

DIVINE TEACHINGS OF Sri Sathya Sai Baba



Contentment

Be content with what you have, and share it with others.

Peace comes from within; contentment is a mental condition.

Contentment is the state of mind that is unaffected by the achievement or non-achievement of any wish, the happening or non-happening of any event.

The one who has contentment is the richest man in the world. Who is the poorest man? The one who has many desires is the poorest man.

Be content. Nothing can happen against His Will.

What is the cause of worry? Lack of contentment is the cause.



Divine Teachings
of
Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Contentment





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Dedicated with love and reverence
to
Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba





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Divine Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba

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Contentment

Preface

During His sojourn on Earth, Sri Sathya Sai Baba delivered more than 2,000 discourses, most of which were subsequently compiled in *Sri Sathya Sai Speaks* and *Summer Showers*. In addition, He wrote 16 books in the *Vahini* series. You can find these at this website: <http://sssbpt.info/>.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba was born in a small village in India on November 23, 1926. He left His body on April 24, 2011, having become one of the most revered spiritual teachers in the world. He exhibited love, wisdom, and knowledge beyond our comprehension. His devotees regard Him as an incarnation of God in human form (an *Avatar*).

Sri Sathya Sai Baba did not come to establish a new religion. Instead He exhorted people to practice their own religion and to respect the differences among faiths. His mission is best described in His own words:

I have come to light the lamp of love in your hearts, to see that it shines day by day with added luster. ... I have not come on any mission of publicity for any sect or creed or cause; nor have I come to collect followers for any doctrine. I have no plan to attract disciples or devotees into My fold or any fold. I have come to tell you of this universal unitary faith, ...this path of love, ... this duty of love, this obligation to love.

All religions teach one basic discipline: the removal from the mind of the blemish of egoism, of running after little joy. Every religion teaches man to fill his being with the glory of God and evict the pettiness of conceit. It trains him in the methods of detachment and discrimination so that he may aim high and attain liberation. Believe that all hearts are motivated by the One and Only God; that all faiths glorify the One and Only God; that all names in all languages and all forms man can conceive, denote the One and Only God; His adoration is best done by means of love. Cultivate that attitude of Oneness, between men of all creeds, all countries, and all continents. That is the message of love I bring. That is the message I wish you to take to heart.

His discourses and writings focused on what He had come to give us: a path toward realizing our own Selves, toward realizing and experiencing the oneness of

all creation. His discourses and writings are filled with simple explanations of how we should live and how we should treat our fellow humans in order to further ourselves along the path to enlightenment.

We are pleased to offer our readers *Divine Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba*, Volume 2. It includes the topic, “Contentment.” The quotations are selected from *Sri Sathya Sai Speaks*, *Summer Showers*, and the *Vahinis*. Each quotation is numbered, and references are provided.

In one of His Divine discourses Sri Sathya Sai Baba said: “Practice what I teach. That is enough. That is all I ask.” Let us imbibe His words, apply them in daily practice, and find fulfillment in life.



Contentment

The following are highlights of the full quotations that begin on page 12.

Be content with what you have, and share it with others.

Happiness lies in contentment. Dissatisfaction will lead to misery.

Work disinterestedly, content to do your duty as best as you can.

*Sense control, self-confidence, contentment, absence of hatred and greed—
these are far more precious as possessions than land, money, or houses.*

Hear good things; do good things; share good things.

That gives joy and contentment.

The search for mere riches can never confer contentment and peace of mind.

Only the contented man can experience real joy.

*Contentment, it is said, confers the greatest happiness. It follows that true
happiness resides in the heart and everyone should seek it there.*

The one whose devotion is surface deep will have no contentment.

Peace comes from within; contentment is a mental condition.

*When ego is destroyed, all troubles end, all discontent vanish, and bliss is
attained.*

*Be contented and happy with the dwelling place you have, though small. You
should thus kill jealousy.*

*When man is satisfied with what he has, he can be happy. When he desires
more, he becomes discontented and miserable.*

*Contentment can come only from a spiritual outlook. The desire for worldly
goods has to be given up.*

The contented man is the most praiseworthy person. One who wishes to realize the Divine should cultivate contentment.

The contented man is free; he does not depend upon others.

A discontented man suffers both ways. He is not happy with what he has and feels unhappy over what he does not have.

Contentment is heaven; grief is hell. Goodness confers great contentment; bliss confers great freedom from fear.

As desires grow, discontent grows and worries multiply.

Contentment is the state of mind that is unaffected by the achievement or non-achievement of any wish, the happening or non-happening of any event.

There is no greater happiness than contentment.

Not being content with what he has and hankering after what he does not have, man forfeits peace of mind.

One desire leads to ten, and man exhausts himself in trying to exhaust the demands of desire. He has to be turned back from this path of never-ending desire to the path of inner contentment and joy.

Leave the success or failure of the thing done to God, the loss and the profit, the elation or the dejection. Then you have the secret of peace and contentment.

The Gopikas and Gopalas lived a life of contentment. They had only one desire: the yearning for God.

What is the cause of worry? Lack of contentment is the cause.

Once you turn toward the path of worldly happiness, you will be led on and

on to greater and greater discontent, competition, pride, and jealousy.

When a man has insatiable desires, he will never feel contented.

Man must not be content with sensual pleasures, which are temporary and leave a trail of misery.

There is no happiness greater than contentment.

The one who has contentment is the richest man in the world. Who is the poorest man? The one who has many desires is the poorest man.

Be content. Nothing can happen against His Will.

Mental peace and contentment alone can guarantee health.

For the disease of insatiable desires, the remedy is contentment. Without contentment man can have no happiness.

Love of pomp, desire to beat others in standard of living, eagerness to appear superior to the rest—these make men fall into discontent and deceit.

Contentment gives all spiritual aspirants the enthusiasm and vigor necessary for treading the path that leads to realization of God.

To get rid of desires, man must turn his mind toward God. That is the way to achieve contentment and lasting bliss.

When the sense organs are influenced by good thoughts and impulses, they act in a manner that produces joy and contentment.

Bad thoughts and bad habits have to be cast away. Not recognizing this truth, man makes himself prey to misery and discontent.

When man's wishes are fulfilled, he is content. When they are not realized, he feels disappointed.

Unless you tap the springs of bliss within you, you cannot have peace and lasting contentment.

Without self-satisfaction, you cannot have contentment.

Everyone must develop the virtue of contentment through the practice of meditation.

Man can have some desires, some eagerness to achieve comfort, some attempt to earn contentment—but it must be like the diseased man craving medicine.

Man, in his ignorance, finds contentment in separating himself from the rest.

As long as one is overwhelmed by desires, one cannot be contented.

There is no wealth like contentment.

Wealth cannot yield joyous contentment. Divinity alone can confer that.

Contentment in the mind is not easily secured. As soon as one desire is satisfied, another crops up. There is no limit to desires.

If only man intensifies his thirst for God, he can live in perpetual contentment.

Be contented and cheerful always, without regard for the changing tides of fortune.

We should seek not unlimited worldly possessions but contentment and peace of mind through good deeds.

The one prescription that will give you the peace and contentment that you seek is namasmarana (remembering the name of the Lord).

Once you rise above “I” and “mine” and lead a contented life, you will derive great happiness.

Man must reveal the Divine qualities of love, humility, detachment, and contentment. If he does not, he becomes worse than a beast and more deadly.

The unseen alone can confer contentment and courage to face fortune as

well as misfortune.

The heart of a human being should be full of the noble qualities of tolerance, perseverance, sympathy, and contentment.

Owing to restless activity, endless worry, and limitless desires, man has lost peace of mind and has become prey to discontent and misery.

The Godward path is action based on righteousness. That is also the path toward joy, contentment, and therefore strength.

The man who is most highly educated is the very person who is most discontented and unhappy.

Animals are always busy seeking food. Man, who is endowed with intelligence, should not be content to remain like animals.

Dedicate all to the Lord; that is genuine contentment.

Birds and beasts are content with what they can get. Man alone is afflicted with insatiable desires.

Contentment is the most precious wealth; greed brings misery in its train.

Those who want to have the experience of Divinity must possess some important qualities in the first instance. They are patience and perseverance, purity of body and mind, love coupled with an intense yearning, a steady and unchanging mind, sense control, intense yearning, equanimity in the face of odds, unflinching faith, and total contentment in everything.



Contentment

Be Content with What You Have

Be happy with what you have. Why do you worry about something you do not have? Do not crave things that you do not have. This is your real *sadhana* (spiritual discipline). When you are not satisfied with what you have and constantly worry about what you do not have, how can you experience happiness? Therefore be content with what you have, and share it with others.

Develop such broad-mindedness. In this vast world, one should have a broad mind. One bereft of broad-mindedness is not a human being at all. So, broaden your heart. How can you do it? Fill it with love. When you fill your heart with love, you will not be troubled by any of the roots of sorrow. You will have the power to face all challenges and move forward.¹

1. Experience Unity of Man and God. Divine Discourse on July 25, 1996.



Keep Your Desires under Control

Happiness lies in contentment. Dissatisfaction will lead to misery. In order to experience peace, keep your desires under control. Misery is the birthplace of all desires. In this journey of life, desires can be compared to luggage. “Less luggage—more comfort—makes travel a pleasure.” So, reduce your desires. This is called renunciation. As the desire for the world decreases, the desire for God increases.²

2. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 31, Chapter 34: Entire Universe Is within You. Divine Discourse on September 28, 1998.



Do Your Duty as Best as You Can

Do not get attached to worldly things and pursuits. Be in the world, but do not let the world be in you. Work disinterestedly, content to do your duty as best as you can. Have no desires to place before God, for, whatever He does with you,

however He treats you, is the gift He likes best to give you!³

3. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 8, Chapter 9: The True Tablet. Divine Discourse on March 5, 1968.



Precious Possessions

Men may have a superabundance of food, clothing, and houses, but their hearts may be dry and their spirits gloomy. Sense control, self-confidence, contentment, absence of hatred and greed—these are far more precious as possessions than land, money, or houses.⁴

4. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 13, Chapter 12: Why I Love Villages Most. Divine Discourse on April 28, 1975.



Speak Softly and Kindly

Hear good things; do good things; share good things. That gives joy and contentment. Speak softly, kindly; that is *dharma* (righteousness). Give generously, wisely; wipe the tear, and assuage the sigh and the groan; that is *dharma*. Do not simply throw money at the needy; give with respect and reverence, give with grace. Give also with humility. Try to live with others harmoniously.⁵ Be helpful to others; then your conscience itself will appreciate you and keep you happy and content, though others may not thank you.⁶

5. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 5, Chapter 23: Rope Round the Neck. Divine Discourse on March 30, 1965.

6. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 5, Chapter 28: The Bird on the Swinging Bough. Divine Discourse on April 6, 1965.



Wisdom Is the Most Precious Wealth

Man feels that riches are paramount, but what he fancies as wealth are but material, momentary, trivial things. Character, virtue, brotherhood, charity—these are the real riches. The company of the good and godly is wealth most worthy. Wisdom is the most precious wealth. The educated person must live with this

conviction. The search for mere riches can never confer contentment and peace of mind.⁷

7. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 15, Chapter 57: Three in One. Divine Discourse on December 1, 1982.



Happiness Is True Holiness

A devotee should always be happy, contented, and peaceful. He should not give scope for any pain or sorrow in his heart.⁸ Happiness is true holiness. True bliss lies in cultivating the principle of love and leading a life of contentment. We should always be contented. When there is no contentment, worries raise their head. All troubles are created by worrying.⁹ There is, in this world, no austerity higher than fortitude, no happiness greater than contentment, no meritorious act holier than mercy, no weapon more effective than patience.¹⁰

8. Bhagavad Gita Part I, Chapter 3: The *Sakara* and *Nirakara* Worship.

9. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 39, Chapter 6: Happiness Is Holiness. Divine Discourse on April 14, 2006.

10. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 18, Chapter 20: Qualities of the *Sadhaka*.



Limit Your Desires to the Minimum

It is not practical to give up all desires totally. But limit your desires to the essential minimum. Do not cherish excessive or endless desires in respect to wealth or other possessions. Promote a sense of contentment. The discontented man loses everything. Only the contented man can experience real joy. The man with endless desires is the poorest man. The man with no desires is the richest man. The rich man can have no sleep. You must no doubt earn enough to meet your reasonable needs. But excessive wealth is undesirable.¹¹

11. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 26, Chapter 11: Through Self-Inquiry to Self-Realization. Divine Discourse on March 24, 1993.



Excessive Desires Are the Source of All Ills

Contentment, it is said, confers the greatest happiness. It follows that true happiness resides in the heart and everyone should seek it there. Excessive desires are the source of all ills. There is momentary satisfaction from the fulfillment of some desires. But when desires are not realized, man becomes sick in many ways. There is no more dreadful disease in the world than insatiable desire.¹²

12. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 30, Chapter 28: Discovering the *Atma*. Divine Discourse on October 9, 1997.



Realize the Truth of the Spirit

The one who is filled with deep devotion to God will experience great bliss. The one whose devotion is surface deep will have no contentment.¹³ All the luxuries and pleasures of the world will not give a man contentment and peace. Only when he realizes the truth of the Spirit will he experience true peace and contentment.¹⁴

13. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 22, Chapter 13: The Four Qualities. Divine Discourse on June 20, 1989.

14. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 25, Chapter 3: How to Be Near and Dear to God. Divine Discourse on January 14, 1992.



Contentment Is a Mental Condition

The rich, the healthy, the strong, the powerful, the influential—all are afflicted with discontent, worry, fear, and anxiety. They have no peace of mind. Peace comes from within; contentment is a mental condition. Do not feed the roots of attachment to worldly comforts more than is absolutely necessary. They lead only to anxiety and fear; they can never satisfy the innermost craving of man.¹⁵

15. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 5, Chapter 51: The Daily Diet. Divine Discourse on November 4, 1965.



All Troubles End When Ego Is Destroyed

The effulgence of the *Atma* (Divine Self) is obscured by ego. Therefore when ego is destroyed, all troubles end, all discontent vanishes, and bliss is attained. As the sun is obscured by mist, the feeling of ego hides eternal bliss.¹⁶ For every man, humility and reverence are valuable ornaments. Humility is the hallmark of right education. Humility is lost when men are filled with self-pride, or discontentment. Humility should be observed in all circumstances. It should be manifested from the heart. Egoism is an acquisition from outside.¹⁷

16. Prema Vahini, Subtitle: *Ahamkara Causes Asanthi*.

17. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 25, Chapter 14: From Knowledge to Wisdom. Divine Discourse on May 22, 1992.



Do Activity without Expecting Rewards

Apart from securing a contented and happy life, man craves wealth, fame, power and possessions, and popular esteem. But the central teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita* is disinterested activity, that is to say, activity suffused with enthusiasm and intelligence, done with perfection, without hope or expectation of rewards and even fruits. “You are entitled to do the work but not to the fruits thereof,” says Krishna to Arjuna. The process is really more pleasant and satisfying than the end product.¹⁸

18. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 17, Chapter 21: *Geetha—the Kalpatharu*. Divine Discourse on September 10, 1984.



Jealousy Is Contrary to Human Nature

Jealousy is rampant to a considerable extent amongst people today. This is the root cause of anger, hatred, and other evil qualities. If a person owns a car and travels in it, don't be jealous. Satisfy yourself that you have your legs to help you walk. If one is in a big house, don't get jealous. Be contented and happy with the dwelling place you have, though small. You should thus kill jealousy.

Jealousy is contrary to human nature. It is artificial and not pertaining to the

heart, which is natural. Virtues and vices are reflections of your good and bad thoughts. The physical heart is on the left side, while the spiritual heart is on the right. This will help you in the right direction. It is compassionate. But man breeds desires, which contaminate the heart. These should be checked and restrained to a limit.¹⁹

19. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 31, Chapter 12: Man, Truth, Love, and God. Divine Discourse on April 17, 1998.



Four Gates

To reach the Divine within, one has to qualify himself to pass through four gates: self-control, enquiry, contentment, and the company of the good. ... The third gate requires contentment. At this stage man must learn to be content with what he has and what he gets and look upon whatever he receives as a gift from God. When he is satisfied with what he has, he can be happy. When he desires more, he becomes discontented and miserable.²⁰

20. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 20, Chapter 4: The Four Gates. Divine Discourse on February 19, 1987.



Greed Results in Sorrow and Despair

Evil thoughts cause ill health. Anxiety, fear, and tension also contribute their share. All these result from greed; greed to have more things, 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 toward Divinity.²¹

21. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 15, Chapter 21: Good Health and Goodness. Divine Discourse on September 30, 1981.



Cultivate Contentment to Realize the Divine

Today there are people who are never content with what they have and are ceaselessly seeking more wealth, position, or power. They are perpetually harried by discontent. They claim rights of every kind, but have no awareness of their responsibilities. They are consumed by perpetual discontent and insatiable desires. The contented man is the most praiseworthy person. Who is the richest man in the world? Not the millionaire or the billionaire. It is the man who is fully satisfied with what he has. He who is filled with desires is the poorest man in the world. One who wishes to realize the Divine should cultivate contentment.

The great spiritual masters—Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Vivekananda, Tulsidas, Ramadas, Kabir, and others—were men who led supremely contented lives. There were numerous occasions when they could not get even food to eat. They regarded such occasions as invitations by God to observe fasting as food for the Spirit. They enjoyed such fasts by contemplation of God. When they were entertained with a rich meal, they considered the feast as a gift from God to make up for the fast they had observed. Whether it was a fast or feast, they looked on both with the same sense of contented acceptance. They were not depressed by the former or elated by the latter.²²

22. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 20, Chapter 4: The Four Gates. Divine Discourse on February 19, 1987.



Let the Lord's Will Prevail

The contented man is free; he does not depend upon others. He is unaffected by the feeling of agency. He is content with whatever happens to him, well or ill. For he is convinced that the Lord's Will must prevail. His mind is unshaken and steady. He is ever jubilant.²³

23. Geetha Vahini: Chapter 10.



Ego Leads to Bad Qualities

Excessive wealth makes one egotistic. Ego leads to bad qualities. Excessive

desires make one suffer. As the desires increase, misery also increases. A discontented man suffers both ways. He is not happy with what he has and feels unhappy over what he does not have. Be content with what you have. Experience bliss, and share it with others. If you have devotion, God Himself will confer bliss.²⁴

24. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 31, Chapter 36: Power of Divine Love. Divine Discourse on September 30, 1998.



Attach Yourself to Goodness Fully

Contentment is heaven; grief is hell; anger is the foe; calmness is the armor; compassion is the comrade.²⁵ Attach yourself to goodness fully, and you can renounce all sorrow. Goodness confers great contentment; bliss confers great freedom from fear.²⁶

25. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 11, Chapter 24: You Are All I. Divine Discourse on May 14, 1971.

26. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 6, Chapter 41: The Pole Star.



He Who Is Content Is the Richest

He who is the slave of desires is the poorest; he who is content is the richest.²⁷ Man can experience joy and happiness only when he has contentment. As desires grow, discontent grows and worries multiply. You must learn to be content with your condition. He who has much satisfaction is the richest man.²⁸

27. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 14, Chapter 50: Teaching in Ancient India. Divine Discourse on July 10, 1980.

28. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 22, Chapter 26: Disciplines of the Spirit. Divine Discourse on September 3, 1989.



Have Contentment under All Conditions

It is laid down that the aspirant for devotion must possess contentment

always. What does this mean? It implies contentment under all conditions, wellness or illness, loss or profit, grief or joy. Whether one's wish is fulfilled or not, the mind should not lose equanimity and poise.

The mind loses balance if the slightest obstacle arises in the path it frames for itself. It is so fickle. Why, if the cup of coffee is not forthcoming in time, if you miss seeing two films in one week, if you could not sit by the radio, both in the morning and in the evening for long hours, if many such trifles are denied or disturbed, you feel overshadowed by discontent. Contentment is the state of mind that is unaffected by the achievement or non-achievement of any wish, the happening or non-happening of any event. The mind must be undisturbed, without excitement or disappointment.²⁹

29. Geetha Vahini: Chapter 22.



Only Spiritual Happiness Can Give True Happiness

There is no penance superior to peace of mind. Every individual, every family, every society, every nation seeks peace in all possible ways. Every man should strive in every way to achieve peace as the most desirable objective.

There is no greater happiness than contentment. Man is perpetually in quest of happiness. But what is the happiness he seeks? Worldly happiness? Transient pleasures? These cannot confer true happiness. Only spiritual happiness can give true happiness. Why has man lost this happiness? Because man is afflicted with insatiable desires. These desires are the cause of various maladies. It is only by limiting desires and thereby eliminating the diseases arising from them that man can secure peace.³⁰

30. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 30, Chapter 4: The Gospel of Work, Love, and Sacrifice. Divine Discourse on February 13 1997.



Make Best Use of the Present

Man's life is wasted in brooding over the past and worrying about the future. What is the root cause of man's sorrow and sickness? Not being content with what

he has and hankering after what he does not have, man forfeits peace of mind. There is no need to think about what is past or about what is in store in the future. Of what avail is it to think of the past, which is irrevocable, or to worry about the future, which is uncertain? It is a sheer waste of time. Past is past, future is future. You can do nothing about either. What is most important is the present. This is not ordinary present. It is omnipresent.

The result of the past and the result of the future are both present in the present. You are reaping in the present what you have sown in the past. And what you are sowing in the present you will reap in the future. Thus both the past and the future are contained only in the present. So, make the best use of the present. Give up all sorts of worry, and lead ideal lives leading to immortality and fulfillment of the purpose of human life.³¹

31. Summer Showers in Brindavan 1990, Chapter 3: The Moving Temple.



Turn to the Path of Inner Contentment and Joy

Man always seeks happiness by trying to satisfy his desires, and if a desire is fulfilled, he feels joy, and when it is not, he feels grief. But the trouble is, desire is a bonfire that burns with greater fury, asking for more fuel. One desire leads to ten, and man exhausts himself in trying to exhaust the demands of desire. He has to be turned back from this path of never-ending desire to the path of inner contentment and joy.³²

32. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 1, Chapter 17: *Gunās* and Money. Divine Discourse on December 14, 1958.



Make the Mind Cling to God

Attachment causes pain, and detachment results in joy. But you cannot easily detach yourself from activity; the mind clings to something or other. Make it cling to God, let it do all things for God, and leave the success or failure of the thing done to God, the loss and the profit, the elation or the dejection. Then you have the secret of peace and contentment.³³

33. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 5, Chapter 19: *Pandiths* Have the Keys. Divine Discourse on March 28, 1965.



Yearn Only for God

The feeling of “I” and “mine” is the root cause of all man’s troubles. Attachment and possessiveness cannot be totally eschewed. But there should be limits for them. Insatiable desires are the cause of the lack of peace. The *Gopikas* and *Gopalas* lived a life of contentment. They had only one desire: the yearning for God.³⁴

34. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 28, Chapter 21: Dedicate All Actions to God. Divine Discourse on August 18, 1995.



Lack of Contentment Causes Worry

As is the food, so is the mind; as is the mind, so are the thoughts; as are the thoughts, so is the conduct; as is the conduct, so is the health. Man today is a victim of worry. What is the cause of this worry? Lack of contentment is the cause. The rich man is not contented in spite of the accumulation of wealth. Worry causes hurry, and both together bring about ill health. So, worry, hurry, and curry (fatty foods) are the root causes of cardiac ailments.³⁵

35. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 27, Chapter 3: Food, the Heart, and the Mind. Divine Discourse on January 21, 1994.



Worldly Happiness Leads to Greater Discontent

Once you turn toward the path of worldly happiness, you will be led on and on to greater and greater discontent, competition, pride, and jealousy. Just stop for a moment and examine your own experience, whether you are happier when you grow richer and whether you get more peace as and when your wants are satisfied. Then you will bear witness to the truth that an improved standard of living is no guarantee of happiness. Nor is education or the mastery of information and the acquisition of skills any guarantee of mental equanimity.³⁶

36. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 2, Chapter 6: Steps in *Sadhana*. Divine Discourse on April 23, 1961.



Control Desires and Be Truly Rich

As long as one is proud, men will not like him. Only when he suppresses his pride will he be liked by one and all. The man filled with anger will have no happiness. He will be immersed in misery. When he subdues his anger, he will be free from grief. When a man has insatiable desires, he will never feel contented. When he controls his desires, he will be truly rich. A miserly person will never feel happy. When he gives up greed, he will realize happiness.³⁷

37. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 29, Chapter 5: Spiritual Significance of *Shivarathri*. Divine Discourse on February 17, 1996.



The Mind Is Responsible for One's Uplifting or Downfall

Man should develop high and noble ideals and feelings in all spheres of life—physical, moral, religious, and spiritual. He must not be content with sensual pleasures, which are temporary and leave a trail of misery. It is the mind that is responsible for either one's uplifting or downfall. One should not hastily rush into action, based on the whimsical dictates of the mind. It is only after considering whether the action is good or bad, right or wrong, that a person with a disciplined mind acts. Such a man will ultimately reach the goal of self-realization.³⁸

38. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 26, Chapter 23: Follow the Intellect; Not the Mind. Divine Discourse on May 25, 1993.



Greed Yields Only Sorrow

The highest happiness is contentment. Where there is no harshness, there holiness will thrive and virtue will flourish. Where greed exists, vice will breed thick.³⁹ Greed yields only sorrow; contentment is best. There is no happiness greater than contentment.⁴⁰

39. Vidya Vahini, Chapter 8: Loving Service.

40. Sandeha Nivarini, Chapter VII: Forty-Six Maxims of Conduct.



The Body Dies But Not the Mind

Who is the richest man in the world? The one who has contentment is the richest man in the world. Who is the poorest man? The one who has many desires is the poorest man. Cut short your desires. It is said, “Less luggage—more comfort—makes travel a pleasure.” You can have a comfortable journey through life only when you reduce the luggage of your desires. The fewer the desires, the greater will be the willpower. The body dies but not the mind. The mind is responsible for everything.

So, fill your mind with pure and selfless thoughts. Then you will attain the state of Illumination Mind. Gradually, you will cross Illumination Mind and attain Over Mind. In Vedantic parlance, this is known as the state of *amanaska* (non-existence of mind). Once the mind is withdrawn, only the principle of the *Atma* (Divine Self), i.e., the Super-consciousness exists.⁴¹

41. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33, Chapter 19: God Incarnates to Serve Mankind. Divine Discourse on November 20, 2000.



Nothing Happens Against His Will

God will grant you what you need and deserve; there is no need to ask, no reason to grumble. Be content. Nothing can happen against His Will.⁴² You must be content with what you have. Even a loss of something must be considered a form of sacrifice. Rejoice in what you have, make good use of that, and develop faith in God.⁴³

42. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 9, Chapter 1: Alms and Qualms. Divine Discourse on January 13, 1969.

43. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 22, Chapter 33: Knower of the *Brahman*. Divine Discourse on October 7, 1989.



The Most Powerful Tonics

Moderation in food, moderation in talk and in desires and pursuits, contentment with what little can be obtained by honest labor, eagerness to serve others and to impart joy to all—these are the most powerful of all the tonics and health preserves known to the science of health, the *Sanathana Ayur-Veda*, the *Veda* of the full life.⁴⁴ Many people spend their years piling and piling and then are dragged away by death, before they could preen themselves on the size of the pile. Money can purchase drugs, but mental peace and contentment alone can guarantee health.⁴⁵

44. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 1, Chapter 28: The Best Tonic. Divine Discourse on September 21, 1960.

45. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 6, Chapter 22: Of Him, to Him, by Him. Divine Discourse on September 7, 1966.



The Chains of Desire Grow Stronger Every Day

Today there is no limit to human desires. For the disease of insatiable desires, the remedy is contentment. Without contentment man can have no happiness. Along with contentment the spirit of sacrifice has to be developed. What we are witnessing today is a limitless growth of wants without any concern for reducing them.

This growth of desires was described by Adi Sankara as “*trishna*” (thirst). Drinking water quenches thirst for a time, but the thirst arises again. Likewise, as long as life lasts, the thirst (for material pleasures) lasts, though it may be quenched from time to time. This thirst is a strong kind of fetter. Its strength does not diminish, but grows from day to day. Iron chains will rust in the course of time, but the chains of desire grow stronger every day. Therefore Sankara declared: “The desire for more and more wealth is dangerous. Cultivate the good sense to give up your desires. Wealth is the result of past deeds. Therefore be content with what you have.”⁴⁶

46. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 23, Chapter 27: Devotion and Self-Sacrifice. Divine Discourse on September 3, 1990.



Be Simple in Your Method of Living

Love of pomp, desire to beat others in standard of living, eagerness to appear superior to the rest—these make men fall into discontent and deceit. Be simple in your method of living, have *satwic* (pure) food and pure recreations; let your mind be fixed on the ideals of service; let your thoughts be guided by truth, righteousness, peace, and love.⁴⁷

47. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 5, Chapter 56: The Rules of the Game. Divine Discourse on November 23, 1965.



Peace Comes through Contentment

The sages, religious mendicants, and *yogis* of the past realized the goal of life by means of the peace that came to them through contentment. Contentment gives all spiritual aspirants the enthusiasm and vigor necessary for treading the path that leads to realization of God. Contented, the aspirant can ignore the dangers and difficulties of the path. The aspirant treats all the impermanent things of this life as poison and discards them as trash. Discrimination, renunciation, and the spirit of inquiry develop through contentment. The story of Meera is an example of this.⁴⁸

48. Dhyana Vahini, Chapter X: Innocence, Purity, and Humility.



Turn Your Mind toward God

There is no limit to desires. One feels hungry, another is thirsty. If the thirsty man is offered water, he is not satisfied; he wants a cool drink. When he is given a cool drink, he is not satisfied; he wants ice cream. And so on. He is not satisfied with anything. There is no end to desires for material things in the world. To get rid of desires, man must turn his mind toward God. That is the way to achieve contentment and lasting bliss.⁴⁹

49. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 21, Chapter 11: "Seek Ye First." Divine Discourse on April 16, 1988.



Empty the Mind of All Bad Thoughts

A tree that has roots deep in the ground cannot be destroyed when its branches or leaves are cut off. Likewise, when evil qualities like hatred and envy have established deep roots in the tree of life, they cannot be eliminated by striking at some branches. By suppressing bad thoughts intermittently, these evils cannot be eradicated. The mind has to be completely emptied of all bad thoughts to achieve real peace. Every bad thought must be rooted out the moment it arises in the mind.

The war against bad thoughts is like the war against enemy hordes who attempt to get behind a fort through a subterranean tunnel. As each one of the enemy emerges from the tunnel, he should be struck down. Each one of the sense organs—the eye, the tongue, or the ear—when it is influenced by a bad thought is led astray and behaves improperly. When the sense organs are influenced by good thoughts and impulses, they act in a manner that produces joy and contentment. When the eye sees someone who is regarded as an enemy, there is an upsurge of ill will in the mind. On the other hand, when one sees a dear friend, the reaction is one of love and affection.⁵⁰

50. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 19, Chapter 15: *Mano Moolam Idam Jagath*. Divine Discourse on July 31, 1986.



Cast Away Bad Thoughts and Bad Habits

Unfortunately, today men give up what is wholesome and take what is harmful. That is, they are taking in the bad and giving up the good. It is this that accounts for the prevalence of disorder and misery in the world today. Hence the first need is to cultivate good qualities. Bad thoughts and bad habits have to be cast away. Not recognizing this truth, man makes himself prey to misery and discontent.

Can you say that this misery and worry were caused by Providence? Not at all. Your own bad thoughts and actions are the cause of your misery. As you sow, so shall you reap. The seed determines the fruit. When man cherishes bad thoughts,

bad results haunt him. When he has good thoughts, the results are also good. Those who do not recognize this fact go about blaming God. They lament: “Oh God! Why are you inflicting these miseries on me? Why are you denying me peace of mind?” God is the eternal witness. He is the dispenser of the fruits of actions. He is in no way responsible for your grief or happiness.⁵¹

51. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 28, Chapter 19: Acquire the Friendship of God. Divine Discourse on July 11, 1995.



Thoughts Form the Basis of Actions

Man has to keep a watch over his thoughts because they form the basis for his actions. When his wishes are fulfilled, he is content. When they are not realized, he feels disappointed. Man does not inquire into the causes of these divergent results. His failures are the result of his own shortcomings. When his heart is pure, his actions yield beneficial results. His thoughts are the cause of the success or failure of his efforts. Hence man must utilize his thoughts in the proper manner. His vision of the world depends on how he looks at it. “As he feels, so he becomes.” When one’s thoughts are sublime, the results are also sublime.⁵²

52. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 25, Chapter 12: No Greater Sin Than Ingratitude. Divine Discourse on May 10, 1992.



Four Pillars

You must tread the spiritual path with an uncontrollable urge to reach the goal; you must cultivate the yearning for liberation from all this encumbrance. Remember that you have to dwell in a house built on four stout pillars: *dharma*, *artha*, *kama*, and *moksha* (righteousness, wealth, desire, and liberation); righteousness supporting wealth, and liberation being the only desire. However much you may earn either wealth or strength, unless you tap the springs of bliss within you, you cannot have peace and lasting contentment.⁵³

53. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 5, Chapter 14: Awake! Arise! Divine Discourse on March 25, 1965.



Develop Self-Confidence

Lack of Self-confidence is the main cause for all the present-day problems like foul play, injustice, losses, failures, sorrow, and pain. People do not believe in themselves, not to speak of believing in others. First of all, develop Self-confidence, and that in turn will give you self-satisfaction. Without self-satisfaction, you cannot have contentment. Once you have gained self-satisfaction, then automatically you will be ready for self-sacrifice. Needless to say, where there is self-sacrifice, there will be Self-realization naturally.⁵⁴

54. Summer Showers in Brindavan 1990, Chapter 16: Vedic Wisdom.



Desires and Greed Attain Dangerous Proportions without Contentment

Everyone must develop the virtue of contentment through the practice of meditation.⁵⁵ Without contentment, desire and greed attain dangerous proportions and will overwhelm the power of discrimination itself. Desire easily becomes greed, and greed degenerates into miserliness and lust, which make you flit from object to object in mad pursuit of the evanescent sensual joy. How can people with such qualities develop the faculty of concentration? And without the capacity to concentrate, how can they engage in meditation?⁵⁶

55. Dhyana Vahini, Chapter X: Innocence, Purity, and Humility.

56. Dhyana Vahini, Chapter XIV: Remove Defects in Character.



Remove the Weeds in the Garden of Your Heart

The scriptures lay down steps in *sadhana* (spiritual practice), so that man can have peace, contentment, and joy. The very first step is to remove the weeds in the garden of your heart, plucking by the roots the briar and bush of lust and greed, of hate and pride, and plant in the ground thus cleared the fragrant flowering plants of love and the sweet fruit trees of virtue.⁵⁷

57. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 7, Chapter 32: The Miracle of Love. Divine Discourse on October 5, 1967.



The Mind Is an Instrument for Both Bondage and Liberation

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 lead it 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. The quality of the food determines the direction of the desire that diverts the mental flow. That is why in the *Bhagavad Gita* as well as in all scriptural texts, *satwic* (pure) food is recommended for the upward-seeking individual.⁵⁸

58. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 11, Chapter 8: Forms of Food. Divine Discourse on January 28, 1971.



Do Not Be Afflicted with Incessant Desire

Ravana was the mightiest potentate of his day, as Valmiki describes him. His capital city was an impregnable fortress, filled with rare treasures. He was the master of the four *Vedas* and the six spiritual sciences. Duryodhana, the eldest of the Kauravas, was, as Vyasa describes him, unsurpassed in the number and strength of his army and armaments and in diplomatic skill. Yet, these two are execrated by young and old for centuries. Why? Because they descended from the

human to the bestial level, instead of rising from the human to the Divine level. Both had the same flaw—greed. They did not know the secret of contentment. They were afflicted with incessant desire. Rama and *kama* (desire) cannot co-exist. The inner shrine of man can accommodate only one deity, Rama or *kama*.⁵⁹

59. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 10, Chapter 7: The Dead Satellite. Divine Discourse on March 6, 1970.



Grace Will Set Everything Right

God's grace is as the shower of rain, as the sunlight. You have to do some *sadhana* (spiritual practice) to acquire it, the practice of keeping a pot upright to receive the rain, the practice of opening the door of your heart, so that the sun may illumine it. Like the music that is broadcast over the radio, it is all around you; but you must switch on your receiver and tune in the identical wavelength so that you can hear it and enjoy it. Pray for grace; but do at least this little practice. Grace will set everything right. Its main consequence is Self-realization; but there are other incidental benefits too, like a happy contented life here below and a cool courageous temper, established in unruffled peace.⁶⁰

60. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 8, Chapter 16: The Lost Key. Divine Discourse on March 29, 1968.



Regard God Alone as the Doer

Only those free from self-conceit can be God-realized souls. Valmiki, Nanda, Kuchela, Sabari, Vidura, and Hanuman are examples of devotees who realized God, but who could boast of no great lineage, wealth, or scholarship. Their supreme quality was freedom from ego. Hanuman, for instance, was content to describe himself as a servant of Rama, despite his great prowess and knowledge. All the accomplishments and acquisitions in this world are transient and impermanent; lured by them, men become inflated and ultimately court ruin. Hence, giving up the notions of one's own doership, man must regard God alone as the doer. He is the giver, He is the recipient, and He is also the object that is

given.⁶¹

61. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 24, Chapter 1: Time Is God. Divine Discourse on January 1, 1991.



The Needs of the Spirit

Man can have some desires, some eagerness to achieve comfort, some attempt to earn contentment—but it must be like the diseased man craving medicine. Hunger is the disease for which food is the medicine; thirst is the illness for which drink is the medicine. Food and drink, housing, and clothing must be subsidiary to the needs of the Spirit, the education of the emotions and passions and impulses.⁶²

62. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 5, Chapter 44: Sustained *Sadhana*. Divine Discourse on October 2, 1965.



Men Crave Worldly Happiness

Even if the attainment of liberation is not directly realized as a consequence of taking up the Lord's name, four fruits are clearly evident to those who have had the experience. They are (1) the company of the great, (2) truth, (3) contentment, and (4) the control of the senses. Through whichever of these gates one may enter, whether he be a householder or recluse or a member of any other class, he can reach the Lord without fail. This is certain. Men crave worldly happiness. Analyzed properly, this itself is the disease, and sufferings are but the drugs we take. In the midst of these worldly pleasures, one rarely entertains the desire for attaining the Lord.⁶³

63. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 18, Chapter 20: Qualities of the *Sadhaka*.



Develop Firm Faith in God

Develop firm faith in God. All the ills afflicting the world today are due to

the loss of faith in God. Why has man lost peace of mind? The reason is twofold: one, indifference to what he has; two, craving for what he does not have. Man does not make proper use of what he has. Why should he hanker after what he lacks? One should be content with what he has and should not worry about things he does not have. Then alone can he be happy. This is true education.⁶⁴

64. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 22, Chapter 10: *Vidya* and *Samskara*. Divine Discourse on June 15, 1989.



All That Exists Is One

When there is only the One *Atman* in all, how can hatred arise? Who is to hide from whom? All that exists is One. Man, in his ignorance, finds contentment in separating himself from the rest for the search for his own happiness, forgetting that he cannot be happy unless all are happy. He pollutes himself through the cultivation of pride. He uses time for degrading himself to the bestial level. Time is an invaluable gift that has to be treated reverentially.⁶⁵

65. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 14, Chapter 35: Mine and Thine. Divine Discourse on September 27, 1979.



Desire Mental Peace and Good Health

As long as one has desires, one cannot be truly rich or wealthy. Put a limit on desires. Who is the richest person? One who has contentment. Who is the poorest person? The one with many desires. Of course, one has to have some desires in order to achieve certain good things in life. But the country is facing all types of problems because of the limitless desires of people. Desires are like a forest fire; the more it spreads, the more it burns with added vigor. What kind of desire one should have? Desire mental peace, good health, and knowledge about the infinite principle. Householders should have such desires that are suitable to their stage of life. Goddess of wealth Lakshmi will then enter their houses.⁶⁶

66. Realize the Oneness of the Atmic Principle. Divine Discourse on April 28, 1997.



Limitless Desires Result in Ruin

By conquering desire, one becomes unselfish. As long as one is overwhelmed by desires, one cannot be contented. He loses control over his senses. He is intoxicated with insatiable desires. No doubt man cannot avoid desires. But there should be a limit to them. Limitless desires can result only in ruin. Prosperity will elude him. The moment man is able to control his desires, all things will come to him of their own accord.

Conquering greed, man realizes happiness. Greed is another cause of human misery. Greed makes a man distant from every kind of happiness—material, intellectual, or spiritual. Greed accounts for the failure of Duryodhana and Dussasana to feel happy despite all their wealth and power. Hence people must banish greed from their hearts. How is this to be done? When they foster the spirit of sacrifice, greed will vanish. With greed-filled hearts there is no room for joy. You cannot fill a tumbler full of water with milk. First empty the tumbler, and then fill it with milk. Likewise, get rid of greed, and fill your heart with sacrifice. “A mind full of evil thoughts has no room for good thoughts.” (Telugu saying).⁶⁷

67. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 30, Chapter 23: Foster Firm Faith in God. Divine Discourse on September 23, 1997.



Time Is the Most Precious Gift of God

There is no wealth like contentment. Use your time as if it is something very precious. It is really the most precious gift of God. It is fast running out; every moment lost is lost forever. Try to serve the sick, the suffering; learn how to serve them efficiently and quickly. Move about always with a smile on your face; do not make the smile a cynical grin or a laugh of merriment. No one should feel hurt by that smile; everyone should feel happy, should catch the infection of joy.⁶⁸

68. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 8, Chapter 29: The Two Mothers. Divine Discourse on May 13, 1968.



Divinity Alone Confers Contentment

Wealth cannot yield joyous contentment. Divinity alone can confer that. Yearn for God, and joy and peace will be added unto you. When you pursue these elevating ideals, you will come up against many obstacles that others place in your path. So you must be ever alert and vigilant not to be taken in by their specious pleas.⁶⁹

69. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 13, Chapter 21: Expand the Heart. Divine Discourse on August 1, 1976.



As Long as Desires Remain, Man Is Bound to the Mundane Existence

Contentment in the mind is not easily secured. As soon as one desire is satisfied, another crops up. There is no limit to desires. Even the aspiration for *moksha* (liberation from mundane existence) is a desire. As long as desires remain, man is bound to the mundane existence.⁷⁰ Man today is afflicted with discontent.⁷¹

70. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 25, Chapter 32: See the One in the Many. Divine Discourse on October 4, 1992.

71. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 28, Chapter 16: Health, Diet, and Divinity. Divine Discourse on June 3, 1995.



Intensify Your Thirst for God

Injustice and discontent are spreading everywhere due to one fault in man: saying one thing and doing the opposite, the tongue and the hand going in different directions. Man has to set himself right and correct his food, his recreation, his method of spending his leisure, and his habits of thought.⁷² If only man intensifies his thirst for God, he can live in perpetual contentment, instead of groveling in perpetual discontent, pining for land, buildings, bank balance, furniture, status, power, authority, and all such trivial satisfactions.⁷³

72. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 5, Chapter 13: The Voice of Thunder. Divine Discourse on March 24, 1965.

73. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 6, Chapter 29: The Supreme Physician. Divine Discourse on October 15, 1966.



Two Qualifications

How can man become “dear” to God? The *Bhagavad Gita* emphasizes two qualifications: *samthushtah sathatham* (ever contented) and *dhruda nischayah* (with firm resolve). He has to be contented and cheerful always, without regard for the changing tides of fortune. It should not be a pose, a passing phase, an artificial, superficial show.⁷⁴

74. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 19, Chapter 16: Near and Dear. Divine Discourse on August 2, 1986.



Do Not Seek Unlimited Worldly Possessions

The great conqueror, Alexander, when he was approaching his end, called all his warriors and told them that when he died, his body should be taken to the grave with his hands held upwards. On seeing the funeral procession with the hands of the emperor held up, the people asked why the emperor was being carried in that manner. They were told that the great emperor, who had amassed immense wealth, wanted to show that when he was leaving the world he was going empty-handed, taking nothing with him. The lesson of this episode is that we should seek not unlimited worldly possessions but contentment and peace of mind through good deeds. All that we accumulate is really not our property. It belongs to the people.⁷⁵

75. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 17, Chapter 12: Combine Morals with Business. Divine Discourse on May 14, 1984.



Prescription for Peace and Contentment

I shall give you one prescription that will give you the peace and contentment that you seek: It is *namasmarana* (remembering the name of the Lord). Install on your tongue any one of the thousand names of the Lord, current in

any part of the world, among any community of devotees. Repeat the name for some time at least every day as part of your duty to yourself, a discipline that will yield good results, a habit that you should cultivate as a compensation for the hard toil that you do with your body from sunrise to sunset.⁷⁶

The name has much efficacy. By repeating the name, the Lord and His attributes can be easily identified. Your tongue must be sanctified by the repetition of the name. It also has to use sweet expressions that will spread contentment and joy. Be very careful about your speech. Animals have horns, insects have stings, beasts have claws and fangs. But man's biggest weapon of offence is his tongue. The wounds that his tongue inflicts can scarce be healed; they fester in the heart for a long time. They are capable of more damage than even an atom bomb.⁷⁷

76. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 3, Chapter 38: Project Site, *Puja Site*. Divine Discourse on December 6, 1963.

77. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 4, Chapter 21: *Sravana* and *Smarana*. Divine Discourse on July 29, 1964.



Rise Above “I” and “Mine”

You are God verily. If only you get rid of “I,” the ego, and “mine,” the attachment, then you are really yourself (your real SELF)! When you say, “my house, my people,” etc., attachment grows. This body attachment breeds ego. Hence once you rise above “I” and “mine” and lead a contented life, you will derive great happiness.⁷⁸

78. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 41, Chapter 18: Lead a Happy Life with a Feeling of Camaraderie and Fraternity. Divine Discourse on November 23, 2008.



Illness Is Caused by Malnutrition of the Mind

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. Illness is caused more by malnutrition of the mind than of the body.

Doctors speak of vitamin deficiency; I will call it the deficiency of vitamin G, and I will recommend the repetition of the name of God, with accompanying contemplation of the glory and grace of God. That is the vitamin G. That is the medicine; regulated life and habits are two-thirds of the treatment, while the medicine is only one-third. Man must reveal the Divine qualities of love, humility, detachment and contentment. If he does not, he becomes worse than a beast and more deadly.⁷⁹

79. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 5, Chapter 39: Vitamin G. Divine Discourse on September 27, 1965.



The Unseen Alone Can Confer Contentment

By an inordinate attachment to the seen, man has become an alien to the realm of the unseen. But the unseen is the basis of the seen, the thing that gives stability and value to it, the thing that is true and valid. In spite of the warnings administered by countless saints and teachers through the centuries, man has today in this land of *Bharat* (India) forsaken the unseen for the sake of the seen.

The unseen alone can confer contentment and courage to face fortune as well as misfortune. Ignoring it has caused the discontent and distress prevalent in every heart and home today. Develop devotion, and you are free, for the Lord takes on the burden you carry.⁸⁰ Despite acquiring plenty of riches and luxuries, peace and contentment will accrue to man only when he attains consciousness (*Atma Tatva*).⁸¹

80. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 6, Chapter 18: The Bottomless Pit. Divine Discourse on July 3, 1966.

81. Summer Showers in Brindavan 2002, Chapter 12: Health Is Wealth.



There Is Nothing Greater than Love for God

The heart of a human being should be full of the noble qualities of tolerance, perseverance, sympathy and contentment. Only then can the human easily understand the principle of the Self and propagate the same. The principle of the

Self cannot be attained merely by education, scholarship, and intelligence. Purity of heart is of utmost importance for this.

What education did noble souls like Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Kabir and Surdas have? Ramakrishna was not highly educated, yet he earned worldwide name and fame as *Paramahansa* (realized person). His purity of heart was responsible for this. In order to attain purity of heart, there is no need to perform chanting, penance, and meditation, nor is there any need to study the *Vedas*, the scriptures, and the *Puranas* and *Itihasas* (epics and mythological texts). Love for God is the only requirement to attain purity of heart. There is nothing greater than this. The heart that is full of love for God is truly the heart of a human being.⁸²

82. Develop Purity of Heart. Divine Discourse on September 2, 1996.



The Source of Peace and Bliss Is Within

Man craves peace. Though the source of peace and bliss is within himself, he seeks them in the external like one pursuing a mirage. Owing to restless activity, endless worry, and limitless desires, man has lost peace of mind and has become prey to discontent and misery. At the outset, peace has to be cultivated within ourselves. And then that peace has to be extended to the family. From the home it should be spread to the village. Thus peace should begin with the individual and spread to the whole society.⁸³

83. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 22, Chapter 6: Live Up to Your Role. Divine Discourse on March 23, 1989.



Strive Only to Do Good

Virtuous conduct purifies the mind and leads you to God. It creates a taste for the name and the form of God. When you love the name and form of Krishna, you will naturally respect and obey the command of Krishna, which is found in the *Bhagavad Gita*. Have the name on your tongue and the form in your eye, and the demon called *aasha* (unending desire) will fly from your mind, leaving joy and contentment therein. This kind of constant dwelling on the indwelling God will

promote in you love for all beings. You will then see only good in others. You will strive only to do good to others.⁸⁴

84. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 5, Chapter 12: *Dharma and Dharmashala*. Divine Discourse on March 22, 1965.



Do Not Forget the Goal

The Godward path is action based on righteousness. That is also the path toward joy, contentment, and therefore strength. Now the path has become hidden by an overgrowth of briar and bush; the bridges and culverts are in disrepair. People have forgotten the goal, the path, and the habit of walking on it. That road is the only refuge; it must be trodden tomorrow, if not today, for the goal lies at the end of that road.⁸⁵

85. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 4, Chapter 8: *Dharmakshethra*. Divine Discourse on February 18, 1964.



Do Not Neglect the Code Governing Life

Forgetting his true nature, man spends his life in the pursuit and enjoyment of meretricious and evanescent sensuous pleasures and mundane desires. Does man secure peace, however much he may succeed in indulging in worldly pleasures? No. Ultimately he ends his life in discontent and despair. Ignoring the pure, eternal, infinite Divine truth in him, man fosters animal and demonic traits.

What is the reason for this betrayal of his true nature, which renders his life meaningless? It is because he neglects the code governing life based on restraints and righteousness. The old saying is “*Dharma* (righteousness) is at the root of everything. It is the highest virtue.” Morality is the corollary to *dharma*. Morality does not merely mean the observance of certain rules in the work-a-day world. Morality means adherence to the straight and sacred path of right conduct. Morality is the blossoming of good conduct. It is the royal road to the acme of human achievement. The honor of the community rests upon morality. Without morals a community decays. Morality alone makes or mars the community.⁸⁶

86. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 17, Chapter 30: Secure God's Love. Divine Discourse on December 25, 1984.



Envy and Greed Have Fouled Relations

Mankind has progressed far in exploiting the material resources of the earth in order to promote the standard of life. But neither the individual nor the society has learnt the way to inner peace and contentment. Envy and greed have fouled the relations between nations and between persons, suppressing the awareness of the unity that underlies all creation. The main cause of this calamitous situation is rank egoism; each one tries to grab for himself whatever adds to power and comfort. The ego is making puppets of them all. The words and deeds of men reflect this tendency of selfish aggrandizement. Every move is decided by the needs of the self only. Steps are taken to promote one's self-interests.

In order to restore peace to the individual and in society, the mind, where desires are born and resolutions are framed, has to be purged of its attachment to the self. The mind has desires as its warp and woof. When desires are ego oriented, time and effort are wasted, duty is neglected, and the body and its skills are misused. And all this when life is being shortened every day. With every second, life drips, as water from a leaky pot. But man is not aware of the tragedy that is imminent every moment.⁸⁷

87. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 15, Chapter 6: Rama the Ideal. Divine Discourse in Golden Jubilee Hall, Laal Baagh, Bangalore.



Penance Means Giving Up All Bad Qualities

Firm faith is essential for realizing the Self. Faith is the basis of self-confidence, without which nothing can be achieved. The word *manava* (man) itself means one who has faith. When he acts upon his faith, he experiences peace and contentment. Love is the means through which faith is strengthened. People offer prayers to God. Prayers should not mean petitioning to God for favors. The object of prayer should be to establish God firmly in one's heart. Aim at linking yourself

to God and not at seeking favors.

Aspire to earning the love of God. That is real penance. That is why it is said: Looking ahead is *tapas* (penance); looking backward is *tamas* (ignorance). Penance does not mean giving up hearth and home and retiring to a forest. It means giving up all bad qualities and striving to live ceaselessly for God's grace.⁸⁸

88. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 22, Chapter 5: From Love: to Love. Divine Discourse on March 6, 1989.



Equanimity Is Gained through Systematic Spiritual Effort

Control the mind, and you remain unruffled. That is the secret of peace; that is the education that man must first claim and secure. We find today that the man who is most highly educated is the very person who is most discontented and unhappy. Then what is the gain from all the study he has made of books and of men and things?

To gain this equanimity, you have to do not reading, but systematic *sadhana* (spiritual effort). Then you can be happy whether you are rich or poor, appreciated or rejected, prosperous or unlucky. That is an armor without which it is foolish to enter the arena of life. If the arena is entered just for getting sensory joy, you are in for all kinds of trouble. It is like sailing in a tiny boat on a storm-tossed sea without a rudder. So, enter upon the path of spiritual discipline now itself.⁸⁹

89. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 1, Chapter 18: Education and Peace. Divine Discourse on December 20, 1958.



Man Should Not Be Content to Remain Like Animals

Man who came to this earth in quest of the *Atma* (Divine Self) is wasting away his time in the frivolous pursuit of material things. Animals are always busy seeking food. Man, who is endowed with intelligence, should not be content to remain like animals. He should strive to reach reality. Food, sleep, fear, and mating are common to both birds and beasts. Man's life today is largely confined to these four things. Birth as a human being should be used for realizing the Divinity within

and not in frittering life away in sensual pursuits.⁹⁰

90. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 20, Chapter 10: From the Mother to *Moksha*. Divine Discourse on May 6, 1987.



Dedicate All to the Lord—That Is Genuine Contentment

Contentment grants and increases happiness. For the contented mind, life is an endless festival, but the mind worried by desire will have no rest. With desire troubling you, concentration is impossible. Desire is the fire in your frame; it reduces you to ashes. Contentment is the effective drug to destroy it. Just as a bath in the cool waters of a stream refreshes a traveler who is exhausted and perspiring in the burning heat of day, the one suffering from the scorching fire of greed will be refreshed by the pellucid waters of contentment. One should have desire only for the path of realization. One should not dedicate one's life to the mean desires of the world. Dedicate all to the Lord; that is genuine contentment.⁹¹

91. Dhyana Vahini, Chapter X: Innocence, Purity, and Humility.



People Are Filled with Worries and Discontent

People today are totally immersed in self-interest. Multiplying desires without limit, they are becoming demonic beings. They are not content with having what they need for essential purposes. They wish to accumulate enormously for the future. They are filled with worries and discontent. Thereby they forfeit their happiness here and in the hereafter. Birds and beasts are content with what they can get. Man alone is afflicted with insatiable desires. Birds and animals have no desire to hoard or to exploit others. But man is prey to these vices. He forgets his natural human qualities and behaves worse than animals.⁹²

92. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 20, Chapter 21: Teaching Values by Example. Divine Discourse on September 26, 1987.



Contentment Is the Most Precious Wealth

No one brings wealth when he is born or takes it with him when he dies. Whatever riches one has accumulated have to be freely shared with others. Flowers scatter fragrance; trees offer fruits in plenty. Instead of learning the lessons they teach, man pursues his own sense cravings and his urge for fame and authority over others. Contentment is the most precious wealth; greed brings misery in its train. Contentment alone can lead man to the goal of life, namely, the attainment of Divinity.⁹³

93. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 14, Chapter 45: The Way of Jesus. Divine Discourse on December 25, 1979.



Have Total Contentment in Everything

Those who want to have the experience of Divinity must possess some important qualities in the first instance. They are patience and perseverance, purity of body and mind, love coupled with an intense yearning, a steady and unchanging mind, sense control, intense yearning, equanimity in the face of odds, unflinching faith, and total contentment in everything.⁹⁴

94. Bhagavad Gita Part II, Chapter 19: The Secret of *Anaasakthi Yoga*.



Glossary

For a comprehensive translation of Sanskrit words into English, please go to the following website: <http://sssbt.info/vahiniglossary/entries.htm>





Contentment

Sri Sathya Sai Baba, one of the most revered spiritual leaders in the world and regarded as an incarnation of God in human form by His devotees, delivered more than 2,000 discourses, most of which are compiled in *Sri Sathya Sai Speaks* and *Summer Showers*. He also wrote articles for His devotees in the spiritual monthly *Sanathana Sarathi*, which were later published in 16 books under the *Vahini* series.

This compilation of *Divine Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba*, Volume 2, contains quotations on the topic “Contentment” selected from the discourses and writings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Sri Sathya Sai says: “Contentment, it is said, confers the greatest happiness. It follows that true happiness resides in the heart and everyone should seek it there.”

