



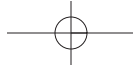
**Canadian**  
**Sathya Sai Newsletter**  
SPRING 2009

*Samasta Loka  
Sukhino Bhavantu*



**MAHA SIVARATHRI ISSUE**





**Sri Sathya Sai Baba  
Organization  
of Canada**  
www.sathyasai.ca

**Central Coordinator**  
Dr. V. P. Singh

*The Sri Sathya Sai Baba  
Organization of Canada is part  
of a worldwide spiritual  
movement to awaken in all  
people the awareness of their  
inherent divinity and to  
encourage the practice of the  
universal principles of Truth,  
Right Action, Peace, Love and  
Non-violence through personal  
example and selfless service.*

**Canadian Sathya  
Sai Newsletter**  
30930 Polar Avenue  
Abbotsford, BC V4X 1Y8

**Editor & Publisher**  
Dr. S. V. Evani  
<sairam@shaw.ca>  
FAX: (604) 853-9114

**Graphic Design**  
Julia Charles Hall  
<saijhall108@gmail.com>

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# Maha Sivarathri

## Feb. 23, 2009

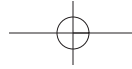
Sivarathri has a variety of meanings. "Rathri" implies the darkness of night. But "Sivarathri" connotes not darkness but the special sacredness of this night. There is darkness in this night also, but this darkness is invested with auspiciousness. The reason is that on this 14th day after the Full Moon (Chaturdasi), the moon, who is the presiding deity for the mind, has shed fifteen of his sixteen digits. This is an auspicious time for having proximity to God. This is the primary message of Sivarathri.

I am giving you three maxims that you have to bear in mind: Service! Service! Service! Never forget the duty to serve. For this, you have to develop Love. To develop Love, you have to promote the spirit of sacrifice. Service will become meaningful when it manifests the Love that issues from sacrifice. Be good! Do good!

-BABA

Sivarathri discourse 1998





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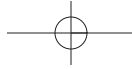
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# PRANAVA



The essence of the *Sama Veda* is the *Pranava* (*Om*). *Pranava* is the very life-breath. *Omkaaram Sarva Vedaanaam*---the scriptures have also declared that *Omkaara* (the sacred syllable *Om*) is the supreme *mantra* in the *Vedas*. From this it will be realised how supremely important the *Omkaara* is in the eyes of the sages. The single syllable "Om" is pre-eminent among the letters of the alphabet. It symbolises the *Paramatma* (Supreme Omni-Self).

### ***Pranava* is present in every living being**

The *pranava mantra* ranks, higher than all this music. It is all-pervasive and ever-present. There cannot be a single moment when we are not listening to this *pranava*. Nor can we dispense with it even for a second. The *Pranava* is present in every living being. The *Pranava* is the primordial sound on which all sounds are based.

The Gita has declared *Om* as the monosyllable representing *Brahman*. Even as *Om* is all-pervasive, the *Brahman* is also all-pervasive. The *Vedic* dictum, *Ayam Atma Brahma* (*This Atma is Brahman*) points out that *Atma* and *Brahman* are one and the same. Hence *Om*, *Brahman* and *Atma* signify the same entity.

### **The effulgence and the effulgent in dream state**

Every human being experiences four states of consciousness in daily life; *Jagrata* (the waking state), *Swapna* (dream state), *Sushupti* (deep sleep) and *Turiya* (the highest state of consciousness). The waking state is the state in which one sees and experiences the phenomenal world through the five life-breaths, the senses, the mind, the intellect and the ego. There are also

the five sheaths for the body. All these together account for the experience of the phenomenal world in the waking state. Without the *Atma*, the waking state or experience of the phenomenal world cannot exist. Hence the *Atma* in this state is known as *Viswa*. Krishna is stated to have revealed to Arjuna His *Viswaroopa* (cosmic form). This really means that Krishna showed to Arjuna that the Divine is present everywhere in all things at all times. The entire cosmos is a projection of the Divine.

The *Atma* that appears in the waking state as the phenomenal cosmos in its gross form, appears in the dream state in its *sookshma* (*subtle*) form. The objects and forms that are experienced in the dream state have a reality only in that state. They have no existence in other states. All the joys and sorrows experienced in the dream state are unique self-created experiences of the *Atma*. If ten persons are sleeping in one room, their dream experiences are unique to each person and have nothing in common. This means that each person creates his own dream state and experiences his dreams. There is a light that shines in a dream state. This is known as *Tejas*.

The *Atma* as the experiencer in this state is known as *Taijasa* (the effulgent). Apart from dreams, the presence of *Taijasa* can be demonstrated by a simple example. When we close our eyes, we say it is dark and we cannot see anything. Who is it that is able to experience this darkness? There is some entity that experiences darkness when the eyes are closed and describes it as dark and black. That entity is described as *Taijasa* because it is present as an inner light during

Contd..on page 9





## “How Swami U-Turned My Life”

My tryst with divinity began when I was a 12 year old boy, studying in a public school in Pasadena, California. My mother, giving in to the counsel and pressure from her friends, decided to switch me over to a Church school. Three weeks into this school, and I encountered something which sowed the seeds for a transformation that was to last a lifetime. For, at the Church School, our teachers told us, “You know, there is one thing we must tell you. That is, God would not like it if you went to another Church. If you do so, you will be doomed to perdition.” I did not feel too comfortable with that. Instead, three questions raised themselves to my mind.

**~If there is a God, shouldn't He be there for everybody?**

**~If He has manifested as Jesus Christ, does that mean that He has not manifested earlier, or will not manifest hereafter?**

**~Shouldn't there be more to this universe than what I can think of?**

This thought stirred the depths of my consciousness every time I looked up at the night sky even as a young boy and saw all the beautiful stars twinkling and shimmering in the empyrean. I stopped going to the Church school. But then,

unknown to myself, the Journey had begun.

It was essential that I first lose my way in the labyrinths of worldly happiness, for only then it would strengthen the urge for spiritual bliss and peace. Thus, I took the path of the temporal and the mundane, because my path, being born in America, was to seek happiness in a materialistic way. So I went, full barge as one would say, and finished school, and later went on to become a flourishing business man. Then I got married and even had wonderful children. I had everything that was supposed to make one happy; I could not ask for more. But, at the age 45, I was so unhappy that I didn't want to be around any more. The feeling was, in fact, deeper than that. I just thought life was useless, but nobody could feel or know how I felt inside. I was trying to find happiness in the pursuit of the great American dream. But I could feel that in spite of having everything, I had nothing.

### **‘Sai Yoga’ Through Hatha Yoga**

It was around this time that Bhagavan decided to draw me to Himself. And this happened in early seventies through my wife who had developed an



interest in Hatha Yoga. Keen in her intent of pursuing this ancient form of Yoga, she got in touch with Indra Devi, the leading Yoga practitioner in the West, who was also an ardent follower of Sathya Sai Baba. My wife went twice to Tecate, to supposedly learn Hatha Yoga but when she was there with Indra Devi, they spent so much time talking about Baba. When my wife returned to California, she told me that she had learned about Sathya Sai Baba and would like to go to India sometime. Reluctant and unconvinced, I dropped it at that. But my wife wanted to go the following year, and she did.

Then, towards the end of the year 1973, about December, my wife made a statement which was so unlike her. She said, "I am going to go to India, whether you come or not." I did not say no to Sathya Sai Baba, because, fortunately, we had an open upbringing. We were brought up that way. So, I said, "Well, I guess I am going."

### **He Appeared, Not in Dream, But in Person**

Here, I should mention something very significant which happened in this month of December. Actually, during this period I was deeply depressed and one

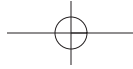
night Sathya Sai Baba appeared to me not in a dream, but in person. I woke up in the middle of the night on December 9, and there was Baba standing at the end of our bed! He was clothed in a white robe and with a raised hand as if blessing and comforting me. He said, "Don't worry, everything will be alright."

And the unique thing about this experience is that Swami spoke to me in the voice of my physical father who had actually passed away the year before! In fact, I remember, saying to Him, "How are you, father?" And Swami again answered in my father's voice. He sweetly said, "I am fine, but working very hard." It wasn't until several years later that I found out that Shirdi Baba often talked to newcomers in a voice they



are familiar with so that they feel comfortable.

It did not stop at that, on that momentous night. Baba, next, took me out of my body and I remember looking down on the bed where my wife and I were actually sleeping. It was such a unique experience. He then put me back into my body and told again, "Don't worry, every thing will be alright." After this, Swami left. But again, it wasn't until



a year later that I completely understood the message that Swami wanted to give me that night. It was very clearly this: "I wasn't the body".

So, filled with such experiences, we came in February 1974 to Bangalore, India. And as per our plan, I was to escort my wife to Puttaparthi, ensure that she was safe, and then I was to go back to Bangalore, and from there, start touring. I was still, not so convinced about His divinity. But way back in 1974, having come to Puttaparthi, it wasn't easy to turn around. We reached Puttaparthi into the evening and it was impossible to go back. So I decided to stay on for the night and return the next morning to Bangalore. In fact, I hadn't checked out of the hotel even, since I knew I was going back.

The next morning, Swami was very kind to call our group in the Mandir. It was not an official interview, but a sort of a small discourse. Professor Kasturi was there who translated His words for us. And then, something very beautiful transpired. It was actually quite extraordinary for me then. For, as I was to learn later on, Bhagavan talks to each one of us - heart to heart. And one is sure of a message from Him, whether it is in a discourse, or whether one is in darshan. Directly or otherwise, Swami has a message for each of us, if we are alert to it. Sometimes we get it, sometimes we don't.

But in my case, it was direct.

For, here was Swami giving us a sweet talk. But suddenly I could feel Swami answering the three questions that I had asked of an unseen Creator when I was a twelve-year old. I could hear His message distinctly, addressed straight to my heart, though not verbally, and felt their import and impact.

**~Yes, there is a God and He is here for everyone.~He has come before Jesus, and He is here now and He will come even after.~No doubt, there is much more to this universe than what man thinks there is.**

After the discourse and that wonderful get-together, I walked out of the Mandir, found my wife and said to her, "He is God. We are staying." And I sent somebody, who was going to Bangalore, to check out of my hotel and send my luggage to Puttaparthi.

#### **Instantaneous Realisation**

Then came the dramatic twist to my tale. My wife, who was very enchanted by Sathya Sai Baba, and wanted to come and see Him in the first place, was dumbfounded. For I, the non-seeker, had realized Baba's divinity instantly. Whereas, it took her three years to accept the fact that Sathya Sai Baba was God Incarnate and the Avatar of the Avatars. That's interesting. I got it like that! She took a little bit longer. But acceptance or not, Bhagavan ensured that He made us feel





comfortable all the time when we were with Him. Let me share one instance. We were fortunate to have a private interview with Swami. On that occasion, He told us things that we didn't know. He revealed to us about our past and present. It was surprising He knew events about our lives that nobody would know. But what struck me the most, more than His overwhelming omniscience, was this: He had such a beautiful way of personalizing any moment that you are with Him, by making you think, 'Here is God of the Universe, and I am the only thing existing at this moment'. That is the divine love that He is able to pour out. You cannot explain it. But it's there.

Baba came to be a major turning point in my life. For, when I returned to the USA, I was absolutely sure that my life was to take a total U-turn from thenceforth. During that one interview which we had with Baba, Swami had said to me, "You are very unhappy." I must say that I added to myself, "Even though He is God, He doesn't know how unhappy I am right now, which I know now He did."

Then Bhagavan in His infinite mercy reassured me, saying, "Do not worry. Things will change... You are unhappy with your work. Don't worry. That will change." So I came back, invigorated by hope and suffused with optimism, thinking, "Oh, wow, work is going to change. A new job on my way! How exciting!" Soon I was to discover that it is

not my work which was going to change; it was I who was about to change. And that was the beginning of my transformation.

### **Swami Sows the Seeds of Change**

The seeds of change had already been sown by a discourse that Bhagavan Baba gave in 1968. That particular message to me is still one of those which is most important; I replay it even today. In that discourse, Bhagavan clearly stated the reason behind His Divine Descent. He said that this time He had come to protect the righteous.

However, since everybody was tainted with sin at this particular time, He had come to 'Transform'. To me, that really hit home. I tried to dive deep into that, and listen intently to the Voice of Bhagavan to put into practice any particular idea that He might point at me in my path of transformation.

Guiding me also on my individual path of transformation was Swami's message to me, which He pointed out in that interview. Swami told us - "**Duty without love is deplorable. Duty with love is desirable. Love without duty is Divine.**"

And that is where I started my journey from. For, though I always did my duty with a sense of moral righteousness, I could not say that it stemmed so much from Love. Thus, Swami decided to set to me on to this path of 'Love without Duty'.

It has been 34 years now, since I







first met Swami. And I am now beginning to get His message. I would not say that I practice 'Love without duty' in the truest spirit, but I've been fortunate enough to get parts of that, and it is really beautiful.

Swami's message is Love. "Love is God. Live in Love. And do everything with Love". That is where Swami has been dragging me along - to really dive in and get that message. More importantly, practising this Love was very important to my personal and spiritual growth, because at that time, my heart was very dry and I didn't know it. I thought I was being nice but the fact was that I felt completely devoid of Love from within.

With Swami, it is not U-turns, it is L-Turns - Transforming through Love! Talking of Love takes me back to that 1968 discourse wherein Swami said that He would be known all over the world by how we devotees conduct ourselves and put into practice His teachings. And that discourse has always been my touchstone in these

34 years whenever I keep getting off-base from Swami's teachings.

Because whatever we do in a moment of true Love or sharing, catches the attention of people. And I have encountered this even in far-away America, with people wondering as to who is this guy who goes to India so often.

The point is I realized that as I began to practice what this Beautiful Avatar is trying to teach, I began to see a nice relationship. I observed a change was occurring. It was not that the people were changing; in fact, whether they changed or not became irrelevant to me. What was important was that I was changing.

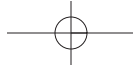
And what really mattered was how I interacted with them.

~Robert A. Bozzani  
USA

SATHYA SAI BABA  
LIFE, LOVE & SPIRITUALITY  
December 5, 2008

*"Yes, there is a God and He is here for everyone. He has come before Jesus, and He is here now and He will come even after. No doubt, there is much more to this universe than what man thinks there is."*





*Contd..from page 3*

the dream state. In the third state of *Sushupti*, the experience of the waking and the dream states are absent. It is the state of deep sleep. All the senses are merged in the mind and nothing can be seen or imagined. In this state *Prajna* (integrated awareness) alone exists. It is because of *Prajna* that one is aware of this state. All the sense organs are totally inactive. Only the breathing process remains. It is because of *Prajna* that one is aware of continuity of Being in deep sleep state and experiences a feeling of bliss. With all the senses stilled, the Self alone is conscious in the form of *Prajna* manifested in respiration. Hence the *Vedas* have declared: "*Prajnaanam Brahma*" (Constant Integrated Awareness is *Brahman*). *Prajna* is the state of unchanging and permanent bliss that exists equally in the waking state as the body, and in the deep sleep state. It is for this reason that it is characterised as Constant Integrated Awareness.

How do we cognise the *Pranava* and hear it? it is not perceivable. It is like something to be absorbed. All that is seen in the visible universe, all that is heard in the realm of sound, all the multifarious experiences of the heart, all of them are subsumed by the *Pranava*. Even in the state of deep sleep, the process of breathing in and breathing out goes on ceaselessly. That which sustains the breathing process is *Omkaara*, which thus proclaims its identity with the *Brahman* and the *Atma*. The fourth state is *Turiya*. This is a state of complete ineffable Bliss in which the Universal Consciousness alone is experienced. It is beyond description.

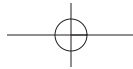
#### ***Omkaara is viewed as the four-faced Brahma***

Like the four states of consciousness, the *Omkaara* has also four constituents. These are: *Akaara*, *Ukaara*, *Ma-kaara* and *Adhiratha* (the hum-

ming sound--mm...). *A-kaara* is the first and foremost sound of *Omkaara*. It is the first letter of the alphabet. In the waking state, it is regarded as a manifestation of the *Viraatpurusha* and is personified as *Viswa*, the ruling power and sustainer of the phenomenal world. *U* is the syllable representing the dream state. It is the second sound of *Omkaara*. It has the form of *Tejas* or effulgence. It illumines everything and dispels every kind of darkness. The third sound is *Ma*. It represents the state of *Prajna* (Integrated Consciousness). It reveals the inner meaning of everything. It is also known as the unifying entity, *Antaryami* (the Inner Controller). After the "A", "U" and "Ma" are combined, the fourth sound emerges. That is the sound that is heard in *Turiya* state. It is the vibration "mm ....", known as *Adhiratha*. Because *Omkaara* has four sounds, it is viewed as the four-faced *Brahma*. It is also described as *Sabda-Brahmam*, the *Brahman* in the form of cosmic sound. The *Sabda-Brahmam* pervades everywhere and is first among eight cosmic powers attributed to the Divine.

It is only when the unique spiritual significance of "*Omkaara*" is understood and experienced and when it is realised that all that one sees or hears emanates from the *Pranava*. The first requisite is to acquire the faith that the Lord, who is manifest in Cosmic Sound, is present within as *Pranavakaara*. For nourishing this faith, it is necessary to abjure impurity in speech.

*Embodiments of Divine Love!* Realise the omnipresence of the Divine in the form of *Omkaara*. Practise *Omkaara Upasana* ( meditation on OM ) with the consciousness that the Divine is omnipresent and achieve merger in the Divine as the goal of human birth.



## Resolving Doubts

Sathya Sai Baba has repeatedly asked us not to indulge in or listen to rumours, and yet it is sometimes difficult to avoid doing so. The secret obviously is to take no notice of the content however 'believable' the rumour may seem, until proved correct. Normally I adhere to this principle as much as is humanly possible, but I actually weakened momentarily when someone happened to mention that they had heard from a 'most reliable source' that the medical treatment in the Super Speciality Hospital was, in fact, not up to scratch.

I later discovered that this information came from a magazine noted for its negative stance. However at the time I was susceptible enough to accept that this was a possibility, due to my own incredulous state. I had visited Prasanthi Nilayam many times since 1986, and had been over to the Super Speciality Hospital in 1991.

Overawed at its beautiful atmosphere then; I wondered whether the medical treatment would after nine long years, still match the pristine grandeur of the Hospital.

In July this year, my wife and I were in Prasanthi Nilayam for one month and the thoughts of the Hospital were nagging at me from time to time. A few days before we were due to leave I felt a sudden desire to find out the facts for myself and contacted Dr. Safaya, the director of the S.S. Hospital and made an appointment to see him: this turned out to be the day before we were leaving.

Dr. Safaya asked me what it was I wanted exactly. I explained that there was talk in the western media that the conditions in the S.S. Hospital were substandard;

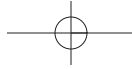
and I should like to see for myself if it was true.

Dr. Safaya called in his Head of Security, a Dr. Barkuni, who has a practice in Delhi and like many in the Sai Organisation gives his time freely for several weeks every year, and directed him to take me wherever I wished to go in the Hospital and to answer any questions I may ask. And so commenced what I can only describe as a V.I.P. tour which could only have been bettered by a visit from Swami Himself. I spent the whole day at the hospital going into general wards, intensive care wards, the kitchen and maintenance areas.

I was capped and gowned and permitted by the operating surgeons to enter operating theatres where I witnessed two open-heart operations (without heart-lung machines) at close range. I was even able to converse with the surgeons who explained the symptoms and the techniques. I also watched a mitral valve replacement operation done with breathtaking precision. I saw a cataract operation whilst almost breathing down the shoulder of the operating surgeon, who, even to my untrained eye, was obviously highly skilled despite his apparent youth. Incidentally, there are an average of 12 cataract operations a day carried out in this theatre plus an average of eight laser treatments in the Department of Ophthalmology itself.

In the Department of Cardiology an average of over a thousand heart surgeries are carried out each year. This includes bypass, valve replacement and as well as pacemaker implantations. Over 1900 patients are admitted into this department each year.





Like all major hospitals through out the world, the S.S. Hospital caters for every medical need. It incredibly has the lowest mortality and infection rate of any hospital in the world; in fact, an area such as Puttaparthi where dust and germs seem to find such an easy footing, infection in the Hospital is almost unheard of. The Hospital gleams with cleanliness and there is a wonderful air of calmness and efficiency, which is quite inspiring. The intensive care wards (like the operating theatres) are all air-conditioned, and have the latest electronic equipment installed from bedsides to central control. The wards are well staffed by competent nurses and there is a doctor on call at all times.

I was introduced to the Heads of all Departments, including: Dr. Sunil in charge of the Anesthesia Section; Dr. Sara Pavan, an anesthetist, who spends his time between the General Hospital and the S. S. Hospital; Dr. K. Prasad of the Catheter Laboratory section and Dr. K. Bhat who although officially retired, still gives all of his time giving lectures and advice whenever needed, and his wife, the senior microbiologist at S. S. H They were all happy and enthusiastic about their work and their dedication was obvious when speaking to them.

It was all the more refreshing to me as I had gone to the Hospital with mixed emotions, and, to be honest, was somewhat apprehensive that there might be some truth in what I had heard. Not so. I was, if anything, even more impressed than I had been nine years before.

I moved on to the Department of Engineering and Maintenance and was introduced to its Head Mr. K. Viswanathan, who is an electronics engineer and is responsible for maintaining all the electronic equipment throughout the Hospital. He explained some of the ancillary equipment needed for the smooth running of the Hospital including enormous generators-such as the latest Swiss 180KVA model, so efficient that should the

main power suddenly drop out at any moment, it will immediately ensure an uninterrupted continuation of power, especially vital when operations are in progress. In addition there are 2 - 260KV and 1 - 100KV and 1 - 500KV generators for different areas in the Hospital in case of power failures.

Although the General Hospital at Puttaparthi screens all patients before they are sent on to the S. S. H., a typical day sees an average of 150 of the more serious cases being treated at the S. S. H. In addition there is a demineralisation plant, which supplies absolutely pure water to the operating theatres. An incinerator which takes solid waste to convert it into gaseous products and pass into another chamber where the temperature is over 10,000 C rendering it safe to be passed into the atmosphere. There is a needle separator and disposal unit: in fact every piece of equipment needed to ensure that this 'quite isolated' Hospital has every thing needed to be totally self-sufficient. There appeared to be no shortage of any medical equipment in the theatres or wards.

The prevailing ambience wherever I went in the hospital was one of tranquility and love. It is no wonder that patients heal so quickly in this vibration. Swami has often said that more love at the bedside results in faster recovery. It is certainly true in this Hospital where love is shown through efficient care and encouraging words, everywhere.

In conclusion, I can only say how grateful I am to have been given this wonderful opportunity to experience this most remarkable Hospital and at the same time to dispel any doubt I might have had.

~Raymond Lindsay

Sathya Sai Baba, Life, love and spirituality

July 19, 2008



## Power of Lord's Name

All Religions have laid stress on purity of heart. They have also declared that without a pure heart all spiritual exercises are valueless. How can purity of heart be realised if the mind is filled with egoism? The body can be cleaned by water. But the heart can be cleaned only by chanting the Lord's name.

Prahlada, who was the son of an Asura, Jatayu, a bird, and an animal like Gajendra, the Lord of the Elephants, redeemed themselves by relying on the Lord's name. As long as one is filled with ego and relies on his own strength, the benefit of the Lord's grace will not come to him. It is only when Gajendra declared that he knew no one other than God who could save him here or in the hereafter that the Lord rushed to his rescue. When Draupadi was being humiliated by the Kauravas, who went to her rescue? All the prowess of her husbands could not protect her. She prayed to Krishna as her sole protector, as no relations or others could come to her aid. Men may help to relieve ordinary difficulties in life. But in times of grave crisis only Madhava (God) can save man. Believing in this, Draupadi prayed to Krishna for succour. The faith in the Lord's name saved her.

Tulsidas hailed Rama as the protector of the universe and declared that the very name Ra-aa-ma represented the three powerful deities, Agni, Surya and Chandra (the Fire-God, the Sun-God and the Moon-God). Valmiki, who was a hunter in his early life, became a sage and the author of the immortal

Ramayana by meditating on the name Rama, taught to him by the Seven Sages. Association with the saintly persons and the chanting of Rama's name made him the Adikavi (the first poet). The Lord's name is like a boat for a man crossing the ocean of life. It is supremely important in the Kali Age. It has been declared that there is nothing greater than the name of Hari in the Kali Age. By no other spiritual or religious practices can peace be attained in this age.



The Divine name can turn poison into nectar. It can revive a lifeless thing. It is surcharged with infinite power. Mira was so deeply immersed in chanting the name of Krishna that she was totally unmindful of where she was going and what others thought about her. Those who have firm faith in God should not bother

about what others thought or said about them. They should adhere to their practices regardless of what others felt.

This applies to students when they go to their homes for the holidays, when some persons might comment about their uttering prayers before they took their meals. They should have the courage to practise what they knew to be right. They must be afraid to commit sin, but have no fear at all in chanting the name of God. The Lord's name will protect them upto the end of their lives even when all others desert them. You must practise chanting God's name from now on because no one can say when the end will come.

(Discourse at Prasanthi Nilayam on June 22, 1989.)





## Swami, What is the importance and significance of Gayatri mantra?

**Bhagavan:** Everyone must chant the Gayatri. It transcends the barriers of caste, community, sex, nationality, time and space. It is the one mantra that all should repeatedly chant. There are three main things in the Gayatri mantra. First of all, you should know that Bhur Bhuvah Svah in the Gayatri are not separate worlds. You think, "Bhur Bhuvah Svah " are three different worlds. It is a mistake to think so. They are within you. 'Gayamulu ' means senses. Since Gayatri deals with sense control, it is called so. The body has senses of perception and action. This first

aspect of Gayatri is called materialisation or Gayatri. The body can function only when there is life in it. This second aspect of Gayatri, which is the life force, is called vibration or Savitri.

The third aspect of Gayatri is the primal sound Omkar, which springs upwards from the navel. Om is a combination of three sounds, 'A', 'U' and 'M'. 'A' is uttered as it starts from the navel. 'U' starts from the throat. 'M' comes out of the lips. 'Soham ' is chanted in our breathing process though we are unaware of it. This is called 'Japa Gayatri'.

As we breathe in, we make the sound 'so' and as we breathe out the sound 'ham' is made. The 'soham' mantra is repeated everyday 21,600 times in our respiratory process. In the mantra, 'soham', the second sound in 'so', i.e., 'o' and the second sound in 'ham', 'm' together constitute 'OM'. This 'soham' is repeatedly chanted in all the three states; waking, dream and deep sleep. The entire alphabet is formed

out of the mother of letters, the primal sound 'OM'.

To illustrate this, I give you a small example. In the English alphabet, we have 26 letters from A to Z. All words and sentences are spoken and written using these letters only, aren't they? You notice that the harmonium has reeds. As you press the bellows the air gets in and as you press the reeds, you get musical notes like sa re ga ma pa dha ni. By means of these seven sounds only, different tunes or ragas are composed. Are they not? You know the violin. It has strings on which you

can play any tune. So also, 'omkar' is the primal, primordial sound out of which the rest of the sounds originated.

When you close both your ears tight, you will listen to the Pranava, the 'Omkar'

within you. This third aspect of Gayatri that pertains to this omkar, the primordial sound, the speech faculty and the chief source is known as radiation or Saraswati.

Therefore, at the body level it is Gayatri, materialisation. As the life principle, it is Savitri, vibration, and finally as the chief source of sound, it is Saraswati, radiation. These are the three aspects of Gayatri mantra. In other words the atomic power, divine source, is radiation (Saraswati) that enters the body as vibration or life principle (Savitri), so that this body made of material becomes functional which is called materialisation (Gayatri).

(From Satyopanisad by Prof. Anilkumar Kamaraju)

**Aum Bhur Bhuva Svah  
Tat Savitur Varenyam  
Bhargo Devasya Dhimahi  
Dhiyo Yo Naha Prachodayat**



## Truly A Sai-Chiatric Shock



March 1995 happened to be the end of my 2nd year of service at the Super Specialty Hospital in Puttaparthi. Before we left for Australia on holiday, Swami called us for interviews twice. I had asked Swami in the 1st interview if He would give us one of His Robes for our Homebush Sai Centre, in Australia. Swami brought a Robe from the inner room and gave it to me saying, "This is for you." Four days later we had our second interview when He asked my wife, "Have I given you the Robe?" Even before she could say a word, Swami walked into the inner room and brought a Robe and gave it to her. Presuming that Swami may have intended this Robe for our Sai Centre, we gave it to the Centre, placing it on Swami's chair during the Centre bhajans.

Within a week of our arrival in Australia, I had a phone call from an old friend. He sounded desperate and told me that his son, David, had been admitted to the pediatric psychiatric wing at a major teaching hospital in Sydney. Since he had attempted suicide twice during this period the authorities had decided to transfer him to a high security juvenile psychiatric unit, spe-

cially built for such cases at another hospital. David was 16 and came from a loving and well-to-do upper middle class family. For some reason he developed resentment towards his parents and, unknown to his parents, he became extremely depressed. With a caring psychiatrist, counseling and medication, David had shown some improvement within a couple of weeks. When he was sent home one weekend, it proved disastrous when David attempted suicide by jumping through the 2nd floor window at his home on to the concrete driveway. Luckily he fell on the sunroof of his father's car and caused extensive damage to it. He was miraculously unscathed.

One day the boy stealthily tried to electrocute himself by poking something into a live power socket in the ward but the safety trip switch thwarted his attempt. The authorities decided to send him off to the High-Security Unit immediately. His father managed to persuade the hospital authorities to delay the transfer until I saw David.

I remembered to carry Swami's Robe with me. First I had to win the boy's confidence and told David that I had just returned from India. I gave him the Robe to hold and told him that Swami had given it to me only a few days back. David couldn't believe that such a precious gift could be in his hands and he held it dumbstruck for a moment. With my regular visits, David showed great improvement and the staff there encouraged my visits. The only furniture in his tiny room was his six-foot bed and we were seated on it next to each other.

When I saw my face in the mirror I had a flash of intuition that we should swap places. After swapping seats I asked him if he could see his face clearly in the mirror and he nodded his head. I told David softly, "I will sit in silence next to you and let us continue with



this precious moment of silence ('Sai-Lens'). Two minutes passed and suddenly David let out a scream and grabbed me tightly. He appeared to be terrified over something and his whole body was shaking. "What happened...what happened?" I asked, and he replied, "Those eyes...those eyes," gasping away. I queried, "What eyes?" and he said, "That face!" I quizzed him, "What face? What are you talking about? Tell me!" and he answered, "Those hairs!" Instantly I was able to piece together something astonishing happening and wondered if he had seen Sai Baba in the mirror.

Then I pulled out Sai Baba's photo from my wallet and asked, "Is it Him that you saw?" and he replied, "Yes!" He was still in utter turmoil and breathing heavily and I persisted. "Where were you then?" and he replied, "I disappeared and Sai Baba alone was there!" I was overjoyed and said, "How blessed you are! For over 15 years I have been visiting Baba every year and never had any vision of Him. You have had this amazing vision of your true self, which even evolved souls strive to experience. Can you realise the truth of yourself that you are Divine? You have seen Sai Baba in you with your own eyes without even going to India, haven't you?"

Sai Baba is revealing to you that He is the Christ and God within you and is going to heal you." David eagerly awaited my visit the following day and I gave him a copy of the book, "The Holy Man and the Psychiatrist", by Samuel Sandweiss. He looked bright, cheerful and excited and wanted to tell me about his overnight dream. In the dream he was alone and Baba suddenly appeared at the door, holding a gent's umbrella with a metal shank that had a pointed tip. David saw many cut bits and pieces of his body strewn all over the floor. Staring at David, Baba walked into the room and poked the sharp pointed end of the umbrella into a small piece of his body lying in one corner. Lifting it up and pointing it towards David, Swami said, "I am taking this piece away, you don't need it anymore!" and disappeared. The very same night David's mother too had her first dream of Baba. She and David were

together alone in a room with Baba. She showed her reverence by bending down and touching Swami's feet, padanamaskar, and David followed suit and the dream ended. The two separate dreams the mother and the son had that night, possibly at the same instant, was a sign of Swami's Grace and Divine intervention.

On my next visit, David and I discussed about his amazing dream as well as what he had seen in the mirror. When David saw Swami's face in the mirror, when his own face disappeared, did it mean he saw Sai Baba as a reflection of himself? "If your body was cut into several pieces you must have been dead. Then how could you have seen anything?" He replied, "I had no doubt that they were pieces of my own body." David was discharged from the High- Security Unit. His parents were happy to accede to David's wish and got him admitted to another school. He did well in the University entrance examination, completed a 4-year course at the University of Sydney with honours and even did a postgraduate degree.

He is now doing well in his career and the family is happy. This extraordinary story shows us that we are reflections of God, and He has revealed Himself to humanity in the form of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The dream David had, reveals the existence of a conscious 'subtle person' within each one of us, who can see, hear and interpret, even when the physical body is merely an instrument, a psychosomatic apparatus!

~Dr. Sara Pavan

*Dr. Sara Pavan is an Anaesthesiologist from Australia, who came to Baba in 1980 and has been residing in Prasanthi Nilayam since 1993, serving in the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences.*







## Contemplate on The Divine Name

Embodiments of Love! People should, of course, have some comforts for this physical body and fulfill some desires that are necessary for their daily life. But, unfortunately, these desires are reaching to a point of insatiability. You may live for a few years or a full hundred years in this physical world. One day or other, the body has to be cast off. Hence, do not cultivate unlimited desires.

We see three kinds of beings in the world: tame animals, wild beasts, and human beings. One has to analyse for oneself whether one belongs to the category of animals or beasts or human beings. If you think you are a human being, then you should cultivate human values, lead a human life, and develop human thoughts.

First and foremost, truth is a human value. Truth does not undergo any change in all the three periods of time; past, present, and future. Truth is always Truth. You have to develop faith in that Truth. All others undergo change.

"Love is God; live in love." In fact, your entire life is nourished and nurtured by love. When truth and love go together, nonviolence is the result. Where there is love, people will not quarrel among themselves, they don't get angry against someone. When you develop love, you consider all people as your brothers. Hence, you have to develop noble feelings. Good and bad arise only from your thoughts. If something bad happens, it is not something that others have done to you. Nor has God a role to play in this. You are bad to yourself! Your thoughts have done harm to you!

Suppose you are happy, even that is not caused by God. That too is on account of your own

thoughts. Hence, you have to purify your own thoughts. When you develop pure thoughts, your life will be happy and peaceful. Where there is purity, there is Divinity. Where unity, purity, and divinity go together, life will be happy.

God is not responsible for either your good thoughts or your bad thoughts. Only you are responsible for both. If you have bad thoughts, that is your own making. All are one's own making. The senses create a lot of unsteadiness in us. They lead us to bad ways in many ways. However, when our mind is pure, they lead us on the noble path. Hence, keep your mind fresh and pure always. It should not be allowed to waver, which leads us to ups and downs.

Today, the world is facing a lot of unrest. People are indulging in criminal activities. What then is your role in the present situation? You need not do anything else. **Just do Namasmara (contemplating and chanting the name of God) incessantly.** Contemplate upon your inner Self. You need not use any kind of bombs and weapons. Remain calm and unperturbed at all times. Maintain the attitude that whatever happens is only for your own good. On the other hand, if you constantly brood that so and so did this and so and so did that, you will only develop hatred against others. Instead, constantly contemplate on God with a calm and steady mind. Never lose your courage and fortitude. If you maintain courage and fortitude, the worldly worries cannot trouble you in the least and cause fear and anxiety in you.

Of course, you should take proper care of your body as long as you live, for the body enables you to lead your life. Later, it drops down of its own





accord. No one lives in this world permanently. There is only one entity in this world that is permanent, the Atma. Faith in the inner Self (Atma) is the basis for everything in this world. Jesus was crucified on the cross. Mother Mary could not bear that scene and wept inconsolably. Jesus then remarked, "Why do you cry? This is natural. Whatever has to happen will happen. Hence, do not shed tears."

Everything is God's gift only. One has to realise this fact and develop faith accordingly. If you are enjoying good times, it is God's gift. On the other hand, if you are passing through difficult times, it is also God's gift. You should develop such steady faith.

Where is God? This is the question skeptics often raise. God is in you, with you, above you, below you, and around you. He is your Hridayavasi (indweller of your heart). Your Atma is none other than God, verily. Hence, you need not search for God elsewhere.

You repeat the names of Rama and Krishna, thus identifying Divinity with a particular name and form. That which is beyond the body, that which is beyond the name is real Divinity. Divinity has nothing to do with the physical body. The physical body may subsist only for a limited period. It constantly undergoes change.

People develop ego on the basis of their physical and intellectual capabilities, wealth, and property. It is also common to see ego showing its head in positions of power. All these will vanish in no time. Even your body will perish.

Though God has come in human form and is acting as a human being now, never forget to realise Him as God. Since we are in human frames, let us know God in human form. Devoid of your physical body, you can never realise God. Hence, you have to experience God only in human form. People flock to this place in

thousands to have the darshan of this physical body. The more important thing to realise is that the physical body points to the eternal Divinity. Divinity is beyond the body. Hence, do not treat the physical body as permanent. However, keep up the health of the physical body as long as you live. Do not neglect it, thinking that it is bound to perish one day or the other. You have to look after the welfare of the body till your last breath. It is not your concern what happens to it later.

**Embodiments of Love!** As far as the physical body is concerned, you are a human being. When God is with you, in you, around you, why should you have to fear man-made bombs? Develop self-confidence.

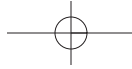
Develop faith in the Atma Tathwa. The Self in you is the Supreme Self. When that Supreme Self is present in your body, why should you have to fear anyone? Even if the body becomes weak, the power of that Supreme Self drives you to march forward. It will help you. Hence, may all people contemplate on God incessantly! Do not get confused with names. You can contemplate on any name. Many varieties of sweets are prepared with sugar, which is the basic ingredient. You may eat any sweet of your choice. But, all sweets taste sweet only.

**Embodiments of Love!** You have all gathered here with great devotion, love, and faith. Keep up that feeling of love. Constantly remind yourself, "I am God! I am God!" with a feeling of love for God. If anyone asks your name, do not reply, "I am so and so." Instead, reply, "I am God." Not only I, you are also God! Everybody is God. Develop such confidence. Peace and happiness have to well up from the inner spring of your own heart. If you wish to have peace, happiness and bliss, contemplate on the Divine Name in your heart. Be happy.

~Baba

(Excerpts from discourse on December 25, 2008)





# Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Toronto-York

## Inaugural Celebration, November 23, 2008

The search for a new home for our Centre began 19 years ago. After a lot of searching and researching and with the grace of Bhagavan along with the efforts of brother Dayal Mirchandani brought us to this venue. The deal was signed off in October 2006 with the purchase date of March 14, 2007. With prayers and gratitude to our beloved Lord, the gears were placed in motion soon after. The process of getting the various permits, putting the teams in place, arranging for all other formalities was the prime focus of the project team led by brother Dayal Mirchandani.

Shortly after taking possession, the youth and young adults took charge of the demolition work. They worked tirelessly to ensure the demolition was done with safety in mind. The walls, ceiling and floor was torn out and the 20,000sq ft property did not look the same anymore. Bhagavan says "Work is Worship" and this was apparent in the enthusiasm and passion displayed particularly by the youth and young adults.

Time seemed to be flying past during the 18 months it took for the construction to be completed. A project blessed by Bhagavan on November 17, 1999 became a reality on November 21, 2008. As we've seen with many of Swami's projects, there was a flurry of activity where the volunteers worked hard and tirelessly into the late hours of the night during the preceding days to complete the necessary work. A clean bill of

health regarding fire and safety was required before we could occupy the building. With Swami's grace, the official occupancy permit was granted just hours prior to the 'Gruha Pravesh' ceremony which provided us with an auspicious entry into the abode of peace and tranquility which took place at precisely 7:00pm on November 21st, 2008. Thus began the start of the three days of prayers and offerings which culminated on November 23rd on Swami's 83rd birthday.

The centre building houses a large payer hall, seven classrooms, a library, a meditation room, recreation room and most importantly Swami's room along with kitchen and washroom facilities.

The opening and inaugural functions were spread over a period of three days. This involved the installation of Bhagavan's picture and the idols of Lord Ganesh and Shirdi Sai Baba. The prescribed poojas were attended by devotees from far and near. All those who came had the opportunity to participate in the offerings and installation of the murtis. All attendees were radiating with Swami's love and energy. They felt His presence at all times. The Vedic chants resounded within the entire building night and day. The atmosphere was fully charged with love for Sai, all felt they were in Prasanthi for three days.

With Bhagavan's grace prasadam was lovingly served at the end of every session. Sai Centres from across the greater Toronto Area and farther were





cordially invited and joined with loving hearts.

The evening of November 23rd was combined with an offering of gratitude to Bhagavan with all the family members celebrating the 83rd birthday of our Beloved Lord. The atmosphere was intense with anticipation, love and adoration. With the seniors leading the way it reflected a scene of true home-coming. Brother Vinod Lad, President, Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Toronto-York welcomed all with sincerity and love on this momentous occasion.



The Sri Sathya Sai Organization was represented by the Regional Coordinators, brothers Thurairaja and Gopal Chidambaram who brought messages from the Chairperson and Central Coordinators of the Central Council of Canada. Brother Thurairaja lovingly acknowledged how the Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Toronto-York has been a pioneer in so many aspects, whether it was the launch of SSEHV, Gurus workshops, Value Parenting, hosting events etc and now this beautiful centre building for all GTA members to call home. This venue with open doors and warm hearts that will help spread the message of Sai to a larger community.

Brother Dayal Mirchandani humbly thanked all the volunteers for their dedication and selfless effort, and brother Dr. Sivaji expressed his heartfelt apprecia-

tion to the donors. This was followed by vibrant bhajan singing, cake cutting and aarti to our Beloved Lord. The prayer hall was resounding with the vibrant voices of over 1300 devotees glorifying the Lord. Overwhelmed with the loving energy, they just felt drawn by the atmosphere and did not want to leave the prayer hall.

As we celebrate this milestone we cannot but reminisce on our pilgrimage to Puttaparthi and the interview with God on July 27, 2001. Bhagavan's Divine words echo in our hearts where he had said, "Be always happy here there and everywhere. Be happy everywhere because your heart is God's seat. The heart is where God is seated. God is coming with you. God is in you, with you, around you. Strengthen that faith."

It is His mantra and unwavering faith in Him that has helped us in our endeavor. We owe it all to Him our Beloved Lord. May we utilize this gift to transform ourselves and extend a warm welcome to one and all.

*With folded hands and hearts full of glee  
We thank you Dear Lord for thy presence supreme  
At the installation and opening  
Of this 'Sai Temple' so serene  
We gratify thee in all what we feel and see  
For thy grace and love which flows like the sea.*

~Vinod Lad





## Love: Antidote to Existential Angst

The two month period, January to February, in the Sathya Sai School of Canada's academic calendar is devoted to the value of Love. Recently, the Grade 3 class completed an interdisciplinary strand on using the power of Love as a strategy to resolve personal difficulties.

The daily tuning-in time at the start of the day was often followed by some intense discussions during circle time. Miss Das and her students candidly shared their personal predicaments in life and explored if they could improve their situations using love as a strategy. The core of the lesson was to explore why it is important to love everyone. The class was unanimous in concluding that everyone in creation is a cell or a tiny heart that forms the larger heart of God. If each of the little hearts that make up the big cosmic heart is doing its natural job of loving without any reservations, then the big heart will be strong, beating to its healthy rhythm.

The SSEHV discussion was combined with their Language Arts curriculum. Students then wrote out their reflections on their further plan of action. The general consensus was to send love to anyone they wanted to improve their relationships with.

Reproduced below are extracts from a few journal entries:

*Love is really important because all these wars need to stop. No one is thinking for each other. If wars stop, everyone will be peaceful. Everyone should have loving thoughts. Then we would never get frustrated with anyone. If you are angry with someone just think of a*

*loving thought about that person and then you will calm down...If you want to be closer to God, all you have to do is love someone. All our hearts are connected, so if one person is happy, everyone in the whole world will be happy. But if one person is sad, everyone will be sad.*

~Shlok Ahuja

*Love is important because it gives us peace and when we are peaceful, we are calm and then we can concentrate more on what we are doing. When we love everyone, we help everyone.*

~Arun Maharaj

*God is in everyone. Since God is in everyone, what one person feels is what everyone feels. So if you want to be closer to God, you have to help everybody. Helping others is a nice thing to do.*

~Gayathiri Krishnaratnam

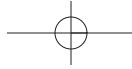
*If you are loving to others, it helps them and it gives you inner joy. If you have love in your mind, then people around you will also have love in their mind...Another reason love is important is that God is love. If you have love in your heart, you will be very close to God. But the most important reason is that if you are loving to someone, they shall pass it on till the whole world has love in it.*

~Prashant Munshi

*Love in our heart is important because all our hearts are connected. So if one of us is mad, slowly all of us are mad. If one of us is happy, slowly, all of us are happy...If you share love, you will be closer to God.*

~Abivarna Raveendran





*You should always have peaceful thoughts. I mean love all and help everyone and you are closer to God. Then you should help the poor with food, money and/or warmth. All our hearts are connected so the way to help the world be a better place is to love yourself and others first. Remember God is in everyone, even you!*

**~Emon Mujumder**

*Love is expansion. Why is it important to love, you ask? Someone out there has nobody to sing a lullaby when they go to sleep or give them food when they are hungry. Why do we have war? We have war because our minds think of war. The things we think of is what will happen. Funny, right? You have a big part to play and this is where you start:*

***-Try to think of someone who makes you frustrated.  
-Now send light to them and have peaceful thoughts about them.***

***-Then try to be calm when you meet them.***

***Three easy steps!***

**~Sanya Mehndiratta**

The second part of the exercise was to introspect and identify the special person(s) in life with whom each of the students could improve their relationship by using the tool of love. In the extracts taken from Grade 3 journals, all names have been withheld due to the sensitive and personal nature of the entries. Thank you for your understanding in this connection. Here are a few random samples:

*The special person is my brother. He is very irritating and troubles me when I am doing something. Now I am going to send light to him and make him very happy and I too will then become very happy and have fun playing with him.*

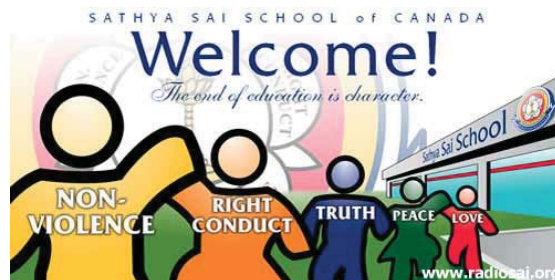
*I would like to send light to my big sister because*

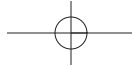
*on weekends, when I am watching television and need to go to the washroom, she always takes the TV remote and watches her channel even though I got the remote first.*

*I need to send light to both my friends in class because when I try to talk to them, they ignore me. When they do that, I feel like they are not my best friends and it makes me feel left out.*

*Whenever I go to my younger cousin's house, he either plays with his Nintendo Wii or DS. He also plays with my DS. Every time I go to his house, I think that he will play with me but he won't unless I give him something. I get so angry when he does it. I feel like hitting him. But since I am a Sathya Sai School student, I shouldn't hit him. Sometimes he shows off his cool car. I get so jealous. I just need his attention most of the time. But I need to give love to him. I'll try.*

**~From Sathya Sai School Weekly Newsletter**





## Teaching Acceptance & Unconditional Love

*The depth and strength of a human character are defined by its moral reserves. People reveal themselves completely only when they are thrown out of the customary conditions of their life, for only then do they have to fall back on their reserves.*

~Leon Trotsky

The children of today will be running governments, schools, universities, hospitals, pharmaceutical companies, financial institutions and printing houses of tomorrow. They will be our doctors, caregivers, financiers, media moguls and policy makers.

If we really want to change the world for the better, we need to equip the children of today with a moral compass. To make a lasting and significant difference, we need to develop their CHARACTER by teaching them universal values such as integrity, honesty, trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship.

But how do we do this? How do we teach our children to care for themselves, others and the world? As teachers at the Sathya Sai School, we plan and teach daily lessons integrated with the five Human Values which are the heart of all our school programs and policies. We read inspirational quotes and stories, conduct in-depth discussions, involve our students in cooperative games and learning activities, and sing songs that celebrate living a life filled with goodness, truth and inner beauty.

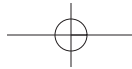
The basic premise of the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV) program is that all the values are in fact already within each of us. We are all hard-

wired with infinite and positive potential. We are programmed with the capacity to care, love, uphold the truth, experience peace, live in harmony and so on. This values package is inherent in our collective DNA. In order to execute this program and run the files of moral reserve without a glitch, all that a child needs is a compatible operating system - one that allows their decision making to be guided by the principles of respect for oneself and others and a sense of moral and social responsibility.

As educators, our goal is to help our students understand how to love and accept all people. In the months of January and February, we focus our SSEHV and core curriculum around the universal human value of Love and its related sub-values such as caring, sharing, compassion, and acceptance.

Along with our morning "tuning-in" time and yoga classes, we aim to provide on-going learning opportunities that encourage the students to tap these inner qualities. Often, these are presented in the form of community service projects.

In this connection, last week's visit from Ms. Anne Wood's developmentally delayed students at the Downsview Secondary School provided a unique opportunity for our Grade 5 and Grade 6 students to be placed in a situation that was definitely beyond their "customary conditions". As an educator, I was pleased and proud to see that, just as Leon Trotsky's quote suggests, our students relied on the "moral reserves" they have developed after so many years of studying at the Sathya Sai School, and came out as shining exam-



ples of our character education program.

The Grade 6 students learned how to care for others by preparing a variety of art activities and games for our special guests. Their teacher Mrs. Ganesh divided the students into groups and each group was responsible for running one of the activities. Our visitors enjoyed the Sathya Sai School version of bowling, basketball, making key-chains and decorative door-hangers. The Grade 6 students patiently assisted the Downview Secondary School students with the crafts and cheered them on whenever they succeeded in scoring a goal or knocking down a pin or for trying their best.

The Grade 5 students learned how to care for others by being gracious hosts. They spent the morning converting the Grade 5 classroom into a kitchen and filling the hallways of our school with the aroma of mouth-watering Mexican cuisine. Our head chef, Ms. Ramdath, set up an assembly line where each of her students was responsible for at least one aspect of preparing the tacos, grilled veggies, bean salad, and deserts that were served at banquet-style tables in our school gym.

The teachers from Downview Secondary School couldn't help but notice how much their students enjoyed the lunch. They were especially surprised to find one of their picky eaters relishing every bite. Clearly the secret ingredient of love that went into preparing the food did the magic.

Our attempt to capture on camera the interaction between our students and this special group of students, may not do justice to the warmth and care that was felt by everyone on this day. Some of our visiting students asked if they could say a few words before leaving. Brendon Myrie said, "This is the best trip ever! I thank you for making me feel at home. This school is filled

with love." To which his friend Chaid McFarlane chimed in, "In every part of this school." Chaid also said, "I'll never forget the children. They have given us so much love." The class teacher from Downview Secondary School, Ms. Anne Woods was overcome by emotion. Seeing our students care for her students, she felt optimistic and said, "Your students give me hope for the future."

By inviting our new friends from the Downview Secondary School, we provided our students with just the right operating system/environment to draw out the goodness they are hardwired with. Watching them demonstrate unconditional love, acceptance and sensitivity towards their peers who were different from them in more ways than one, was the much-needed affirmation for us as teachers. Let's be honest - kids will be kids. It takes time for the values to really flourish. As a result, we don't always see the values being put into practice on a day-to-day basis. As our grade 6 teacher, Mrs. Ganesh commented: "At times I wonder what we are doing with SSEHV when our kids behave a certain way. But, the positive feedback from the outside teachers is reassuring that we must be doing something right."

Opportunities such as these erase the prejudices that are formed through ignorance and allow students to connect with others from the heart. Through these experiential learning activities, the values latent within truly come to life, and yes, we can see that the future does look hopeful when education is geared to nurture the mind, body and the spirit of each child.

~Miss Seema Poddar,  
Vice Principal,  
Sathya Sai School  
Toronto



## God is My Coach

Wherever we are, at home or at school, we are constantly surrounded by people. However, my friends and family members surround me all the time. But what happens when we are sleeping at night, singing beautiful melodies or even moving from one place to another? Who is it that follows us like a shadow in times of difficulty or sorrow, trouble or anxiety, insecurity or change? For me, it is My Bhagavan, My Lord, My conscience, the power behind my deepest decisions, hopes, desires and dreams. This is whom I walk with all the time, everywhere and under all circumstances.

When I was a young child, only four years old, a big change took over my life. However, being a young girl, I did not know what to think of it and I definitely did not have enough mental capacity to question it. So, I accepted the fact that I was moving half way across the world from India to Canada. Since then, my life has been a roller coaster, considering the fact that we have moved, over 7 times till now. If you know my family, you know that we change houses like people change socks! We hardly settle in, before we have to move again. The move requires a lot of adjustment on our part. However, when we lose one thing, we always gain something in return. So from a young age, I was always taught to adapt to the environment and adjust with the people around me. Change yourself and not expect the world to change for you.

Regardless of the fact that everything is always changing, there is one thing that always stays

the same, Bhagavan. People change, our family changes and our life is always changing. But God never changes. His grip is strong, and he never stops walking with me even though I may stop occasionally. I walk with God in many ways, singing, dancing, praying, swimming and even running.

I can tell when I am walking with God because I get a feeling that nothing can go wrong, everything is just swell and life is a beautiful wave, that I am just floating. I often get this feeling when I am singing, especially when I am singing for God and He is enjoying my music.

To me, it does not make a difference as to, if I am singing a bhajan or a filmy song, as long as I am singing. If my voice sends vibrations, lifts me up, banishes my worries and shows me the clear path that I am treading on, then it does not matter what song I am singing or what melody I am producing. I know my Bhagavan is with me. And I will always be able to go through the changes and distractions in the world today.

You have probably heard the saying, "Catch a man a fish, you have fed him for a day, teach a man to fish, you have fed him for a lifetime." This indirectly relates to what I am talking about. God does not tell us what to do in life, but merely shows us how to live life, by giving us good values and directions.

In my life, we change houses many times, but in the end, each house we move into ends up feeling like a home. God has very graciously taught me to live





without attachments, without worries and materialistic desires. He has taught me to be as a river, which flows whichever way nature intends it to and however the rocks guide it steadily. He has taught me over the course of my life through many different ways and techniques, as maybe a commander or a captain would do. This is the relationship I have with God, as somewhat of a coach. And as a coach, God is always with me, supporting my every move, mentioning my mistakes and perfecting me as a person, one step at a time.

God is the light by which we see, the sound by which we hear, the rhythm by which we move and the morals by which we live. To me, He is not just a friend or just a person to talk to, He is much more. He is the source of my happiness, the homeliness I feel entering

my every new house and the melody by which my voice lingers. In life, He is quiet and mysterious, as He teaches us lessons no teacher could ever imagine. But to my knowledge, we need not look for Him, because God is always walking with us: He is walking with me, with my friends, my family and even with people who I may not get along with.

Dear brothers and sisters, God is walking with each one of us, and if you look hard enough you will see him and if you listen hard enough, you will hear him.

~Aaina Grover  
Senior SSSE student  
Abbotsford

“There is no short cut to the Grace of the Lord. Namasmarana (Chanting the name of God) is the best means. Only you do not believe that it can cure you or save you.

The Divine Name is the panacea for all diseases in the world. There is nothing sweeter than the name of God. To chant His name is the easiest path to reach the Lord. This Name is available to sinner and the saint, to the student and the teacher, man and woman, without any distinction whatsoever. Through Love and Devotion, chanting the Name of the Lord is the easiest and the most sacred path.”

~Baba



# Knowledge of Atma

Once upon a time, king Janaka sent a message to the people in his kingdom: "If there be amongst you a great scholar, or a Sage, who can teach me the knowledge of Atma within a matter of a few moments of being properly instructed. Even while climbing onto his horse, before he was completely settled on to it, he should have attained Atma Jnana. He said: "If the person offering to teach me Atma Jnana is not able to accomplish this task of providing me an experience of instant illumination, then I don't want to see him. Well, all the Pundits and Rishis were a little frightened by this requirement. They saw that this would be a severe test on their scholarship and learning, and so none dared to come forth and offer himself to instruct the king and meet the conditions that had been posed.

It was at this point that the boy Astavakra entered the kingdom. While he was going on the road towards the capital city of Mithilapuram, he met a number of people coming from there, including scholars and Pundits; all of them had long faces, looking worried and grief-ridden. Astavakra asked them what was the cause for their worry and grief. They explained to him all the things that had happened. But Astavakra couldn't understand why they should get frightened over such a small thing. He added: "I will gladly solve this problem for the king." So saying he directly entered the court of Janaka. He addressed the king: "My dear King, I am ready to enable you to experience the knowledge of Atma as you desire. But this sacred knowledge cannot be taught so easily. This palace is full of Rajo Guna and Tamo Guna. We must leave this place and enter an area

of pure Satva." So, they left the palace and went along the road leading out of the city towards the forest. As was the custom whenever the emperor went outside his palace walls, the army followed behind; but Janaka had them remain outside the forest.

Astavakra and Janaka entered the forest. Astavakra told King Janaka: "I am not going to fulfill your wish unless you accept my conditions. I may be only a boy, but I am in the position of a preceptor; and you may be an all-powerful emperor, you are in the position of a disciple. Are you prepared to accept this relationship? If you agree then you will have to offer the traditional gift to the Guru, the Gurudakshina that is given by the Sishya to the Guru. Only after you give your offering to me will I start my instruction to you." King Janaka told Astavakra: "The attainment of God is the most important thing to me, so I am prepared to give you absolutely anything you want." But Astavakra replied: "I don't want any material things from you, all I want is your mind. You must give me your mind." The king answered: "Alright, I offer my mind to you. Up to now I thought that this was my mind, but from now onwards it will be yours."

Astavakra told Janaka to dismount from his horse and made the horse stand in front of the king and then he told the king to sit down in the middle of the road. Astavakra walked into the forest and sat quietly under a tree. The soldiers waited for a long time. Neither the king nor Astavakra returned from the forest. The soldiers wanted to find out what had happened to them, so one by one, they proceeded to look for them. When



they went along the road leading into the forest, they found the king seated there, in the middle of the road. The horse was standing in front of the king. The king had his eyes closed and sat still almost immobile. Astavakra was not to be seen. The officers were afraid that Astavakra might have exercised some magic spell over the king and had made him lose consciousness. They went to look for the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister came and addressed Janaka: "O King! O King! O King!" But King Janaka did not open his eyes; he did not move at all. The Prime Minister became frightened. Not only the Prime Minister but all the officials were now getting frightened, because the time when the King usually took his food and drink had passed and the king still had not stirred. In this way the day went on and evening came, but the king did not move from his position, sitting there immobile on the road. Left with no alternative, the Prime Minister sent the chariot back to the city to bring the queen thinking that if the queen spoke to the king, he would surely respond. The queen came and addressed the king: "Raja, Raja, Raja!" The king did not stir; there was absolutely no response from the king. Meanwhile the soldiers searched throughout the whole forest for Astavakra. There, under a tree, Astavakra was seated peacefully, in absolute calm and serenity.

The soldiers caught hold of him and brought him towards the place where the king was. Astavakra told them: "Why are you all so worried? The king is safe and everything is alright." But still they insisted and brought him before the King seated on the road with his eyes closed, his body completely still. The soldier said: "Here, look for yourself! See what has happened to the king!". Until that time, whether the Prime Minister, or the ministers, or the queen or any of the other court officials or common people, had called out and addressed the

king, he neither opened his mouth in answer nor opened his eyes in acknowledgment.

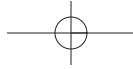
But now Astavakra came and spoke to the king. King Janaka immediately opened his eyes and replied, "Swami!" Astavakra questioned the king: "Well, the ministers have come, and the soldiers have come, and also many others have come, why did you not reply to their entreaties?"

Janaka answered: "Thoughts, words and deeds are associated with the mind, and I offered my mind entirely to you. Therefore before I can use the mind for anything, I need your permission. What authority do I have to speak to anyone or use this mind in any way without your permission and command." Then Astavakra said: "You have attained the state of God-realization."

Once a person has offered his mind, and with it all his words, deeds and thoughts, then he will not have the authority or the power to perform any actions without the permission of the one to whom he has surrendered his mind.

~From Chinna Katha





# Sai Family News

## Spiritual Retreat ~ Ontario Region I ~

## Festivals ~ 2009

### One Day Annual Spiritual Retreat

Hosted by Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centres of  
London and Windsor.

**SATURDAY ~ AUGUST 15TH, 2009**  
8:00 am to 6:00 pm

**LOCATION:**

**Komoka Community Centre**  
(near London, Ontario)

**THEME:**

### LOVE AND CARE FOR OUR MOTHER EARTH

Interactive Sessions for Adults, Youths &  
Children. Bhajans, Study Circle, Meditation,  
Swimming, Outdoor Sports & Much, Much More.

No Fees, however pre-registration is required.

Please note that discipline and dress code are to be observed as  
per Prasanthi Nilayam guidelines as in the past retreats (i.e. No  
Shorts or Jeans). Centre/SDG Presidents are requested to inform Mr.  
Kailash Nath Dhir the number of devotees attending by July 31, '09

**FOR FURTHER DETAILS, PLEASE CONTACT:**

Kailash Nath Dhir,  
President,  
Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of London  
55 Deer Valley Crescent,  
London, Ontario, N6J 4K6


 (519) 657 8810

<kdhi7836@rogers.com>

- Feb 23 Maha Sivarathri
- Mar 27 Ugadi
- April 3 Sri Rama Navami
- May 6 Easwaramma Day
- July 7 Guru Pournima
- Aug 14 Krishna Janmashtami
- Aug 23 Ganesh Chaturthi
- Sept 28 Vijaya Dasami
- Nov 14-15 Akhanda Bhajan
- Nov 23 Bhagavan's 84th Birthday

## SRI SATHYA SAI BOOK & INFORMATION CENTRE

58B Arlington Ave., Toronto, ON M6G 3K8

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WEBSITE: [www.saibooks.org](http://www.saibooks.org)

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