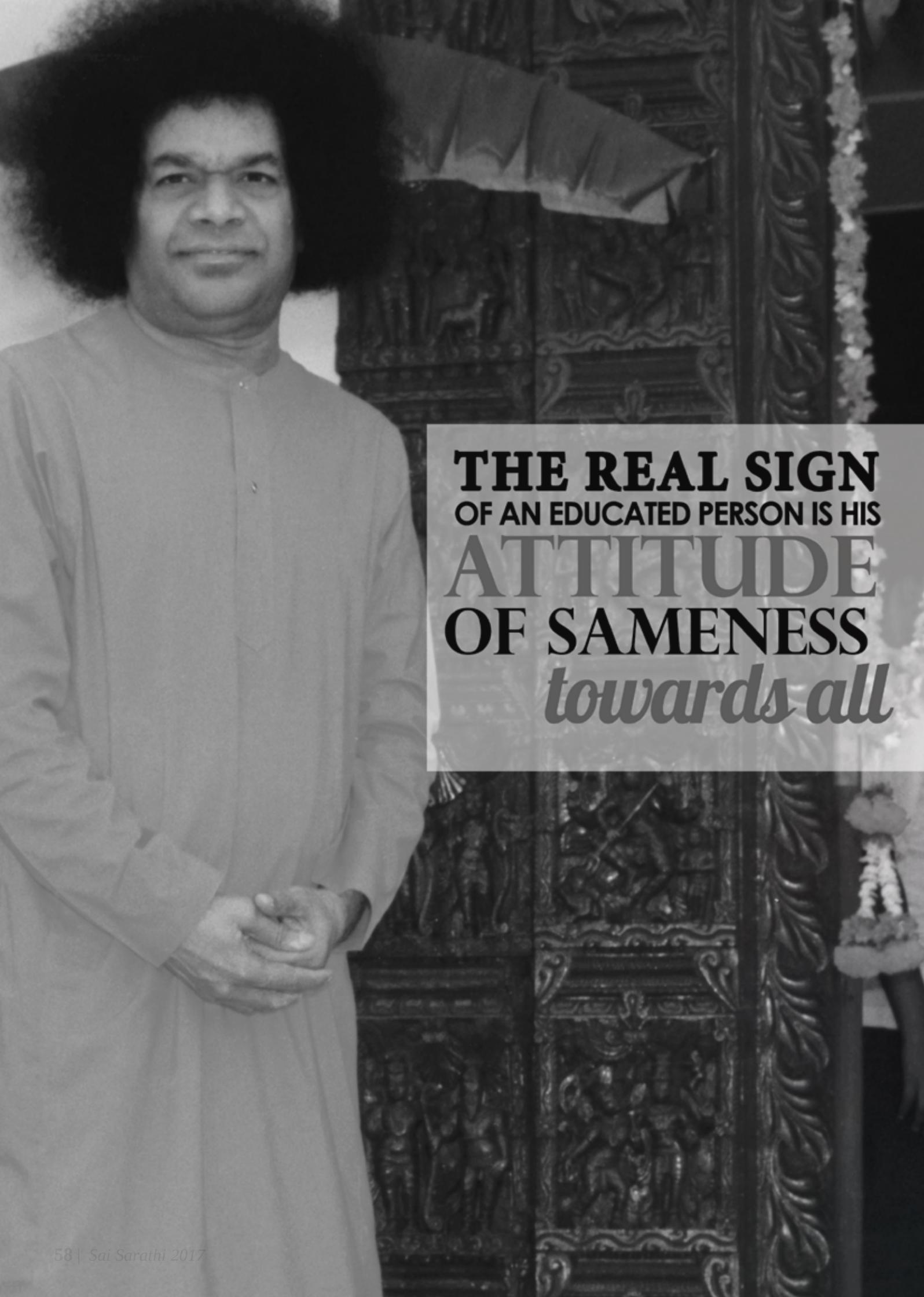
我們所有的學生都是品學兼優的，知識廣，智能高。你也許不知道我們的大學在美國頗負威名。我們有180個畢業生在美國。他們都來了這裡，大概也有一段時日了。他們只要在此度過他們的整個假期，而不想到其他地方去游玩。哥爾德斯坦 (Goldstein) 在過去20年來一直是美國賽組織的主席，他今天也和我們在一起。(薄伽梵於是叫哥爾德斯坦博士上台來並要他說幾句話)。

哥爾德斯坦博士說，“接觸了那麼多美國來的學生，我的印象和體認是，他們把光帶到賽組織來，不但在美國乃至於整個世界。斯瓦米的愛之光已傳達了神聖精華給他的信徒，幾乎遍及世界200個國家。這些學生已帶來了斯瓦米的福音和斯瓦米的愛給大家，並激勵信眾們提升自己 and 體現他們自己的神性。你必須感到多麼的有福氣，在神聖的蓮花足下，進入這大學求學並成為聖愛和鼓舞世界的使者。如果我還有來世，我祈求斯瓦米讓我來世進入這所大學就讀。”

很久以前，當峇克瓦提 (Bhagwati) 在阿默達巴德市 (Ahmadabad) 的時候，我告訴他說，“很快你就會到德里去。”我叫他回去收拾行裝。峇克瓦提感到懷疑。他說，“我的名字不在委員會內。我怎能去？”不久，他收到指示。他被委任高等法庭的一個法官。從那一天起，這些年來，他一刻也沒有忘記薄伽梵。我對他很親。

峇克瓦提法官 (前印度高等法院法官) 說，“今天，我不能用任何文字表達我內心的感受。這幾年來，斯瓦米一直對我那麼仁慈與深情，使我畢生難忘。他塑造了我的一生。我之所以有今天，全拜祂之賜。我祈求祂繼續當我的神聖導師，只要我還活著，不僅是這一生，還有許多來世。我可以常常繼續去服務祂。”

(薄伽梵的神聖講道2007年11月22日於百善地尼樂園賽古魯彎禮堂，
時值斯裡沙迪亞賽大學26屆畢業典禮。
source: 《百善》第36期第12-25頁)



THE REAL SIGN
OF AN EDUCATED PERSON IS HIS
ATTITUDE
OF SAMENESS
towards all

2017 : THE YEAR IN PHOTOS



Brother James Kon, Spiritual Coordinator of Sathya Sai Council, SSIO of Malaysia, conducted a **So Ham Meditation workshop** at the Kowloon Centre on 18 March



Interfaith Walk for Value, POC
26 March, Peak Trail





Bal Vikas children paid tribute to **Earth Day** -
Kadoorie Farm, 6 May



Health Talk on 19 May by Dr. Vinod Sharma, a qualified Ayurvedic Practitioner, Certified Healer, and experienced Yoga Instructor on Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and Sleeping Disorders



SSIYLP graduates made an informative presentation on the theme, "**Protect the Planet**", 4 June

Dato Jega Jegadeesan, a long standing devotee of Bhagawan Baba visited Hong Kong in June accompanied by his wife, Sister Lalitha Jegadeesan



Public Programme on 21 June on the topic
'Can Religion be a force for change to Protect the Planet?'



22 June, Brother Jega spoke
at the Sathya Sai Centre of Kowloon

24 June, Brother Jega and Sister Lalitha
at a **Sadhana Camp** titled
'Heaven, Hell – One Life, One Choice'



Brother Sudhakar Pant, National Spiritual Coordinator of SSIO of Nepal, visited Hong Kong in September



6 September, Brother Sudhakar Pant was invited to sing during bhajans and share his personal experiences with Swami



9 September, Sathya Sai Centre of Tsuen Wan organised a full day **Sadhana Camp**



SSE students visit old age home



SPIRITUAL WING

“All of you should take a vow continually to develop the Sathya Sai Organisations. Let all join in the activities. Never give up the organisation. Regard it as the breath of your life. This is real penance. Having this firm resolve, become exemplary leaders. This is My sole desire. Swami’s love will accompany you everywhere.”

- Sri Sathya Sai Baby, 23 November 1990

So Ham Meditation Workshop

18 March, Sathya Sai Centre of Kowloon

19 March, Sathya Sai Centre of Tsuen Wan

As daily meditation and prayers are one of the Nine Codes of Conduct laid down by Bhagawan, Hong Kong devotees were honoured to have Brother James Kon, Spiritual Coordinator of Sathya Sai Council, SSIO of Malaysia, to conduct a **So Ham Meditation** workshop at the Kowloon Centre on Saturday 18 March 2017, from 2 pm to 7 pm. About 80 devotees attended and greatly benefited from his clear direction on the actual practice of So Ham meditation.

On 19 March, Brother James repeated the workshop for Nepalese devotees of the Tsuen Wan Centre.

“If people desire to transform their lives, internal as well as external, into one of splendor, meditation is the best spiritual discipline (sadhana) they can adopt. When the taste of meditation is once discovered, one will discard all doubt and discussion thereon and engage oneself fully in it. Therefore, begin meditation, each one of you, today, even from this moment.” - Sathya Sai Baba

Interfaith Walk for Values, POC

26 March 2017, Peak Trail

“A walk with a difference”, this best describes this Walk for Values that the Public Outreach Committee of the SSIO of Hong Kong organised

on Sunday, 26 March 2017 at the trail walk around the Peak. Rising 1,810 feet above the city, the trail offers an amazing view over Hong Kong.

In spite of heavy rains the night before and a thunderstorm warning in the early hours, more than 350 people turned up for the walk! Swami blessed the walkers by taking care of the rains and shortly before the walk started most of the ground was dry!

Amongst the participants were Hindus, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Zoroastrians, Sikhs and, of course, devotees of Sathya Sai Baba. Rabbi Stanton Zamek of the United Jewish Congregation of Hong Kong, the Chief Imam from the Kowloon Mosque and Islamic Centre, Muhammad Arshad, Mrs. Bhagwanti Mohan, Mrs. Minoo Melwani and Mr. Henry Fung from the Mahayana Buddhist Association, Carola Chard of Soka Gakkai International Hong Kong, Priest Ervard Homyar Nasirabadwala of the Zoroastrian Community and members of the SSIO of Hong Kong and Hong Kong Sikh Temple all gave speeches on the importance of environmental protection as taught in their faith tradition. The messages underlined that all faiths stress this same responsibility.

There were also Hindu and Buddhist chants to purify minds and strengthen bodies for the walk, and also songs from Ms. Seema Ramchandani and the SSIO of Hong Kong.

Amidst this wonderful sanctuary just minutes away from the hustle and bustle of Hong Kong, participants were given T-shirts and

environmentally friendly water bottles. After the walk, they were treated to piping hot Indian masala tea and savory fritters, courtesy of the Khalsa Diwan (HK) Sikh Temple, and cupcakes and juices provided by the devotees of the Sathya Sai Centre.

A member of our young adults, Brother Jayesh Peswani, interviewed some of the walkers. A video of the interviews and festivities can be viewed on our website www.saibaba.org.hk

Earth Day

22 April 2017

The Bal Vikas children paid tribute to Earth Day when they went on a field trip to Kadoorie Farm on Saturday 6 May as part of their annual outing on Easwaramma Day. One of the activities they were engaged in was a treasure hunt at the farm. The activity aimed to make them aware that all of us belong to the Earth – the Earth does not belong to us – and that we should take full responsibility to protect this Earth that provides selflessly for all.

Serve the Planet Presentation SSIYLP

9 June 2017

The Sathya Sai International Youth Leadership Programme (SSIYLP) graduates made an informative presentation on the theme, **“Protect the Planet”** at the Sathya Sai Centre of Kowloon. They explained the imbalance in nature and provided practical solutions for the proper use of resources to keep a check on pollution, which Bhagawan says originates in the mind and reflects externally into the world.

Interfaith Meeting at Mosque

4 June 2017

The HKNRP invited members of the Sathya Sai Centre of Kowloon to attend their meeting at the mosque. The topic for discussion was **‘Being Muslim in Hong Kong’** and was followed by attending mosque prayers. Dinner was served and attendees had a chance to interact casually with people of different faiths.

Heaven, Hell - One Life, One Choice

21 – 26 June 2017

Another guest welcomed to Hong Kong in June was Dato Jega Jegadeesan, former trade ambassador for Malaysia and a long standing devotee of Bhagawan Baba. He was accompanied by his wife, Sister Lalitha Jegadeesan.

The almost weeklong visit started with a Public Programme on 21 June 2017. About 75 participants attended this panel discussion, which included the a priest from the local Anglican Church and an officer of a Buddhist organisation. The topic was **‘Can Religion be a force for change to Protect the Planet?’**

On 22 June, Brother Jega spoke at the Sathya Sai Centre of Kowloon about Swami’s miracles that evidence His comforting omnipresence.

On Friday, 23 June, a casual meet and greet with Brother Jega was held for local devotees. Dinner was served by the Mahilas.

The weekend saw devotees spend the entire day of 24 June at a Sadhana Camp titled **‘Heaven, Hell – One Life, One Choice’**. In addition to Brother Jega’s dynamic and interactive presentations, his wife, Sister Lalitha, involved the devotees in an interesting activity in which participants had to use their creative judgment to solve a puzzle. It was surely a day well spent in the presence of Swami’s messengers of Love.

On Sunday, 25 June, Bro Jega offered a presentation at the Sathya Sai Centre of Tsuen Wan.

Bhajans by Sai Devotees on National Radio

5 August 2017

RTHK, a local radio channel, produced a Community Involvement Broadcasting Service (CIBS) programme entitled **Indian Devotional Sandhya**. Members of the SSIO were invited to sing English and Hindi Sathya Sai Bhajans. During the interval, short excerpts of Bhagawan Baba’s teachings in English and Chinese were



shared with listeners. Recorded in June/July, the programme aired on 5 August. To listen visit the archived link: http://www.rthk.hk/radio/pth/programme/g0560_indiandevotionalsandhya

Brother Sudhakar Pant's Visit

6-12 September 2017

Following the summer, September saw the arrival of another Sathya Sai guest to Hong Kong, Brother Sudhakar Pant, National Spiritual Coordinator of SSIO of Nepal. On 6 September he was invited to sing during bhajans and later shared his personal experiences with Swami. He explained that Swami's organisation is a part of Swami Himself and we should be honoured to be a part of His organisation and to serve Him.

On Sunday, 9 September the Sathya Sai Centre of Tsuen Wan organised a full day Sadhana Camp for 100 people. Brother Sudhakar was the main speaker. The entire camp was conducted in Nepalese language.

Spiritual Message on Bhajan Days

Thursdays and Sundays

The messages that have been read on Thursdays and Sundays after bhajans have been taken from the daily *Thought of the Day* on Radio Sai. Since July, however, the messages were changed to extracts from *Sai Dictionary of Quotations*, in which questions posed to Sathya Sai Baba were answered.

Bal Vikas Children Leading Bhajans

This year Bal Vikas children have been invited to lead Bhajans on one Thursday a month to develop them into future young leaders. The quality of bhajans by the Bal Vikas children has greatly improved thanks to the commitment of the Bhajan teacher who is also a Bal Vikas guru.

Annual Sarathi - *Protect The Planet*

This year's theme for our annual publication is on Protect the Planet and includes topics addressing the relationship between Nature, God, and Man, particularly Man's spiritual responsibility to protect the planet.

Festivals and Important Sai Days

Bhajans continue to be held on all the festivals days, viz, Mahashivaratri, Guru Pournima, Krishna Janmashtami, Diwali and Christmas. Bhajans are also held on important days, like Aradhana Mahotsavam, Akhand Bhajans weekend and Baba's Birthday.

As the year comes to an end, we pray Swami's guiding hand and grace for continuous strength to grow into His fold and serve Him.

Stay Blessed! Sai Ram.
Naina Shamdasani
Spiritual Convenor

SERVICE (SEVA) WING

“Service is the worship you offer to the God in the heart of everyone.”

– Sri Sathya Sai Baba

The Service Wing has continued its monthly activities during the course of 2017 as effectively as it has done in past years with unwavering commitment from the heads of the fourteen service activities held each month.

Creation of Awareness in the Local Community

In 2016 we expanded the task of creating more awareness of Swami’s work in the local community to enable more non-devotees to participate in our service activities. With Swami’s Grace, more have joined our activities in 2017. In some *seva* activities, non-devotees outnumber the devotees.

Last year, in 2016, a group of employees from Morgan Stanley Bank joined us in several street sleeper *seva* activities. This was part of the bank’s worldwide programme to require employees to serve in their local communities between May and July. They were so impressed with our work that this year they signed up again with greater awareness and enthusiasm.

5-6 employees joined each activity, making a total of about 30 employees. One has since joined on a regular basis with his family. Additionally, the bank’s liaison officer with the SSIO of Hong Kong is now enlisting employees to join our Christmas Party this December 2017 at the home for mentally challenged adults.

Cage Home Seva

An expanded Cage Home *Seva* started in 2016 under the leadership of Sis. Isabella Chu and now serves about 150 individuals in the Sham Shui Po and Cheung Sha Wan areas every two months. The *seva* is held on Sunday mornings. An increasing

number of non-devotees have also joined this particular *seva* activity, including a group of firemen recently.

This additional team compliments the work started in 2004 under the leadership of Bro. Balu Peswani and devotees of the Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Tsuen Wan.

We are sure community engagement by the local community will continue to grow in the years to come. Presently, basic necessities such as rice, oil, soap, etc., are being distributed to the cage home dwellers, but as time goes on we will serve more of their needs.

Home for the Mentally Challenged

This home that we have served every month for about 10 years has really given satisfaction to many participants and a unique experience that they never thought possible. The regular SSIO members and Young Adults take turns each month to spend time with the residents there.

The yearly Christmas Party has been fixed for 16 December 2017. More than 50 participants are expected to serve over 100 residents with game stalls, indoor activities, presents and food, not to mention our very own Santa Claus. Each year, it is a fun filled and rewarding afternoon. This year participants from Morgan Stanley Bank have expressed deep interest to come and experience the joy of hosting this event.

Seva in Dongguan

The dedication continues to-date and 15 families are supported with basic necessities on a bimonthly basis.

Serve the Planet

In view of the project initiated by the Prasanthi Council to *Serve the Planet*, the *Seva Wing* during 2017 has taken steps to reduce the use of environmentally hazardous items, such as plastic bags and bottles, and non-biodegradable 'lunch boxes' in which dinners are served.

Part of the items have already been replaced by eco-friendly products that will not eventually cause a pollution problem, even though the cost is much higher. We still need to do some work on this ongoing transformation but we are sure the task will be achieved in the near future. We owe it to our home (Hong Kong) not to pollute it even more.

Swami's Birthday Celebration

In view of suggestions received last year that our annual cultural programme at Kai Fong hall be replaced (at least this year) by something different, the Committee of the SSIO of Hong Kong together with the *Seva Wing* decided to host an interfaith service programme for some under-privileged in the community. In this way, Sathya Sai Baba's message is taken to the wider community, with people of different religious traditions participating, thus fostering greater community engagement.

The programme was planned for December 2017 (the regular Birthday programme in the Sathya Sai Centres on 23rd November 2017 will be held as usual). However, finding a suitable public venue in December proved to be quite a challenge, notwithstanding an early indication that an open ground near the Central Library would be made available to us. Therefore, the project has been postponed to March or April 2018.

It may be that this is Swami's blessing to allow us more time to make the project successful and spread Swami's message of Love to all.

In ending this report, we can only thank Swami for allowing us to serve throughout 2017 and making us His instruments. We hope we have been worthy. We pray He keeps showering us with his Blessings and Guidance to enable us to continue the same in the years ahead.

Jai Sai Ram
Arjan Sakhrani
Seva Wing Co-ordinator



“The primary duty of man is to share with other children of God the infinite boundless Love that God showers on him. Serve all, love all. Serve joyfully, intelligently, selflessly, being ever-grateful for the opportunity. This is the best way, the most pleasant way to earn the Grace of God.”

- Sathya Sai Baba

EDUCATION WING

“Every form of knowledge and capacity is latent in man.

He is endowed with all types of potentialities physical, mental, spiritual and ethical. The true aim of education is to make explicit the innate powers of man.”

– Sri Sathya Sai Baba

The Education Wing continued the task of helping to mould and shape the character of young ones during 2017 with the blessings of our dear Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The Bal Vikas (Sai Spiritual Education) team worked with devotion and love to sow the seeds of virtue, of wisdom, and of faith in the hearts of the students.

The Education Wing conducted weekly spirituality classes and many other value-based activities, and taught devotional singing to over 200 students between the ages of 4 and 17 years. As instructed by Baba, 23 SSE teachers were engaged in guiding the students, dedicatedly fostering and encouraging good habits, sound reasoning and valid emotions.

For the convenience of the teachers and students, classes were conducted in different venues. Most of them were conducted at the Sathya Sai Baba Centres of Kowloon and Tsuen Wan. Classes were also conducted in teachers' and devotees' homes at South Horizon and in the Mid-Levels on Hong Kong side.

Weekly Spiritual classes

As instructed by Baba, the founder of Bal Vikas (SSE), the weekly classes focus on Baba's teachings and nurture love through love itself; the syllabus emphasises valued-based education. Since classes are divided age-wise, age appropriate tools are used to impart the values.

The common thread of all topics is teaching love through love. The topics include Ceiling On Desires, the five universal human values (Truth, Right Conduct, Love, Peace and Non-violence),

the 5 D's (Discipline, Determination, Duty, Devotion and Discrimination), the five elements (Space, Air, Fire, Water and Earth) and W.A.T.C.H. (watching our Words, Action, Thoughts, Character and Heart).

Baba said, *“The ideal of the Bal Vikas is to raise a generation of boys and girls who have a clean and clear conscience. The actual syllabus is not so important as the creation of an atmosphere where noble habits and ideals can grow and fructify. The Bal Vikas pupils follow Bal Vikas discipline and curriculum only for one day in the week and attend their usual schools on other days. The home too must feel the change in child behavior.”* For this reason, life application is given great importance in SSE.

There is only one religion, the religion of Love. The Vedas teach that man should adore and worship God in gratitude for His benedictions. The Bible teaches that he should pray for peace and practice charity. The Quran would have man show mercy to the suffering of others and to surrender his will to the All High. The Buddhist texts teach the lesson of detachment and sense-control. The Zendavesta exhorts man to get rid of evil propensities and shine in his own innate glory, said Baba. In SSE we teach *Sarva Dharma* following this principle.

Activities

DEVOTIONAL SINGING (BHAJANS) is a very important aspect of SSE. About five to six new *bhajans* in English, Hindi, and Mandarin are taught by selected SSE teachers to each age group. Teachers are also taught the *bhajans*, which they practice every week.

SSE students are given opportunities to sing in public on many occasions. On one Thursday every month, three SSE students are chosen to sing during the regular *bhajans* at the Sathya Sai Centre. On one Sunday in March and June this year, regular *bhajans* at the Sathya Sai Centre were sung by SSE students exclusively. One of the students read a Sai message afterwards. SSE students also get special time during Akhand Bhajans to sing with love and dedication to their heart's content.

SEVA is a regular feature of the SSE curriculum. All students over 8 years of age participate in *Narayan Seva* once a year. In 2017 this is planned for 18 November. The street sleepers in certain areas of Hong Kong will be served food and basic necessities by the students, who get to see how these needy citizens live. The children cherish this opportunity to serve them with a caring attitude.

The students also visit old age homes or the Gurdwara in Happy Valley once every three months. They interact with the residents of such homes and it always is very heartwarming to see the happy faces of otherwise lonely residents.

This year in June, teachers went on a *seva* together to foster their relationship.

EASWARAMMA DAY on 6 May is always special for SSE students. We take a particular value as a theme and take the children outside to engage in activities that bring out the values from inside them. This year the theme was "*Protect the Planet*" and we visited the Kadoorie Organic Farm. About 80 students and 20 teachers and parent volunteers made the day very special with lots of games and learning experiences.

SSE SUMMER CLASSES were arranged for the second consecutive year during July and August. The response from parents and students was overwhelming. The teachers prepared the lesson plans and activities with so much zest and we could see Swami's hands in this programme.

Teachers (Gurus)

Baba said, "*The Bal Vikas chores are bound to elevate and sublimate the thoughts and emotions of the gurus far better than any other sadhana can. Remember that as gurus you too have a guru*

guiding you and overseeing your seva. So, you too are pupils, and you too learn the lessons of equality, equanimity and selfless love while acting as gurus." With this in mind, a study circle is arranged for the gurus every Tuesday evening for their spiritual upliftment.

Some gurus attended the *So Ham* Meditation workshop arranged by the Sathya Sai Centre in March. Some gurus also took part in the "Walk For Values" arranged by the SSIO of Hong Kong in March. With Swami's blessings, some of the gurus went to Puttaparthi on a pilgrimage in April during the Easter holidays and came back with extra positive and spiritual energy. In June, some gurus attended the Sadhana Camp arranged by the SSIO. Baba also gave a beautiful opportunity to gurus to offer prasada on Guru Poornima day.

Teachers continued to learn Vedic Chanting and aim to complete learning the first *anuvaka* of the Rudram by the end of the year.

SSE Parents

Swami said, "*Parents and teachers are the sculptors who have to mould the shape and figure of the students for whom they are responsible. Teachers should not be content with merely teaching the children. They should contact the parents and be in touch with them.*" In SSE we strive to get the parents involved in the progress of their child's personality growth through spiritual education.

We conducted parent-teacher meetings in September in which each class teacher(s) met with the parents collectively to exchange ideas and to share with them the year's broad structure and syllabus. In February, the teachers met parents again, this time, one-on-one to explain the child's progress in class.

With Bhagawan Baba's grace and blessings, His guiding hands holding the SSE team, the triangle of Students-Gurus-Parents is working as His Divine instruments towards an education renaissance.

***In Sai Service,
Seetha Subramanian***

MAHILA VIBHAG

“When service is rendered in a total spirit of dedication with concentration of thought, word and heart gets sanctified. Without purity of heart there can be no spiritual progress.”

– Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Swami says “*Motherhood is the most precious gift of God.*” It is the mother who knows only service because she is full of sacrifice. If anyone in the family sheds tears, the mother feels and sheds tears too. A mother is full of compassion.

These qualities of a mother – sacrifice and compassion – must not be given only to her family and loved ones but must extend to the society at large. In spite of her demanding role at home and to her family, mothers should give some time towards community service.

It is especially important for women to know the difference between one’s *dharma* and one’s commitment to external service activities. According to Swami, *dharma* is performance of one’s duties in the different roles in life, as a daughter, wife, mother, grandmother, etc. These roles are to be performed as an act of worship, while *seva* is sacrificing one’s leisure, giving one’s time and talent for the upliftment of the community.

Swami clearly said that service outside should be taken only after family duties are fulfilled. All family members should approve of these activities otherwise there will be disharmony at home. Also, the husband’s support and encouragement should be sought. Where necessary, one can do service from the home, such as offering to cook and sending food for *narayan seva*, making *prasad* on special occasions, or making flower garlands, etc.

Even educated women can do useful community service according to their skills, talent, special knowledge, etc.

Without disturbing the harmony at home, one should prioritise one’s duties at home and outside according to one’s ability and availability of time. Always remember that you are not doing service to others, you are doing it for yourself, to the God in you, the God who is equally present in others too.

Three qualities are very important when serving: 1) love in the hearts; 2) softness in one’s speech; and 3) sweetness in one’s acts.

We have our regular monthly *seva* at the old people’s home and home for mentally challenged adults, and these are well attended by the women. At these *sevas*, the residents are entertained with *bhajans*, games, music and dance, food and drinks, gifts, etc. At the *seva* for the elderly they are also given a short message from Swami and Light Meditation is practiced with them.

Apart from *sevas*, various activities give us Mahilas an opportunity to educate ourselves spiritually and to spend our time in a sacred manner. These include attending *bhajans*, weekly study circles, chanting the *Namavali* daily in individual homes and celebrating the 19 of every month, which has been declared by Sathya Sai Baba to be Ladies’ Day.

This year we had three special talks:

- On 19 May, we invited Bro. Vinod Sharma, an Ayurvedic doctor. He spoke about cures for Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and Sleeping Disorders. It was a very informative talk and was followed by a Question and Answer session.

- On 20 June, we organised a Yoga session, which was conducted by Sis. Diva Chugani, who taught us some gentle yoga movements along with breath awareness. It was a refreshing session.
- On 19 September, we had a special study circle conducted by our Young Adults on a community project – “Protect the Planet” – that focused on water. Water is our vital resource; Man cannot live without water. We need to conserve water. Is water ever going to run out or are we in denial? What is our individual role in its preservation? What do we leave for our children? It was a very informative and interesting talk and made us aware not to waste water.

In spite of our demanding roles at home, women should give some time to community service. Believe that service is a path to Self-realisation. It is essentially for our sake – to transform our own life and redeem ourselves.

The act of service is not to be judged according to the cost or publicity but by the need of the recipient, the mood of the person who offers – these decide whether the act is gold or lead.

Jai Sai Ram
Nisha A. Sakhrani
Mahila Co-ordinator



Study class by Young Adults



Talk by Bro. Vinod Sharma

SATHYA SAI YOUNG ADULTS

Since the establishment of the Youth Wing in 1985, we have provided a forum for the holistic development of youngsters between the ages of 18-35.

At the November 2016 Prasanthi Council meeting in Prasanthi Nilayam, a policy decision was announced that the age limit for a Sathya Sai Youth will be raised from 35 to 40 years old and the name will be changed from 'Youth' to 'Young Adults' to reflect the characteristics of the expanded membership.

Spiritual Activities

We conduct weekly study sessions on Friday evenings on various topics to bring in-depth spiritual learning to young adults.

In addition to the study classes, the Young Adults meet every Sunday afternoon for *bhajan* jamming/practice sessions in preparation for 2-monthly *bhajans* organised by Young Adults.

Service Activities

Swami says that an important way to relate and connect to our very true nature is by engaging

in selfless service. As part of our spiritual growth, the Young Adults have been involved in various service activities:

- **SSEHV Classes**
Special Educare English Enhancement Programmes were conducted by the Young Adults at a local primary school in Mongkok. The focus of the programme is to develop students' confidence in English language through human values.
- **Visits to a Home for Mentally Challenged Adults**
Young Adults continue to visit a home for mentally challenged adults, which they alternate each month with the *Mahilas*. The Young Adults take charge of arranging fun activities, music and dance for this *seva*. The purpose of this *seva* is to bring happiness to these residents but really the visits have been an eye-opener and humbling experience for all participants.
- **Street Sleeper Seva**
Our members participate in Street Sleeper Sevas organised by the Service Wing and



SSEHV Classes



distribute breakfast and hot meals to street sleepers in Kowloon and Hong Kong Island.

Protect the Planet

In June, graduates from the Sathya Sai International Youth Leadership Programme gave an informative presentation at the Sathya Sai Centre of Kowloon on the theme 'Protect the Planet', which coincides with the Public Outreach theme for 2017. They explained the imbalance in nature and provided solutions for proper use of resources by putting into practice Swami's teachings on Ceiling on Desires in our own homes, without disrupting our daily routine.

In September, the team conducted an interactive study class with the different wings of the Organisation on "The Importance of Water". Many practical suggestions were brought forth on how we can individually conserve water.

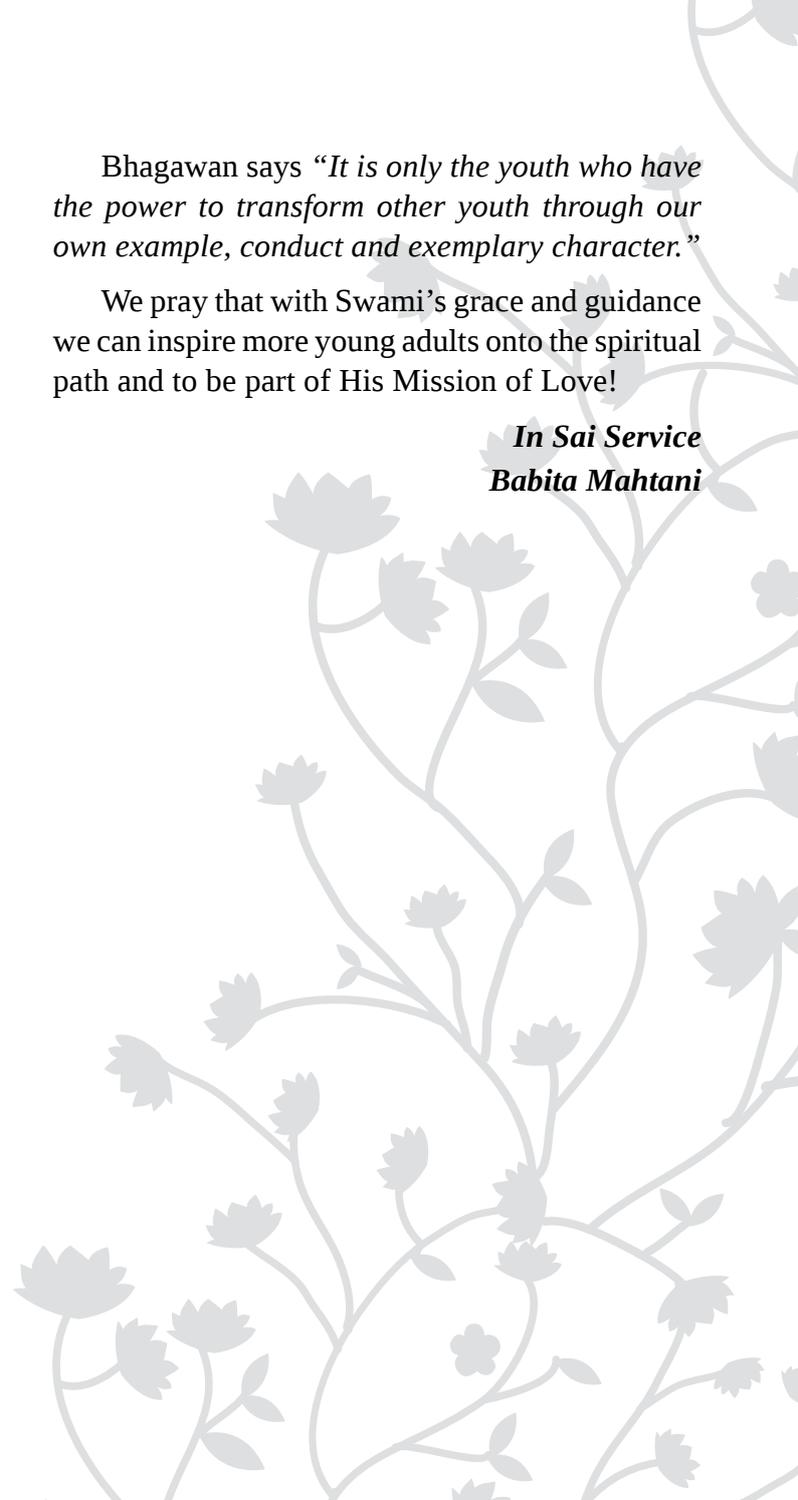
The team was then invited to a private event to give the same presentation to a group of domestic helpers to educate them on the current situation and provide them with practical tips.

We encourage our members to take an active role in the local Sathya Sai Organisation, working with all other Wings and on national projects/events. On the international level, a few of our members have been selected to be a part of the SSIO sub-committees for various projects.

Bhagawan says *"It is only the youth who have the power to transform other youth through our own example, conduct and exemplary character."*

We pray that with Swami's grace and guidance we can inspire more young adults onto the spiritual path and to be part of His Mission of Love!

In Sai Service
Babita Mahtani



SATHYA SAI CENTRE OF TSUEN WAN

The Sathya Sai Centre of Tsuen Wan has 125 members, including Mahilas and Young Adults, some of whom play active roles in the management of the Centre and in leading its activities. All Wings actively participate in Centre activities in a spirit of unity.

The Devotional Wing

Weekly *bhajans* are held on Thursdays and Sundays each month, and additionally on the third Friday of each month in Kam Tin.

Festivals are celebrated with great enthusiasm and generally attract more people. The festivals celebrated this year were Mahashivaratri, Buddha Poornima, Guru Poornima and Krishna Janmashtami. Additionally, Aradhana Mahotsavam was remembered. The Nepali New Year day was celebrated with a special programme in the Centre.

The Centre was blessed by the visit of three senior devotees from overseas. On 19 March, Bro. James Kon, the Spiritual Convenor of the SSIO

of Malaysia, presented a *So Ham Meditation* workshop to 51 devotees and on 25 June Bro. Jegathesan from Malaysia gave a lively talk to over 50 people in the Centre. Bro. Sudharkar Pant visited Hong Kong just before 10 September and in addition to a Sadhana Camp he gave several talks at the Centre in Tsuen Wan.

It was truly a blessing to receive so many dedicated emissaries of Sathya Sai Baba to share His love and His message for our personal spiritual growth.

As part of the activities of the Spiritual Wing, study circles are held on the second and fourth Sunday of each month. These classes enable group study and discussion of Sathya Sai Baba's teachings in a most practical way so that they may be implemented in our daily lives.

The Seva Wing

3 *Narayana* sevas are held each month and a fourth, a Cow Seva, is held on special occasions. On the first Friday and Saturday of each month,



Mahila Study Circle



dry food packages are delivered in Tsuen Wan and in Yuen Long, and on the third Sunday of each month dry food packages are delivered to street sleepers in the Jordan and Yau Ma Tei areas.

Sai Spiritual Education (Bal Vikas)

Due to the dedication of the 2 teachers, there are two classes, a Junior and Senior class. Totally there are 17 students. The children have *bhajans* monthly and on 6 May 2017 they celebrated Easwaramma Day.

Ladies' Section (Mahila Wing)

The ladies meet fortnightly on Thursdays for a study circle. The class is well attended and generates much interest and enthusiasm for Sathya Sai Baba's teachings as a means to personal transformation.

Additionally, the ladies have a monthly service activity to distribute basic necessities to 14 under-privileged households consisting of 36 family members.

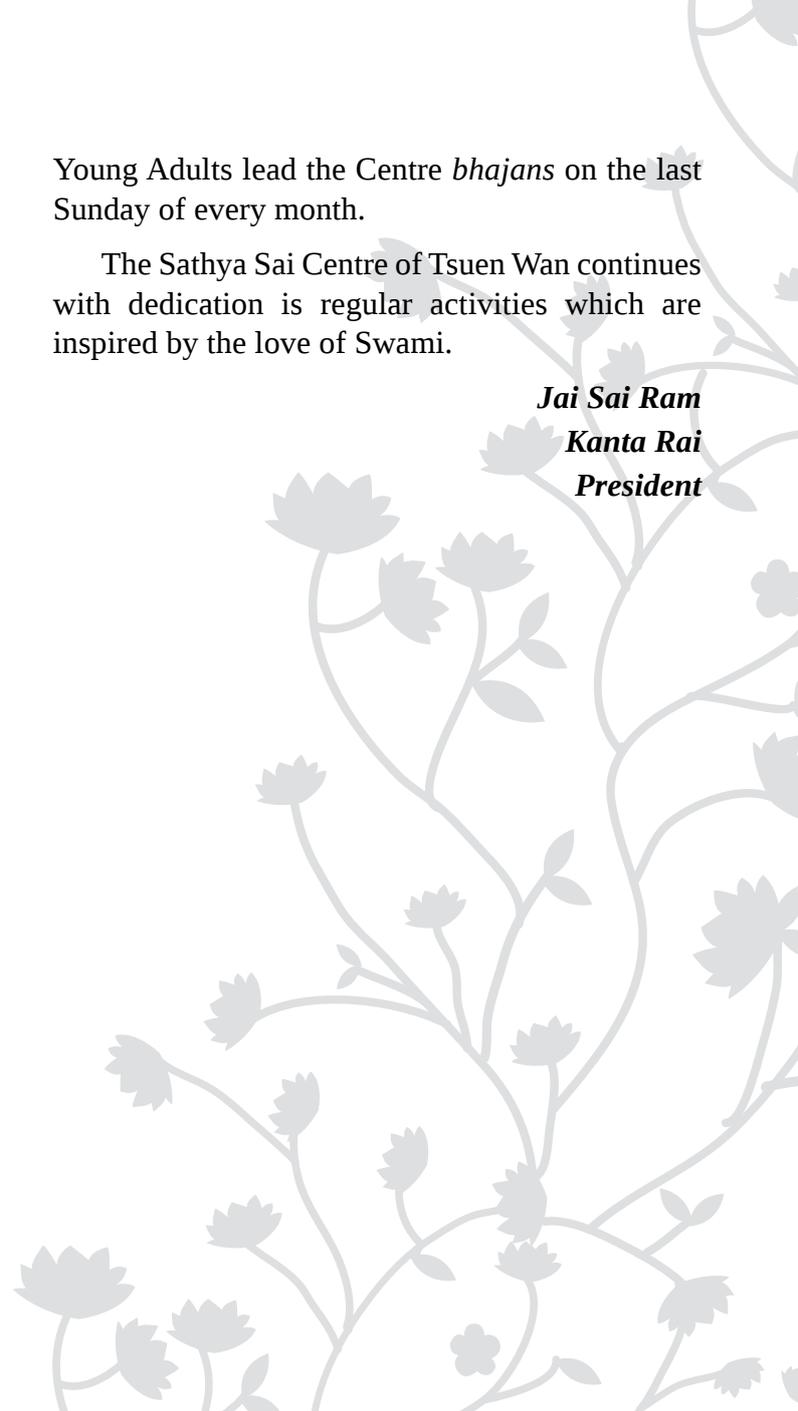
Young Adults

Although there are only 9 members, they participate monthly in a *seva* in the notorious 'Cage Homes' to distribute basic daily necessities to these under-privileged people who are forced to live in deplorable conditions. Additionally, the

Young Adults lead the Centre *bhajans* on the last Sunday of every month.

The Sathya Sai Centre of Tsuen Wan continues with dedication its regular activities which are inspired by the love of Swami.

Jai Sai Ram
Kanta Rai
President



SSEHV CHINA REPORT

This year SSEHV in China has been expanded to the Geng Ma District in Yunnan Province, bringing it to a total of seven districts in five provinces. This interestingly forms the shape of a belt across south-west China, our SSEHV version of “One Belt One Road!

As SSEHV expands, our focus has shifted more towards training the trainers. The ISSEHK is working intensively with post-graduate Education students from our partner universities to prepare them to lead and support teachers in schools. Below are some comments from some of these students, that indicate the depth of their commitment to and understanding of SSEHV:

“Of course love is the most important, then you can understand others and think in their way – but maybe love is a word too big. Everybody says I love you, I love this, I love that, but we need to ask others how can we love others. Also, what are the sub-values of love. It’s easy for us to love the person who is similar to us – for example, we say we love our children even if they are not behaving well – but we have to learn to love those who it’s a little hard for us to love.”

“I have had a very, very obvious change. Three years ago I think I was not very tolerant of others so when people around me were not very perfect I would not love them, I would always see their shortcomings. I did not very clearly understand peace. Now I think peace is my heart’s peace, not the outward peace. Now I want to be a better person. I know I need to change myself – only change myself, then the world will be more beautiful. So my soul has changed, really my soul has changed. When I touched EHV three years ago I didn’t think it was a good thing because I did not really understand it, but now I think it is very, very good. I try my best to practise EHV and I also

bring EHV to my family and my classmates, friends.”

“Because of love one will be powerful. I was touched by the love of EHV members; it’s about heart. In the conference I was just touched and I think the feeling is very important, and the atmosphere too. Because the members of EHV believed in me and showed their love to me and told me I can do it too, so I believed in myself. Life is very chaotic and sometimes I forget to smile. The conference made me feel that I can be calm and I should love myself and love my life, and I am trying to do it.”

The teachers in our project schools have continued to grow and develop in their understanding of SSEHV and we have seen some exciting evidence of their own transformation, as they use the strategies to reduce their own personal and professional problems, as well as evidence of the transformation in their students.

We found that the SSEHV affects the teachers lives in two ways. First, their practices changed the children, which made it easier for the teachers to cope. Second, the teachers changed so they were not as affected by the challenges that they could not change.

Below are some examples of the teachers’ comments:

- Exhaustion and coping with excessive workload
“Every day, early in the morning, I close my eyes and breathe deeply three times and fully concentrate on the day’s work ...Then the day’s work goes smoothly – everything is under control and I feel full of joy.”
- Developing Love
“Later I imagine my students thinking in the classroom and I focus on each student’s

face, imagining each of them as a beautiful flower or something else beautiful. Then I have a sense of love from my heart. I feel full of strength and energy all over.”

- Burnout feeling and doubting sense of mission as a teacher

“Though I had thought myself to be a teacher, only pursuing academic scores was really superficial. I have learned the ‘human’ side of the work, to ‘take love as the starting point’, even if the student’s outcomes are not so good. I try as much as possible not to look at the superficial things but to discover the students’ true intrinsic selves. I feel my teacher’s sense of mission more strongly, love the students more deeply, am more harmonious in my relationships with the students and more creative in my methods of work.”

- Health

“Before, it took too much time to deal with problems – now I feel I am more

tolerant, emotionally better, and more communicative with children. Positive changes in the children have made me happier and this has had positive effects on my health.”

We conducted an anonymous survey to find out the experienced teachers’ true beliefs about SSEHV and their confidence to teach it. The teachers believed strongly in the importance of the values and in their responsibility to teach them, that it is equally as important as literacy and numeracy.

They felt confident in their ability to influence their students’ values, particularly to encourage them to use their own inner strength to help themselves and others, to respect other people’s ways of doing things and to understand “strength in unity”.

Jai Sai Ram

Dr. Margaret Taplin

Senior Education Officer

ISSEHK

“The teacher is the most important asset of the school. Brick and mortar do not make a school efficient and useful. Nor are books in the library or appliances in the laboratory, so essential. The teacher makes the school or mars it. He is all the books you need; he is the most desirable appliance. He shapes the manners, behaviour, attitudes and even prejudices of the pupils under his care. So he has a big responsibility.”

- Sathya Sai Baba, 26 September 2000



Sathya Sai International Organisation, Hong Kong

Tel: 2367 4240 / Email: saiorghk@netvigator.com

For General Information, contact: Verkha Mahtani at 9377-7671

or visit our website: www.saibaba.org.hk

WEEKLY BHAJANS

Every Thursday : 6:25pm - 7:50pm

Every Sunday : 6:25pm - 7:50pm

SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES

Suprabhatam - every Thursday 7:30am - 8:00am / Sharda Chettri 9409 3006	Bhajans in Ap Lei Chau - every Thursday 5:30pm - 6:30pm / Manju Aravind 9813 8903
Study Circle - 1st & 3rd Monday of every month 7:15pm - 8:30pm / Arul Shanty 2633 6850	Bhajans in Mid-levels - fortnightly on Fridays 5:30pm - 7:00pm / Poonam Mahtani 2540 2292
Bhajans & Study Circle in Mid-levels - every Monday 4:00pm - 5:15pm / Rakhee Nandwani 2530 4444	Bhajans in Tai Koo Shing - once a month, Saturday 7:00pm - 8:00pm / Gope Daswani 9634 9239

SEVA ACTIVITIES

Narayana Seva, Cage Home last Sunday of every month 10:30am / Isabella Chu 9411 5454	Street Sleepers Narayana Seva on HK Island • second Wednesday of every month Haresh Wadhvani 9021 4467 • last Friday of every month Ashok Kirpalani 9779 5209
Visits to Home for Mentally Challenged Once a month, Saturday 1:30pm • Anju Nandwani 9230 7751 • Babita Mahtani 9465 5933	Street Sleepers Narayana Seva on Kowloon • second Friday of every month Cooking - Anmol Nainani 9500 9090 Distribution - Anand Nandwani 9354 5198 • last Wednesday of every month Haresh Wadhvani 9021 4467
Narayana Seva, Rice Distribution Dongguan (China) - every 2 months, Sunday Tobi Chu 6408 7648	Street Sleepers Breakfast Narayana Seva • HK Island - second Sunday of every month Ashok Kirpalani 9779 5209 • Kowloon Side - second Sunday of every month Priya (Vimal) Mohinani 9485 4065 • Kowloon Side - last Sunday of every month Sonia Balani 9039 2751
Street Sleepers Narayana Seva, Tsuen Wan Centre Third Sunday of every month Sanu Gurung 9549 6599	

WINGS

REGULAR CLASSES

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

EDUCATION

Kowloon (TST) every Wednesday, Saturday	Guru's Study Circle - every Tuesday 6:15pm - 7:30pm
Hong Kong • Mid-levels - every Monday & Friday • Aberdeen - every Monday, Wednesday, Saturday	
Tsuen Wan Centre - every Sunday Laxmi Gurung 6346 9494	
New admissions - please email to balvikasadmissions@gmail.com	

MAHILA VIBHAG

Senior Mahila - every Tuesday 11:30am - 12:45pm / Nisha Sakhrani 6338 2706	Community Seva • in Tai Kok Tsui Meghna Chotrani 9371 9294 • in Mong Kok Asha Mahtani 9056 1021
Junior Mahila / Anushka Nainani 9040 9090 • every Wednesday 6:45pm - 8:00pm • every Friday 10:45am - 12:00pm	Ladies' Day Celebration - 19th of every Month Knitting Seva - Anju Daswani 9750 9315

YOUNG ADULTS

Young Adults Study Circle - every Friday 7:15pm - 8:30pm / Sai Ameet Peswani 9103 4316	Visits to Home for Mentally Challenged every 2 months 1:30pm - 4:30pm Babita Mahtani 9465 5933
---	--

For information of the Devotional, Educational & Seva activities of the Tsuen Wan Centre please contact
Bijay Sharma at 6058 6578



The Code Of Conduct

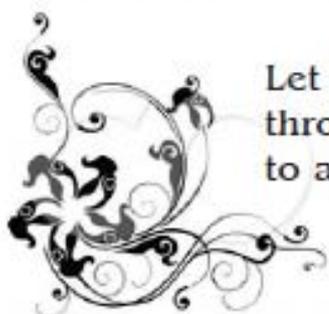
As Laid Down By The Charter Of Sri Sathya Sai World Organisation



That in order to remember continuously Bhagawan's teachings and in order to put them into practice and to be a worthy instrument of our Divine Master, every member must undergo SADHANA, a spiritual discipline which should be merged with day-to-day life so as to make SADHANA (spiritual exercises) a part of his or her worldly life, and every member shall make his or her "Family as a Unit" for such SADHANA (spiritual exercise).

Thust with a view to qualify to be a true member of the Organisation, the following guidelines shall be followed.

- Daily meditation and prayer.
- Devotional group singing/prayer with members of family once a week.
- Participation in educational programmes (Bal Vikas) organised by the Centre for children of Sai devotees.
- Participation in community work and other programmes of the Organisation.
- Attendance at least once a month in group devotional singing organised by the Centre.
- Regular study of Sai literature.
- Speak softly and lovingly to everyone
- Not to indulge in talking ill of others especially in their absence.
- Put into practice 'Ceiling on Desires' and to utilise savings generated for service of mankind.



Let us strive to be Bhagawan's worthy followers through spiritual discipline, and earn His Grace to attain perfection and enlightenment.

Om Sai Ram



"Let the different faiths exist, let them flourish, let the glory of God be sung in all the languages, in a variety of tunes that should be the ideal. Respect the differences between the faiths and recognise them as valid as far as they do not extinguish the flame of Unity."

-Sri Sathya Sai Baba



"Listen to the primeval Pranava resounding in your hearts as well as in the heart of the Universe."



"Remember the Wheel of Cause and Consequence, of Deed and Destiny and the Wheel of Dharma that rights them all."



"Offer all bitterness in the sacred Fire and emerge grand, great and godly."



"Be like the Star which never wavers from the Crescent but is fixed in steady faith."



"Cut the 'I' feeling clean across and let your ego die on the Cross, to endow on you Eternity."



Published by : **Sathya Sai International Organisation, Hong Kong**
Burlington House, Block A-1, 10th Floor
92-94 Nathan Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong
Mail : T. S. T. P.O. Box 95017, Kowloon, Hong Kong
Telephone : 2367 4240 (During Bhajan Hours)
Email Address : saiorghk@netvigator.com
Web Site : www.sajibaba.org.hk