

Workshop Session 2



# Remember Swami

Dr. Samuel Sandweiss

Dearest Beloved Swami, *Pranams* at Your Divine Lotus Feet. I offer these few words to You and pray that Your Love comes through them.

Respected elders and wonderful Sai Youth, you have been sitting patiently for a long time, and I am truly impressed by your enthusiasm and steadfastness. How remarkable to see 7,000 young adult delegates gathered here today, about 3,500 representing over 80 countries outside of India and about 3,500 wonderful young brothers and sisters from India.

I would like to first address Swami, who is Omnipresent. Although not physically here, how exhilarating to know that He is just across the hall. Swami, in front of these brothers and sisters I want to tell You how much we love You, and how grateful I am for what You have done for our family. You are the central figure in our family, giving steady, loving direction and bearing the burden of our welfare. It is because of Your Love, Your example, and the example of Your students, that my four daughters, my wife, and I have such full and happy lives. For this, I thank You, Swami.

## Remember Swami

Swami can give each and every one of us a full and happy life. I came to Swami as a young adult just like you, 35 years ago. Over the ensuing 35 years, He has shown our family that He is the doer in the family, offering direction and solving problems. This is not a philosophic idea. Swami is actually the central figure in our lives, and it is He who makes our family strong and happy.

How is this done? Swami gives us each an extraordinary gift. Its value is immeasurable, worth more than all of the gold and diamonds in the world. Swami gives Himself to each of us, placing Himself in our hearts. We carry Him with us at all times; we are never separate from Him. Swami actually lives in our hearts. We are all here because we have experienced this miracle. Now, we have to care for the treasure. I want to tell you some of my insights about how to

nurture and care for the treasure of Divinity within your own heart.

**In order to keep Swami's Love alive and see that it grows day by day with added lustre, we have to remember Him.** It's as simple as that. We have to remember Him.

Now you say that this is a simple teaching. Well, here in Prasanthi Nilayam it is simple because we can be physically near Swami all the time. We are living in His Presence, talking about Him, reading about Him, absorbing Him, and loving Him all the time. So, we can't stop thinking about Him while we are here.

But beware: the world is very treacherous, and the mind very tricky. Swami sometimes affectionately tells us that the mind is a mad monkey. Then, even worse, He says that it's a drunken mad monkey – and even worse. The natural inclination of the mind is to look into the world and get attached to sense objects. When we get attached to these objects, we can easily forget Swami who lives in our heart. Because the mind deceives us like this, Swami lovingly reminds us to remember Him and see Him in every being. The *Bhagavad Gita* tells us that we should be aware of Him every moment of existence. His teaching is simply to remember Him, remember Him, remember Him.

## Master the Mind

Swami teaches us how to master the mind and become a mastermind. **The mind is a bundle of thoughts and desires.** When the mind thinks of sense objects, it becomes attracted to these objects, desires them, and becomes attached to them. Our mind leads us to believe that the gratification of our desires, including ego gratification, brings us happiness. We want name, fame, and fortune. We want power, prestige, and position. But all these ego gratifications are short-lived. Deep down, we know this to be true.

The nature of the mind is to get attracted and then addicted to sense objects in the outer world. We must battle with the six enemies – lust, anger, pride, greed,



hatred, and attachment. When we get angry we lose our bearings and our reasonableness. We lose our sensibilities and our memory about what is important. We forget the purpose of life, and when that happens, we self-destruct. So, we have to apply a little restraint to this monkey mind.

Right now, sitting here hour after hour in Prasanthi Nilayam, we are learning self-restraint. Even though we endure discomfort and inconvenience, we apply self-control and hold in the energy. Inwardly, we offer the austerity to Swami and pray for His Love. Swami likes to see this type of self-control. I know that He likes us to sit for long periods; I've seen it for 35 years. Inwardly, I say to Him, "Swami, don't You know that my legs are aching, my back is hurting, and I can't sit anymore?" And it seems that He says, "Only another three hours." I believe that He likes us to sit quietly and with self-restraint, to bring awareness to the heart where Swami lives.

### See God in Everyone

I'd like to tell you a story about how the mind is transformed when we remember Swami. After knowing Swami for a few years, one day, as a young psychiatrist I was called to see a patient in the locked unit of a psychiatric hospital. He was a middle-aged, wasted and weathered man who was picked up on the street in a confused state. He had not bathed for days, was incoherent, dirty, and reeked of an awful odour. What to do with such a man? Not only was he dirty and foul-smelling, but to make matters worse he had been burned over 70% of his body. Most of his ears, eyelids, and nose were burned off. You could see the holes on the front of his face where his nose once was. Unsightly scars deformed his body and squeezed his hands almost closed.

As I looked at this poor soul I said to myself, "Oh my God, how can he stand to be in such a body?" I felt revulsion toward him. I wanted to leave. Then I caught myself and remembered – "This must be Swami." I reminded myself that if Swami was to come to me, He would do it in a way that would show me my weakness – my inability to see Him in everyone. "My God, this must be Swami," I thought.

As soon as I remembered Swami, everything changed. I didn't want to be like the Shirdi Sai devotee who approached Shirdi Baba and said, "You told me that You were going to visit me, and You never came." Shirdi Baba replied, "I came as the dog wanting your food, but you beat me away. You chased me away." I didn't want to deny Swami like that. The strange thing was that not only did I think that this tortured soul was Swami, I had a strange inner feeling much deeper than thought, an awesome feeling that this person actually was Swami. In an instant, I experienced a wonderful

transformation of my feelings and thinking. I liked this man!

I liked this man. I wanted to be in his presence. I looked deeply into his eyes to see if I could see Swami looking back. I looked at his deformed lips, trying to make out Swami's smile. I wanted a smile from him, and I wanted to do my best for him. Remembering Swami brought awareness of His teachings about *Sathya*, *Dharma*, *Shanthi*, *Prema*, and *Ahimsa*, I wanted this patient to have peace. I didn't want to ignore him in any way. When I came to see him everyday, I thought I was having *Darshan* of Swami. How could this transformation come about? It all followed from remembering Swami. This is the way to fan the small flame of love in our hearts so that it grows day by day with added lustre. We have to remind ourselves. We must retrain our mind and transform it into an instrument that sees only Swami. In short, remember Him, remember Him, remember Him.

### God Bears Our Burdens

Once my young daughter asked Swami, "How can we get closer to You?" He said, "**You have to talk to me all the time and give me your pain.**" This is a very deep teaching. Be ever vigilant. Swami has even described the process as a fight. He has said, "Follow the Master; Face the devil; **Fight** to the end; Finish the game." Yes, we face difficult situations – and when facing them, we must think of Swami. Remembering Him during difficulties takes **practice, practice, practice**. Practise like a good tennis or basketball player; be creative and persistent in keeping your attention on Swami. This is a critical step because Swami has said that if we offer everything to Him, if we meditate on Him, serve Him, devote ourselves to Him, worship Him, remember Him, if we know that He is always with us, providing for us in this world and the next, He will bear the burden of our welfare.

Will Swami really bear the burden of our welfare? Can He teach us how to be completely unaffected by adverse conditions? Can He teach us how to experience endless bliss and peace and how to give and receive unconditional love? The only way to find out is to practise and see. I can tell you from my own personal experience that this practice constitutes the art of living and is the path to personal freedom and happiness. I have not fully mastered the practice of offering everything to Swami, but have had enough experience to say with conviction that **if we live our lives with Swami and offer everything to Him, we will have full and happy lives**. Who can offer you such an opportunity? Any businessman can tell you that this deal cannot be turned down. When we turn over to Swami all of our troubles and pains, He gives us boundless Love in return. You can't beat this deal!

### Offer All to God

Swami says, “A man filled with love has great peace of mind, purity of heart, and is unaffected by adverse conditions, failures, or losses.” By remembering Swami all the time and experiencing love for Him, we can achieve peace of mind, purity of heart, and be unaffected by adverse conditions, failures or losses. We cannot learn this truth from books. **It must be learned through experience, by constantly remembering Swami and offering all acts to Him.** When I remembered Swami and felt His Love, I immediately understood how to practise the five human values – *Sathya, Dharma, Shanthi, Prema, and Ahimsa* – in caring for my burnt and deformed patient.

In February 2004, Swami instructed me to bring Him the book *With Love Man Is God*, by *Guru Poornima* time, July 2004. That gave me about five months to finish a book that I had been working on for five years. He had hardly talked to me about the book but for a few short comments, showing me that He was aware of it. Even so, I had the feeling that He was actually writing the book for me.

I was nervous about the five-month deadline. To get the book ready for publication and then have it printed within that time would mean all-out hard work for the next five months. I would have to complete final writing and editing, choose about 100 pictures and prepare them for placement within the text. I knew from past experiences that Swami frequently has us work very hard and face many challenges in order that we confront our own ego, learn forbearance, and develop faith that He will help us.

Almost every day of those five months, there was a big obstacle to overcome. This prompted frequent conversations with Swami: “Swami, I know that I can’t overcome this obstacle by myself. You told me to bring the book by July. That can only happen if You lift this obstacle. So Swami, now I give the book to You and ask for Your Grace.”

This spiritual attitude should not be mistaken for giving up one’s responsibility. It is essential to work as hard, and with as much talent and skill as possible. Yet, when we meet an overwhelming obstacle, we offer the work to Swami. We become aware that our own gains or losses depend upon Swami. Almost every day, I reached the point of offering the task to Swami because the obstacles I faced were so imposing.

I’ll tell you about one of those obstacles: A young adult was helping me with the desktop publishing software, *InDesign*. This particular young man, who knew much more about this programme than I, lived about 80 miles north of me. Early one morning, I packed my computer and took a train to his apartment. While we were installing the *InDesign* programme, we came upon a message stating, “wrong activation code.”

After all the effort and travel, I was met with the obstacle of a wrong activation code. I called tech support and asked for a solution. I was told that the code could not be given over the telephone. I would have to show proof of purchase and request the code in writing by mail. I told the technician that I didn’t have time as I was working with the book designer right then. The technician simply reiterated that I would have to send the request by mail. As much as I pleaded my case, he held his ground. I felt stymied and in frustration I prayed to Swami, “Dear Swami, I am doing my best to bring You the book by July, but cannot get over this obstacle by myself. I offer the obstacle to You and know that success or failure rests with You.”

There comes a time in life when we reenact the drama of Arjuna and Krishna in the middle of the battlefield. Arjuna felt overwhelmed by the impending war and threw down his bow. Many times in life, we feel overwhelmed by obstacles; at those times, if we look to Swami, He will provide direction. **The outcome might not always be what we like, but He encourages us to fight on, and promises that, by His Grace, we will have full and successful lives.**

I performed the spiritual practice of offering all to Him, and in this particular case Swami brought me through the obstacle in a pleasing way. There was a moment of silence, and then the technician said, “Well, I can understand your situation, and here is your activation code.” Then, as if nothing had happened, we were able to continue on with the book.

### God Is the Doer

Almost every day was like this. As each obstacle appeared, I had a conversation with Swami. “Swami, I can go no further; You have to do it.” Then the obstacle would mysteriously disappear. Every day, I practised this spiritual exercise until it was easier and easier to remember. We have to work hard and diligently with as much talent and effort as we can, and when we meet obstacles, call out for Swami’s help. Like a magical movie, almost every day, an obstacle appeared and Swami removed it. The book was finally printed and in my hands two days before my trip. Just preceding its arrival I had a dream.

I was standing in front of a large apartment building. Swami was in disguise, looking like a young real estate agent in a black suit and with His hair slicked back tightly against His scalp. I knew that the real estate agent was actually Swami teaching us about the **real state**. Swami approached me, and I bowed humbly before Him. Excitedly I blurted out, “Swami I am bringing a book to You.” And do you know what Swami told me? He said, “I am bringing a book to **you!**” Yes, of course, who is doing what to whom?



This is a big lesson. We get involved and absorbed in the world and think that we are the doer. When we get into trouble we cry out to Swami for help. Then Swami comes and carries us to success. When all is done and finished, even though Swami clearly has done the work, we take the credit. At the end we announce, “Didn’t I do a good job, Swami?” And then He simply reminds us, “What are you talking about? I’m giving the book to **you**.”

This is important to understand. Swami can give us a full and happy life. He can make our family life, personal life, and spiritual life so happy. Sometimes we lose sight of this fundamental fact, forget Swami, and suffer from being attached to the material world. **The way out of this predicament is to remember Swami at all times. He is the source of inspiration, discrimination and Grace.** He saves and sustains. So, keep attention on Him throughout every moment of existence. If we can’t do this every moment as the *Gita* tells us, then remember Him at least once a day – or at meal times – but remember Him we must.

This teaching is at the core of our *sadhana*. Offer Him our pain and receive His Love. This is a heroic kind of undertaking. When we offer ourselves to God like this, I know that the gods and goddesses in the spiritual realm are cheering us on and the whole world is uplifted.

When we take to the task of remembering Swami, offering Him our best efforts, and surrendering the

fruits of our labour to Him, He promises to bear the burden of our welfare. He promises to take our hand and walk with us like a friend, to lead us like a guide and guard us from evil and temptation. He will be our staff and support. He tells us that we will draw nearer to Him. We will enter into Him and begin to understand His mystery. We will develop and achieve Divine qualities. We will melt into Him, merge into Him and become Him.

Dear young brothers and sisters, let us take each other’s hand, and, saying Swami’s Name, offer our best to Him. Let us develop ourselves as best as we can, serve Him, and offer pleasure and pain to Him. Then, He will carry us and bear the burden of our welfare. Let us walk with Him, melt in Him, merge in Him, and become Him. Sai Ram.

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Dr. Samuel Sandweiss has been a practising psychiatrist for 40 years and has written three books about Swami, *Sai Baba: The Holy Man and the Psychiatrist*, *Spirit and the Mind*, and the recently published *With Love Man Is God*. His books have brought many devotees to Swami. He and his wife oversee Birth Day Publishing Company, which publishes books about Sai Baba by Western authors. He has served on the Sathya Sai Baba Council of the United States since its beginning in 1975. He has had a Sai Centre in his home for 33 years.





# Realise Your True Nature with His Love and Grace

Sri B.N. Narasimha Murthy

Respected elders, my young brothers and sisters!

The son of God who lived in flesh and blood two thousand years ago said, "My kingdom is not of this earth. My kingdom shall be wherever two or three of you meet in Love, in wonder at the loveliness of life, in good cheer, and in remembrance of Me."

Dear brothers and sisters! We are here, thousands and thousands of us, meeting to remember Him, to be in His Loving Presence. Our lives are filled with love because we have seen God, in the most adorable loving form that ever adorned the face of the earth. We are in good cheer because all of our cares and concerns are lost under His loving care. We live in love because that is the one and the only Message of our Lord. We live in love. We experience it every moment of our lives.

First, I would like to congratulate the youth from Karnataka for making us feel Swami's Love in that gorgeous dining hall – Love manifested in concrete form as food! It is not just food for the body; their love, their humility, and their faith in Swami: all that is food for our soul.

We are here gathered, aspiring to be men and women of God - His messengers - to heal the wounds of the world which is deeply in conflict and misery.

My dear brothers and sisters, every man and woman who is chosen by God to be His instrument in His Mission has one secret. There are two aspects to this wonderful secret. These two facets of that wonderful secret will make us really men and women of God, will make us messengers of His Love, and leaders of an ailing world. One facet finds beautiful expression in a song composed by Meerabai, the great saint-poetess of India. The other message is revealed in the wonderful words of Brother Lawrence, in his immortal work, *'Practising the Presence of God.'*

## Cry for God

First, let me speak to you about Meerabai. Meerabai said, "I nurtured and brought up the tender creeper of love for God in my heart, watering it with my tears; now the creeper has spread all over, yielding to me wonderful fruits of bliss." That is one secret, one facet of the secret.

*"Asuvana jala seenchi seenchi prembeli boyee,  
Ab to bel phailgayee aanandaphala hoyee"*

These are the exact words of Meerabai. It is only with our tears, many times unshed, that we can really bring up the tender creeper of love for God in our hearts. Khalil Gibran said, "The most sacred of our tears do not seek our eyes." What he meant was that there are unshed tears preserved in our hearts like pearls in an oyster shell.

Anyone who wants to be a true devotee of God should long to shed these tears. When a man or woman sheds tears in pangs of separation from God, the day is not far off when God will make him or her shed tears of joy from union with Him. "When winter comes, can spring be far behind?" asked the great poet, Shelley.

Dr. Samuel Sandweiss said we have to share our pains with Him. What is our real pain? **Real pain is not feeling oneness with Him, who is our very heart and soul.** That is our real pain. The panacea for this suffering was revealed by Swami yesterday in His Discourse. He said, **"Where are you seeking God? You are God!"** We have to realise this truth.

Kabirdas said:

*"Mujhko kahaa doonde bande  
Main to tere paas mein  
Main to tere shwaaas mein  
Main to tere vishwaas mein!"*

"Where do you search for Me? Do you look for Me in a temple or a masjid? Am I on a hilltop, or on the shores of a lake? I am always with you. I am always near you. I live in your breath. I reside in your faith!"

The real pain is that we feel separate from God. The root of all problems is that we feel separated from God. If we want to return to Him, the only way is to pine for Him. That is what Meerabai meant in that beautiful poem. That is the power of longing, or a burning aspiration for God, as expressed by Sri Aurobindo.

## Live in His Presence

Now coming to Brother Lawrence; he gave the world the other facet of the secret of a man or woman of God. He said, "I found in books many ways of going to God, but I thought that they puzzled me. I threw away all the books and started living with God. I chose to be with God always. As often as my mind wandered away from His Holy Presence, I recalled it

to the remembrance of Him. By often repeating the same act, it became a spontaneous habit. Now I walk before God in faith, in humbleness, and in love. I have no will but that of God. I will not take even a straw from the ground against His orders, or with any other motivation but for love of Him."

These are the two facets, my dear young brothers and sisters. You aspire to be close to Swami, physically and also spiritually.

After having lived for nearly four decades with young men and children who are bound to Swami with the silken thread of love, whenever I see the blossoming of a young heart in a child, whether a boy or a girl, I feel overwhelmed by the wonderful Love of Swami which relieves His children of the pain of separation from Him and grants them the bliss of union with Him.

Among His children are those who are His students in the University or in schools. In fact there are the other students, students for life - the young men and women who come to Him voluntarily. Among the students who are admitted to the university and the schools, there are those who have been brought to Him by their parents. But all of you have come to Him from many countries on your own. You did not come here because your parents wanted you to come here. You came here because you yearned for Him, the great Lord, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

### The Power of Longing

It was Khalil Gibran who said, "There is a space between man's aspirations and his attainments. It can only be traversed by the power of his longing." We aspire for something. If we have to attain it, we have to long for it.

The *Upanishad* declares,

*"Naayamaatma pravachanena labhyah  
na medhayaa na bahunaa shrutena  
yamevaihsha vrunute tena labhyah  
tasyaisha Atma vivrunute tanum shvaam"*

"God cannot be won over by giving lectures or by listening to lectures; nor can He be attained by a brilliant brain. **God reveals Himself to the one who chooses Him and Him alone to the exclusion of everything else.**"

That is what Jesus meant when He said, "Whoever wants to follow Me, let him take up his cross and follow in My footsteps." There is a beautiful book - *'Imitation of Christ'* by Thomas Kempis. He says, "There are many who are willing to share heaven with Jesus, but there is none to carry the burden of His cross."

**The power of longing is everything. The aspiration to love Swami, the pining to merge in Him, the yearning to experience His Presence - that is everything on the spiritual path.**

Let me recount one of my experiences. I came to Swami more than four decades ago as a boy of eighteen years. The first words He spoke to me were, "You are worried about your future. Don't worry about your future. Your future is safe and secure in Swami's Hands." Those were the words of assurance that He gave me. Within five years, I decided to take to this path - the path of total dedication to God-realisation and service to mankind.

I was living on the western coast of India in one of the *Ashrams* attached to the educational campus of Swami. It was a very beautiful place; it was surrounded by hills all around. As a young man of twenty-two with love for God and love for nature, I enjoyed living there.

I used to go up the hills almost every evening and watch the sunset. That provided inspiration for my contemplation and meditation in the evenings.

One evening, after watching a very beautiful sunset, I came down to the *Ashram*. There was a book - *'Ramakrishna, the Great Master'* - on my table; I had left it there before going out. I opened it at random and read the passage that describes Sri Ramakrishna's visit to Brindavan, the holy land sanctified by the Divine sport of the *Avatar* Sri Krishna as a young boy. Ramakrishna was standing on the banks of the River Yamuna watching the sunset. His mind went back to five thousand years ago and he said to his companions, "The same river Yamuna is flowing; the same cows and calves are returning to their homes; the same cowherds are bringing them home! But where is my Krishna?" And he lost all body-consciousness. He went into *Bhava Samadhi*, the blissful state of experience of oneness with God.

That episode touched my heart, and it served as a very powerful springboard for my contemplation. In my contemplation, I beheld myself in a very beautiful and heavenly setting filled with the strains of soul-stirring music. I was standing in front of a huge door. I said to the Lord, "Swami, everything is absolutely Divine here. I can feel Your Presence, but I am not able to see You! Where are You?" I opened that door only to find another closed door. I opened the second one, and there was another closed door. And finally when I opened the seventh door, I saw Swami standing there, smiling. I knelt down, kissed His Feet and submitted to Him, "Swami, I have crossed seven doors to meet You here." Swami replied, "Look behind Me; I have crossed fourteen doors to meet you here!" **We have to take just one step and Swami will take a hundred steps towards us.**

### What Should We Aspire For?

I was a very frail-minded young man and a "doubting Thomas" when I first came to Swami. I had

hundreds of doubts and questions. It was my good fortune that at a later date, Swami personally answered every one of my questions.

My dear young brothers and sisters, I can tell you, based on the authenticity of my experience, that every one of you can become a wonderful instrument in the Hands of Swami. **Today's world needs Swami's Message; it needs His Love and compassion. We can all become His messengers in the trouble-torn world.**

Living and working with Swami's students and other young men over a long period of time, I have observed that generally there are three types of aspirations in their young hearts. The first is the aspiration of those who never had the opportunity to interact with Swami. They have been having Swami's *Darshan* for many years, but they have never had the good fortune of a personal interaction with Swami or of being in His close proximity. Their aspiration is very, very simple. Many such young men have come to me in despair and said, "Sir, this is all I want. I want to talk to Swami and Swami should talk to me." My dear brothers and sisters, isn't this your aspiration as well? Yes or no? (Yes! Yes!)

Second is the aspiration of those young men and women who have had some interaction with Swami or those who have enjoyed His loving proximity for some time. Their aspiration is: "I should continue to enjoy His proximity and loving interaction with Him."

And the third aspiration is one that liberates you from both, the first and second aspirations; it is of a little higher order and more evolved. Many such aspirants have told me, "Sir, I want to realise and experience Swami in my heart. I want to feel His Presence every moment of my life. I want to become an effective instrument in His Hands, in His Mission." That is the third aspiration.

How do we achieve this lofty aspiration? When you are fired up with the ideals of the third aspiration, the first and the second fade into insignificance. Once a well-known saint of Karnataka State came to our little school in Mudelahalli. Today, it is a well-developed institution. At that time, it was very small in size, though not in its idealistic aspirations. There were just two small buildings, one for the school and the other for the hostel. The strength of the school was just fifty-four boys. The visitor was known to be a great saint and a man of realisation. When I took him to our little prayer hall, where there was a beautiful photograph of Swami, he prostrated in front of that photograph. In my ignorance I asked him, "Swamiji, have you met Baba at anytime?" He laughed and said, "I see Him every moment of my life, everywhere."

### How to Conquer the Mind

For those who see Him every moment of their life, everywhere, there is no need to interact with Swami physically. Swami is not the physical form at all! It is a sacrilege and blasphemy to limit Him to the form; His reality is much beyond His physical form. He tells us, "You are God! You and I are one!" We have to experience this truth. But, what is our problem? Young men and women, the problem is our own mind. The problems of all serious spiritual aspirants boil down to this. In the words of Khalil Gibran, "Should we all confide our sins to one another, we all would laugh at one another for lack of originality!"

Duryodhana, the great villain of *Mahabharata*, expressed the same truth most succinctly when he confessed,

*"Jaanaami dharmam na cha me pravrittih  
Jaanaamyadharmam na cha me nivrittih"*

"I know what is right; but, I do not have the will-power to practise what is right. I know what is wrong; and, I do not have the will-power to give up what is wrong."

That is the problem. That is the tragic human predicament everywhere. So the question is how do we control our minds? Among the many questions given to me to answer this morning from Sai Youth, that is one very important question, "To what extent can we control our minds?" My dear brothers and sisters, **if you have found Him in your heart by His loving Grace, you can control the mind and senses completely.**

The *Upanishad* declares,

*"Bhidyate hrudayagranthih chidyante sarva  
samshayaah  
ksheeyante chaasya karmaani tasmin drushte  
paraavare"*

"When one beholds God in one's heart, the knot of ignorance in the heart is cut asunder; all doubts and questions vanish once and for all and the evil consequences of one's past actions are dissolved."

All that we have to do is to see Him face-to-face in our heart, which is very much possible, only if we choose.

Mind is not an enemy to be vanquished; it is our younger brother to be trained with love. Control of mind and senses does not mean complete suppression of mind and senses. It means that we have to make our mind and senses do what we want them to do and utilise them to attain the twin objectives of God-realisation and service to mankind.

How do we do it? There is no man or woman on earth at any time who conquered his or her mind without bountiful Grace from God. Every man and woman is weak without His Grace and Love. But with His Love and Grace, no man or woman will be weak.



How do we attain Divine Grace? We have to long and pray for it; and, we have to establish regular communion with Him through prayers, *namasmarana*, *bhajan*, meditation and loving service to Him who is in the form of our fellow beings. When He gives, He will give Himself to us completely; that is one thing for certain.

Here are some more practical tips to control the mind. The best way to control the mind is to keep it happy by right means. All the time you can keep it happy. The greatest happiness, no doubt, is in union with God. Swami says, **“True happiness is union with God.”** But the minds of young men and women are not stable enough to be in that state always.

Once, I submitted to Swami a question that bothers most of the seekers on the spiritual path: “Swami, it is not surprising that in those who have not tasted the sweetness of Divine joy, the senses and mind will drag them down to the sensual pleasures. But we have tasted, at least to some extent, spiritual joy; but still our senses drag us down. Why is it?” He gave an answer which only He can. He said, *“Dvaitabhaavamunde varaku adi thappindi kaadu, Nayana!”* (“As long as you feel that you are separate from God, it is bound to happen.”) The degrading power of mind and senses will prevail over us only till we experience oneness with God.

#### Desire the Highest – God

But there is a problem. Most of us cannot be in that state always, though that is our ultimate goal. Then how can we keep the mind always happy? Man has five sources of happiness, in ascending order: The sensual pleasure is the lowest level of happiness. The next level of happiness takes the form of sports, athletics, and other physical pursuits. Third is the emotional happiness which can be derived from music, literature, beauty of nature, loving and caring for others and any labour of love. The fourth level is the intellectual happiness when we pursue study and research in any subject that we love – science, humanities, or commerce. It is not correct to say that intellectual happiness is higher than emotional happiness. In fact, emotional happiness is more satisfying than intellectual happiness. We can surely say that both of them are of a higher level as compared to physical happiness. The ultimate level of happiness that man is capable of is spiritual happiness.

As a young man, I tried to keep the mind happy always by resorting to one of the four higher levels of happiness so that I did not stoop to the lowest level of sensual pleasures. I played games with boys: cricket, volleyball, table tennis. I kept my mind very happy. In fact, I tell you, when you win a point by a smash in table tennis, tennis or any other game, you will feel the thrill of union with God. It is no blasphemy to say this! At

other times, I kept my mind happy by reading ennobling literature like novels, short stories, or dramas. A novel like Dostoevsky’s *‘Karamazov Brothers,’* which was a favourite book of Albert Einstein, or *‘God’s Pauper’* by Kazantzakis and the plays of Shakespeare and Rabindranath Tagore gave me great joy, and kept my mind happy. I pursued the study of philosophy of the *Upanishads* and of many of the eastern and western philosophers. That also gave me great happiness. At the same time, I practised meditation as long as I could as a means for being in the Presence of God. Thus, I could keep myself happy almost always.

A mind in despair or sorrow is most uncontrollable. A happy mind is easily amenable to control. And I tell you today, the mind does not trouble me much. Since a depressed mind is the most uncontrollable, never allow depression or despair to enter your minds.

Sometimes some young men have asked me, “Sir, how do we give up desires?” I say, it is not possible to give up all desires. Even Swami has a desire. **What is that single desire of Swami? ‘Lokaah samasthaa sukhino bhavanthu’** – May everyone be happy, every being be happy in all the worlds. That is His desire.

There is no way of giving up all desires. But there is a way of replacing a lower desire with a higher desire. It is possible; and the highest desire is desire for God. To those who have attained God, the highest desire is to help their fellowmen. What constitutes a lower desire and what comprises a higher desire for a person depends on the stage of evolution of that person. It is not the same for everyone.

What is a higher desire? Suppose there is a man who is addicted to drugs. If you go and advise him, “Take to meditation; you will be very happy.” He will reply, “Whatever joy you get in meditation, I get it in drugs!” In fact, an American young man said the same thing to Swami Vivekananda when he was explaining to a group of young people the nature of the state of *samadhi* - union with God. One young man stood up and said, “Swamiji, I also experience that joy; but my way is through drugs. What’s the difference between your joy and my joy?” Swami Vivekananda replied, “A man who experiences the happiness that I am talking about, emerges as a prophet. A man who enters the kind of happiness you are talking about comes out as a scoundrel!”

Therefore, you cannot tell a drunkard the highest spiritual truths, but you can coax him to aspire to something higher by saying, “See my dear, today there is a wonderful basketball match on TV. Come on, let’s watch!” Suppose you are in Bangalore, you can tell the young friend, “Today in the Chinna Swami Cricket Stadium, Sachin Tendulkar is playing. Come on, let’s go!” For such an individual, that is a higher desire.

For a young professional with ambitious pursuits in the world, desire for money, position or name and fame is a higher desire. But for a spiritual aspirant, it is a lower desire. **So we have to replace our lower desires with higher desires, until finally we aspire for the highest – the desire for God.**

**Practise His Presence**

Finally, I would like to answer another question which I have been asked: “How can we practise His Presence always?” I have a simple formula:

***Look behind, thank God.***

***Look ahead, trust God.***

***Look around, serve God.***

***Look within, see God.***

***Look beyond, be God.***

Look behind, thank God. When we look at our past, we can recount any number of incidents when Swami has rescued us from the most impossible situations. Thank Him; gratitude is the key to the kingdom of God. Feel grateful to God for everything that He has given, for everything that He has done for you. Immediately you feel His Presence.

Look ahead, trust God. When you look to the future, why do you feel worried? The One who has led you till this point is not going to ditch you now. He is going to hold your hand and take you till the end. Trust Him.

Look around and serve God. Look at the service that our Karnataka youth are rendering in the dining hall during this conference. Anybody who goes there feels that love. Where there is His Love, there is also His Presence.

Look within, see God. Just look within and you will see Him, since He is there all the time. In fact, He is the only real Presence in our hearts.

Look beyond, be God. When you look beyond your individual existence, you are none other than God. The one and the only truth is that He alone exists. Look beyond this little personality of body-mind complex. You will know that you are God.

Thank you, brothers and sisters for your patience.  
Sai Ram.

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Sri B.N. Narasimha Murthy, an engineer by qualification, is a keen student of philosophy as well as a lover of sports. His association with Bhagavan’s educational institutions dates back nearly three decades. He has served in the Sri Sathya Sai Loka Seva educational institutions in Alike and Muddenhalli and thereafter, also in Prasanthi Nilayam. He is currently Warden of the Hostel, Sri Sathya Sai University, Brindavan Campus and Convener, Sri Sathya Sai Vriddhashrama (Old age home), Whitefield. He has authored several books including *Sathyam Sivam Sundaram* Volume 5 and is working on Volume 6.





# Question and Answer Session

## Workshop Number 2

**QUESTION 1: How do you balance all of Swami's teachings: a) if your work prevents you from attending the Sai Centre while you are doing your duty; b) you are supposed to take care of your parents but you cannot because you are too far away; c) if you are married to someone who does not share your faith and beliefs, how do you respect his or her beliefs and share Swami's teachings in your home with your children.**

**Dr. Sandweiss:** Dearest Swami! Please answer these questions through me. First, if your work prevents you from attending the Sai Centre but you are doing your duty, then you do not have to attend the Sai Centre and you have to do your duty. We have to be very practical and do what we have to do.

There is no easy, single solution to all the above problems. Each must be carefully evaluated to gain deep understanding. Swami teaches understanding and then adjustment. Remember, adjustment means the capacity to bend and compromise. It is a chance to offer sacrificial love and give up stubbornness. Understanding the circumstances and making intelligent, practical, and loving adjustments are very important elements in spiritual life.

Using and sharpening our *buddhi*, the intellect, allows us to evaluate correctly and leads us to *Atma*. Problems are to be expected, troubles are always there. We can transcend them when we apply our *buddhi* to the task of finding the right balance between work, personal, and spiritual life.

So what are the facets of *buddhi*? The first aspect of *buddhi* that is challenged by troubles is our faith. Swami has told us that *buddhi* can be illustrated in the form of a bird. The head of the bird is faith. Troubles call on us to deepen our faith in Swami. The tail of the bird is *yoga* or balance. Balance means to not accentuate and increase suffering by allowing the senses and selfish desire to grow unchecked. The left wing of the bird is truth. Truth means evaluating the problem clearly with the understanding that problems are given by Swami to teach faith, detachment, and forbearance. The right wing of the bird is unity in thought, word, and deed – unity in head, heart, and hand. This unity is the sign of true integrity.

Even when applying the most purified *buddhi*, the world can present such horrendous problems that even Arjuna threw his bow down and said, "Krishna! You have to save me." We have to use all the powers we have at hand – our mind, body, and *buddhi*, and then

we have to offer the problem to Swami. This offering is very, very important.

When there is trouble, realise that trouble is good for me. "Think: trouble is my friend, trouble is good for me," says Swami. So how do we face the trouble? We face it with patience, perseverance, and purity. Remember *buddhi*, the flying bird. Faith is always called for. Balance is always necessary. In these days of trouble we need to lead a life of truth with unity of thought, word, and deed. Use *buddhi* and then offer all problems to Swami.

**QUESTION 2: How do we experience Swami in our everyday lives as we go through the hustle and bustle of everyday life? What is the best way to deepen our inner voice and have confidence in ourselves? How can we receive guidance from Swami and how can we be an example of Swami's Love in this world?**

**Sri Narasimha Murthy:** Let me answer this question in two parts. The first question is, "How do we listen to our inner voice?" A single line answer would be that **we should first stop listening to all outer voices. Then, we will listen to our inner voice.** The outer voice could be from our friends, brothers and sisters, husband and wife or children. The other part of the outer voice is the noise of our own mind. You hear the inner voice in the silence of the mind.

I would like to share my practical experience. Every day, after meditation in the morning I refer all the problems and questions that I have about the activities of the day to Swami whom I have felt in my heart. Promptly I listen to His voice and get all the answers. Therefore, the first thing we have to do is slow down the speed of movement of our mind, especially that of desire and anger. Lord Krishna says, "*Shaknothi hai va yah sodhum prak shareera vimokshanaath, kamakrodhodbhavam vegam, sa yukthaha sa sukhee naraha* (He who is able to control his desire and anger, even here (in this world) before he gives up his body, he is a *Yogi*, he is a happy man. (*Bhagavad Gita Chapter V, Verse 23*))."

How do you evaluate the culture of a man or a woman? Swami Vivekananda said that the culture of a man is skin deep, just scratch and the animal will come out. How do you really know the culture of a man or a woman? Here is the yardstick. **To what extent you are able to slow down the speed of desire and anger in your mind, that is your culture.** That is only possible with the remembrance of God, with the experi-



ence of spiritual joy. When you have spiritual joy, the inner voice speaks to you all the time. When we are immersed in sensual pleasures, the inner voice is as good as dead. The inner voice is like a good friend who will continue to speak to us only if we listen to him. If we refuse to listen to him again and again he will stop speaking to us.

The second part of the question I have already answered. Live in His Presence.

**QUESTION 3: How can we remember Baba at work while we are balancing our career and personal lives?**

**Dr. Sandweiss:** All of life is a balance. It is important for us to learn proper balance when confronting problems. In this regard, I'd like to draw attention to a formula that Swami gave us at the Sai Youth Conference ten years ago, in July 1997. He was talking about the kind of balanced service that brings us enlightenment, awareness of the inner voice, and peace. He gave us a formula in the form of a word "BHAGAVATHAMU" (the name of one of the major Hindu *Puranas*, an ancient story of the life and *leelas* of the Lord). He said there are five elements to this: Bha, Ga, Va, Tha, Mu. Keep this *mantra* with you. Bha, Ga, Va, Tha, Mu, Bha, Ga, Va, Tha, Mu. Put it in your heart and infuse all activities with it.

**Bha: Bhakthi (devotion).** Anytime we are up against a problem, remember Swami, feel His Love, and ask for His direction. Remember that all work done with love is God's work, be it in our jobs or at the Sai Centre. That is *Bha, Bhakthi*.

**Ga: Gnana (wisdom).** Perform all acts with the awareness that we are doing it with God, for God, to God. Troubles are a learning challenge given to us by Swami. Don't be frightened; know that He is with you. Why fear when He is here. Look for Him, hold on to Him, and persevere. *Ga, Gnana*, is to look at all problems as given by God, in order to see Him in all and offer all to Him.

**Va: Vairagya (detachment).** Notice that when we are frightened or worried, it is because of ego. Pray to become empty of ego – to become an empty screen. Let go of selfish desires, the six enemies, and the ego. Troubles scrape us and make us remember *Bha-Ga-Va-Tha-Mu*. So *Va: Vairagya*, let go of ego and experience freedom.

You are young enthusiastic Sai devotees. In your exuberance you might think that you should be able to overcome problems and achieve perfection quickly. No. Patience and perseverance are needed, and then purity will come—patience, perseverance and purity. When we demand immediate results, we have to look at our egos. If we fail, offer outcome and ego to Swami. Swami teaches us to let go of all attachment to ego. He teaches *Va – Vairagya*, detachment.

**Tha: Thapas (austerity).** Any activity that involves control of oneself and requires sacrifice is austerity. That is part of love. Look what it takes for you just to come here and see Swami. We need to adjust to discomforts and inconveniences and still smile. *Thapas* generates inner energy and teaches the very important lesson of self-control.

**Mu: Mukthi (liberation).** When we have these—*Bha (bhakthi)*, *Ga (gnana)*, *Va (vairagya)*, *Tha (thapas)*—then we get *mukthi*, liberation. Infuse all acts with *Bha-Ga-Va-Tha-Mu* and we will be emptied of selfishness and ego and a great light will come into us.

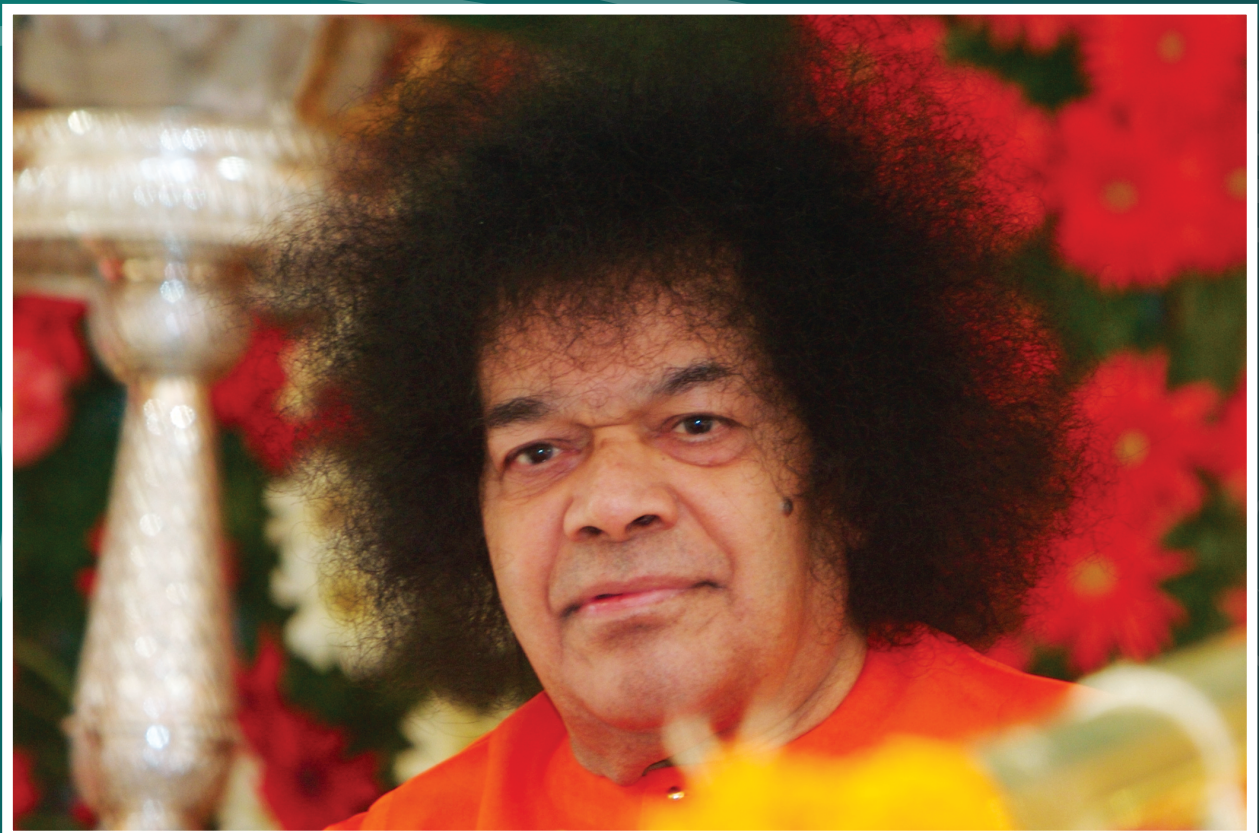
**QUESTION 4: Swami gives us dreams. How should we interpret them?**

**Sri Narasimha Murthy:** Dreams... we experience two kinds of dreams. One is vision-like dreams. They are not dreams but actually visions. They are very, very clear. We see everything correctly, we listen to everything correctly, and we remember everything correctly. Those are the first kind of dreams. Second type of dreams are mere aberrations, reflections of our subconscious mind. Swami says these types of dreams happen because of our indigestion.

Regarding dreams in which Swami appears, Swami has said, "Which dreams are real? Dreams relating to God are real. You see Me in the dream. I allow you to do *namaskar*, I bless you, I grant you Grace; such dreams are true."

**If the Lord or your Guru appears in your dream it must be the result of His Will and your sadhana,** not due to any of the other reasons that cause dreams. How do we interpret dreams? These vision-like dreams are visions, are messages of God in the form of images. It was W. B. Yeats who said, "Wisdom often speaks in images." It is a big science in itself, the interpretation of dreams. But each person who has got the dream is at a vantage point to interpret it for their own self. Suppose you are not able to interpret, you can go to somebody in whom you have confidence. But one thing is certain. **When Swami appears in your dream, He has blessed you with His Love and Grace.**

Workshop Session 3



# The Divine Touch

Mr. Leonardo Gutter

I humbly offer my *Pranams* at the Divine Lotus Feet of our Beloved Bhagavan.

Dear brothers and sisters, Sai Ram to all of you.

I am honoured to have the opportunity to speak to you. I would like to start this talk by asking you a question and giving some possible answers to this question. Why are you here today? Not only here in this hall participating in this World Youth Conference, in the abode of the *Poorna Avatar* of this age, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, but more importantly, living on the planet earth. I will share with you some possible answers.

We are here today because we have struggled for a very long time to be here. In the long process of human evolution, there is a moment when one feels that life is not merely meant for eating, sleeping, drinking and enjoying the gratification of the senses. Eventually there comes a feeling that there must be a higher purpose in life. **The search for this higher purpose is the beginning of the spiritual path.** After many lives of this searching, the seeker may feel the need for help in this search, and prays for guidance. At some point, the seeker may find guidance in the form of spiritual teachings and becomes a student of spiritual knowledge. But eventually the spiritual aspirant realises that studying spiritual books is not as important as actually putting these lessons into practice. Finally, the aspirant realises that winning God's Love is the highest achievement. At this point the seeker becomes a devotee.

## Spiritual Evolution

Why are you here? Being here in Bhagavan's Presence is a sign that you have undergone many lifetimes of spiritual evolution. Many of you have traveled thousands of miles to be here, but really you have traveled thousands of lives to be here. This is a special meeting. Let me tell you that you may have young bodies, but each one of you have an old soul that has traveled through many, many lives and worked very hard to have this golden opportunity. So this

World Youth Conference is a special conference of old souls in young bodies.

Let me share with you an experience I had with Bhagavan on my first trip to His Divine Presence. I came to see Swami because I heard of Him in Argentina, and I also had a special dream about Him. So, I decided to come and see if Bhagavan was the *Poorna Avatar* of this age. I met Bhagavan for the first time in Madras (called Chennai now) when He was visiting that city.

One day, there was a special cultural programme and I had the good fortune to be seated not far from where Swami was sitting. So I decided to approach Him and introduce myself. I went to Him and when I was by His side, I gave Him my visiting card so He would know who I was. How naive I was. I did not realise at that moment that He knew me perfectly well, since He created me. It was I who did not know who He was. When I gave Him my visiting card, He looked at me with a smile and while touching my hand said, "You are very lucky." Yes, dear brothers and sisters, let me tell you, we all are very lucky and you are especially lucky. We as human beings have four special good fortunes:

1. To be born as a human being, out of the 8,400,000 forms of life
2. To be born as human beings at the time when God has incarnated on earth
3. To know the glories of the *Avatar*
4. To be His devotees
5. And, I would like to add a fifth – one that you all have: to know about this *Avatar* and be His devotees at such a young age. This is really very, very special.

So, all of you have an incredible good fortune that brings with it a very important responsibility. You have to take full advantage of this golden opportunity.

Why are you here? You are here because you have been brought here; the Divine invited each one of you. No one is here by chance. Bhagavan called each one of you and your hearts responded. You did not decide to



come here. Bhagavan did! Why did He decide to bring you all here? Because He has very important plans for you; each one of you will have a very important role in His Divine Mission. He believes in you and now you have to believe in yourselves and dare to fulfill your part in the Divine plan. You are going to become not just witnesses, but also instruments of the most magnificent and wonderful change that the *Avatar* is bringing about in human consciousness. Most of us don't have the complete perspective of what is happening on this planet right now. But wonderful events are happening at this moment; Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is changing the hearts and minds of people everywhere.

### Spiritual Transformation

I have the good fortune of traveling to many Latin American countries and I witness how His Divine Love is reaching so many thousands of people of all lands. Many people unfamiliar with Bhagavan have started the process of spiritual transformation after hearing about Bhagavan's Message. They changed their perspectives, their values and their lives, and became more concerned with the needs of their fellow beings. They started to do service for the people in need, and also personal *sadhana*. This is happening on a global basis and is the most wonderful miracle of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. He is changing the lives of millions and millions of people all over the world.

**Sai is an infinite source of Love that is guiding millions and millions of people all over the world to become better people, to embark on a process of self transformation.** Most of them never came to India to be in His Divine Presence, but they feel His Presence in their lives, His protection and guidance. These people are also receiving, as we do, "The Divine Touch" that melts our egos and opens our hearts, that awakens our dormant consciousness. Once awakened, it starts guiding our lives.

I can give the answer to my first question, "Why are you here?" It is because you have received the Divine touch and the Divine call. Bhagavan has stirred in you the yearning to come, and so you have come. You are drops that are running to merge in the ocean. It is a call to awaken us from the slumber of ages. Your souls have been working hard for so many lifetimes. They now have reached a point of maturity to make a last and sublime effort and become what we always have been: Divinity. You all have a mission. The Lord wants you to fulfill your destiny and help others to do so, too.

What does He want from you? He wants you to become Divine and emulate Him. When we come to the *Ashram*, everything revolves around Sai. When we go back, it should be the same way.

Swami says that what we need today is not a new educational system, nor a new social system – such changes will not serve to solve the problems we are facing. Today, we need men and women whose hearts are pure.

**The challenge for the Sai Youth is to become citizens with righteousness in their heart and beauty in their character, and thus help to transform the world.** You have to strive towards excellence. You don't have to say very much because your actions and being will speak for themselves. Then you will radiate enthusiasm. You must become true devotees of Sai. A spiritual aspirant must fight against his lower impulses, the passions and egoism, and develop the discipline to advance with steadfastness towards the most important goal of realising our Divine nature.

What are the objectives of this conference? I will summarise what I consider are the most important objectives:

1. To receive information
2. To receive inspiration
3. To recharge your spiritual batteries
4. To increase your yearning and determination
5. To increase your faith
6. To deepen your knowledge and understanding of the Divine Message
7. To accelerate the process of your transformation
8. To help you develop skills to fulfill your duties in the Sri Sathya Sai Organisation
9. To feed the flame of love and gratitude to Sai, our Lord, in the altar of our hearts
10. To give us more opportunities to receive the Divine Blessings and Grace in the Divine physical Presence

Today, the heroes and role models for our youth are from Hollywood, Bollywood, Hong Kong film studios, or the singers and dancers of modern pop or rock music. But soon, through Bhagavan's Divine Grace and *sankalpa*, the world's youth will have another hero, the real one, the only hero, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

The Sai Youth must be prepared and trained to be leaders now. They must awaken their innate aptitudes for leadership. The Sai Youth must be a positive influence in society. The Sai Youth must assume an important role to reestablish human values on earth. We must ask ourselves if we are doing enough. Let me tell you the simple answer: No! We can all do more at the individual level, more at our family level, and more at the community level. When is it going to be enough? The answer is when we reach the point of feeling His constant Presence in our lives. Spirituality is not the practice of rituals, but living in a spiritual way, remembering God always. We are living a spiritual life when our actions are in harmony with the awareness that Divinity is present in all places all the time, and



when we live with this constant spiritual awareness. When is it going to be enough? When we realise our real Self. Until then, it is not enough. Let's reflect on the word *sadhana*. It means spiritual effort. If we feel comfortable, it means that we can and must do something more.

I would like to use a metaphor to refer to our situation. Having the good fortune of knowing about Bhagavan and His Message is like receiving a very fast car to reach our spiritual goal. Let us say we received a Ferrari, a Formula One car. The irony is that some devotees drive the car at a very low speed because they are afraid; some others are even more afraid and go on pressing the brake all the time, and there are others even more foolish that go in reverse. But there are some that have full faith in Bhagavan and His teachings and put them into practice in their lives. Adhering to Bhagavan in such a way is like traveling at 300 kilometers per hour!

#### **Eradicate Bad Qualities**

We have to have full faith in Him and surrender our lives completely to Him. What does this mean? It is understanding what parts of our lives we have to change and not delaying in making the changes! What is the main point we have to learn? That **spirituality is to eradicate our bad qualities and fill our lives with human values**. There is no spiritual path without morality and ethics. There will be no morality in our lives without control of our senses and discipline. There will be no morality without fear of sin and love for God. This is the starting point. What is necessary is to know what we have to change and to have the will power to do so. The habits that we have to check include what we eat, what we drink, what we see on TV, and what we read. We have to start by taking these elementary actions. The company we keep can promote or delay

our spiritual journey. We imbibe the good or bad habits of our company. If we really want to advance, we have to purify our minds and hearts. Embark on service and spiritual disciplines. We are here on this planet to learn a Divine way of living. This is the basis of a spiritual life.

Bhagavan's life and teachings are the most wonderful scripture of practical spirituality. There are simple and practical methods that He teaches us that I call His practical spirituality lessons.

We must be constantly aware of our egos. This is the real enemy: the ego. When we are on the spiritual path, our ego makes us think, "I will do it my way." When in actuality, we really must do it in Swami's way. We must surrender to His Will. I would like to share a recommendation that has been very useful to me. **From today onwards, take a vow not to criticise anyone by your words or by having negative feelings about another person.** If we are successful in this, we can be sure that we have taken a great step in subduing our little minds and are moving forward in our spiritual *sadhana*.

Another useful spiritual practice that I would like to share with you is this. Write down on a piece of paper the following sentence and read it every day when you wake up. The sentence is, "I am going to die." After reading it and reflecting on this for a while, and especially before you get depressed, write down on another piece of paper another sentence that you will have to read afterwards. The second sentence is, "Not yet." So, when you realise that you still have time, think which is the best way to take full advantage of the time still available.

Let me share another experience I had with Bhagavan on my first trip to His Divine Presence. I was just starting my spiritual journey and I was participating in another spiritual organisation where I had an important responsibility as an office bearer. When I came to His Divine Presence, I was overwhelmed by His teachings, the miracles I witnessed, and by His Divine Love. So, one day I was in my room in the *Ashram* and I felt that I had found the *Poorna Avatar*, and I had to surrender fully to Him. So I felt that I had to resign the position I had in the other spiritual organisation, because I had found the *Avatar* and I had to be free to work for Him. So, I wrote on a piece of paper my resignation for the position I was holding in the other organisation. I felt I was doing the right thing. The next morning, I went to *Darshan* and when Swami came, instead of His usual routine of going first to the ladies