

# Teachings of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

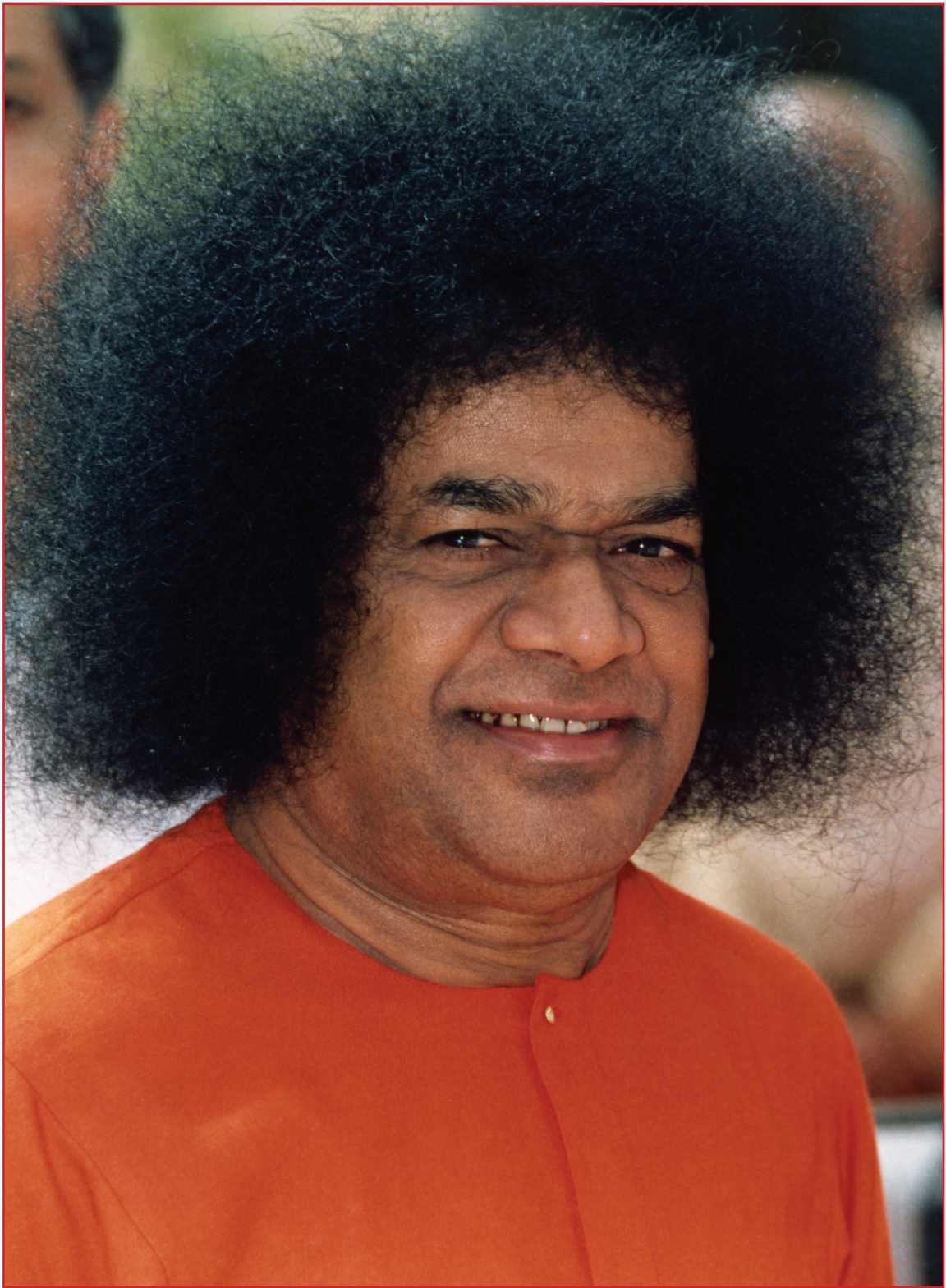
Volume 2



Silence

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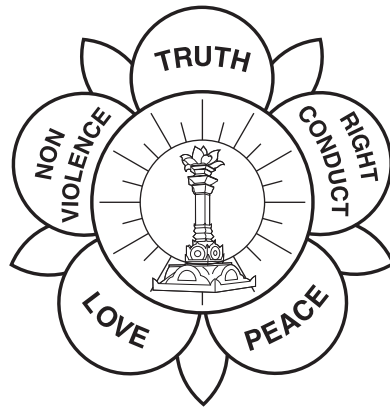
You Cannot Always Oblige,  
But You Can Always Speak Obligingly



**Dedicated with love and reverence to**

*Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba*

# Teachings of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba



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# Silence

*The Voice of God Can Be Heard Only in the Depth of Silence*

*Silence Is the Speech of the Spiritual Seeker*

*You Can Experience Divine Bliss Only in Absolute Silence*

## **Silence Develops Love**

Silence is the only language of the realised. Practise moderation in speech. That will help you in many ways. It will develop love, for most misunderstandings and factions arise out of carelessly spoken words. When the foot slips, the wound can be healed; but when the tongue slips, the wound it causes in the heart of another will fester for life.

The tongue is liable for four big errors: uttering falsehood, scandalising, finding fault with others, and excessive articulation. These have to be avoided if there is to be peace for the individual as well as for society. The bond of brotherhood will be tightened if people speak less and speak sweetly. That is why silence was prescribed as a vow for spiritual aspirants by the scriptures. You are all spiritual aspirants at various stages of the road, and so this discipline is valuable for you also.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume I,  
Chapter 10: *Viveka* and *Vairagya*.



## **Talk Sweetly without Anger**

The first step in spiritual discipline is the cleansing of speech. Talk sweetly without anger. Do not boast of your scholarship or attainments. Be humble, eager to serve; conserve your speech. Practise silence. That will save you from squabbles, idle thoughts, and factions.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume II,  
Chapter 6: Steps in *Sadhana*.

## **Make the Place Where You Are a Citadel of Silence**

You need not escape into a forest to gain silence and the chance of uninterrupted spiritual practice. You can make the place where you are a citadel of silence; shut off the senses, let them not run after objects. Your home becomes a hermitage; your spiritual practices will then move on, without any obstacle.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume II,  
Chapter 6: Steps in *Sadhana*.



## **Stay Away from Bad Company**

I know that you are finding time, in spite of the hard work throughout the day, to attend cinemas, to engage in wayside chats, to promote and partake in factions, and quarrels, and for many other distractions that add to the sum of your worries.

It is best you stay away from companions who drag you to such distractions that weaken and worry you; spend a few minutes every morning and evening in the silence of your own shrine or home; spend them with the highest of all powers that you know of. Be in His elevating and inspiring company; worship Him mentally; offer unto Him all the work you do; you will come out of the silence nobler and more heroic than when you went in.

## **Communion with the Master**

Just consider – do you come out of the cinema theatre more peaceful, more heroic, purer, nobler than when you went in? No; your passions are aroused, your animal impulses are catered to, your lower nature is fed. Nothing else can give one the rich reward that silence and prayer and communion with the Master can give. Not even a decent bank account, or a string of degrees, or the muscles of a prize-fighter.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume III,  
Chapter 38: Project Site, *Puja* Site.

## **Kindness Has to Be Fostered in Silence**

One great temptation for weak minds nowadays is the opportunity for publicity. Even a gift of five rupees to some charitable organisation is announced in thick banner headlines! Conceit is thus encouraged, and man slides into paltry pomp. Kindness has to be fostered in the silence of the mind.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume IV,  
Chapter 52: *Anna* and *Amritha*.



## **The Silent Man Has No Enemies**

The tongue is the armour of the heart; it guards one's life. Loud talk, long talk, wild talk, talk full of anger and hate – all these affect the health of man. They breed anger and hate in others; they wound, they excite, they enrage, they estrange. Why is silence said to be golden? The silent man has no enemies, though he may not have friends. He has the leisure and the chance to dive within himself and examine his own faults and failings. He has no more inclination to seek them in others. If your foot slips, you suffer a fracture; if your tongue slips, you fracture someone's faith or joy. That fracture can never be set right; that wound will fester forever. Therefore use the tongue with great care. The softer you talk, the less you talk, the more sweetly you talk, the better for you and the world.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume V,  
Chapter 21: The Rare Chance.



## **Silence Is the Best Practice to Guard Faith**

Silence is the best spiritual practice to guard faith; that is why I insist on silence here also, as a first step in your spiritual practice.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume V,  
Chapter 42: Pay the Price.

## Repeat God's Name in the Silence of the Heart

The magnet cannot draw to itself a bit of iron that is covered with rust and dust. You cannot yearn for God when your mind is laden with the rust of material desires and when the dust of sensual craving sits heavy on it. Clear the rust, know the glory of God, and repeat His name in the silence of the heart. Any one of the names that denote Him can be selected. Do not listen to people who canvass for one particular name and cavil at others.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume VII,  
Chapter 45: The Treasure under Your Feet.



## Keep Silent if Speaking Truth Causes Grief or Pain

If you want to know the way in which you have to observe truth in speech, read the *Bhagavad Gita*. It tells you that the best speech is speech that does not create pain or anger or grief to others. The scriptures also say, "Speak the truth and speak pleasantly. Do not speak the truth which is not pleasant. If speaking truth will cause grief or pain, keep silent."

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume VII,  
Chapter 46: Truth and Love.



## The Voice of God Can Be Heard Only in the Depth of Silence

It is only in the depth of silence that the voice of God can be heard. Speak as low as possible, as little as possible, as sweetly as possible.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume VIII,  
Chapter 33: The Creeper and the Tree.

## All Joy Is Within

All the joy you crave for is in you. But, like a man who has vast riches in the iron chest but who has no idea where the key is, you suffer. Hear properly the instructions, dwell upon them in the silence of meditation, practise what has been made clear therein; then, you can secure the key, open the chest, and be rich in joy.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume IX,  
Chapter 3: *Mahashivarathri*.



## Avoid Entangling Yourself in the Affairs of Others

Detachment is the first step in spiritual practice. Silence helps you avoid entangling yourself in the affairs of others; that is why it is encouraged as a preliminary.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume IX,  
Chapter 19: Counsel for the Chosen.



## Talk to Others in Whispers

One of the first principles of straight living is – practise silence. For the voice of God can be heard in the region of your heart only when the tongue is stilled and the storm is stilled and the waves are calm. There will be no temptation for others to shout when you talk to them in whispers. Set the level of the tone yourself – as low as possible, as high as necessary to reach to the outermost boundary of the circle you are addressing.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume X,  
Chapter 4: The Very Breath.



## Silence Promotes Self-Control

Silence. This is the first step in spiritual practice; it makes the other steps easy. It promotes self-control; it lessens chances of anger, hate, malice, greed, pride. Besides, you can hear His footsteps only when silence reigns in the mind.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume X,  
Chapter 16: Labels Are Libels.



## Spiritual Practice Is Done in Silence

There are many who go about the country, preaching about repeating God's name and meditation, pretending to be highly advanced experts. They claim to be masters, so that they can collect huge audiences and show off their skills. But such exhibition of talent is not a sign of spiritual attainment. Spiritual attainments shun publicity. Spiritual practice is to be done in silence, away from public gaze. The name and form of God are extolled by Mira as "precious gems"; precious gems are not brought out as wares to the market place; only vegetables are so exhibited for all to see. The units of our organisation should not encourage pomp or show – for they are alien to the spiritual path.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume X,  
Chapter 33: Faults and Failures.



## Maintain Silence in the Recesses of the Heart

God is omnipresent. So, do not act differently when you are away from My presence. Be always and everywhere conscious of the presence. Be vigilant, even while engaged in little tasks. Maintain silence in the recesses of the heart, as well as outside.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XIV,  
Chapter 59: The Search for Fulfilment.

## Cultivate Inner Silence

The very first spiritual practice one must adopt is the cultivation of inner silence, to put an end to the endless dialogue with the mind. Let the mind rest for a while. Do not project on the mind irrelevant details and pollute it with fumes of envy and greed. Every idea we entertain, either good or bad, gets impressed on the mind, as on carbon paper. An element of weakness and unsteadiness is thus introduced in the mind. Keep the mind calm and clear. Do not agitate it every moment by your non-stop dialogue.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XV,  
Chapter 42: The Triple Purity.



## The Mind Must Desist from Wandering

Speech is produced cheaply, but it has high value. It can elevate as well as demean man. Listening to a speech, a zero can rise into a hero or a hero can collapse into a zero. Speech can inspire or plant despair. It must be true and sweet, not false and pleasant. Man must endeavour to acquire speech untouched by subterfuge, limbs untouched by cruelty, hands free from violence, and thoughts free from vengefulness. Frenzy, fanaticism, and gusts of anger have to be controlled, for they lead to disasters whose range is beyond calculation. By constant practice, these can also resort to the vow of silence. The mind too must desist from wandering when the tongue is desisting from talking. Otherwise, the vow cannot be fruitful. Be conscious that every word we utter or hear will leave an impression on our consciousness and provoke reactions that may or may not be beneficial. This is the reason why the company of God and godly people is to be sought.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XV,  
Chapter 42: The Triple Purity.



## Practise Silence to Conserve Energy

Spiritual energy has to be conserved by all possible means. The sages practised silence to conserve the energy lost through speech.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XVII,  
Chapter 6: Students and *Sadhana*.



## Triple Purity That Pleases the Lord

There are three things that are immensely pleasing to the Lord: a tongue that never indulges in falsehood, a body that is not tainted by causing harm to others, and a mind that is free from attachment and hatred. These three constitute the triple purity. Refrain from uttering falsehood, inflicting pain on others, and entertaining ill will towards others. Practise silence as a means of preventing the tongue from straying away from truth. The ancient sages practised and preached silence for this purpose.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XXI,  
Chapter 9: From *Annam* to *Ananda*.



## Restraint in Speech Develops Mental Agility

The effect of excessive speech on the behaviour and mental faculties of people was the subject of research at Columbia University. The experiment was conducted in a primary school for twenty-five years. The students were grouped separately in batches of ten. Those students who spoke the least were offered prizes. Tests were conducted on students indulging in excessive talk and those observing silence or reticence. It was found over the years that the intellectual abilities of students observing restraint in speech were of a high order. There was purity in their speech. They had a broad outlook. They developed enquiring minds. They had a high degree of discrimination.

In the case of students indulging in excessive speech, it was found that their memory power was weak. They were narrow-minded. They lacked discriminating power. The result of the experiment

testified to the wisdom of the ancient sages who went to the forest for silent contemplation. Every one of the practices of the ancient sages was designed to lead men to the highest stage. Remember that through restraint in speech you can develop mental agility.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XXII,  
Chapter 10: *Vidya* and *Samskara*.



## Two Functions of the Tongue

Control of the senses should be one of the primary aims of students. More than the sense organs, the sensory perceptions are powerful. They are: sound, touch, form, taste, and smell. Among the sense organs the most important one is the mouth (or tongue), with the power of speech. If one can conquer the tongue, he will be the master of all the other senses.

The tongue has two functions: speaking and eating. Whoever is able to master these two faculties will be able to raise himself to the level of the Divine. When the tongue becomes silent, the mind begins to talk. To control the mind's talk, the *buddhi* (intellect or intelligence) has to be awakened. Then one should strive to turn the intellect or intelligence towards the *Atma* (the Divine).

True spiritual striving consists in turning the tongue towards the mind, the mind towards the intellect, and the intellect towards the *Atma*. Although this royal road is available to man, he chooses to immerse himself in worldly pleasures and becomes submerged in sorrow.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XXIII,  
Chapter 13: Royal Road to Realisation.



## Pursue the Godly Way of Life

To get rid of ego, there is only one path – it is to pursue the godly way of life. When you are puffed up with the sense of ego, sit silently in a corner and observe what your breathing is telling you. It is declaring: “*So-Ham*” (“*So*” while inhaling and “*Ham*” while exhaling). *So-Ham* is made up of the two words *Sah* (He, that is Brahman) and *Aham* (“I”). “*Aham Brahmasmi*” (I am Brahman). If this is constantly meditated upon and this consciousness grows within, the *Aham* (“I”) will cease to be a bother. This *mantra* (sacred syllable or word, by the repetition of which one attains liberation) has been described as *Hamsa Gayatri* in Vedantic parlance.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XXIII,  
Chapter 16: The *Buddhi* and the *Atma*.



## Tips on Controlling Anger

You should not become a victim of the feelings of anger, hatred, ego, or pride that may arise in you. When such feelings arise in you, sit silently for a few minutes. Instead of doing so, you must not give vent to your anger by scolding or beating others as you like. How to put this into practice? As soon as you get angry, you should immediately leave that place and go out into the open and quietly walk about 200 metres. Then your anger will disappear. An easier method than this is to stand before a mirror and look into your own angry face. You will dislike your own face and look upon it with disgust or aversion. Then try to laugh heartily and your anger will leave you.

If you find it difficult even to do this, go into your bathroom and turn the water tap on. To the accompaniment of the tune of the sound created by the water flowing from the tap, begin to sing a good song. Then your anger will certainly disappear. Or else, drink a glass of cold water. Like this, you have to seek ways and means of regaining a calm and peaceful mood. Instead of doing so, if you allow your anger to grow, restlessness will also grow along with that anger, depriving you of

peace of mind. You should never give tit for tat, or word for word.

The less you talk, the more your mental power will grow. With the increase in your mental capacity, there will be an increase in your power of discrimination too. Consequently, you will give up “individual discrimination” and resort to “fundamental discrimination.” Because of this, you will begin to consider the good of the world at large rather than your own individual welfare. You must cultivate such broad feelings from this young age itself.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XXV,  
Chapter 15: Rise from Animality to Divinity.



## Three Kinds of Silence

The ancients practised three kinds of silence. The first was silence of the tongue, the second one was silence of the mind, and the third was supreme silence. Silence in speech meant confining one’s speech to the limit and the needs of the occasion. By this discipline, excessive talk was avoided. As a result, the power of their speech was conserved and enhanced. Discipline in speech also resulted in truthfulness. Speaking the truth served to purify their thoughts. By this means they acquired the highest wisdom. Therefore purity in speech is vital. It has to be achieved by restraint in speech.

Then, there is silence of the mind. The mind is a bundle of thoughts and fancies. These thoughts have to be reduced gradually. When thoughts are reduced, the mind naturally comes under control, like a clock that is unwound. When the activity of the mind is reduced, the power of the *Atma* manifests itself. As a consequence, intellect becomes more active than the senses. When control of speech and control of the mind have been achieved, the state of supreme silence is easily realised. Students should strive to reach the third stage by the disciplines of the first two stages.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XXVII,  
Chapter 7: Imbibe *Bharat’s* Ideals.

## Energy Is a Divine Gift

Spiritual practice consists of speaking good, thinking good, seeing good, hearing good, and doing good. Excessive talking must also be avoided, as it is a waste of energy. When one gets weak due to wastage of energy, he is prone to get angry and develop hatred. You must therefore use your God-given energy for good purposes. Energy is a Divine gift. By curtailing unnecessary talk and keeping silent, you can conserve energy. “Talk less and work more” is the golden rule to be adopted.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XXVII,  
Chapter 10: Foster Love: Eschew Hatred.



## Harm Done by Television

Television sets are installed in every room in the houses of the rich. From the moment television made its appearance, the mind of man has been polluted. Before the advent of TV, men’s minds were not as polluted. Acts of violence were not so rampant previously. Today TV is installed in every hut. People watch TV even while eating. The result is that all the foul things seen on TV are being consumed by the viewer. Concentration on TV affects one’s view of the world. The scenes, thoughts, and actions displayed on the TV set fill the minds of the viewers. Unknowingly, agitation and ill feelings enter their minds. In due course they take root and grow in their minds.

Hence while eating, you should not discuss dreadful incidents. No room should be given to subjects that excite the mind. Silence should prevail during eating. Even sound waves enter into us and affect our minds. Hence people should avoid TV while eating.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XXIX,  
Chapter 3: Triple Transformation: *Sankranthi’s* Call.

## Silence Helps to Experience the Divine

It is essential to limit one’s desires and keep the senses under control. This is the only way to true happiness. The most important organ that has to be controlled is the tongue, which, unlike the other sense organs – the eyes, the ears, and the nose – has a double function, speech and taste. The ancient sages practised silence for a variety of reasons. Silence serves to conserve energy, improve the memory, and experience the Divine. Restraint in speech and avoidance of gossip and slander are commendable virtues.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XXIX,  
Chapter 10: *Srishti* and *Dhrishti*.



## Meditate on Swami’s Teachings during Silence

Promote love in your hearts, and share it with others. That is the best form of worship. Love is the only property of Sai. My life is love. That is what I offer to one and all. I go on giving, giving. But to what extent are you putting into practice Swami’s teachings? Practise silence for at least ten minutes in a day. Meditate on Swami’s teachings at that time. Realise that in this transient world the Eternal is immanent. Hold fast onto God. Experience the bliss of union with the Divine. Make love your life-breath. With love of God in their hearts the ancient sages could transform even the wild animals in the forests.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XXIX,  
Chapter 11: The Triple Transformation.



## Be Silent and Induce Silence in Others

Be silent yourself; that will induce silence in others. Do not fall into the habit of shouting, talking long and loud. Reduce contacts to a minimum. Carry with you an atmosphere of quiet contemplation, wherever you happen to be.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XXIX,  
Chapter 21: Importance of Discipline.

## Silence Ensures Peace of Mind

You must make it a practice to observe silence for at least one hour daily. It saves your cosmic energy and ensures peace of mind. You should develop also the discipline of simple living and high thinking.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XXX,  
Chapter 17: Cultivate Character: Lead an Ideal Life.



## Silence Brings Back Memory Power

The ancient Indian sages practised silence as a spiritual discipline because they realised the myriad benefits derived from silence. Swami Vivekananda learnt a valuable lesson when he found that after ten days of endless talk he had forgotten all the verses he had learnt by heart. By practising complete silence for a fortnight he got back his memory powers. People should realise that God's grace is secured by the sacred use of the senses endowed on man by the Divine.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XXX,  
Chapter 25: Sacred Use of *Indriyas*.



## Speak the Truth

Nowadays, people resort to telling lies, fearing that they may get into trouble otherwise. Why should you fear speaking the truth? You have to fear only when you commit mistakes. Today, there is fear rampant everywhere. Life is fear-stricken! Practise truth and righteousness. If you practise these, you need not fear. When you are not able to utter the truth, you may desist from speaking and keep silent.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XXXI,  
Chapter 12: Man, Truth, Love, and God.

## Each One Has to Bear the Consequences of His Actions

There are many obstacles along the path of devotion. Some people accuse, criticise, and censure God in times of difficulties. Each one has to bear the consequences of his own actions. God remains unaffected. God is pure, unsullied, and sacred. Let people say anything; be cool and calm. Do not enter into unnecessary arguments with them. It only breeds enmity. Speak softly and sweetly with a smiling face. That will silence the critic. A smile is the best answer to criticism.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XXXI,  
Chapter 46: Sacrifice Leads to Immortality.



## Silence Fosters Purity

Only those who observe silence are good people. Silence fosters purity. Therefore observe silence at all times. It is a waste of time if you carry tales about others. What have you come here for? Vain gossip causes harm to many. So refrain from indulging in it.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 32, Part 2,  
Chapter 8: Cultivate Discipline and Love.



## Divinity Can Be Recognised Only by the Pure Hearted

If you are aspiring for good results, offer only good feelings to God. There should be perfect harmony in your thought, word, and deed. He is a noble soul whose thought, word, and deed are in perfect harmony. Do not hate anybody. On November 24, 1926, Sri Aurobindo broke his prolonged silence only to declare that God had incarnated the previous day. After making this significant statement, he continued with his vow of silence. Divinity can be recognized only by the pure hearted.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 32, Part 2,  
Chapter 11: Devotion – the Supreme *Yagna*.



## Talk Less and Work More

Do not waste energy! Energy is God. Today, students are wasting a lot of energy through unshared vision, bad thoughts, bad hearing, and excessive talk. Our body can be compared to a radio. When the radio is turned on continuously, the batteries become discharged quickly. Likewise, if you indulge in excessive talk, you will be losing a lot of energy. That is why the ancient sages and seers used to observe silence. So, conserve energy by observing silence at least one day in a week.

I often tell the students, talk less and work more. Only then the latent energy develops. This was the sole aim of sages and seers in undertaking various spiritual practices. Once the latent energy develops, your memory power as well as your power of concentration will increase. Some students are not able to perform well on examinations because they are not able to concentrate even for a moment. They are constantly engaged in listening to radio news, cricket commentary, etc., with the textbook in their hand! With such distractions, how can they concentrate and retain their memory?

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 32, Part 2,  
Chapter 14: Seek God Within.



## Exercise Proper Control over the Tongue

While all other senses do only one type of work each, the tongue alone has the capacity to do two types of work, namely, to taste and to speak. That is why one has to exercise proper control over the tongue lest it should indulge in sinful activities like talking ill of others. In times of anger, observe silence. Our ancients taught: Talk less, work more. The less you talk, the purer your heart remains.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 34,  
Chapter 4: Have Steady Faith in the *Atma*.

## The Same *Atma* Is Present in All

A person remained silent though he was being criticised. When his friend wanted him to react, he replied, “The same *Atma* is present in me as well as in the person who is criticising. So, why should I be annoyed when he is criticising himself?” A deep inquiry into the truth will reveal that when you love or hate others, you love or hate your own self. In fact, there are no “others.” You consider yourself different from others because of body attachment. Once you give up body attachment, you will realise that there are no others and all are yours. That is the true vision of the *Atma*. The *Atma* does not have a specific form.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 34,  
Chapter 12: Human Birth Is to Experience *Atmic* Bliss.



## Always Talk in a Pleasing Manner

Why has God given you a tongue? Is it to partake of delicious food? No, not merely for that. The tongue is given to chant the Divine name and to talk sweetly and softly. Do not talk as you please, which may hurt the feelings of others. Some people may not pay heed to you if you talk softly and sweetly. It is their fate. They may listen or not, but you should always talk in a pleasing manner. If that is not possible, observe silence. When you are silent, there can be no conflict. Only those who do not recognise the Divinity act in a foolish manner. In fact, man himself is Divine. Only then can he become a perfect human being. Whatever you do, do it in a perfect manner.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 34,  
Chapter 18: The Life Principles of Man.



## Satisfy Your Conscience

Love is your greatest asset. Develop love, and always speak the truth. Truth sounds bitter, whereas people are easily pleased by falsehood. People do not relish milk, which is brought to their doorstep, whereas they are prepared to traverse miles together to consume a bottle of liquor. Falsehood has become the order of the day. Falsehood may

please others but not your conscience. Strive to satisfy your conscience before satisfying others. Under all circumstances follow the path of truth. In case the utterance of truth is likely to lead to some danger, remain silent.

### **That Which Sees Cannot Speak – That Which Speaks Cannot See**

A hermit was deeply engrossed in the contemplation of God. He had vowed to speak “truth always.” Lord Easwara wanted to subject him to a test. He assumed the form of a hunter and started chasing a deer, which, out of fear, hid in a bush close to the hermitage. This was noticed by the hermit. On being questioned by the hunter about the whereabouts of the deer, the hermit was in a dilemma. He could not feign ignorance and say that he had not seen the deer as that would amount to uttering a lie. At the same time he could not reveal the whereabouts of the deer, lest the hunter should kill it. In that case he would be a party to the crime. He prayed to Lord Easwara fervently to show him a way out.

A brilliant idea flashed in his mind by God’s grace. God is always with you, in you, around you, above you, guiding and guarding you. Why fear when He is near? The hermit replied, “O hunter, that which sees cannot speak; that which speaks cannot see.” By such a tactful answer, the hermit not only upheld his adherence to truth but also protected the life of the deer. Then Lord Easwara manifested in His true form and declared, “Such tact that safeguards your interests as well as those of others is true *yoga* (union with God).”

Therefore it is said, truth is the life of the tongue. Righteousness is the life of the hands. Non-violence is the life of the heart. *Shivarathri* is celebrated to teach man the significance of these values.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 35,  
Chapter 4: Idols are Pointers to Divinity.

### **Strife Does Not Arise out of Silence**

What is silence? One should never speak ill of others. Strife does not arise out of silence. Salute those who offend you. Don’t return offence with offence. If you act in the same manner as your opponent, how can you become greater? While saying that the other is acting wrongly, will you be right if you act in the same manner? Never act in this manner. Let those who commit an offence continue their offensive behaviour. Never react. Wish for the welfare of everyone.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 35,  
Chapter 4: Idols Are Pointers to Divinity.



### **Experience Innate Divinity by Observing Total Silence**

When God is all-pervasive, where is the need to go in search of Him? You should make efforts to experience your innate Divinity by observing total silence and turning your vision inward. You can experience Divine bliss only in absolute silence. That is why it is said, “Silence is golden.”

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 37,  
Chapter 20: Experience Divinity Within in Total Silence.



### **Pray to God Wholeheartedly with Love**

Any mighty task can be accomplished by prayer. Hence pray to God silently. Do not pray for the fulfilment of your petty desires. Give up all desires and pray to God wholeheartedly with love. You will certainly find fulfilment in life. You can understand and experience Divinity only through love. Nothing can be achieved without love. Love makes all your tasks successful. Some people complain, “Swami, we are making fervent prayers, but our prayers are not fruitful.” I tell them, “The mistake lies in your prayer and not in God.” If your prayers are sincere, they will certainly be answered. There is nothing that God cannot accomplish.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 37,  
Chapter 22: My Power Is the Power of Love.

## Remain Calm and Composed

Always speak the truth. Apart from speaking the truth, you should remain calm and composed in the face of criticism. Only then can there be peace. Our ancient sages used to observe silence as part of their spiritual practices. Observance of silence helps you to progress on the spiritual path. When you practise silence, you can easily experience peace of mind. Love manifests from peace. When you are filled with love, you will have no enemies. Therefore lead your life with love. Only through love can we establish peace in the world.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 41,  
Chapter 13: Love Is Truth; Truth Is Love. Live In Love.



## Do Not Indulge in Excessive Talk

Too much talk is very bad. Do not indulge in excessive talk. Try to mend your nature. Observe silence as far as possible and be quiet. Talk as much as is needed. Just answer to the point. If you talk more, you will be branded as a chatterbox. Too much talk is not good, even from the health point of view. This is very important, especially in the case of children. You have to keep your mind steady right from a young age. What is important is not studying textbooks, but steady-ing your mind. Textbooks, you can always study, in the classroom, in the hostel, etc.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 42,  
Chapter 5: Love God and Meditate on Him.



## Maintain Silence While Eating and Drinking

We should never talk while drinking something or eating. In the olden days, the great sages used to maintain silence while eating or drinking.

If you talk while eating, the digestive system will be spoiled. Once the digestive system is spoiled, several diseases will confront you. Pray to God silently, keeping your eyes closed, and then partake of your food. Most children do not know this rule. Take your food in silence in a calm at-

mosphere. Do not howl, talk, and chitchat. Do not laugh or cry while eating. Do not entertain any worry before or while eating. These are some of the precautions one has to take to lead a happy daily life.

Divine Discourse in Prasanthi Nilayam on October 12,  
2002: *Soham – the Right Sadhana.*



## Solitude Means to Be in Communion with God

God is the embodiment of truth. Truth is God. Therefore you should rely on truth. In fact, you are the embodiment of truth. It is not something new to be discovered afresh. Truth will manifest in you if you sit in deep silence and solitude. What does the word “solitude” mean? People have wrong notions about this word and misinterpret it in many ways. They think that sitting alone in a room with all doors and windows shut is solitude. This is not solitude but loneliness. Many others think that sitting under a tree in a forest or in a mountain cave is solitude. That also is not the true meaning of solitude.

Solitude means to be in communion with God, wherever you may be – in the bazaar, in a meeting, or in the midst of a large number of people. Wherever you are, your mind should be focused on God without being distracted by worldly and family matters. Solitude is total communion between you and God. Nothing else should divert your attention from God. That is the real meaning of solitude. Whatever you may be doing or even when traveling in a bus or train or plane, always keep your mind firmly fixed on God. While doing meditation or contemplating on God, do not allow any other distraction to divert your mind. Only then can you have the experience of Divine light.

Sanathana Sarathi, September 2011.  
Lack of Values Is the Cause of Violence in the World.

# You Cannot Always Oblige, But You Can Always Speak Obligingly

*Speak with Love*

*Speak Good Words*

*Always Speak with a Smile*

## **Speech Promotes Friendship as Well as Differences**

In this world, speech carries more value than the currency note. In ancient times, people used to give immense value to speech. With the help of speech they were able to become rich and prosperous; they could even win kingdoms. Man becomes virtuous only when his speech is good; he becomes evil when his speech is bad.

Speech promotes friendship. It also brings about differences between friends. Speech promotes affinity among relatives. It also creates discord. Effects of speech are not confined to ephemeral and worldly matters only; speech affects our spiritual progress also. Speech may even cause death. Speech can save one's life, too. Sweet speech brings you name and fame. Since man today has lost his pleasant speech and sweet temper, he is subjected to innumerable ordeals and sufferings. That is why I tell the students now and then, you cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. When the speech is good, man becomes a hero. But man will become a zero if the speech is not good.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 32, Part 1,  
Chapter 11: The Ephemeral and the Transcendental.



## **Wound Inflicted by the Tongue Can Never Be Healed**

Never use harsh words. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. Bodily wounds can be cured by the use of medicines. But the wounds inflicted by the tongue can never be healed. That is why I repeatedly tell you to cultivate love and talk with love. I never use harsh words even when I appear to be angry. I always speak lovingly. You too will become Divine when you cultivate such Divine love.

Cultivate good thoughts. Good thoughts lead to good actions. Good actions lead to good company. Cultivate love. Everything is based on love and love alone. Man is born in love, is sustained in love, and ultimately merges in love. Love is the basis of human life. But you are forgetting such true love and are getting carried away by worldly and physical love, which is not love in the true sense.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33,  
Chapter 19: God Incarnates to Serve Mankind.



## **See No Evil; See What Is Good**

The image of every seen object gets imprinted in the mind. Therefore first of all one must have right vision. Right vision is that which is untainted by the baneful influence of evil feelings, evil thoughts, and evil deeds. See no evil; see what is good. That which develops your insight to understand what is good, eternal, and true is right vision.

Next comes right listening. You should lend your ear only to good speech. Under no circumstances should you listen to evil talk. For this, you should listen to sacred texts, devotional songs, and talks about sacred acts.

Everything in this world is impermanent. The *Vedas* say, "All that is seen is bound to perish." All that you see will disappear one day or the other. For the nine-fold path of devotion, good listening is the beginning. Listening, singing the glories of the Lord, constant remembrance of the name of

Vishnu, serving the Lord's feet, worship, salutation, servitude, friendship, and self-surrender are the nine paths of devotion. The first step to the final act of self-surrender is listening. Ancient scriptures are derived from listening only.

## **Right Vision and Right Listening Lead to Right Speech**

The next virtue is right speech. Right vision and right listening lead to right speech. Your speech should be good. Never utter harsh words. Speak softly and sweetly. That is why I tell you often, "You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly." Say what you have to say without harshness. Speak softly so that only the person for whom your words are intended may hear you. Such soft and sweet speech should be developed. Good vision, good listening, and good speech lead to good thoughts. "As are your thoughts, so is the result." Right thoughts lead to right action. Without good thoughts, it is not possible to perform good actions.

Buddha performed penance for many years to put his five senses on the sacred path. Mere bookish knowledge is of no consequence. It is in fact artificial. Mere textual knowledge will not lead you to right vision. Similarly, your sense of hearing does not become holy by listening to the expositions of a teacher. Good thoughts cannot be acquired by reading scriptures or by listening to the teachings of the preceptor. By self-effort you should put your senses of sound, touch, form, taste, and smell to right use. That alone leads you to proper spiritual practice.

## **Sanctify Your Senses**

When you put your senses in the right direction, your life will also enter the right path. For the wrong attitude of man today, senses are the cause. As the senses become impure, the entire life too becomes impure and unsacred. If you want to make your life sacred, you have to first sanctify your senses. So, Buddha, who did penance for several years, understood that all ritualistic practices were useless. He declared right vision, right listen-

ing, right speech, right thoughts, and right acts as the five primordial principles for the guidance of man.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 32, Part 1,  
Chapter 13: Nature of Self.



### **Speak with Love**

The food you eat is impure. The air you breathe is impure. Everything is impure. Then how can you escape disease? If you do not want disease, eat pure food, breathe pure air, drink pure water, and be pure. But wherever one looks, there is only impurity. When you are surrounded by impurity, how can you get purity? When purity manifests from within, you can experience its reflection, reaction, and resound in the external world. First and foremost, you have to infuse purity into society. To whomever you speak, speak sweetly, not with hatred, anger, and jealousy. First you have to learn this. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. Speak with love.

### **Show Humanness in Action**

From head to foot, man is filled with anger today. He has become like an animal. Even an animal is better than man. An animal has a reason and a season. Today man has no reason and no season. If you behave in this manner, how can you call yourself a human? To call yourself a human, first and foremost show humanness in action.

Just because you have a human body, you cannot call yourself a human. The human body will have value only when you cultivate human values, namely, truth, righteousness, peace, love, and non-violence. Of what use is human birth if human values are absent? First demonstrate humanness. Develop love. By doing so, all will become your friends. What kind of friends? Those who are full of love. Your real friend is only God. God is love personified. He is full of love.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 34,  
Chapter 10: Cultivate Love and Become Divine.

### **Speak Good Words**

You should help people even if you have to undergo some difficulties. Never indulge in reviling others, for the same *Atma* is permeating every living being. If you abuse others, it amounts to abusing your own self. If you do not like them, keep yourself away from them, but never abuse them. Any amount of good work done by you will be of no use if you do not give up bad qualities.

If you cannot do good to others, at least speak good words. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. If you find someone suffering, try to help him. Today it is his turn, but tomorrow it could be yours. Always keep this in mind. Nobody can escape pain and suffering. Always pray for the welfare of all. It is only in this context that the universal prayer “May all the people of the world be happy!” is addressed.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 35,  
Chapter 23: Love and Morality – The Need of the Hour.



### **Make All People Happy**

Learn to speak good words. Never hurt anybody with harsh words. Speak softly and sweetly to make all people happy.

*Embodiments of Love!* Good words bring good actions. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. When you thus speak obligingly, how much your status grows! The society will respect you.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 35,  
Chapter 21: The Best Way to Love God Is to Love All and  
Serve All.



## Keep Silent When You Are Angry

When you converse with others, you should do so with respect. You should not use harsh words. “If you cannot oblige, speak obligingly,” is the golden rule you should follow. When you salute others, it goes to God. When you criticise or abuse another person, that also goes to God. You must discourage and control the emergence of bad qualities.

When you are in a bad or an angry mood, keep silent. Do not exchange words, which cause the anger to multiply. That is why we say, “*Om Shanti, Shanti, Shanti*” at the end of the devotional singing session. Why three times and not four times? It is to cover the three entities: body, mind, and *Atma*. You should have *shanti* (peace) in all three levels.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 31,  
Chapter 20: Install Divinity in the Heart.



## Talk Less, Work More

Students! See that the words that you speak are sacred. “You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly.” That is enough. Try to speak sweetly and softly. I have told you many times, “Talk less, work more.” The one who talks excessively cannot work. The one who works will not talk. What is the reason for your not remembering all that you read? It is excessive talk. By talking less, your memory power will increase. Not merely this, your *Atmic* power will also improve.

## Put into Practice What You Hear

Whatever you hear, try to recapitulate, then put into practice. Listening, contemplating, and practicing – these three are very essential. Listening can be compared to cooking in the kitchen. Contemplating can be compared to bringing the food to the dining hall and serving it. Practising can be compared to the eating process. When all these three are unified, you will have health and happiness.

So, if you want to lead a life of contentment, contemplate and practise whatever you have studied. Today we find bookish knowledge everywhere, which is nothing but superficial knowledge. This superficial knowledge is of no use. You should be thorough in practical knowledge.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 31,  
Chapter 30: Knowledge without Practice Is Meaningless.



## Speak Softly and Sweetly

Love always gives and never receives. Such selfless love is only with God. You have gathered here to experience that love. No one has sent you any invitation. It is only love that has brought you here. What is it that I am giving you? When I just ask you, “When did you come?” you become ecstatic. There is so much sweetness even in the words that I utter.

You too should learn to speak softly and sweetly. “You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly.” Harsh words are like atom bombs. When someone visits your house, even if you do not give him anything to eat, at least talk to him sweetly and softly. It can even appease his hunger. Instead, if you speak harshly, that will not only increase his hunger but also dishearten him.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 31,  
Chapter 33: Obey God’s Commands.

## What Is the Best Way to Love God?

Students! You do not need to fight for rights. Discharge your responsibilities, and rights will follow. Do your duty. Duty is God; work is worship.

What is your right? To make everybody happy is your right. Serve everybody, and make everyone happy without expecting anything in return. Service is God. The best way to love God is to love all and serve all. Speak softly and sweetly. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. That is the essence of the culture of India.

Education does not mean “Twinkle, twinkle, little star, how I wonder what you are.” All this is artificial education. True culture of India is one that fosters spirituality and human values.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 31,  
Chapter 43: Fuse Spirituality with Education.



## Purify Your Mind and Fill It with Positive Feelings

Some people say that they have not received any benefit in spite of chanting the Divine name for twenty to thirty years. No benefit accrues from chanting the Divine name if the mind is filled with impurities. First purify your mind and fill it with positive feelings. Only then you can experience the benefit of chanting the Divine name. Bad thoughts and bad feelings will not help you in any way. Even if you happen to come across anything bad, do not let it enter your mind.

God's work will never fail. So, all the work that is done with Divine feelings will never meet with failure. If you fail in your endeavour, it means you do not have Divine feelings. You will always be successful if your feelings are pure and Divine. At least from today onward, cultivate noble feelings. Talk sweetly and softly. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 32, Part 1,  
Chapter 9: Do *Sadhana* with Pure Feelings.

## Always Speak with a Smile on Your Lips

Service is the easiest path to attain Divine grace. Offer service and receive the love of God. Love and service are like two wings by which man can soar to higher levels of consciousness. If you have the spirit of love and service, Divine grace will follow you like a shadow wherever you may be, be it in the forest or in the sky, village or city, river or mountain cliff.

God has created man in His own image so that his conduct should be in consonance with His command. You should not cause harm to anyone, for God exists in all. Always speak with a smile on your lips. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 32, Part 2,  
Chapter 9: Human Values and Service.



## Do Not Fritter Away This Life

Today unrest and violence have gripped the world as truth and righteousness have declined in the hearts of people. All that you find outside is nothing but the reflection, reaction, and resound of your inner feelings. Human life is highly sacred, most precious and Divine. Do not fritter away this life by indulging in unsacred activities. It has to be lived in the proper way by exercising control over the ten senses.

Speak sweetly and softly. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. Pray for the well-being of all. May all the worlds be happy! Sanctify your senses by serving all. If you exercise control over your senses, you can achieve anything in life. If God is not pleased with you, you will be looked down upon by everyone in the world.

You may think that you have given away ten bags of rice in charity and distributed clothes to 500 people. Such accounts are to be submitted to the income tax department and not to God. God is not interested in quantity; He sees the feeling

behind your acts. So, whatever act of charity you undertake, do it with the spirit of love and sacrifice.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33,  
Chapter 12: Flowers That Never Fade.



### **The Tongue Is Given to Make Others Happy**

One who calls himself a leader should always speak sweetly and lovingly. He should not indulge in criticism. Criticism is nothing but the reflection, reaction, and resound of one's wicked qualities. The bad qualities that one sees in others are nothing but the reflection of one's own inner feelings. No one has the right to find fault in others. He is the worst sinner who indulges in faultfinding. The tongue is given to make others happy and to sing the glories of the Lord. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly.

The hands are given not to hurt others, but to earn one's livelihood and perform acts of charity. The ears have been given not to listen to vain gossip, but to listen to the sacred stories of the Lord. In this manner, man should put each of his limbs to proper use and sanctify his life. Today science has advanced, but senses have become polluted. What is the use of acquiring education, which does not confer sense control?

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33,  
Chapter 14: Eradicate Immorality to Attain Immortality.

### **Senses Are Responsible for Both Merit and Sin**

Direct your mind on God instead of directing it on the senses. As I pointed out yesterday, senses are responsible for both merit and sin. If you put them to misuse, you will incur sin. If they are used in a proper way, it results in merit. Speak softly and sweetly, and cultivate a good mind. Only then will you earn the respect of others. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. Cultivate right vision. Evil looks will put you in danger. Keechaka cast his evil looks on Draupadi, which eventually led to his death at the hands of Bhima. Do not listen to evil talk.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 34,  
Chapter 4: Have Steady Faith in the *Atma*.



### **True Humanness Lies in Understanding Unity in Multiplicity**

The *Vedanta* (*Upanishads* which teach Self-knowledge) declares that the *Atmic* Principle is the underlying unity in diversity. Bulbs are many, but the same current flows in all of them. Likewise, the *Atmic* Principle exists in all. Man's inability to understand this principle of unity is the cause of his ignorance. True humanness lies in understanding unity in multiplicity. You have to develop right vision in order to develop unity. This was Buddha's first teaching.

Next, He stressed the need for sacred speech. One should speak only those words that cause no annoyance to others and that are truthful, pleasant, and helpful. Whatever you speak should not cause any disturbance to others. It should be truthful as well as pleasing. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. Sacred speech is the manifestation of Divinity.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 34,  
Chapter 9: Attain God's Grace through Sacrifice and Love.



## **As You Think, So You Become**

In order to sanctify your senses, you should utilise them in the service of others. As you think, so you become. If you have bad vision, listen to bad talk, indulge in bad activities, you will ultimately ruin yourself. If you cannot undertake any service activity, at least speak softly and sweetly. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly.

Today man speaks harsh words that hurt the feelings of others. He puts his senses to misuse. Then how can he expect to be happy and healthy? In order to enjoy perfect health, make sacred use of your senses. You may be a pauper or a millionaire. You may have money or not, but God has given each one of you five senses. Make proper use of them, and sanctify your lives.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 35,  
Chapter 2: Light the Lamp of Morality in Your Hearts.



## **What Is True Education?**

When you have a visitor to your house, you should greet him with respect and love. These days you cannot find any such courteous behaviour at all. That is why I often say, “You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly.” But today’s education is making the children veritable demons. There is no humility or friendliness in them. They learn the material given in books by rote, go to the examination centre, empty the material in their heads on the answer papers, and return home with empty heads. Is this education? Not at all. True education is that which is imprinted on the heart of the learners. It should remain unchanged over the years. Such sacred feelings are not to be found in today’s students.

## **Lead the Life of a True Human Being**

Everyone pretends to be a devotee without any trace of devotion. What is all this acting for? People learn such false values from cinema, TV, etc., which are ruining them, especially the children. The world today seems to be happy with TV and cinema. But Swami does not approve of them. Are cinema, TV, etc., helping in the redemption of mankind? Everyone should cultivate human qualities and lead the life of a true human being. But there are few such people to be found. There are, of course, a few parents who bring up their children with great love and affection and put them on the right path. Only such parents can be called ideal parents. Their children grow up to be ideal and noble.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 35,  
Chapter 9: Mother Is Your First God.



## **Too Much Talk Diminishes Memory**

Do not slide into lazy habits the moment you leave the Institute. Laziness must be avoided at all cost. Laziness is rust and dust, whereas realisation is best and rest! Realisation must be your goal in life, and laziness can make that goal elusive.

Excessive talking must also be avoided. Too much talk diminishes memory and dulls intelligence. Therefore do not talk much. Others may try to drag you into pointless conversation, but deftly dodge them. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly! Talk only when you must, speak sweetly when you do, be ever courteous, and never fail to respect your parents. It is only when you conduct yourself in this manner and base your actions on love that you can truly be called an educated person.

Summer Showers in Brindavan 2000,  
Chapter 1: Seek Educare Instead of Just Education.

## Excessive Thought Can Lead to Harm

You should not lend your ear to all that is being said. Similarly, thoughts too must be kept in tight check. Thoughts must centre around appropriate matters. The questions – when, where, and what you must think are all important. Excessive thought can lead to harm.

Excessive thinking (plotting) is what the Kauravas did, and they eventually paid dearly for it. They were always seized with evil thoughts and spent all night devising mean and wicked ways of harming the noble Pandavas. The Kauravas came to ruin because they constantly harboured foul thoughts about the Pandavas, who were the very embodiment of righteousness. Therefore always avoid bad looks, listening to bad words and talk, and also bad thoughts. Do not ever utter unbecoming words. Always say good things and speak pleasantly. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly! Students must cultivate such good qualities for they alone are the true ornaments.

## Bad Looks Encourage Bad Thoughts

Students — boys and girls! In this phase of life, there are many virtues that you must acquire; later, you must make good and active use of them. Only if you accumulate wealth now, can you spend it later. If there are no “earnings” now, what can you do later? You must therefore firmly resolve to develop right now good intellect, good habits, and good speech.

Buddha repeatedly stressed the need for right vision and never tolerated any violation of this maxim by His disciples. Bad looks encourage bad thoughts, which ultimately lead to ruin. Looks must therefore be strictly controlled.

Summer Showers in Brindavan 2000,  
Chapter 4: The Human Body and Its Importance.

## Always Be Immersed in Divine Feelings

Be polite, courteous, and humble when speaking to elders. Never be rough or rude. Your humility would please the elder to whom you are speaking. At times, you may not be able to do what you are asked to do, but you can be courteous while being non-committal. As Swami often says, “You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly.” Cultivate this practice.

Always be immersed in Divine feelings. If you happen to see a wicked person, do not immediately think of that person as being bad. The bad actions of that person are due to the body, but within that person is the same *Atma* that is also in you. This unity, this *Atmic* Principle is what you must focus on. Deal with this other person with the feeling that the Self in you is also present in him. This is the way to develop love for all beings. Also, do not bear ill will towards any country, but be alike to all. Do not criticise the culture of other countries. Love your culture as your mother, just as people of other lands love their respective cultures.

Summer Showers in Brindavan 2000,  
Chapter 15: The Ideal Student.



## Share Whatever You Have with Others

India is a sacred land, a land of sacrifice and spirituality. It is being converted into a land of material pleasures. Spirit of sacrifice is very essential. Share whatever you have with others. A small amount of food is enough to satiate your hunger. Why crave the entire River Ganga when a small glass of water is all that you need to quench your thirst? Do not harbour greed and other evil qualities lest you should suffer the same fate as that of Duryodhana and his tribe. Fill your heart with love.

Students! Talk softly and sweetly. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. You are all young. Make efforts to mould your future in the proper way. Develop the spirit of love and sacrifice. Share your love with your

friends. For example, if you have two pens, give one to someone who needs it. If your parents raise an objection to this act of charity, convince them by saying, “What is the use of having an extra pen? It is better that it is given to somebody who needs it.” This will certainly make them happy.

### **As You Sow, So Shall You Reap**

There is no wealth greater than love. Respect and revere your parents as God. Offer salutations to them when you wake up in the morning, before you go to school, and when you go to bed at night. Never argue with them. Try to convince them with love. Remember that as you sow, so shall you reap. Whatever you do to your parents, your children will do the same to you. Never talk to them rudely. Be obedient.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33,  
Chapter 9: Easwaramma – The Embodiment of Love and Sacrifice.



### **Respect Women and Be Respected**

Today people are conferred various titles like *Padmashri*, *Padma Vibhushan*, etc. (honours and titles conferred on people for their distinguished services and achievements). But the titles conferred on women, such as *Grihalakshmi* (prosperity of the house), *Illalu* (head of the house), *Dharmapathni* (companion for righteous living), *Ardhangini* (better half), etc., are very high and sacred. How can women with such exalted titles to their credit be inferior to men? But, unfortunately, today due to the effect of the *Kali* (Iron) Age, men look down upon women and treat them as mere servants. This is a big mistake. The more you respect women, the more you will be respected.

You should see to it that women do not shed tears. Otherwise, the family will face hardships. A thorn can be removed from the foot, but a harsh word, which has wounded the heart, cannot be taken back. So, never use harsh words. Talk sweetly and softly. The husband has the right to point out the mistakes of his wife, but he has no right to use harsh words and hurt her feelings. You cannot

always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. The family will attain peace and prosperity once you observe these principles.

### **Destructive Power of Anger**

Usually the element of anger is found more in men than in women. If you get angry once, the energy gained by you from the food consumed over three months will be destroyed. Not merely that, it also boils your blood, which will take nearly three months to cool down. Such being the case, imagine what would be your fate if you lose your temper time and time again.

The story of Jarasandha bears ample testimony to this. Many times, Krishna challenged him for a battle. However, when Jarasandha would come with fierce anger, Krishna would run away from the battlefield. Seeing this happen time and again, Krishna was asked the reason for His strange behaviour. Then Krishna replied, “Don’t be under the mistaken notion that I am running away from the battlefield out of fear. I can kill him in no time, but this is not the right time to kill him. By arousing his anger time and time again, I am draining out all his strength.” Gradually Jarasandha lost all his strength and ultimately met his doom.

Krishna never considered it an insult to run away from the battlefield because He was acting according to His own master plan. He adopted this method of conquering His enemy to teach an important lesson. All the plans of God are meant only for the welfare of others. He does not do anything for Himself. God always does only good, which may appear to be bad to some people. The mistake lies in their vision, not in God’s creation. Whatever God does, it is always meant to help you and develop your sacredness.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33,  
Chapter 11: Women Are the Embodiments of Nobility and Virtue.



## **Each Limb of the Body Has Its Own Purpose**

Many people say, “Swami, I am losing my teeth. What is the use after I lose all my teeth?” Swami says, “You may lose your teeth, but the tongue is still there.” All the teeth are strong. Strong things go first. The tongue, which is soft, remains. When you go, the tongue always goes with you. The tongue should be kept safe. That is why it is said, “You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly.”

Talk softly and sweetly. Speak the truth. Follow righteousness. Chant the name of the Lord, and make others listen to it. Do you know why the tongue is given? Is it to eat everything? Do you know why the feet are given? Is it to travel in the lanes and bylanes? Each limb of the body has its own purpose. You should do good and perfect deeds. The body is gifted to undertake sacred activities. You should never be unrighteous and never utter falsehood. Let your body tread along the righteous path. Swami expects you to earn a good name.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 34,  
Chapter 16: Vinayaka – The Master of *Siddhi* and *Buddhi*.



## **Use Discrimination to Enrich One's Character**

Our character is reflected in our words, behavior, and conduct in daily life. So we should speak pleasantly and not hurt others with our harsh words. It is true that we cannot always oblige but we can always speak obligingly.

While cooking, women select appropriate vessels according to the quantity of rice to be cooked. It does not make sense if a large vessel is chosen to cook a small quantity of rice. Discrimination should be used to select the vessel and the intensity of the flame required for cooking. In the same way, discrimination should be used to enrich one's character.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 34,  
Chapter 20: “Educare” Is True Education.

## **Develop Love for Students and Mould Their Character**

There is a bond of pure love between teachers and students. Students can win over any teacher's heart, and a teacher can win over students' hearts. If you want to be loved, you have to love others first. First and foremost, we should aspire for truth. The basis of Indian culture is “Speak truth, practise right conduct.” I was always very humble. Now also I teach the same thing to students. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly! But sometimes one needs to be strict. That is what I do. I can be harder than a diamond when the situation demands. Otherwise, I am softer than butter. Teachers understood this nature of Mine.

Teachers! If you want to take students into your confidence, you have to approach them with love. You have to point out their mistakes and lead them on the right path. Only then will they follow the right path and accept their mistakes. For the progress and prosperity of the nation, teachers should develop love for students and mould their character. Then the society will obtain many good citizens.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 34,  
Chapter 21: *Pari Prashna* – The Divine Answers.



## **Never Show Anger towards Children**

It is not enough if you start an institution. The students must be brought up in the right way. Speak gently. Never show anger towards the children. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. Talk to the children softly and sweetly. Interaction between the teachers should also be pleasant. Then the children will be encouraged by their example. Every little thing should be taught to the children to the best of your ability. Only then the children will learn with enthusiasm.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33,  
Chapter 15: Education Should Foster Values.

## **All the Noble Souls Have Taught Sacred Things**

You are attributing various names and forms to God for your own satisfaction, but God is essentially one. Be He Rama, Krishna, Allah, or Jesus, all their teachings are meant for the emancipation of man. No religion preaches violence or to harm anybody. Some evil-minded people are misinterpreting the sacred teachings and are indulging in wicked deeds. All the noble souls have taught sacred things. They said, "Love all." They did not preach hatred. God never tells anybody to kill others. No one has any right to kill another because the same *Atma* is present in all.

In the name of God, people are committing heinous crimes. It is not good for anybody. Love all, serve all. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. There is no God greater than love. Love is God, God is love. Live in love. Destroy wicked qualities. The mean-minded people try to attribute their meanness to God. It is a sign of ignorance. Do not pay heed to such people. Have faith in your own Self. Otherwise, you cannot have love for God. Due to defects in the modern education system, love is diminishing in man day by day. Hatred is on the rise.

## **The More You Love Others, the Greater the Joy You Will Experience**

Man is forgetting truth and thereby subjecting himself to danger. He has forgotten humanness by developing animal tendencies. True spirituality lies in destroying animal tendencies and transforming humanness into Divinity. It is not possible to attain Divinity without getting rid of animality. Today man is behaving like an animal because of his selfish love. Such a person can never enjoy happiness. He will always be immersed in misery. The more you love others, the greater the joy you will experience. The more you develop hatred, the more miserable your life will be.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 34,  
Chapter 24: God Never Forsakes His Devotees.

## **God Alone Is Your True Friend**

Students must primarily foster and develop good ideas. Reduce excess talk. Do not enter into friendship overly. What is this friendship? Who is the true friend? These worldly friends are not real friends. As long as you are rolling in wealth, position, and power, they swarm over you, saying, "Hello! Hello." As long as there is money in your pocket, they say, "Come on, let's go to the cinema."

As you gradually lose your money, power, and position, you will find that there is no one to even say good-bye to you! They will try their best to avoid you. These are not your friends. God alone is your real friend. Wherever you may go, He is the friend who will never leave you.

*You may be in the forests or the skies;  
You may be in the city or the village;  
You may be on the hill or on the plateau below;  
To those who see no direction to their life,  
God is the only succour.*

Your earthly friends will desert you when all is lost. As long as there is water in the pond, the frogs croak. The instant the water dries up, there will not be even one frog left there. Earthly friendship and relations are all like that. You are experiencing it daily. How many such friendships have you developed in your life? Where are all those friends today?

As long as you are in the college for two or three years, they will move about with you, saying "Hello!" After college studies are over, they disperse in various directions. One friend is in the east, and one is in the west. If they want to meet, north and south block the path in between! That is not the type of friendship to be developed. Certainly, you must speak well to all and move about with them amiably. But do not become attached and excessively friendly. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly.

## The Lord Is Always behind You

Do not develop hatred; at the same time, excessive friendship must also be avoided. Be as close as is required and no more. Friendship must be within limits. Friendship beyond limits must be with God alone for He will not let go at any time.

*All the relations will come only to the doorstep;*

*The Lord's name is your only saviour that will never leave you.*

Wherever you may go, the Lord is always behind you. No friend on earth will ever be able to keep up with you like that.

Summer Showers in Brindavan 1996,  
Chapter 12: *Sathya* and *Dharma* – The Hallmarks of  
Humanity.

## Practise Compassion and Morality

Your destiny is not achieving the most pleasure, but climbing the peak of bliss. Compassion and morality will take you higher and higher, until you reach the summit. So, practise these qualities even in your smallest acts, to the best of your capacity.

You cannot always oblige, but can you not talk obligingly? You can, but you don't! The tongue has the extra power to harm and hurt, so you must exercise extra control over it. Do not pain anyone through your words; spread love; be full of love. If you cannot love man, how can you hope to love God?

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XI,  
Chapter 24: You Are All I.

## Glossary

### *Atma/Atmic*

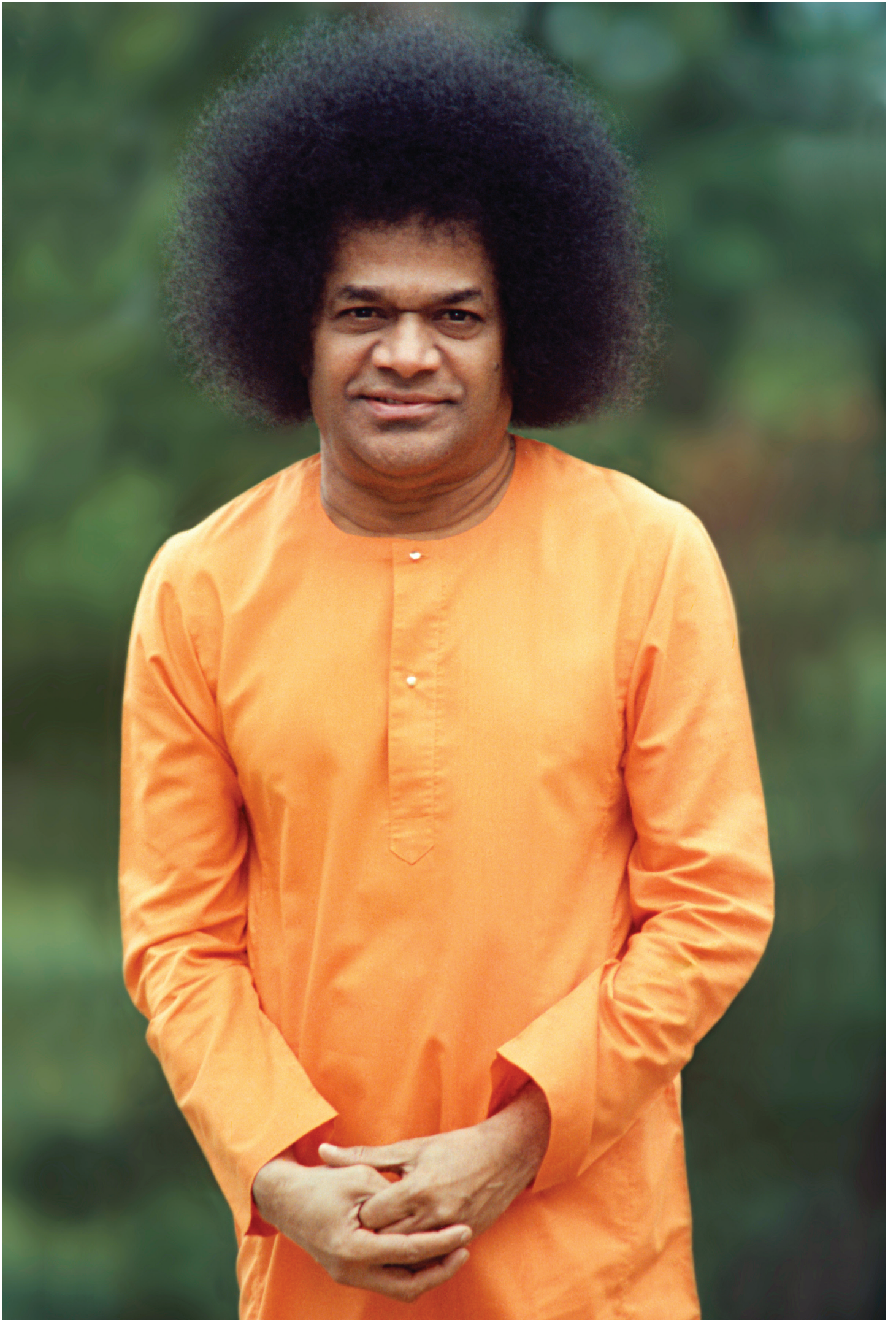
Self; Soul. Embodied Self is *jiva* (the individual soul). Self, with no limitations, is Brahman (the Supreme Cosmic Reality).

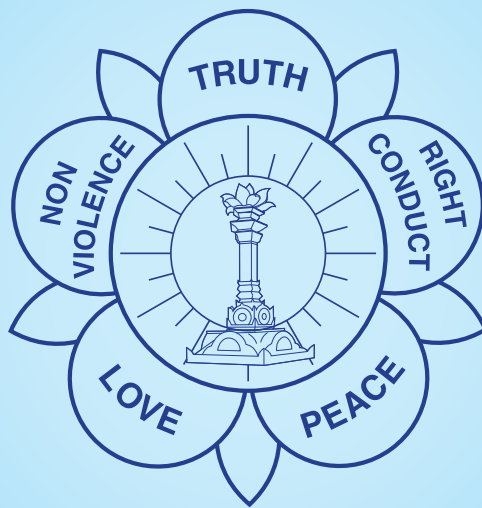
To read “Teachings of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, Volume 1,” please go to the following link: <http://sathyasai.org/publications/TeachingsOfSSSB>

Two topics are covered in Volume 1:

(1) Ceiling on Desires and (2) Eight Flowers of Worship.







LOVE ALL, SERVE ALL