



Canadian Sathya Sai Newsletter



Guru Poornima

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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.

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Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is no more with us physically. He left his earthly body on April 24, 2011 at 7:40 a.m. Bhagavan Baba's body was laid to rest in Sai Kulwant Hall April 27, 2011 in the presence of a huge assemblage of devotees and a host of political luminaries.

Swami's unforgettable teachings:

Love All, Serve All

Help Ever, Hurt Never

Love is God and God is Love

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Guru poornima is an ancient Indian celebration. It goes back to the time when the four Vedas were established as the foundation of the Indian tradition. The great sage Veda Vyasa, who compiled the Vedas, was also the one whose inspiration gave rise to this celebration of Guru poornima, a celebration in honor of the Guru.

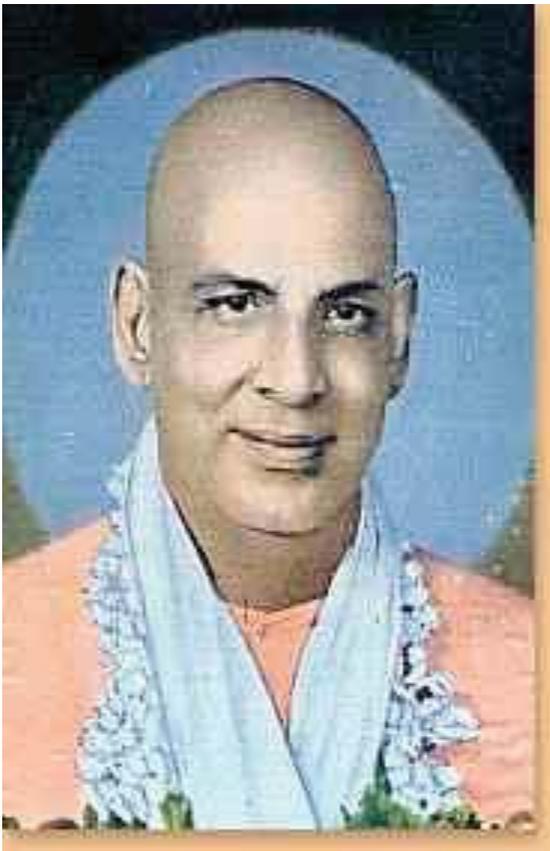
The disciples of Veda Vyasa were pondering the immense nature of the gifts that he had bestowed on the world. Not only had he compiled the four Vedas, but he had recorded the Mahabharata and the thirty-six Puranas, Brahma Sutras and Bhagavatam, masterpieces of the Indian spiritual tradition. In addition to these great bequests to mankind, he was their teacher and had bestowed his grace and his spiritual knowledge upon each one of them. By following his guidance, the disciples of Veda Vyasa grew to spiritual maturity and felt rich in gratitude to their teacher. Uncertain what form of thanks could possibly be adequate to express their gratitude, they asked Veda Vyasa himself, "How can we repay you for the divine wisdom you have imparted to us?"

With great compassion, Veda Vyasa told his disciples that they could choose one day of the year to be especially dedicated to honoring Shri Guru as a way to express this profound gratitude. On this chosen day, the Guru would be honored with offerings and gifts. Disciples, for all time, would know that their offerings would always, on this day, reach their Guru.

The disciples of Veda Vyasa followed his guidance. They chose the full-moon day (poornima) of the month of Ashadha as it was the fullest and brightest of all the year's poornimas. This day became known as "Guru poornima"—the full moon of the Guru.

Maharshi Vyasa

In ancient days, our forefathers, the Rishis of Aryavatha, went to the forest to do Tapasya during the four months following Vyasa Poornima, an important day in the Hindu calendar. On this memorable day, Vyasa, an incarnation of the Lord Himself, began to write his



**HIS HOLINESS SRI SWAMI
SIVANANDA**

Brahma Sutras. Chaturmas begins from the Vyasa Poornima Day when, according to our Shastras, we are expected to worship Vyasa and the Brahma Vidya Gurus and begin the study of the Brahma

Sutras and other ancient books on wisdom.

Krishna Dvaipayana was born of Parasara Rishi through the Matsyakanya Satyavathi Devi daughter of Vasu (fisherman) under some peculiar and wonderful circumstances. Parasara was a great Jnani and one of the supreme authorities on astrology and his book Parasara Hora is still a textbook on astrology. He has also written a Smriti known as Parasara Smriti which is held in such high esteem that it is quoted by our present-day writers on sociology and ethics. Parasara came to know that a child, conceived at a particular Ghatika or moment of time, would be born as the greatest man of the age, nay, as an Amsa of Lord Vishnu Himself. On that day, Parasara was travelling in a boat and he spoke to the boatman about the nearing of that auspicious time. The boatman had a daughter who was of age and awaiting marriage. He was impressed with the sanctity and greatness of the Rishi and offered his daughter in marriage to Parasara. Our Vyasa was born of this union and his birth is said to be due to the blessing of Lord Siva Himself who blessed the union of a sage with a Jnani

of the highest order, although of a low caste.

At a very tender age, Vyasa declared to his parents the secret of his life that he should go to the forest and do Akhanda Tapas. His mother at first did not agree, but later gave permission on one important condition that he should appear before her whenever she wished for his presence. This itself shows how far-sighted the parents and the son were. Puranas say that Vyasa took initiation at the hands of his Guru, sage Vasudeva. He studied the Shastras under sages Sanaka and Sanandana and others.

He arranged the Vedas for the good of mankind and wrote the Brahma Sutras for the quick and easy understanding of the Srutis; he also wrote the Mahabharata to enable common folk to understand the highest knowledge in the easiest way. Vyasa wrote the eighteen Puranas and established the system of teaching them through Upakhyanas or discourses. In this way, he established the three paths, viz., Karma, Upasana and Jnana. To him is also attributed the fact that he continued the line of his mother and that Dhritarashtra, Pandu and Vidura were his progeny.

Vyasa's last work was the Bhagavata which he undertook at the instigation of

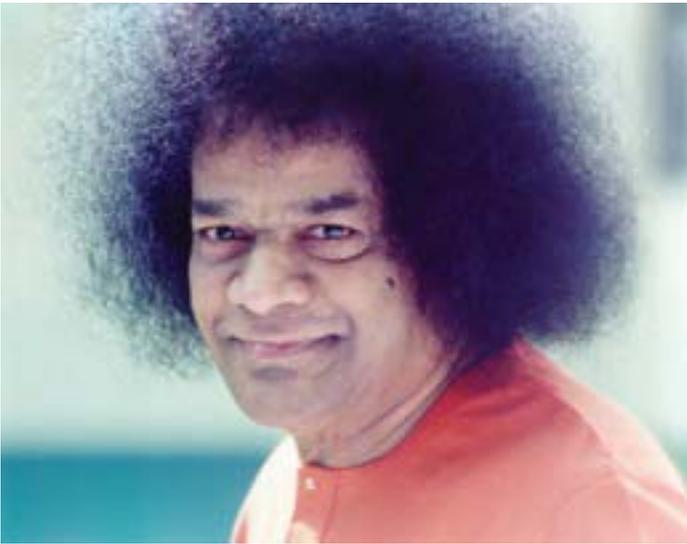
Devarshi Narada who once came to him and advised him to write it as, without it, his goal in life would not be reached.

Vyasa is considered by all Hindus as a Chiranjivi, one who is still living and roaming throughout the world for the well-being of his devotees. It is said that he appears to the true and the faithful and that Jagadguru Sankaracharya had his Darshan in the house of sage Mandana Misra and that he appeared to many others as well. Thus, in short, Vyasa lives for the welfare of the world. Let us pray for his blessings on us all and on the whole world.

Vyasa's life is a unique example of one born for the dissemination of spiritual knowledge. His writings inspire us and the whole world even to this day. May we all live in the spirit of his writings!

–Sri Swami Sivananda

DIVINE PROMISES



Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

This morning I would like to share with you the Divine promises He made. I will not say “Divine Vows”. I could have said that, but Divine promises are equal to a vow. Krishna made such vows.

I would like to draw your attention to those Divine promises, particularly at this juncture when some of us are still suffering from the physical absence of Bhagavan Baba. Many, many people are feeling the pangs of separation from the Divine proximity, and are so sad and sorry. It is understandable. But these satsangs will help us to rehabilitate, to go back to normalcy without crying anymore, because that will not get us anywhere.

At some stage or other, we should put a full-stop to the crying and go on to

the next step. Therefore it is with that in view and to drive us away from our grief that I want to remind you and myself of the Divine promises. So the topic of this morning is “Divine Promises“.

PRACTICE, NOT PREACHING

What are they? Bhagavan said, “Most of you are very anxious to spread My message, and many would like to share My message with others. But I tell you, the best way to share My message is this: live up to it.”

Kindly note the best way to spread the Sai message was given by Sai Himself. What is that best way? It is first to live up to His message in thought, word and deed. It is better not to spread the message if we cannot live up to it. Therefore, those of us who are very anxious to spread His message should know that we have to practice it in our lives. Bhagavan says that kind of practice by itself will transform the whole world, not merely preaching. That is the first thing.

THE STUDY OF VEDAS

The second point: Baba said that He has three tasks to fulfill, three important

areas to attend to. What are they?

One is to advance the Vedas (the oldest and most authoritative religious scriptures) because Vedic knowledge has been neglected over the years. It is praised, recognised and appreciated—but nobody is prepared to learn it! We are proud of the Vedas but no one knows anything about it. Therefore Bhagavan said His first task is to encourage the study of the Vedas. Has He succeeded in that? Yes, He has succeeded. You have thousands of students together reciting the Vedas for hours and hours. Not only that! Sai centres in Japan, US or even China, have devotees who can recite the Vedas. So there are many devotees all over the world who can recite the Vedas. It is evident that Bhagavan has fulfilled His promise to spread Vedic literature and the study of Vedas. It is for us to continue bearing its torch, to continue to light the lamp of Vedic effulgence in the future.

TO HELP THE DEVOTEES

The second task He announced was “to help the devotees.” That is His second task. He said, “I have no other job other than to help My devotees, to come to their rescue”. This has been going on right from His childhood, and will continue so forever and ever and ever.

There is no doubt about it. Bhagavan helping devotees will continue forever and ever, regardless of His physical absence.

I know of many devotees who tell me, “We don’t miss Him. We feel that He is still here.” They say that they see Swami sitting near the Samadhi (the sacred tomb shrine), in His physical form. So people are feeling the physical presence of Swami. In the past, we saw Him and today we feel Him. Bhagavan said clearly, “Whosoever feels Me, wherever he is, I will come to his rescue. I will come and save him.” That is His promise.

Ananya Chinta Yanto Maam

Ye Janah ParyuPaasate.

When you think of Me, I am there to help you; I am there for your rescue.

That is the second promise and He has fulfilled that promise. How can I say that is so? On the other side of this building, you have book stores—thousands of books in all national, international, or regional languages. Most of these books describe spiritual experiences. Two or three percent may contain His message and interpretations. All the rest are about the personal experiences of devotees, or of others. What does this signify?

People have bundles of experiences. Every day is an experience. When you feel like listening to His bhajans (devotional songs), He is prompting you to listen to Him. When you feel like reading His book, He is encouraging you to be near Him and hear Him. So you hear Him when you read His book, and you forget yourself when you listen to His bhajans.

~Prof. Anil Kumar Kamaraju

Bhaja Govindam

<<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OHfnYB3UC5Y>>



Adi Shankaracharya with his disciples

Bhaja Govindam is one of the minor compositions of the spiritual giant, Adi SHANKARACHARYA. Though sung as a bhajan, it contains the essence of vedanta and awakens the man to think, "Why am I here in this life? Why am I amassing wealth, family, but have no peace? What is the Truth? What is the purpose of life?" Man is thus awakened and gets set on a

path to the inner road back to God.

The background of Bhaja Govindam is interesting. During Shankaracharya's stay in Kashi, he noticed a very old man engaged in the early hours studying the rules of sanskrit by Panini. Shankara was touched with pity seeing the plight of the old man spending his years at a mere

intellectual accomplishment while he would be better off praying and spending time to control his mind. Shankaracharya understood that the majority of the world was also engaged in mere intellectual, sense

pleasures and not in the divine contemplation. Seeing this, he burst forth with the verses of Bhaja Govindam.

In 31 verses, he, like no other, explains our fallacies, our wrong outlook for life, and dispells our ignorance and delusions.

Shankara explains, nay chides, us for spending our time in useless trivia like amassing wealth, lusting after sensual pleasures and requests us to discriminate and cultivate the knowledge to learn the difference between the real and the unreal. To emphasize that all knowledge other than Self-Knowledge is useless.

Shankara makes the man realize how foolish he is in his conduct and

behavior by these verses, and shows mankind the purpose of our worldly existence, which is to seek the Lord and attain Him.

The Bhaja Govindam is a devotional song, but it also contains within the simplest of Sanskrit verses, the very essence of Indian philosophy.

Bhaja Govindam is divided into Dwadasa manjarika stotram and chaturdasa manjarika stotram.

At the end of composing the first stanza, it is said that Shankaracharya burst forth with the next 12 stanzas of Bhaja Govindam. Thus stanzas 1-12 are called Dwadasa manjarika stotram. Inspired by the extempore recital by

Shankaracharya, each of his 14 disciples composed a verse and the 14 verse compendium is called Chaturdasa manjarika stotram. Shankaracharya added the finishing touches by adding five of his own stanzas at the last bring the total to thirty one.

Anyone who listens to the music of

Bhaja Govindam is attracted to it. However, the significance of the text goes much deeper and contains a well defined

Shankara begins by saying "Oh fool stop wasting your time in unnecessary things. Meditate upon God and try to understand what His real nature is."

philosophy of attaining salvation. Shankaracharya's words here seem to be quite piercing and seem to lack his softness and tenderness often found in his other texts. The reason is that this was an extempore recital to an old man.

His words can be compared to a knife of a doctor. The doctor's knife cruelly removes the tumor with much pain, but removing the tumor ultimately restores good health in the patient. So is Shankaracharya's words, which pierce and point out our ignorance. It is a knife into the heart of worldliness, and by removing this tumor of ignorance, we can attain

everlasting bliss with the grace of the Lord.

(Based on talk by Sri C Rajagopalachari)

Listen to Swami singing Bhaja Govindam at this Link:

<<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OHfnYB3UC5Y>>

Qualities of Sthitaprajna

(Self Realised Individual)



Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2 Sloka 54

Arjuna uvacha:

STHITAPRAJNASYA KAA BHASHA SAMAADHISTASYA KESHAVA
STHIDADEEHI KIM PRABHASHETA KIM ASEETA VRAJETA KIM

Arjuna said: O Krishna, what are the characteristics of a
Stithaprajana? How does such a man speak, sit and move?

A Sthitaprajna is also known as a jivanmukta, or one who is truly free while still living. Although the realization of truth is private and cannot be communicated to others, the Sthitaprajna can be identified by his or her actions, habits, and character as a tree is known by its leaves, flowers, or fruit. The Bhagavad Gita describes the character of the Sthitaprajna as the following:

1] The Sthitaprajna is dvandatita, or free from the conflicts of the pairs of opposites, such as pain and pleasure, virtue and vice, honour and dishonour, and good and evil. In short, the Sthitaprajna is free from all attachments and aversions.

2] The Sthitaprajna demonstrates the reality of the Self the divinity of all beings, and the unity of all existence through his or her conduct.

3] Steady in wisdom, the Sthitaprajna enjoys the constant bliss of the Self, irrespective of the changing phenomena of the universe . The rise and fall of mind and pain and pleasure of body never make the sthitaprajna waver in steadiness of wisdom.

4] Though behaving like an ordinary person, the Sthitaprajna is ever conscious of the reality of oneness.

5] Though engaged in actions, being free from ego and free from motive, the Sthitaprajna is not a doer of actions. Though having a physical body, the Sthitaprajna is merely a dweller within the body and is unidentified with it.

6] Firmly grounded in the wisdom of the one Self, the Sthitaprajna is at peace and ease with everything in all situations.

7] The wisdom of the Sthitaprajna is wisdom of a cosmic oneness with all beings that cannot be contained in any temple or exhaustively described by any scripture.

8] The Sthitaprajna is not bound by the injunctions of the scriptures, the traditions of society, or the laws of ethics. Yet the Sthitaprajna's freedom does not impose itself on anyone, nor does it violate the rules of morality and ethics.

9] The Sthitaprajna does not belong to a particular culture, sect, nation, or society; the Sthitaprajna is for all beings of all times.

10] Whatever the Sthitaprajna does is conducive to the welfare of all beings. When the Sthitaprajna does good, he or she has no expectations or desires. The Sthitaprajna's very nature is to do good.

11] The Sthitaprajna is a seer of truth, no longer its seeker. The Sthitaprajna is not just pure but purity itself. A person conscious of his or her purity is also conscious of impurity. The Sthitaprajna is not just holy but holiness itself, not just a knower of truth but the very embodiment of truth.

12] While steady wisdom indicates seeing action in inaction and inaction in action, it does not stand for a philosophy of inaction. The Sthitaprajna continues to act, lest by following his or her example, the vast majority of people should be led to practice inertia in the name of spirituality.

13] The Sthitaprajna lives on the borderline between absolute and relative consciousness.

14] The Sthitaprajna is a jnani, a bhakta, and a yogi.

15] Ever established in the state of yoga, the Sthitaprajna remains in constant

union with God and, at the same time, is the ideal exemplar of karma-yoga, demonstrating steady wisdom through every action.

16] The Sthitaprajna's knowledge of Ultimate Reality is universal and dynamic.

17] The Sthitaprajna's spiritual vision is integral and all-embracing.

18] For the Sthitaprajna, God is both immanent and transcendent at the same time. Dedicated service is as important as offerings of worship, and meditation is no less an action than everyday activity

Source: Unknown

GOOD HEALTH and GOODNESS



Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences, Puttaparthi

The body is the boat on which we voyage across the ocean of worldly life and it has to be kept trim and seaworthy. The voyage too has to be strong, confident and courageous.

Health is necessary for gaining this world and the next, for earning worldly and other worldly progress to realize the very purpose for which the Self has embodied itself in the human form, namely, to become aware of its source, the Eternal Absolute. In Order to attain this goal, the ideals of righteousness, prosperity, moral desire and release from grief have to be practiced with the help of a sound mind in a sound body.

Every activity of man is dependent on the energy he derives from the intake of food. The spiritual disciplines he ventures upon depend for their success on the quantity and quality of food taken by the spiritual aspirant, even during the preliminary preparations recommended by Patanjali.

The Five Sheaths

The most external of the five sheaths that enclose the Atmic core, namely, the physical sheath, has impact on all the remaining four – the vital, mental, wisdom and bliss sheaths. The physical sheath consists of the material flesh and bone, built by the food that is

consumed by the individual. After digestion the grossest part of the food is thrown out as excreta. A subtle part becomes blood and flesh and provides the sustenance for the body. The subtlest part goes to the mind. Hence, the tendencies of the mind are based on the food that is eaten. First, the food becomes the physical sheath. Then it affects the mental sheath. Only after that, the sheath of wisdom is reached. Beyond this, is the sheath of Bliss. Of the liquids we consume, the grosser part goes out as urine. The subtle part sustains prana, the life-force. The subtle part of the food that goes into the mind and the subtle elements in the fluids which gets into the life-force together enter the sheath of wisdom.

Food and the Mind

The mind of man is not an organ that can be identified physiologically; it cannot be touched or operated on by doctors or surgeons. It is an intangible bundle of resolutions and hesitations, of wishes and wants, of pros and cons. It has, as warp and woof, the wishes that man entertains with reference to outward

objects and sensations. It easily rushes out after external pleasures and assumes the shapes of the things it seeks. It can also be turned back into searching for inner contentment and inner joy. That is why the mind is said to be the instrument for both bondage and liberation. Allow the senses to go outward, it binds. Allow the intelligence to prevail upon it to look inward for bliss, it liberates.

The mind is the puppet of the food that is consumed by man. It is prompted one way or the other by the subtle pull of the food it is fed on. The quality of the food determines the direction of the desire that diverts the mental flow. That is why in the Gita as well as in all scriptural texts, satwic food is recommended for the upward-seeking individual. Mind means desire, resolve (sankalpa), something sought for. When the Formless desired Form, the Universe arose; so mind is the creative principle, the Maya or illusion that desired the very first desire to be “be many”. When it is fed on rajas – passion and emotion, activity and adventure – it gallops into the world with the plunge of desire! It brings man deeper into the morass. When it is fed on

tamasic food which dulls, inebriates, blunts reason and induces sloth, the mind is callous, inert and useless for uplifting man.

The Types of “Food”

Satwic food, according to some, consists in milk and fruit. But is much more. It may not even be these, for the calories that one takes in through the mouth are but a small part of the intake of man. The intake by the senses are part of the food that builds the individual. The sounds heard, the sights seen, the tactile impressions sought or suffered, the air breathed, the environment that presses for attention, appreciation and adoption – all these are “food”. They have considerable impact on the character and care of the individual.

Food & the Mind

The quality of the food is determined by the vibrations that it is charged with, through the thought processes of the persons who handle it, prepare it and serve it. The 17th chapter of the Gita clearly defines the nature and tastes of the three types of “food” eaten

by man. The food that promotes love, virtue, strength, happiness and cordiality is satwic, that which inflames, arouses intoxicates and heightens hunger and thirst is rajasic; the food that depresses disrupts and causes disease is tamasik.

The company in which food is consumed, the place, the vessels in which it is cooked, the emotions that agitate the mind of the person who cooks it and serves it – all these have subtle influences on the nature and emotions of the persons who take the final product in! The sages of India realized this. They laid down many do’s and don’ts for the process of eating, as for the different stages of spiritual progress.

Our thoughts trail off in directions determined by the sounds that fall upon the ear. When the sounds convey rebuke or praise, flattery or challenge, the thoughts too react correspondingly. When the sounds instill ideas of truth, beauty, or goodness, the mind too seeks the silence of truth, the sweetness of beauty and harmony, the strength of goodness.

Control of Senses

The senses have to be controlled, primarily because they pursue deleterious influences that harass man and lead him into ruin. Inner peace is lost when the senses feed man on inflaming wants and infructuous desires. For the spiritual aspirant – and, who can escape being a spiritual aspirant? – the intake must always be pure and blameless, satwic. The sounds, the sights, the impressions, the ideas, the lessons, the contacts – all must promote reverence, humility, balance, equanimity and simplicity. If the impressions are rajasic, the mind will get agitated, vengeful, fanatic and fearsome. If they are tamasic, the mind will not even be aroused into the awareness of its own innate handicaps. It is only satwic food that will keep the mind on an even keel, fully concentrated on the Atma on which one must contemplate in order to attain peace.

Avoid Rajasic and Tamasic Food

Millions of living beings grouped as species dwell on earth; they sustain themselves by means of food secured from Nature, as provided by Nature. It is only man that is an exception. He is the

only living being which dislikes raw food found in the natural state. All other animals eat foods as they are – grain, grass, leaves, shoots, fruits. Man boils, fries, melts, mixes and adopts various methods of cooking in order to satisfy the cravings of the tongue, the eyes and the nose. As a consequence, the food value of these articles are either reduced or destroyed. Birds and beasts do not adopt such destructive methods. They eat things raw and consume the strength, giving vital essence. So, they do not fall victim to the many ills that man brings on himself.

When the seeds are fried, they do not sprout; that is clear proof that the “life-force” is eliminated. Therefore, uncooked food, nuts, fruits and germinating pulses are the best. Use these at least at one meal, say, for dinner; this will ensure long life. And long life is to be striven for in order that the years may be utilized for serving one’s fellow-beings.

Rajasic food generates virulent thoughts. By consuming non-vegetarian food we develop brutal mentalities. Those who are practicing meditation must abstain from

meat. We should also remember constantly that ahimsa or non-violence is the supreme Dharma. When you kill an animal you give him suffering, pain, harm. God is in every creature, so how can you give such pain? Animals did not come for the purpose of supplying food to human beings. They came to work out their own life in the world.

Smoking destroys health, happiness, energy and even charm. Smoke will not quench your thirst or fill the hungry stomach. It disfigures your face and denigrates your lungs. It debilitates you and makes you diseased. Control yourself and do not yield to the snares of friends or society.

Drink large quantities of pure water, not during meals, but some time before and after.

Fast one day a week. Take only water, so that all the dirt is washed away. Do not crave for fruit juice or other liquids. When you take food, all the evils are eliminated if you offer the first morsel to God. The food then becomes Prasad (sacred offering) of the Lord bestowed on man.

Practice Moderation.

Give the body the attention it deserves, but not more. Tend it as an instrument and use it as a raft. When you cultivate the attitude that you are the body, the body will demand from you more food, more variety in food, more attention to appearance and physical comfort. A large portion of the food now consumed is superfluous; man can live healthy on much less. A good deal of effort and expenditure are now spent to cater to taste and to social pomp can be given up, and health too will improve thereby. Eat to live, do not believe that you live in order to eat.

An intake of too much food is also harmful. Simply because tasty food is available and is being offered, one is tempted to overeat. We have air all around us, but we do not breathe in more than we need. The lake is full, but we drink only as much as he thirst craves for. But overeating has become a social evil, a fashionable habit. The stomach cries out, "Enough" but the tongue insists on more, and man becomes the helpless victim of

disease. He suffers from corpulence, high blood pressure and diabetes.

You must practice moderation in food, drink, sleep and exercise. Pure, wholesome food promotes self-control and intelligence more than passion-producing and impure food. **For spiritual aspirants, pure food is very necessary. One has to be very careful about food,** especially if one is proceeding Godward, through the steep path of Yoga.

Sleep, too, must be regulated and moderate; it is as important as work and food.

Humanity is Bedridden

The world is a huge hospital and humanity is bedridden. Some are writhing in pain of envy, some are bloated with pride, some are losing sleep through hate, some have become blind through miserliness, some are struck down by selfishness, every one has some illness or other.

It is wise to prevent disease than to run after remedies after it has happened or grown beyond control. Man does not

attend the precautionary measures; he allows things to worsen and then the disease is aggravated by fear, uncertainty and anxiety.

Illness is due to the neglect of some of the simple rules of healthy eating and drinking, and due to the damage caused to the system by evil habits and stupid cravings. Man ruins himself by greed and lust, worry and fear, he falls an easy prey to his insatiable thirst for a happy life. He does not know the source and spring of happiness, which lies within himself. He believes he can get it in plenty and in quick time by running after the mirage of fashion or fancy, excitement or entertainment. He thinks that floating on the roaring, raging torrent of the world will help, but that only gives him unbearable tossing nausea.

Just as everyday you engage in exercises and consume tonics, calculating the intake of calories and vitamins, paying meticulous attention the nutritional value of the food, pay attention also to the intake of impressions into the mind – whether they debilitate or strengthen, whether they add

to the power of resistance of the mind against the viruses of greed, envy, hatred, pride, malice etc. Have a meal of good acts, divine thoughts, and drink the juice of love, so that they may be washed down and digested well. Then you will be shining with mental health and physical health.

Enemies of Health

Evil thoughts cause ill health. Anxiety, fear and tension also contribute their share. All these result from greed to have more of things, of power and fame. Greed results in sorrow and despair. Contentment can come only from a spiritual outlook. The desire for worldly goods has to be given up. One should not distinguish between “my work” and “work for God. All work should be worship. Whatever the reward, it is the gift of God. It is for our lasting good. If this attitude is developed, suffering and pain can toughen us and help us to progress towards Divinity.

It is through pain that pleasure is gained. Darkness enables us to appreciate the light. Death teaches us to love life. Diseases that torment man are

many in number. Of these, hatred, envy and egoism are the worst. Even doctors cannot cure them, for most of them suffer from these. One should develop equanimity and serenity if one desires to be free from these diseases.

Now I find people are increasing their worries and getting anxious about things that they do not understand nor can they correct or reform them. The radio, the newspaper and other means of communication or information cause so much fear and discontent that worry and anxiety are increased, and the mind of man gets weakened.

Anger is another enemy of health.

When you pay undue attention to differences, spasms of hatred, anger, malice and envy overwhelm you. Anger rushes blood to the brain, the temperature rises, the composition of the blood changes; toxins enter into it in such quantities that it injures the nerves, and make you old before your time.

Another cause of ill health is vice and vile conduct. Do not seek to listen to vile and vicious stories. This tendency reveals a diseased mind. What is heard is

imprinted like a carbon copy through the ear, on the heart. One injures oneself through indulgence in this evil habit.

The Course of Treatment

Food is the medicine for the illness of hunger; drink for the illness of thirst; for the disease of bhava roga (Birth Death Cycle), Bhagavan (God) is the medicine; for the disease of desire, Jnaana (spiritual wisdom) is the specific. For the disease of doubt, despair and hesitation, which are the occupational diseases of spiritual aspirant, the most effective remedy is doing good to others. For the major infection of anxiety, the course of treatment is bhajan.

Above all, do every act as an offering to the Lord without being elated by success or dejected by defeat; this gives the poise and equanimity needed for sailing through the ocean of life.

When the mind of man is unattached to the ups and downs of life, but is able to maintain equanimity under all circumstances, then even physical health can be assured. The mental firmament must be like the sky, which

bears no mark of the passage through it of birds or planes or clouds. It is the mind that builds up the body, strong and shiny, or wastes it to skin and bone. For human being to be strong, the mind has to be strong. Live always as the servant of the Lord within you; then, you will not be tempted into sin or fall into evil. Get into the habit of living in the light of God. It is the habit that rehabilitates.

The dress worn by humans, the houses where they live and the areas where they are situated, have to be tidy and clean. The food that is taken in has to supply all the elements needed to keep the body strong enough to resist illness. Even if it falls short a little in this respect, health can be maintained if it is unpolluted, pure and holy. The atmosphere breathed in, the water taken in, the ground lived on, the animals and plants that surround- all have maleficent microbes that may cause illness if the mind and the body are not equipped with powerful resistance and armour. Exercise, bathing, washing, cleaning etc. are prescribed for this purpose.

Do not, like some mental patients, be always worrying about some little ailment or another. Have courage. That is the best tonic; do not give up, before you have it. It is not long life that counts.

Rely on His Grace

Regular prayers twice a day will give strength and courage which can withstand illness. The Grace of God will confer mental peace and so, good sleep and rest for the mind. Feel that you are a hundred percent dependent on God. He will look after you, and save you from any harm and injury. When you go to bed offer thankful homage to Him for guiding and guarding you throughout the day.

Resolve that relying on His Grace you shall be free from illness this moment. Transfer the faith that you have in drugs to God; put your trust, not just in medicine, but in God. Illness is caused more by malnutrition of the mind, than the body. I will call it the deficiency of Vitamin G.

Resort to prayer, spiritual practice, recitation of the Name and meditation. They are the vitamins that you need; they

will restore you. Regulated life and habits are two thirds of the treatment, while medicine is one third only. I shall give you sacred ash and that will cure you.”

God is the Doctor. Seek Him. Rely on Him. And you will be free from disease.

References:

Sathya Sai Speaks, several volumes, Conversations with Sathya Sai Baba by John Hislop and Summer Showers in Brindavan, 1972.

Service to Society



Narayana Seva

Busy Life

Today people in society are caught in the grip of countless demands and responsibilities. The “I want it” or “I must have it” mantras are unfortunately, mentally repeated by individuals more often in a single day, than even the number of breaths taken by one during that period.

Standing against these perpetual pressures is the loving call of the Divine. Swami has often said that “the one who constantly contemplates on God is the noblest of all human beings” and has quoted from the Vedas thus, “Sarvada sarva kaleshu sarvatra Hari

chintanam” (everywhere, at all times, under all circumstances, contemplate on God). It is hardly any surprise then, that modern man is resigned to lament pitifully in the following manner, “Oh! Whence can I think about God, let alone others, when there is but hardly a spare moment to attend to myself?”

Seva

The solution to this apparent malady of our own making is both simple and ingenious, and revealed by Swami in a single word: SEVA. This short 4 lettered terminology can be shaped into a multi-purpose spiritual tool, to be utilized in our daily activities of living. During many of His discourses, Swami has been heard to say, “The best way to Love God is to LOVE ALL and SERVE ALL”.

If left to our own devices, we will always be consumed by our need to fulfil our every selfish desire, instead of transforming ourselves each day into His selfless “emissaries of love”. Knowing this, Swami has kindly offered us a way to achieve the objective of attending to our mundane activities of sustenance and

self-preservation, as well as the higher objective of God-realisation and ultimate merger with Him, by making the one objective dependant upon the other.

He goes on to expound this Dharmic principle as follows:

1. **Whatever work is done, do it as though you are doing it exclusively for Me,**
2. **Take all work performed, as well as the fruit realized thereof, and make it as an offering unto Me, and finally**
3. **All of the above, do so with pure LOVE.**

As an example, see Swami as seated within your immediate supervisor or every client, and lovingly offer the fruit of your labour unto Swami, through this individual at work. Very soon your daily perception of the “burden of work” will transform into the “bliss of activity”.

If we carefully analyse this 3 step Dharmic principle and adopt it within our daily lives, then Service to Society, does not merely remain as a remote possibility, but instead becomes a very dynamic and

tangible reality. Hence, Swami has offered us a simple formula to convert “all work unto worship”, and quickly achieve the miracle of transforming our seemingly ordinary tasks into a God-centred life.

He further states that “Whilst earning our daily bread, we should all strive to do our work Diligently and Sincerely, and most importantly, offer it unto God with love. This not only achieves the basic goal of rewarding our material bank balances, but simultaneously serves to give a large “capital boost” to our Spiritual Bank Balance, on a daily basis.

A quick word of caution offered to the spiritual aspirant along this pathway by Swami, revolves around the following:

- (i) **Do not expect any reward, recognition, appreciation or even a pat on the back when engaging in service to society,**
- (ii) **He who renders service in this manner, must always see God and God only, in the one being served, and finally**
- (iii) **Ensure that the performance of such actions has contributed to decreasing one's ego.**

In fact, when ‘Service to Society’ or ‘Seva’ is spoken of, one is often inclined to think only of such activities as feeding the hungry or medical camps for the poor, as qualifying within this category. Indeed, these are essential grassroots service activities, which should serve to stimulate the practice of this principle in our day to day living, as explained above. Having thus engaged ourselves in such manner of activity on a daily basis, we become true karma yogis without much penance, and effortlessly clear the pathway to our ultimate return unto Godhead. This was also lovingly deliberated upon by our dear Lord, as Sai Krishna, during His advent in Dwapara Yuga, whilst revealing the Bhagavad Gita to Arjuna at Kurukshetra, for all of mankind, and amply demonstrated by that same Divinity in Kali Yuga, as our Beloved Swami, whose entire life has been one long saga of selfless service to humanity as a whole!

Finally, although critical components by themselves within Seva, service to society does not merely entail vast amounts of money, food and time.

In essence, these vital components must be adopted using the 3-fold Dharmic principle outlined above, such that “Service becomes Spiritual and Work becomes Worship”. In this regards money, food and time are to be considered sacred under all circumstances, and here too, Swami’s oft quoted words on these base parameters hold forever true: **“Don’t waste money, misuse of money is evil. Don’t waste food, food is God. Don’t waste time, time waste is life waste.”**

In His ever affable and sweet manner, Swami has given us great pearls of wisdom, in a simple, easy to follow format, for quick adoption and adaptation into our daily lives. All that now remains to be done is for one to examine ones life carefully, and to question oneself as follows: How active, creative, effective and enthusiastic have I been to the clarion call of Service to Society lately???

~Dr. Sunil Dajee,
Abbotsford, Canada

Lord's loving Gift to Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Scarborough



New Sai Center Building in Scarborough

Sri Sathya Sai Baba Center of Scarborough held its inauguration ceremonies during the auspicious Easwamma day weekend of May 6th, 7th and 8th as blessed by our Divine Lord Himself.

The prayer for a much needed multi-purpose service and worship facility began in 2002 when a 600-strong delegation of devotees from Scarborough made a pilgrimage to the divine abode of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. With no more than an architectural plan and hope in their hearts, the devotees prayed to Bhagavan to bless this endeavour; the Lord heartily approved the venture by signing his divine name not once or twice, but thrice, on the plan - the rest as they say is 'HIStory.'

The congregation has been truly blessed to have the Lord's divine guidance

along the crucial steps of the building process that commenced with groundbreaking in the spring of 2007 in the presence of Prof Anilkumar. Later in the fall of 2009, amrith flowed from Bhagavan's picture during sankusthapanam (holy conch shells burial). Finally in March 2011, Bhagavan approved the dates of May 6th, 7th and 8th for inauguration when the Chairman of the building project presented Him with the agenda for the inauguration.

The facility has 28,000 sq.ft. of building space and consists of 2 floors. On the first floor, there are: a grand, marble-tiled and ornate sanctum that houses Ganesha and Shirdi murthis and a 7.5'x 5' majestic portrait of Bhagavan blessed by Swami himself, a room dedicated to the Lord, an 8000 sq. ft. prayer hall and various

offices. The ground floor is composed of a multi-purpose hall, 8 classrooms, library and kitchen facilities.

The holy weekend began with grihapravesam rituals, Vedic chanting, yagna and bhajans on Friday, May 6th. On Saturday May 7th, the spiritual leaders from the major religions were present to give their respective blessings; devotees and attendees present heard invocations by a Chinese-Taoist priest, a Christian minister, a Muslim imam, a Buddhist monk and a Parsi-Zoroastrian elder.

The evening of divine blessings and melodies was entitled 'Athma Geetham.' Both devotees and attendees from the local community were treated to an enchanted evening of divine songs rendered by Sri Rupak Changkakoti, alumnus of SSIHL and singer of the famed Sai Katha and Sri T. V. Hari Haran, well-known South-Indian Bhajan singer and alumnus. Further, various representatives of the municipal, provincial and federal branches of the Canadian government were present, in addition to office bearers from regional Sai organizations including Dr. David Gries, the Zonal Chairman of the International Sai Organization. Dr. Gries brought words of congratulations on behalf of the Prasanthi Council and urged the congregants to

continue to serve the community with love and unity as Swami had taught us.

In regards to the contributions of the Scarborough Sai community, Hon. Bas Balkissoon, member of the provincial parliament for Ontario, Canada, announced during parliamentary proceedings that, "For 25 years the Sri Sathya Sai Baba Scarborough organization has engaged thousands of people from different religions, nationalities, races and economic status in the spiritual advancement of humanity through the principle[s] and practice of selfless love and service to the community. They strive to spread the human values of truth, right conduct, peace, love and non-violence to the community. I commend leaders of the Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Scarborough for their vision and persistence. I congratulate [the] community who worked extremely hard to build this landmark building - one of the largest outside [of] India."

The weekend came to a close with SSE children and youth offering their love to Sai Mata through Easwaramma Day celebrations which coincided with Mothers' Day in Canada on May 8th. youths. Further details of the Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Scarborough can be accessed through the website:

<http://www.saicentre.net>

Guidelines for Contributors

The objective of this Newsletter is to encourage Sai devotees and their families to understand Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's teachings and His emphasis on transformation. Through your participation, we can share in the process of putting His teachings into practice and realise not only our inner divinity, but the divinity in our fellow beings and the Oneness of all.

Thus, we become Swami's instruments in living the message of Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love and Non-violence where ever we are. Articles may include, personal experiences, reports on Sai retreats, workshops, special events such as guest speakers, book reviews, service activities, children's stories and most importantly, stories of transformation. Devotees skilled in art work, photography and graphic design may also contribute. Cartoons are an excellent way of delivering Swami's message visually.

General guidelines for contributors: Please communicate by e-mail your own story ideas, or thoughts about what would make this Digital newsletter more interesting for you and all our Sai Brothers and Sisters everywhere. Articles should not exceed 2-1/2 typewritten pages or 900 words. Please include your name, age (for children), gender, email address, phone # and references for all quotes. An MS Word file, emailed to the editor, is preferred. Send relevant high resolution pictures in jpeg format. EDITOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO SELECT & EDIT THE MATERIAL FOR PUBLICATION.

**Deadline for Birthday Issue
October 31, 2011**