



NATURE IS THE BEST TEACHER

A selection of teachings from Sathya Sai Baba

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Foreword

Nature is the best teacher. Her variedness, through which she guides us to the realization of the inherent values of diversity, is awe-inspiring. She is dutiful to the very end, unwaveringly following the laws and rhythm of creation. She is bountiful beyond measure, offering her goods to humanity without the expectation of compensation. She renews herself ceaselessly, thus setting an example to man in practicing the virtue of nonattachment. Last, but not least, she is beautiful in whatever form she assumes.

It seems, however, that humanity has not learnt the lesson. Environmental experts have been warning us for decades about the dangers concerning the ecological condition of our planet. It is true that in the past, problems such as the melting ice of the North Pole or the extinction of several exotic animal species had been difficult to identify with for most of us; consequently, there was not much chance for environmental responsibility to gain substantive social support. However, by today the ecological imbalance and climate change have become palpable for one and all. Our ecological footprint has grown beyond the capabilities provided by the ecosystem of our planet: we have misused the generosity of nature to an extreme extent.

What an odd contradiction it is that even though our technological development could increasingly enable the relieving of our environment while meeting our needs in a moderate manner at the same time—consider the countless opportunities provided by renewable energy sources only—, still, no global-scale substantive change has occurred yet. Forests continue to shrink, factories keep on emitting smoke, cars keep on exhausting. What is the underlying reason of our idleness when we are aware of the environmental unsustainability of our civilizational processes and at the same possess the instruments necessary for change? In my



opinion, the fault lies with the approach. Regardless of the context, true change will occur only if it is rooted in firm conviction. So, where does conviction come from? From knowledge: from seeing and understanding things in this world according to their true nature and role.

This is where all the environmental wisdom conferred by Sathya Sai Baba on humanity as part of his life mission, comes in. The fundamentals of Sathya Sai's teachings are that God and man are integral and inseparable; that creation is the manifestation of the One through diversity, and as such, the created world and nature themselves are sacred too, forming an inseparable part of human existence. If we truly understood and not just learned that humanity cannot exist without nature, if we understood that we form an organic oneness with that which we are currently eating up at an insane pace—this knowledge could develop the conviction indispensable for the change; the change that needs to occur both on the individual and on the global scale. All of us are responsible both individually and collectively for the state of our living space.

In this publication, we have collected the most touching teachings of Sathya Sai Baba on nature from his books and speeches (listed in the end) in order to help deepen this conviction. No commentary has been added to the quotations, as all of them speak for themselves; however, we have associated nature and wildlife photography to the valuable ideas behind the words in order to enhance the experiencing and adopting of the dignity shining through these ideas.

Nature is the best teacher. If we pay attention to her, she willingly reveals her countless pearls of wisdom, with which we become capable of restoring the disturbed balance. And for this, Sathya Sai serves as the perfect interpreter.

Vincent Vácz

National Council President of the Sathya Sai International Organisation of Hungary



Who is Sathya Sai Baba?

Sathya Sai Baba was born and spent his entire life in Puttaparthi, a small village in the state of Andhra Pradesh, in South India. Sathya Sai Baba did not belong to any religion, nor did he propagate any. He

is considered by millions as one of the greatest spiritual teachers of all times. He showed to humanity the royal path to realise one's divine nature, respecting the universal spiritual teachings common to all religions.

The selfless and pristine love shown naturally and spontaneously by Sathya Sai Baba attracted thousands of people daily from all parts of the world. His greatest miracle, recognised by his followers, is the transformation of the human heart.

Since early childhood, he declared:

*"There is only one God; He is Omnipresent.
There is only one religion, the Religion of Love;
There is only one caste, the Caste of Humanity;
There is only one language, the Language of the Heart.*

(SSS 11.54: 24 December 1972, <http://www.sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume11/sss11-54.pdf>)

His mission, while recognising the validity of all religious traditions, goes beyond all religions, and helps one realise his or her innate divinity. He teaches the five human values of Truth, Right Conduct, Peace, Love and Non-Violence, ensuring that these values are preserved and nurtured in every human relationship.

He recommends worshipping God in the form that each one cherishes, based on his or her own education and culture. The spiritual transformation brought about by following his teachings results in the manifestation of greater love, peace, tolerance, harmony, honesty and righteousness in thought, word and action. His universal message has been conveyed directly through thousands of discourses and writings.





The Creator and the creation



*You enjoy the sight of the mighty mountains,
the big rivers, the vast ocean, and the dense forests.
Who is the creator of all these beautiful manifestations
in Nature? God is the basis for all these.*

(SSS 28.15: 30 May 1995, <http://www.sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume28/sss28-15.pdf>)



You have to realize that Nature is a manifestation of God. Hence, Nature should not be ignored. Nature is the effect and God is the cause. You should recognize the immanence of the Divine in the entire cosmos. (SSS 29.23: 20 June 1996, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume29/sss29-23.pdf>)

The universe is full of energy or power. The Divine power is all pervasive. Just as sugar is present in sweets, the Divine is present in everything. That is why God is called the sweet essence of everything in the Universe. (SSS 28.15: 30 May 1995, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume28/sss28-15.pdf>)

The universe is the body of God. (SSS 7.18: 21 April 1967, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume07/sss07-18.pdf>)
Love God and you see God in every creature. (SSS 8.17: 12 May 1968, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume08/sss08-17.pdf>)

When you pose the question, “Where is God?” the answer is given by Nature itself. The revolution of the earth around itself at the speed of 1000 miles an hour accounts for the phenomenon of night and day. The earth’s revolution around the sun at a speed of 66,000 miles an hour accounts for the various seasons, for rainfall, and for the cultivation of food crops. Thus the divinely ordained motions of the earth enable living beings to get their food. This is a visible proof of the existence of God. The Vedas¹ declare that the foolish person, even while seeing the acts of God, declares he has not seen God. He does not realize that Nature is the vesture of God. (SSS 23.18: 28 May 1990, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume23/sss23-18.pdf>)

1: The Vedas (Sanskrit: “knowledge”) are a large body of knowledge texts originating in the ancient Indian subcontinent. Composed in Vedic Sanskrit, the texts constitute the oldest layer of Sanskrit literature and the oldest scriptures of Hinduism.





People ask, “Where is God?” The answer is provided by Nature. Who is it that has created the five elements, the five life-breaths, the five sheaths, the five external sense organs, and the five internal sense organs, which are all ceaselessly carrying on their functions according to their prescribed roles? The seasons in their regular cycle are teaching a good lesson to man. Therefore, Nature is demonstrable proof for the existence of God. Nature is not under any obligation to any man, it takes no orders from any man, it operates according to the will of the Divine. (SSS 21.19: 12 July 1988, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume21/ss21-19.pdf>)

In the Bhagavad Gita², you will find Krishna asking Arjuna to “offer Me,” “surrender to Me,” “leave everything to Me.” This Me is no other than the I that is the God within every one, the I which makes everyone declare I shall do this, I own this, etc., the I that prompts the amoeba and the Avatar into activity. It makes the tiger feel “I am hungry, I must seek prey.” It makes the eagle soar high so that it may spy its meat down below. It makes the banyan tree spread wide so that it may get more of sunlight on to its leaves. It makes the jasmine creeper cling to the tree so that it may not drag on the ground and be denied the caressing wind and the warming sun. That I can never grow weak, or fall ill, or falter; it is Being, Awareness, Bliss. It is eternal everywhere. (SSS 10.24: 5 October 1970, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume10/ss10-24.pdf>)

Scientists are seeking to explain the mystery of creation in various ways. The Science of spirituality has also been explaining creation in various ways. Whatever any one may say, what is perceived by us is the atom. Without the atom there can be no universe. Rocky mountains, wooded forests, the waters of the ocean, the mud of the earth and the flesh and bones of the body are all composed of atoms. No object will be perceivable without the presence of atoms. The food you eat, the water you drink, the objects you see and the earth you tread upon are all made up of atoms. When you enquire into the nature of the atom, you realise that the whole world consists of atoms. (SSS 30.6: 7 March 1997, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume30/ss30-06.pdf>)

2: The Bhagavad Gita (Sanskrit: “Song of the Lord”), often referred to as simply the Gita, is a 700-verse Hindu scripture in Sanskrit that is part of the Hindu epic Mahabharata. The Gita is set in a narrative framework of a dialogue between Pandava prince Arjuna and his guide and charioteer Lord Krishna.





The Veda described the Divine as “Anoraneeyaan mahatho maheeyaan” (subtler than the subtlest atom and vaster than the vastest object). Many regard the atom as something which is not visible to the eye. This is wrong. The atom consists of particles which are not visible. The ancient sages considered that the Divine was immanent in the atom. “Oh Lord! You are extremely subtler than the atom and vaster than the vastest object. You are said to be manifest in the 84 lakhs of species in the universe and declared to be omnipresent throughout the cosmos. How can we hope to recognise you?” (Telugu song).

For a thousand years scientists have been trying to explore the nature of the atom. But a long time ago, the young lad, Prahlada, knew that God was immanent in the atom and proclaimed that truth. He stridently told his father: “Do not have any doubts as to the presence or absence of the Divine from one thing or another. The Lord is all-pervasive. You can find Him wherever you seek Him!” (SSS 30.6: 7 March 1997, <http://www.sssbpt.info/ssspeak/volume30/sss30-06.pdf>)

Young people should realise the superiority of spiritual power over the power of technology. Om³, the Pranava Mantra⁴ contains within it the powers of Shiva and Shakthi⁵. These two powers, Shiva and Shakthi, correspond to what scientists call electron and proton (the two constituents of the atom). Proton forms the nucleus of the atom. The electron is moving at great speed round the proton. The Veda has described the phenomenon in different ways.

It has declared that Shiva and Shakthi are inextricably associated with each other. This corresponds to the relationship between the electron and the proton. Anterior to the electron and proton is the particle known as neutron. This corresponds to what the Veda has called Sath.

3: Om (Sanskrit: ॐ) is a sacred sound and a spiritual icon in Hindu religion. It is also a mantra in Hinduism,

4: A “Mantra” (Sanskrit term) is a sacred utterance, a numinous sound, a syllable, word or phonemes, or group of words that bestow the practitioners with psychological and spiritual powers.

5: the Godhead, of which the masculine, passive, transcendent, eternal principle is Shiva, and the feminine, active, immanent, temporal principle is Shakti, the Divine Mother.





The Veda declared that space and Time are essential factors in human birth. Instead of understanding the miracle of human existence, men are wasting their lives in the pursuit of transient worldly pleasures. Although superficially it may appear as if there are differences between the findings of science and the declarations of the Veda, essentially there are no differences. The Veda has revealed many truths not discovered by science. Science has not yet found many of the truths declared by the Vedas. (SSS 30.6: 7 March 1997, <http://www.sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume30/sss30-06.pdf>)

The Lord declares that He is the Seed of all Beings. Watch a tree! The roots, the trunk, the branches, the twigs, the shoots, the leaves, the flowers, the fruits all look different in form, taste, hardness, and smell. They have different uses for the tree and for us. But all this manifold variety is produced, sustained, subsumed, and served by One Single SEED. And, each fruit contains the same SEED! He is the Seed, He is the Tree, He is the Fruit. Love is the Seed, Love is the Tree, Love is the Fruit. (SSS 10.24: 5 October 1970, <http://www.sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume10/sss10-24.pdf>)

The expression of life on Earth is upward through the human to the Divine. By virtue of human birth, the next step is the full realization of the Divine. Human life is sacred and must be appreciated as having the highest value. (Conversations with Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, p.164, http://media.radiosai.org/journals/Vol_05/01APR07/02-conversations.htm)

You see these flags fluttering; now, what is it that flutters? Is it the cloth, or the rope, or the wind? You know it is the unseen wind that causes that flutter. So, too, you see the effect, not the cause, when you observe Nature around you. The bungalow is seen, not the foundation under the earth; the tree is seen with all the crowning glory of leaf and blossom and fruit, but the roots that grip it and feed it are not visible. You cannot therefore deny them. So too, for everything that can be seen, heard, smelt, tasted, and touched, God is the cause. Man is born as man because he is to realize this truth and feel the presence of God in all beings and things. (SSS 6.26: 1966, <http://www.sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume06/sss06-26.pdf>)





**Nature is
the best teacher**



Man should in the first place realize the truth that he has been endowed with the human body not for seeking his selfish ends but for serving others.

(SSS 27.4: 23 January 1994, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume27/ss27-04.pdf>)

If you really want to understand nature, creation is the best school. [...] All that is contained in the creation – the mountains, the trees, the rivers – are teaching us constantly.

(SSIB 1978.8, <http://www.ssbpt.info/summershowers/ss1978/ss1978-08.pdf>)



What is the lesson to be learnt from the observance of Nature? It is [...] excellence in the performance of duty. It is because Nature ceaselessly performs its duty that the world is able to derive so many sacred benefits. The secret and mystery of creation lies in the due performance of one's duty with earnestness and sincerity. (SSS 23.18: 28 May 1990, <http://www.sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume23/sss23-18.pdf>)

Knowledge is not to be derived from books alone. Nature is to be accepted as a better instructor. By its forbearance, adherence to its genuineness, unselfish bounty, patience, and serenity, Nature is continually proclaiming its inherent and real role of preacher of spiritual truths. Consider, for instance, a tree. It puts up with heat and rain, summer and winter, and all the harm inflicted on it. It offers shade and distributes fruits to whoever approaches it. It has no feelings of hatred or vengeance towards those who cause injuries. It seeks no return from those who benefit from it. Everyone should learn this lesson in selfless, patient service from the tree.

Consider, next, the bird. The lesson it teaches is self-reliance. A bird perched on the leafy twig of a tree is not affected by the wild swaying of the twig or the storm, which might blow it off, because it relies not on the twig or tree but on its own wings for its safety. It knows it can always fly and save itself. The bird is always happy and carefree, sporting as it pleases. Birds are not concerned about acquiring things for the morrow. They are content to make the best of the present, living on whatever they can get for the day. They do not worry about the careers of their children or the state of their bank accounts. They have no anxiety about the upkeep of houses or properties. (SSS 19.12: 3 July 1986, <http://www.sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume19/sss19-12.pdf>)

Learn a lesson from the insignificant ant. When an ant spots a lump of sugar, it does not hide the fact and seek to consume it all alone. Instead, it returns to the nest to collect its friends and kinsmen, for it loves to share with others the feast it has come upon. The crow, a bird that is despised and often an outcast, when it discovers a little heap of food, caws repeatedly until its kith and kin gather at the place. What is shared is tastier; what is held back is bitter stuff. Life is short and full of misery, so do all you can to derive joy from making others happy. If others are miserable, how can you really be happy? (SSS 13.30: 16 February 1977, <http://www.sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume13/sss13-30.pdf>)





Mountains help man to build houses by using stone slabs, quarried from them. Trees provide the timber for constructing houses and also firewood for

domestic use. Among animate beings, every creature, from an ant to an elephant, is of assistance to man in one way or another. Cows provide nourishing milk to man. Bullocks are useful for ploughing the fields and helping to grow food crops. All other creatures like birds, fish, sheep, and others are serving man in different ways. Seen in this light, it will be clear that all things in Creation are helpful to man in leading his life. Even the sun and the moon are serving man. The sages regarded the Sun as an important deity and worshipped him through the Gayatri mantra.⁶ (*SSS 21.19: 12 July 1988, <http://www.sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume21/sss21-19.pdf>*)

In this vast world in which countless human beings are leading miserable lives, pursuing endless desires and unattainable aspirations, the spirit of sacrifice is most essential. Trees bring forth fruits for the benefit of others. Rivers carry water for the use of others. Cows yield milk to benefit others. Likewise, man should share in harmony with others his qualities of goodness, compassion, forbearance, and charity. The earth follows its dharma (natural duty) to make use of its five elements to produce sustenance for all living beings. Born on the earth, men are not following the example of the earth. It is not the creeds that men profess – whether Christianity or Islam or other religion – that lend value to their lives. The highest value is the fact of their humanness. (*SSS 28.31: 18 November 1995, <http://www.sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume28/sss28-31.pdf>*)

The Ganges River, when it flows, does not make any attempt to enjoy the sweetness of its own water. (*SSIB 1973.12, <http://www.sssbpt.info/summershowers/ss1973/ss1973-12.pdf>*)

⁶: The Gayatri Mantra is a universal prayer enshrined in the Vedas, a sacred chant that demonstrates the unity that underlies manifoldness in creation.





What have we done to nature?



Whatever man seeks to achieve, he has to rely on Nature. Nature is not anyone's private property. It belongs to God. Without the grace of the Lord no one can enjoy the benefits of Nature. Not realizing this truth, some people embark on the exploitation of Nature, out of arrogance and self-conceit. This is highly misconceived.

(SSS 22.17: 25 June 1989, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume22/sss22-17.pdf>)



Today, all the five elements are polluted and, consequently, man is mired in insecurity. Today the world is losing its ecological balance as man, out of utter selfishness, is robbing mother Earth of her resources like coal, petroleum, iron, etc. As a result, we find earthquakes, floods and such other devastating natural calamities. Human life will find fulfilment only when ecological balance is maintained. Balance in human life and balance in nature, both are equally important.

We are prone to take the creation for granted, thinking that it is but insentient nature, thereby ignoring the sentient principle that regulates nature and imparts a proper balance among its various constituents. Scientists and technologists, in pursuit of selfish interests as well as of name and fame, utterly disregard the security and welfare of the society and the nation by upsetting the balance in Nature, which results in various accidents, calamities, losses, and misery to the public at large.

For example, the oceans contain air needed by the earth for more than ten years. One lightning in the sky emits enough electricity required for the entire world for twenty years. By building gigantic dams and storing huge quantities of water in one place, the earth goes down in that area and consequently goes up in another area, like a seesaw. The indiscriminate exploitation of natural resources by the scientists and technologists such as various types of mines for extracting minerals, mica, coal, petrol and other oils results in imbalance and pollution of the five major elements, leading to catastrophes like earthquakes.

The rapid and excessive proliferation of industries, factories, and automobiles with the attendant pollution of the atmosphere is responsible for the increasing incidence of diseases like asthma, deafness, and pneumonia. However, science per se is not bad. What is necessary is for man to put it to proper and judicious use. (SSS 25.17: 26

May 1992, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume25/ss25-17.pdf>)





Today man is not making efforts to cultivate the feeling of oneness among humanity. To quote an example, you have the ozone layer in the atmosphere,

which protects the people on Earth from evil effects of solar radiation. Because of the advance of technology, several factories have sprung up causing emission of harmful gases in the atmosphere as a result of which the ozone layer has become thinner. If this goes on unchecked, it may have disastrous consequences. Scientists are trying to stop the break up of the ozone layer, but they are unable to find a remedy. One cause for this situation is that more carbon dioxide is let into the atmosphere, which normally is absorbed by the plants and trees, which can assimilate the gas and supply oxygen by the natural process of photosynthesis. But, because there is deforestation to an alarming extent, the extent of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has considerably increased. Therefore, the remedy for this situation is intensive afforestation, growing more trees everywhere and protecting the existing trees without destroying them for other purposes. (SSS 26.3: 21 January 1993, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume26/ss26-03.pdf>)

Here is an example. Once a greedy person owned a duck, which used to lay a golden egg every day. One day, he ripped open the stomach of the duck thinking that he would get many golden eggs at a time. Today man also is indulging in such foolish and greedy acts. Instead of being satisfied with what nature is giving him, he aspires for more and more and, in the process, is creating imbalance in nature.

Today scientists are interested in new inventions. The advancement in science and technology has also led to imbalance in nature. As a result, there are earthquakes and no timely rains. Science should be utilized only to the extent needed. Science has its limitations, and crossing those limits leads to danger. You have a long way to go. Adhere to truth and righteousness. Our ancient sages said: "Speak truth, speak pleasantly and do not speak unpalatable truth!" Make proper use of natural resources and do not put them to misuse. Help everybody and make them happy. Share all the good things you have learnt with others. This is your foremost duty! (SSS 34.3: 21 February 2001, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume34/ss34-03.pdf>).





**How
can we
redeem what
we have
done?**



Man must learn to use Nature not for his comfort or entanglement to the utter forgetfulness of the God behind the joy he derives but for the better understanding of the intelligence that guides the Universe. How does a tree grow or a flower bloom? How does man learn about the stars and space, except by the inspiration of the joy and the intelligence, which He who resides within endows? Approach nature in a humble, prayerful mood; then your future will be safe.

(SSS 7.12: 27 March 1967, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume07/sss07-12.pdf>)



Nature is God's vesture. The Universe is the "university" for man. Man should treat nature with reverence. He has no right to talk of conquering nature

or exploiting the force of nature. He must proceed to visualize in nature its God. (*Sathyam Sivam Sundaram Volume 4, p.55, <http://www.saibaba.ws/avatar/sss/sss4.htm>*)

All that is beautiful and great in nature - the lofty mountains, the vast oceans, the stars in the sky - must be regarded as proclaiming the glory and power of the Divine. The sweet fragrance of flowers, the delectable juice of fruits should be regarded as tokens of God's love and compassion. The entire universe must be considered as the temple of God. The external world will reflect your thoughts. If you view the world with love, it will appear as filled with love. (*SSS 16.17: 24 July 1983, <http://www.sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume16/sss16-17.pdf>*)

I shall tell you of one form of worship, which will endow you with divine strength. Godhead expresses itself initially as the five elements: the sky, the wind, the fire, the water, and the earth. All creation is but a combination of two or more of these in varying proportions. The characteristic nature of these five elements is: sound, touch, form, taste and smell - cognized by the ear, the skin, the eye, the tongue and the nose. Now, since these are saturated with the Divine, one has to use them reverentially and with humility and gratefulness.

Use them intelligently, to promote the welfare of yourself and others; use them with moderation and with the idea of loving service to the community, to all. They are all free and full of precious potentiality. Appreciate the plenty and the preciousness. You know from experience that excessive quantities of wind or fire or water are injurious to health. Drinking more water than needed is a torture; inhaling more air is suffocating. Fire in moderation can warm or serve to heat and melt; but beyond a certain limit, it is a holocaust. Even sound beyond a certain limit is a calamity, a weapon that can distract and drive people mad.





So, efficient use of these is itself a form of worship. The body is equipped with mechanisms that ensure a steady degree of warmth, beyond which, or beneath which, man cannot be healthy and active. Nature is in essence Divinity itself, All this is Divine. All this is God. So, tread softly, move reverentially, utilize gratefully. (SSS 6.28: 15 October 1966, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume06/ss06-28.pdf>)

The primary need today is to eradicate the pollution in the human mind. How is this to be accomplished? The mind today is immersed in worldly desires and pleasures. As a result, there is mental dissatisfaction as well as bitter frustration. The mind should be turned back to the source from which it came. A fish out of water has to be restored to the water for it to regain its life. Can it survive if it is placed on a couch and fed with coffee? It will regain peace and life only when it returns to its native home. Likewise, man's mind has to be restored to its original home in the Atma (Soul). Without doing this, how can peace be got? Thus, mental peace has to come from the Atma. This calls for turning the mind toward the Atma by the use of the conscience. (SSS 26.29: 30 August 1993, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume26/ss26-29.pdf>)

Students! From today, harness the enthusiasm of youth for carrying to every street and alley the glory of the Lord's name! The entire atmosphere is surcharged with electromagnetic waves. Because of the pollution of these waves, the hearts of human beings also get polluted. To purify this atmosphere, you have to chant the Lord's name and sanctify the radio waves. There is pollution in the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the food we consume. Our entire life has been polluted. All this has to be purified by suffusing the atmosphere with the Divine name. Chant the name with joy in your hearts. (SSS 28.1: 14 January 1995, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume28/ss28-01.pdf>)

... contemplate for a while on the magnificent multitude of life, all its rich variety of strong and weak, prey and hunter, distressed and delighted, creeping, crawling, flying, floating, walking, hanging, burrowing, diving, swimming - all this uncountable variety of created beings have come out of the Lord and each of them has in its core, the Lord, again! Visualize this immanent Divinity; you become humble, wise, and full of Love. (SSS 10.8: 12 May 1970, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume10/ss10-08.pdf>)





Embodiments of Divine Love! Today's man has learned to fly in the air like birds and swim in the sea like fish. But he has not learnt how to live as man on the

Earth. Science can teach man such things as flying in the air and swimming in the sea. However, only religion, not science, can teach him how to live as man on the Earth. So if science were to foster the all-round development of man, it has to seek the aid of religion. Religion does not mean blind adherence to some beliefs. On the other hand, religion helps man to attain the goal of human life based on discrimination and sacred values.

[...] The great scientist, Einstein, declared that religion without science is lame and science without religion is blind, thereby stressing the need for a judicious combination of science and religion to serve the needs of humanity. (*SSS 25.17: 26 May 1992, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume25/sss25-17.pdf>*)

There is an internal relationship between Nature and Divinity. The ocean, the moon, and man are interrelated. The ocean swells on Full Moon day. What is the connection between the ocean and the moon? The mind and the moon are interrelated. Without our being conscious of it, our minds are affected during Full Moon days. Mental afflictions are aggravated during those days. The scientist should develop an integral approach towards Nature, Man, and Spirit. Only then can he realize the underlying divinity that unites man and the cosmos. (*SSS 18.4: 26 January 1985, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume18/sss18-04.pdf>*)

As regards Ahimsa (nonviolence) in the context of industrial management, it has a wider social meaning than merely avoiding causing harm to others. The avoidance of pollution of the atmosphere or of natural resources like rivers is one of the ways in which an enterprise practices nonviolence. In these different ways, a great deal of good can be done to our people and nation by business managers who adhere to basic human values and who adopt a spiritual approach to the tasks of the business world. (*SSS 23.3: 10 February 1990, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume23/sss23-03.pdf>*).





Some people do not do any physical exercises and lead a sedentary life. My advice to office-goers and students is that it is good for them to commute by cycle at least 5 or 6 kilometres a day. This cycling exercise is very useful not only for maintaining health but also for reducing the expenditure on automobiles. Another advantage is the avoidance of accidents. Moreover, it serves to reduce atmospheric pollution caused by the release of harmful fumes from automobiles. The carbon-dioxide smoke from motor vehicles and factories is already polluting the air in cities and is harming the ozone layer above the earth. The primary task is to purify the environment, which is affected by pollution of air, water, and food. All the five elements are affected by pollution. People should therefore try to reduce the use of automobiles and control the emission of harmful industrial effluents.

... Trees play a vital role in helping mankind to receive oxygen from the atmosphere while they absorb the carbon dioxide exhaled by human beings. Hence, the ancients favoured the growing of trees to control atmospheric pollution. (*SSS 26.4: 6 February 1993, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume26/ss26-04.pdf>*)

You should not misunderstand and misinterpret what I say. It is my duty to convey to you the truth as it exists. Today, the reason why the human population is increasing is because of the attitude of the people. For man to eke out his living to fill a small tummy of his, God has created plenty in the world. He has created a large amount of rice, a large amount of fruit, a large amount of wheat. While such good food has been created by God, yet we go and eat meat and fish. And all the fish which we kill and eat are reborn as human beings. (*SSIB 1977.19, <http://www.ssbpt.info/summershowers/ss1977/ss1977-19.pdf>*)





Ceiling on desires



Nature is more progressive than man, and to protect nature, man has to make use of it within limits. When man tampers with nature recklessly, it reacts adversely and trouble arises. In order to protect nature, man has to practice Ceiling on Desires.

(SSS 26.3: 21 January 1993, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume26/ss26-03.pdf>)



The object of the [Ceiling on Desires] program is to prevent waste of money, time, food, or other resources and to use all these for the welfare of the people. The

money that is saved [...] may be used in the best way you choose for the benefit of others. (SSS 17.16: 14 July 1984, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume17/ss17-16.pdf>)

There are four components in the term “Ceiling on Desires”. They are, respectively, curb on excessive talk, curb on excessive desires and expenditure, control of consumption of food, check on waste of energy. Man needs some essential commodities for his sustenance, and he should not aspire for more. We can learn a lesson in this respect from Nature. Only if air is available in sufficient quantity will it be comfortable and good. If it is excessive and there is a gale you will feel uncomfortable. When you are thirsty, you can consume only a limited quantity of water. You can’t consume the entire water of the Ganga! You take only as much as is needed for the sustenance of the body. (SSS 16.3: 19 January 1983, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume16/ss16-03.pdf>)

Man is deluded by his unlimited desires. He is living in a dream world. He is forgetting the Supreme Consciousness (Para-tattwa). That is why it is important to keep our desires under control, to place a ceiling on them. We are spending too much money. Instead of inordinately spending for our own pleasure, we should be spending for the relief of the poor and needy. This is the real meaning of ‘Ceiling on Desires’. However, do not make the mistake of thinking that giving money is all that is needed while allowing your own desires to continue to multiply. Curtail your desires, as materialistic desires lead to a restless and disastrous life. Desires are a prison. Man can be freed only by limiting his wants. You should have desire only for life’s bare necessities.





Firstly, consider the food we consume. Eat only what you need to eat. Do not be gluttonous. Do not take more than you can eat and waste the rest, because

wasting food is a great sin. The surplus food can feed another mouth. Eat only what you need, and be sure that what you eat is Sathwic (pure). Do not waste food, because food is God, life is God, and man is born from food.

Secondly, consider the ways in which money is spent. Indians consider money or wealth as Goddess Lakshmi. Do not misuse money; misuse of money is evil. By doing so, you will only become a slave to bad qualities, bad ideas and bad habits. Use your money wisely for good deeds.

A man should own only as much wealth as is essential. It is like the size of his shoes. If the shoes are too loose, he cannot walk; if they are too tight, he cannot wear them. Money is like manure. Piled up in one place, it fouls the air. Spread it wide, scatter it over fields, it rewards you with a bumper harvest. So too, when money is spent for promoting good works, it yields contentment and happiness in plenty. Like blood, money too should circulate to ensure health.

Thirdly, examine the usage of time. One should not waste time. Time should be spent in a useful manner. Time should be sanctified because everything in this creation is dependent on time.

Fourthly, conservation of energy is very important. Our physical, mental and spiritual energies should never be wasted. You might ask me: "How are we wasting our energies?" Seeing bad things, hearing bad things, speaking evil, thinking evil thoughts, and doing evil deeds all waste your energy. Conserve your energy in all these five areas, and make your life more meaningful. *(Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust - His Teachings. What is the meaning of ceiling on desires? http://www.srisathyasai.org.in/pages/his_teachings/practical_spirituality.htm)*





Foster the tiny seed of Love that clings to “me” and “mine.” Let it sprout into Love for the group around you and grow into Love for all mankind and spread out its branches over animals, birds, and those that creep and crawl and let the Love enfold all things and beings in the entire world. Proceed from less Love to more Love, narrow Love to expanded Love.

*I bless all of you and ask you to promote love,
sympathy and compassion toward all beings.*

God is present in every one of them.

It is your duty to revere God in each of them.

Sathya Sai Baba

(SSS 13.16: 23 July 1975, <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume13/sss13-16.pdf>)





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NATURE IS THE BEST TEACHER.

She follows the laws of creation unwaveringly, while offering her goods to humanity without the expectation of compensation. Humanity, however, has not learnt the lesson, but has misused the generosity of nature to an extreme extent.

According to Sathya Sai Baba, the world's spiritual teacher of our times, creation is the manifestation of the One through diversity, thus, nature herself is sacred too. This knowledge is indispensable for making a change: we are all responsible for our living space.

This publication contains the teachings of Sathya Sai Baba on nature. If we pay attention to nature, she willingly reveals to us the ways of restoring the disturbed balance.