

SRI SATHYA SAI YOUNG MESSENGERS

SRI SATHYA SAI GUIDELINES FOR YOUTH

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DISCOURSES DELIVERED DURING THE
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TRANSFORMING SELF TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD

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Understanding the Role of Sai Youth

Young men and women! Future citizens of the world! When one's wealth is lost, it can be acquired again. If one's friend is lost, another can be got. If the wife passes, one can marry again. If land is lost, it can be acquired again. But if time is lost it cannot be got back.

The night that has passed cannot be recalled by any means. The waters of the Yamuna, once they have merged in the ocean, cannot be turned back. A fruit that has been eaten and digested cannot be recovered. Man is spending his days aimlessly without any awareness of what is in store for him in the future. He is not aware of the continuous erosion of his lifespan by the passage of time. *Life is like a mega-clock. Its three hands indicate the rate at which the days, months and the year are passing. Man rejoices in the movement of the clock's hands but does not realise that every movement is a reminder of his diminishing lifespan. Hence, before the final hour strikes, every man should realise what his duties are and see that the remaining time is well spent.*

What is the root cause of man's birth in the world? What are the duties of man? No one seeks to recognise the inherent Divinity in man. Young men and women today waste a good deal of their time, without realising, the preciousness of human life.

What are the causes of chaos in a country?

There are two qualities in human beings. One is the animal nature; the other is humanness. Unfortunately, man is forgetting his humanness by falling a prey to the six enemies - lust, anger, greed, envy and others, and misusing his God-given talents. He thereby degrades himself to the level of the animal. On the other hand, man should use his mind, status, and talents to become virtuous, pursue the path of righteousness and strive to raise himself from the human to the Divine.

All things in the world should be used properly, and not misused. A knife can be used for cutting vegetables or another's throat. How a knife is used depends on the person using it. His mental state should be in proper condition. A man's conduct is related to his thoughts and feelings. The heart is inherently pure. But one's thoughts can pollute it or keep it pure. One can make or mar his destiny by his thoughts and actions.

Today, the world is haunted by suffering, unrest, disorder and agitations. Any country filled with noble beings is bound to be peaceful and happy. *What is the reason for the sad plight of a country? It is the absence of men and women of high character. To protect a country, it is not so important to have arms, missiles and atom bombs. It is most essential to have men and women of great virtue.*

The world's prosperity or otherwise is based upon the character of the youth. Hence, young men and women should be pure hearted and render selfless service to the country. They should keep the company of the good and godly. Losing Paapa Bheeti (fear of sin) and not cultivating Daiva Preeti (love of God), humans today have lost the essential quality of humanness. This has resulted in the loss of peace in the world.

Why should youth serve the society?

Everyone should realise what one owes to the society in which one is born and from which one derives so many benefits. *Every individual should show his sense of gratitude to society by rendering selfless service. It was for this purpose that the Seva Organisation was started.* The body is given for rendering service to society. Today wherever you turn - in the administration, business world, politics or other fields, you see no spirit of sacrifice. In every field, the atmosphere is saturated with pollution. This foulness must be removed. The pollution affects people in authority, parents, educationists and intellectuals. Those who preen themselves on their scholarship have no humility that should characterise genuine scholarship.

People should consider the whole world as the mansion of one human family, when this spirit of oneness prevails, there will be no tendency to harm others. You should forgive even those who harm you. The youth should cultivate the quality of forbearance. Forbearance is a supreme virtue in humans.

What is Sin? What is Merit?

Man should be free from fear. Animals and birds are subject to fear. But man should neither cause fear in others nor be

afraid himself. Today's youth should develop fearlessness as a principal quality. You should be afraid of only one thing: fear of sin. God is the only being to be loved. All other forms of love are transient and selfish. Love of God is selfless and everlasting. God seeks nothing from you. He is utterly selfless. Today if you wish to earn the esteem of society you have to secure love of God. For this you must entertain fear of sin.

What is sin? It covers all those activities which are motivated by selfishness born out of regarding the body and sensual pleasures as the primary things in life. Punya (merit) arises from all actions which take one nearer to God. Sin has been defined as causing harm to or forgetting the Divine. To remember the Divinity in everyone is the means to acquire merit.

Young people today have lost the feeling of forbearance and as a result have become prey to many bad qualities. Most young people are afflicted with the disease of egoistic pride. And this is the cause of all sickness in the world. This egoism has no real basis because the individual is an insignificant speck in the vast cosmos. It is born of ignorance. This ignorance will go if humans realise that the whole universe is permeated by the Divine and belongs to the Divine. Everyone should do what is good and never forget God. That is the way to overcome egoism.

How can youth divinise the world?

It is the privilege and duty of the youth to promote the welfare, progress and peace of the world. Transform all your actions into sacred duties. Experience the love of the Divine. That is the meaning of Swami's declaration "My life is My message". Adhere to the ideals set before you by Swami. Today people tend to forget ideals and foster desires. Selfishness prevails over patriotism. This should change. Never forget your motherland. Remember that our ancients enthroned sacrifice as the supreme virtue. They stood for justice and truth. As a result, they enjoyed peace.

Today, humanity is haunted by fear because there is no spirit of sacrifice; righteousness is at a discount and truth has become rare. *Youth should enthrone sacrifice in their hearts, wear the crown of justice on their heads and carry the sword of truth in their hands. These are the weapons needed, to defend the nation.*

Youth should consider the true purpose of life. They should get rid of all the impurities in their hearts. With pure hearts they should embark on service at all times and everywhere. Hands in society, head in the forest. From today develop an unwavering mind and a steady vision. That is the way to divinise the world.

Should youth seek greatness or goodness?

People should realise the distinction between 'greatness' and 'goodness'. Most parents want their children to acquire greatness. But they have no true idea of what greatness is. They may desire that their children should become great scholars, get big jobs and acquire large wealth. Do these constitute greatness? No. *Great man is the one who sees the human in God. But the one who sees God in human is a good man. The mark of goodness is to see the Divinity in every man. There is no use in acquiring greatness without goodness. You must seek goodness and not greatness.*

Today there are many 'great' men in this country. What is the benefit the country has derived from them? Ravana was a great scholar. Rama was equally great as a scholar. But he was much more than that. He was a good man. Ravana performed rigorous penance and mastered a vast deal of knowledge. However, all his studies did not save him from his evil qualities, which brought about his ruin. The only desire all should cherish is to win the grace of God. Rama was devoted to truth and righteousness. Hence, he became a good man and not a mere great man. After thousands of years, the very name Rama evokes veneration. Rama manifested Divinity in the human. That is the sign of goodness. To see humanness in Rama is nothing special. Being human yourself you see the human traits in others. What you must see is the Divine in human beings.

You must realise that greatness related to power, position or wealth is transient. It is lost when power and position go. But goodness is respected always. Therefore, dedicate your lives to goodness. *What is goodness? It is living according to Dharma and justice, to love all and cherish faith in God, to help the needy and raise the lowly.*

Today at the inaugural function only the broad pattern of the tasks before you have been presented. In the ensuing days the details of the duties you have come to discharge and the programme of activities you must take up, will be considered. What is basic to all these in the spiritual path is the chanting of the name of the Lord. By this means you can experience God. You must chant the name with love.

Source: Inaugural Address, First World Youth Conference, July 16, 1997, Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam

Cultivate Love for God, Fear of Sin

Embodiments of Love! So long as a man is puffed up with pride, none, not even his wife and children will love him. One should shed one's ego and arrogance, if one wants to be loved, by others. One has to suffer grief and misery as long as one is prone to anger. It is only when one gives up anger one can be happy. So long as one goes on multiplying one's desires, he will continue to be in want. When he controls his desires, man attains prosperity. Greed makes a man unhappy and miserable. Only when greed and miserliness are given up can one have an enjoyable and peaceful life.

The whole world and the objects therein are inter-related by the bond of love. It is love that binds the human race together. The world cannot exist without love. God is love and resides in the heart of everyone as embodiment of love. Based on this Truth we pray, 'Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu'.

In ancient times, the sages and saints sacrificed everything for the sake of the welfare of humanity. Even the youth of those times followed suit. They are remembered even today because of their spirit of selfless sacrifice. On the contrary, the youth of today are becoming exceedingly greedy, totally selfish and harbouring feelings of hatred and jealousy, while those in the ancient times were leading a life of Tyaga and Yoga (sacrifice and sense control). The present-day youth want to lead a life of Bhoga (enjoying worldly and carnal pleasures) which results in Roga (disease).

Who is the best friend for youth?

Everyone brings the wealth of love from the moment of one's birth. In this Karma Kshetra (field of activity) that is the world, it is difficult to safeguard the treasure of Prema (love). Therefore, everyone should look for a faithful friend. Today, the only true friend is God. When you hand over the wealth of love to God, it will be easy for you to progress on a life of security and peace. *There is no greater teacher than your heart. Time is a great preacher. The world is a scriptural text. God is the great friend. With full faith in these four entities, one should lead one's life on this earth.*

Prema is the natural possession of every human being. It is the fruit of the tree of life. There are certain impediments in your enjoyment of the fruit. But, before tasting a fruit, you have to remove the skin and rind covering the pulp inside and also cast off the seed. The fruit of love is covered by the thick skin of ego. You must peel off this skin of 'mine' and 'thine'. Then only you can taste the sweet juice. That is why the Vedas describe God as Raso Vai Sah (supreme sweet essence).

What type of love should youth cultivate?

By pure love, youth should establish unity with the Divine. The path of Prema is the straightforward road to realise the Divine. The human life is a journey from 'I' to 'We'. It is also progressing from Swam to Soham (individual self to the state of merger with the Divine). Everyone of your actions must be done as an offering to God. Nowadays people start their journey from 'I' and come back to the same 'I'. This is selfishness. The day you give up selfishness you are on the right path. You experience love in three ways: Swartha Prema (selfish love), Pararthartha Prema (love towards all fellow beings) and Anyonya Prema (mutual give and take type of love). "I should be happy. I should enjoy all pleasures and be comfortable. I do not care for others." This is the attitude of Swartha Prema. Anyonya Prema represents the feeling that not only the individual but also his relatives and friends should be comfortable and enjoy a good life. But, Pararthartha Prema represents the feeling that all should be happy in the entire world. This is the highest type of Prema.

There are three examples to illustrate these three types of love. Swartha or selfish love is comparable to the bulb that illumines just one single small room. This cannot be called love at all. Anyonya Prema is like moonlight. Though it illumines all directions, it is very dim. It does not help one to have a clear perception. You may mistake a rope for a serpent and a stump of wood as human body in moonlight. Similarly, you may mistake a good man to be a wicked one and vice versa due to illusion. But Pararthartha Prema is like sunlight which is very bright and will not give room for any doubt.

A confused person may be overpowered by delusion. He may believe the words of wicked persons, which may appear to be sweet. The words of wise people may appear to be unsavoury, but they communicate nectarine truth. *Divine love is like a downpour of rain, although sometimes interspersed with hard hailstones hurting you. But remember! They melt into the water of love for you. Similarly, Divinity sometimes may appear to be hurting you. But you should realise it contains nothing but love. God is love. Love is God. Live in Love.* You should make an effort to lead such a life.

What is the difference between Human Love and Divine Love?

Some persons consider small defects in others as huge mistakes and criticize them, while they ignore even great drawbacks in themselves. This is highly improper. The correct method is to magnify your own small mistakes and consider them as big mistakes, and the big mistakes of others should be considered as small ones of no consequence. That is how you can control the commission of errors. With this attitude, you will be able to realise the Divine. *Human love is worldly and selfish, while Divine love is spiritual and selfless. It is pure love. The ancients described the Divine as eternal, immortal, pure and unsullied. In order to experience Love of God, you should give up petty minded selfishness and expand your love.*

Let us take an example of how the love of a newly married man to his spouse decreases as days go by. In the beginning he shows considerable concern when they are walking on the road and comes across a thorn. The man shows a lot of concern and pulls the wife aside. In the same situation a few months later, he retorts, "Are you blind? Can you not see the thorn?" Thus, the worldly love will become diluted, while Divine Love will be constant and steady. People cannot understand the greatness of Divine Love. They misconstrue this love and even blame God when they do not get their low desires fulfilled. *Some want liberation. What is liberation? It is liberation from desires. They want to see God. Should you not have the requisite faith and feeling in your heart for this?* Even when you live close to God, you cannot see God unless you have the faith and devotion, just like a frog in the pond which is ignorant of the honey in the lotus, though nearer to it. While honeybees from far-off places know the existence of honey in the flower and come and taste it, people from distant lands come and experience the sweetness of God's Love, while those nearer are not able to do so.

The proximity to the Divine can elevate human to the level of the Divine. But many fail to realise this and waste their lives. Love is in everyone, but, because it is turned to selfish ends, it becomes attachment. You should aspire to experience Divine Love. *In the modern world, youth should know the nature of true love. Many from abroad, mix with persons of the opposite gender, calling them boyfriend and girlfriend. If you really love each other, you must get married and not continue living as friends.*

A few years back, a foreign youth was sitting under a tree with a crest fallen face. He was just in his late teens, and when questioned by Swami, he said that his second wife had deserted him, and he was anxiously thinking of his child she bore. If at this age he had worries, imagine what would happen when he became older? Some young people even before they are 20 years of age get married, divorced, remarry again and get separated from wife and child too and later feel sorry for themselves. They do not realise the value of human life which is both rare and sacred.

You may be getting a lot of thoughts because of your food and other habits. You should discriminate whether they are good or bad. You should not be carried away by bookish and superficial knowledge. You should have practical knowledge to make your life useful. Achieve coordination between your education and behaviour. Perfect harmony in thought, word and deed is the hallmark of a human being. You should have full faith in God. Divinity is beyond human comprehension with the physical equipment you have. Your thoughts are only reflections, resound and reaction of the outer world. God has no such reactions. He has only one Sound, that is Truth Absolute. You should follow the twin ideals "Speak the Truth and Act Righteously". God is the changeless Truth but no one understands this. You can do so only when you follow the righteous path of morality and integrity.

Man has become a slave to money. He may forget God but will never forget money. You provide yourself with an air conditioner, a good bed, fans and other accessories with a view to having a comfortable sleep. But you do not get sleep. Why? You should have mental peace to sleep well. Your body, mind, external limbs and inner instruments must all be oriented towards peace. This can be achieved only by developing Divine love, which is selfless love, which always gives and never takes. Worldly love is keen on getting and then forgetting. Divine love has no equal. It stands supreme.

What should youth ask from God?

You pray to God for trivial worldly things. You should ask for something that you do not have. You are not having selfless love; hence you should only ask for love which the Divine has in plenty. God is the embodiment of bliss. Pray for love, peace and bliss.

You should be able to distinguish between earthly happiness and Divine Bliss. Today, people pray for many trifles. God knows what is good for the devotee and gives it. He is a witness to all the thoughts, words and actions. Therefore, surrender whole-heartedly without any reservation whatsoever to God, and lead an ideal life. You are all embodiments of the Divine. So, you should love all and never hurt anyone. If you harm anyone, you are harming the Divine.

St. John used to consider all as his brothers. But, on one occasion he punished one brother. Jesus appeared in his dream and questioned him, “Do you think you are hurting that man? No, you are hurting Me.” You should understand this truth that any harm done to a fellow being is equivalent to harming the Divine. You should cultivate the spirit of oneness.

Bhajans and meditation are only exercises for purifying the mind. Develop love which is your life breath. When a tree is full of green leaves, branches and fruits, you are attracted by it. When it becomes dry, you destroy it because there is no life in it. A person without love is akin to a dead tree. Love is as vital for a human as fire is vital for a lump of coal to sparkle. You should get rid of your weaknesses by concentrating on Divine Love. Divine grace confers the greatest strength. All other things may come and go, but Divine Grace is ever flowing. Whatever you may or may not be able to do, develop Divine Love.

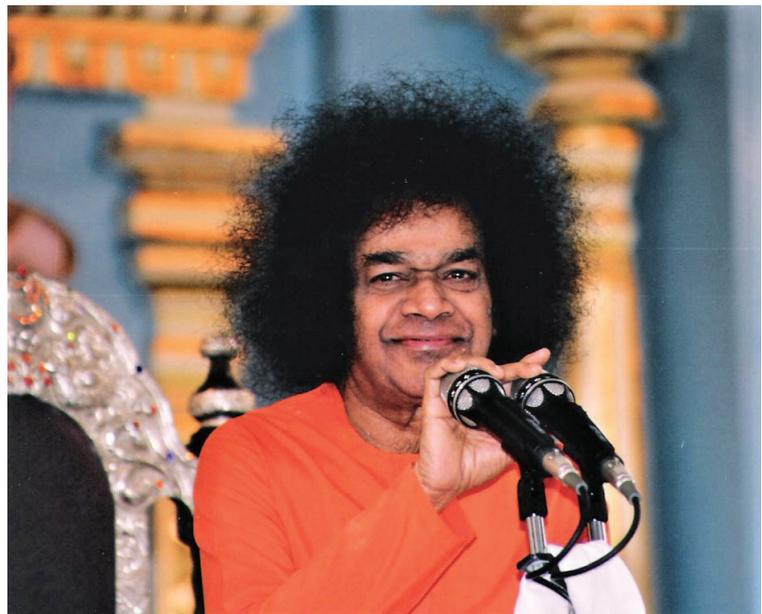
God is the director and all humans are mere actors. Be good performers in God's play. Only to train you for this role, this Youth Conference has been convened. In the midst of the world replete with fear, distrust and mutual recrimination, you have to prove yourself to be the messengers of the Divine and embodiments of love, peace and truth. Declare your reality as Divine to the world at large and make them realise the Divinity in everyone.

You young men and women should know what truth is, what is love, what is God and what is the relationship between the mind and the world. Youth go abroad in quest of money. You are not satisfied with what you can earn here and out of greed you go for earning more. You should have hands in society and head in the forest. Men spend their entire life with attachment to money to such an extent that even while on death bed they cannot think of God. In this conference, you have been told about fear of sin and morality in society. You have to carry these ideals with you and practise them. You must radiate human values and ensure unity in thought, word and deed.

What is the role of Sai Youth in the World?

At present, there is chaos and mutual animosity among various people. Sai Youth have to spread the message of unity, purity and Divinity. Vivekananda had said, “Give me ten men who are pure and perfect. I can change the whole world.” But I say, “I can bring about transformation even with one truly perfect human being.”

You should have Divinity as the base number one. Any number of zeros placed alongside the figure of one will carry value; value increases many folds with its additional zeros. But, without the number one, if you put zeros, they carry no value at all. The Divine is number one. Sun, moon and earth are all mere zeros. They get value only because of the



primary number one, which represents the Divine. God is the hero and the rest are all zeros! *Have full faith in God and surrender to God. Serve with a spirit of dedication as an offering to God. Spread the message of the glory of God in every village by chanting the name of God. Then the atmosphere and climate of the world will change for the better and become sacred.*

Source: Discourse on July 17, 1997, First World Youth Conference, Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam

Follow Satya and Dharma as Guideposts

Young men and women! Truth is God. It is only through Truth you can get peace, plenty and prosperity. There is no greater Dharma than Truth. The mansion of Dharma is raised on the foundation of Truth. Though people may follow several spiritual paths, Truth is the most important of all. Anywhere and at any time, for any individual, Truth is absolutely essential. Because Truth is forgotten, the whole world is in turmoil. It is only from Truth that all creation has originated, including human beings. The whole creation merges back into Truth. One who follows Truth and Righteousness will always be successful. Mere strength of armoury, valour, skill and ability will not do. These are only worldly and external powers. The power of Truth is supreme. To foster Truth and Righteousness is the bounden duty of man.

What is Truth?

You may think that relating exactly what you saw is Truth. It is not so. Suppose you see a person taking the role of king in a drama. You see him on the stage with the royal robe and crown. But when you see him off the stage after the drama is all over, he may be in his usual dress. Which is true? Is the role on stage or the role outside? If you analyse this, it becomes obvious that what is subject to change may be termed as fact but not Truth. Truth remains true at all points of time.

In the word 'Satyam', 'Sat' means life; 'e' stands for food; 'Yam' stands for Sun. Food is essential for every individual. Sun helps in production of crops which constitute our food to sustain our life. Hence Satyam stands for life-sustaining energy. If you read the word Satya, Sa-ta-ya, on the reverse it is Ya-ta-sa. 'Ya' denotes outer and inner discipline as part of Tapas. When you do much Tapas (penance), you acquire 'Sa' or Divinity. Tapas is triple purity, that is purity in thought, word and deed.

Divinity is in the Microcosm and in the Macrocosm. Everything is a combination of atoms. You are not able to realise the Divinity within, despite all your education and scholarship. Whatever you study is only about the physical world and the gross matter. *If you want real lasting happiness you can get it only by union with God. God is all-pervasive. Why should you search for God when He is within you? Body is like a water bubble and mind is a mad monkey. Don't follow them. You should follow only your conscience, which is Satya - the principle of Truth. If you have an unpolluted heart and engage in unblemished action, you will experience the manifestation of God.*

We say often we have no Shanti (peace). Why? Because you are multiplying your desires. One who is bereft of desires is peaceful. You must breed only good thoughts and progress forward transcending all thoughts and reaching a state of ending the mind which is but a conglomeration of thoughts. Desire is like the luggage during a journey. If you have less luggage, travel will be more comfortable. So also, in life's journey, you should restrict your desires which burden you.

How should we speak the Truth?

You should lead a life of morality and character. The Upanishad says: "Satyam Bruyaat" (speak Truth). This is the physical aspect of the directive. "Priyam Bruyaat". This is the Dharmic or virtuous aspect, which means you should speak Truth in a nice and palatable way. Next is "Na Bruyaat Satyam Apriyam". This is the spiritual aspect. You should avoid speaking truth when it is not pleasing to the other person. At the same time, simply because it satisfies the other person, don't speak untruth. Truth is God. You should have this imprinted in your heart.

How do youth live a life based on Satya and Dharma?

Young men and women! You are all wasting time, which is Divine. God is the master of Time. The same individual passes through stages when he is termed as boy, adult and old man due to the passage of time. Time is God. Therefore, you should not waste time.

Excessive talk is waste of time. When you switch on the Radio and listen to all unnecessary programmes the current is wasted. The body is like a Radio Receiver. Chanting the name and singing the glory of God are useful. But while you indulge in unnecessary gossip, the energy is wasted. In doing wicked deeds also, you waste energy, thereby facing dangerous consequences too. By adhering to the twin ideals of Satya and Dharma (Truth and Righteousness) you can sanctify your life and avoid wastage of the precious energy that you are endowed with.

Instead of preaching the ideals, you should put them into practice. Propagation is 'quantity' while practising is 'quality'. Quality is always important. A spoon of cow's milk is much better than a barrel of donkey's milk. Youth should turn their minds away from distractions and concentrate on practising human values.

I always advise people to avoid waste of time, energy, food and money. Young people should take up a job or profession and start earning money. They should know how to use it properly. Food is God. Time is God. Youth should take care not to waste them.

Be good, see good, hear good, talk good and do good. The basis for such discipline is to think good, which entails the control of mind. You must perform all actions as offering to God. *Meditation on God is one of the steps for achieving steadiness of mind. Concentration is needed for every action such as walking on road, talking or reading. You must concentrate with single minded devotion on God. Performing work as worship is also tantamount to meditation.* When you have the feeling of Divinity within you, you will not think, see, hear, talk bad or do any evil.

Having full faith in the Divinity within is self-confidence. This is the foundation on which the walls of self-satisfaction have to be raised with self-sacrifice as roof, so that the mansion of Self-Realisation is complete.

How can we understand our own Truth?

In Vedanta, man is urged to inquire "Who am I?" You will realise that the body, mind and intellect are only your instruments. The single letter 'I' is the Inner self or Atma while the three letter 'eye' refers to the body. You are the master and should make use of these instruments. You should be careful to use your mind in the right direction. Just as a piece of cloth is a bundle of threads, mind is a bundle of thoughts. If threads are removed, there is no cloth. When you remove the thoughts there is no mind and hence no worry.

I often point out that you are not one but three persons in one. The one that you think you are - body; the one others think you are - mind; the one you really are - Atma. When you have pure thoughts, your heart is pure and full of love, radiating human values. In the term MAN 'M' represents mind, 'A' represents Atma and 'N' stands for merger of the two. It also indicates Nirvana (Liberation). Buddha undertook spiritual pursuits and finally felt sorry that he had wasted his life in external pursuits while he had everything within himself.

Man forgets Divinity within and indulges in wasteful exercises. The five vital airs in man are termed as Pancha Pranaas. In reality, Satya, Dharma, Shanti, Prema and Ahimsa - the five human values should be deemed as the five-fold life breaths or Pancha Praanas - Praana, Apaana, Udaana, Samaana and Vyaana (the incoming, outgoing, upward flow, even and circulating breaths). Since the values constitute the life-breath, one who does not radiate the value in one's actions is deemed to be lifeless! There is an example for this in the case of five great elements: Earth, water, fire, air and ether. Earth has the five attributes of sense such as sound, touch, form, taste and smell. Hence it is very heavy and cannot stretch out. Water has all the other attributes except smell, and it spreads to a limited extent. Fire has three attributes only, namely, sound, touch and form. It spreads more than water. Next comes air which has two attributes - sound and touch. It spreads around. But, Akasha (ether) has only one attribute - sound. Hence it is all-pervasive. God, who is without attributes, is present everywhere and in every object.

Modern youth ask, "Where is God? I want to see and catch Him." You are aware of air because without air you cannot survive. Can you see or catch it? Similarly, God is everywhere. Though you cannot see Him, you cannot live without God. God is consciousness. Worship is also tantamount to meditation.

We know by experiment that two parts of hydrogen and one part of oxygen combine to produce water. Both these are inflammable when they are independent of one another. But when they combine, they produce water which can put out the fire. Separately they cause fire, when they join together, they put out fire!

There are two entities namely, Nirakaara and Sakara (formless and with form). In ice, which is with form, there is formless water. Only when form and formless unite, you get liberation. This is like hydrogen and oxygen combining in a particular proportion giving water.

Consciousness, which is all-pervasive and, in all beings, can be comprehended only by human beings. Animals and birds do not have this faculty. From this you get 'conscience' which is limited to body. The word 'conscious' is related to senses. Consciousness is everywhere. All these three are in man. From the Dehaatma Bhaav (body identification) you have to rise to pure Atma (consciousness). Conscience warns you when you move on the wrong path. You should not entertain any thoughts which do not conform to the dictates of your conscience. The Upanishads state: "Yad Bhaavam Tad Bhavati" (As you feel so you become).

What priorities should youth develop?

Youth should mould their life by pursuing a good path, practising the ideals of Satya and Dharma and grow spiritually. Today spirituality is being reviled. You give importance to Technology which is nothing but “Trickology”! It may yield temporary gains but is dangerous in the long run. In ancient times, they observed Satya and Dharma and had no fear. In modern times science has developed but senses have degenerated. Science is a semi-circle while spirituality is the full circle.

Youth should keep everything within limits. Scientists discovered the atom bomb and the hydrogen bomb, wasting huge sums of money to produce instruments of mass destruction. All that money could be utilised for the welfare of humanity. If you have the feeling of brotherhood of man, then there is no need for fear and consequent building up of nuclear arms.

In Mahabarata, among the Pandava brothers, Dharmaja is the eldest. Bheema, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva are the other brothers in order of their age. Now you have America and Russia leading in the world in technological skill and destructive power. But Bharat is like Dharmaja. Even though Bheema and Arjuna were endowed with more strength and valour than Dharmaja, they always bowed to him. Bharat is the nation upholding Dharma. When once you develop Dharma, there is no need to attack or harm anyone. Hence no need to have destructive weaponry. Dharma is the Astra (weapon). Satya is the Bhaavam (attitude). Truth is common to all countries in the world. If you practise Satya and Dharma, you have no need to have bombs.

We always chant at the end of all prayers and Bhajans: “Om Shanti! Shanti! Shanti! Why are we mentioning Shanti three times? It is to invoke peace for body, mind and Atma. Atma Shanti cannot be there without Shanti of body and mind. Hence, we invoke peace of all three entities.

Youth should restrict their talk to the barest minimum. When you talk too much, you may stray away from Truth. That is why the ancients practised “less talk, more work”. Love is the most essential undercurrent of your talk and work. Speaking with love is Satya and doing work with love is Dharma. It will give you Shanti.

God is Love, Live in Love. But we have only polluted love. We should practise pure love. With the same set of eyes, you see your mother, wife and daughter. Though the eyes are same, the vision is different. You see the mother with respect, wife with attachment and daughter or son with affection. The feelings are different. As you feel sorry when someone teases your sister, the others will feel likewise when you tease other girls. This principle of oneness should be imbibed by you.

Students are generally good but change their behaviour due to environments. Tell me your company. I shall tell what you are. *What is good company - Satsanga? Sat is Truth, that is, God. This means you should always be with God.*

Satsanga does not mean participation in Bhajans. If you realise your Reality which is Divinity, there will be no trouble. *When Mahatma Gandhi wanted to go to England for higher studies, his mother did not like it. Gandhi understood his mother's fears about his maintaining sobriety and purity of conduct. So, he made promises that he would not drink, not smoke, and would have no contacts with women. He kept up all the three promises and returned with his principles of morality preserved intact.* Today the mothers themselves encourage their sons to go abroad and do not bother about their behaviour and conduct.

How should youth behave with parents and society?

The main lesson of spirituality is to share and live together in unity. Swami does not like the word ‘Religion’ which is often misused. Religion should help one to realise one’s Reality. But people have narrow compartmentalised feelings as Muslim, Christian, Sikh, etc. Love makes no difference. It is the basis of all human values and you should practise it with full vigour to justify your inherent humanity.

Speak softly and obligingly. By using harsh words even to your mother, you will ruin yourself. *Consider Mother, Father, Teacher and Guest as God. Youth must respect their parents even after marriage, since they gave birth to you and brought you up. Wife is your selection. But mother is not so. Mother should be given first place. You must talk to her sweetly, softly and respectfully. You should also try to influence your friends and relatives, inspiring them to make their life meaningful by doing service to humanity. What is service? It is to do good and share your knowledge with others without selfishness.*

You must serve your mother country first. Swami wants nothing from you. You must become true embodiments of love and service to remove fear. Be good and get happiness. Do good and you will be good. Through sacred action, make life sacred with the principles of Satya and Dharma as your guideposts.

Source: Discourse on July 18, 1997, First World Youth Conference, Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam

Principles for an Ideal Life

Just as there is oil in the sesame seed, butter in milk, fragrance in the flower, juice in the fruit, fire in wood, there is Divinity in this vast Universe. The Divine is all pervasive and is present in every being. It is the Divine Power within that makes it possible for the eyes to see and ears to hear. The entire creation is the expression of the Will Power of God. Prakriti (Nature) is a manifestation of the Paramatma (Supreme Divine). Man is born to manifest and reflect Divinity. All constituents of Nature reflect their inherent qualities. Man also has to do so but is not reflecting his innate human quality.

Everyone should consider devotion and discipline as of utmost importance. Duty comes only next to these two. Youth are intrinsically very good. But you lack in discipline. You should observe good discipline. *You should not waste time which is precious and sacred. How should you utilise the time usefully? You must follow the ideal path reflecting sacred human values. Not only that, but you should also inspire and encourage others to follow a disciplined life.* Today, people do not understand discipline. They sit in a meeting and go on cheering and clapping when a speaker tells something to please them. This is sheer waste of time and energy. Every second is valuable and should be used well. Character is the most important life principle to be imbibed. This is the golden period in your life span and if you spoil this fine opportunity in careless living, your future will be ruined.

The sapling has to be tended very carefully, so that it can grow into a mighty tree in the right manner and serve the people well. *To whatever country you may belong, cultivation of character is essential at any point of time. There is no such thing as American character, Russian character and so on. Character is common to the entire humanity. There is only one caste, the caste of Humanity; one language, the language of the Heart; one Religion, the Religion of Love. Whatever country you may hail from, whatever language you speak and whichever faith you follow, you should maintain sterling human character.*

What are the hallmarks of good character?

In ancient times, youth maintained good character. If you maintain good character, the future generation will prosper. Individual sacredness and purity ensure sacredness of society and country. When all countries are filled with such noble people, the world will be blooming with peace and prosperity.

If you say that the world is not a bed of roses, but a place of misery, the fault lies in you, the inhabitants. It is character that marks the life of a good individual. If you go through history, you will find that in ancient days people were noted for their control of senses. Take the example of Janaka, the great ruler and father of Seeta, offering his daughter in marriage to Rama immediately after the latter broke the Shiva Dhanush, in terms of the proclamation made by him. When Janaka repeatedly asked Rama to look at Seeta and take her hand, Rama looked in a different direction because he should not look at a woman till he has tied the wedding knot around her neck. This is the ideal propagated by the great Avatar Rama.

Later on, when Lakshmana followed Rama and Seeta to the forest and stayed with them for 14 long years, he never once looked at the face of Seeta who was just an 18-year-old lady. Abundant testimony to this exemplary behaviour of Lakshmana is borne by the episode when Rama and Lakshmana acquired the friendship of the monkey-king Sugreeva. Sugreeva bade the monkeys to bring the bundle of jewels dropped by Seeta when she was being abducted by Ravana. When Rama saw this, he was overwhelmed and asked Lakshmana to identify whether they belonged to Seeta. But Lakshmana respectfully said, "I can only identify the anklets worn by mother Seeta as I used to worship her feet every day. I cannot identify the bangles or necklace worn by her as I have never looked up at her face." Because of such worthy and laudable behaviour, they are remembered even today, though thousands of years have passed. Youth should protect character in that way. Both men and women should consider character as their very life breath.

You may go to villages for doing Seva. Doing selfless service is the best way to cross the ocean of Samsara. The Vedas declare, "Not by penance, not by undertaking pilgrimages to holy places, but by rendering service to humanity one can achieve the goal of liberation." *Ego is eliminated by the spirit of service and thus it is linked to progress in spirituality.*

When the great Sage Valmeeiki completed composing the epic Ramayana, he was contemplating as to who could propagate this great epic to the world at large. The two boys Lava and Kusha came before him. When questioned by them as to what he was contemplating on, Valmeeiki said that he wanted that the story of Ramayana and the Divine Glory of Rama should be spread far and wide. The boys with folded hands submitted to the sage who was also their preceptor, "We are ready to even sacrifice our life for your Seva. Command us and we shall follow." Valmeeiki was moved to tears at the spirit of service exhibited by the young boys. He had taught them the scriptures and moulded their character too. The nectar like contents

of an earthen pot are far better than poison kept in a golden jar. The human body is only a mud pot. God exists in this mud pot as Amrit (nectar). We do not want a golden vessel with poison. The world is tempting like a golden vessel but is full of poison of worldly pleasures and pains.

God resides in the human heart and not in shrines like Tirupati, Badrinath or Prasanthi Nilayam. He is essentially Hridaya Nivasi (Indweller of the heart). Valmeeki told the boys, "Go and spread the message of Ramayana with the spirit of selfless sacrifice for the welfare of the world." The boys wore garlands of beads and holding musical instruments in their hands, started on their sacred journey. It is Valmeeki's inspiration that made them pursue this noble task with utmost zeal.

Nowadays youth are reluctant to wear Vibhuti on their foreheads and participate in Nagara Sankeertan. They go forward quite willingly and openly for indulging in wicked deeds but feel shy to participate in singing the glory of God. They revel in singing cinema songs of low taste while they feel shy to sing Divine Names. To spend life in such unholy pursuits is a wasteful exercise and will not bring credit. Morality is the backbone of the community and a society of people bereft of moral values is worse than the jungle infested by wild animals. Even beasts have season and reason while man has lost both.

How should the youth do Seva?

You are all embodiments of God. It is proclaimed in the Geeta that all beings are sparks of Divinity. You should not feel shy to speak the truth when you are going to pilgrim shrines such as Tirupati or Puttaparthi. *You should also not feel shy of engaging yourselves in service activities, especially in rural areas, as villages lack amenities and hygienic conditions. They need your attention more. You may not be able to visit the villages frequently when you are employed in any job due to difficulties of getting leave. But when you go to a village, collect a few young persons of the village and teach them health and hygiene and impress on them the necessity to maintain environmental cleanliness. You need not spend much money for travelling to distant places. Select the villages close by.* You can take doctors to give them treatment and health check-up. You should inspire the villagers by your attitude of service and humility.

You know the greatness of Hanuman who was the symbol of selfless service. He was endowed with mighty power, valour, strength and was hailed as a great scholar of impeccable character. Yet when the demons in Sri Lanka, questioned him who he was, he never hesitated to reply that he was the servant of Shri Ramachandra. *You must feel honoured to call yourself as a servant of God and humanity. If you start serving with the attitude that service to man is service to God, you will experience God there.* The same thing you cannot experience in Japa or Dhyana. You have to 'shut your mind and open your heart,' which happens while doing Seva.

Some may ask, 'While you are God, why worship God?' Even as you realise you are Divine, you have to do certain things as part of your duty. According to the tradition of Bharat, you must transform work into worship. When you practise this, it becomes easier to realise God. Everything you learn by practice only. Walking, talking, eating, singing and serving need practice. Practise service dedicating all activities to God.

You say diamond and gold are highly valuable. If you enquire deeply, man is more valuable than all the wealth of the world. Men alone decide the value of gold and diamond, and other materials. Man should have faith in himself. *Everyone should chant the name of God and engage in service in accordance with the advice given by Hanuman to Vibheeshana. He said, "Mere chanting Rama's name won't do. You should also engage yourself in Rama's work." Vibheeshana went on chanting the name but failed to make any effort to alleviate the suffering of Seeta and Rama on their separation, while Hanuman engaged himself in the service of Rama.*

How should the youth conduct themselves in society?

You should use your willpower to engage in such sacred tasks. A common example can be seen in an electric light. Dharma (virtue) is the wire which carries the current, Shanti (peace) is the bulb and Prema (love) is the light. Light the lamp of the world with Divine Love. Divine Love lights the lamp of life, which you are not able to perceive. None can regulate Divine Love. Worldly love is fraught with conditions and expectations in return. Divine Love does not expect anything in return.

Some say they are searching for Truth. This is meaningless because you are yourself the embodiment of Truth, which is nothing but God. Because you are not aware of this, you indulge in wrong pursuits. *In a co-educational institution, a boy and girl, in the impressionable age when there is no self-control, first look at each other exchanging glances; then it goes on developing into friendship by smiling, talking, exchanging letters and finally leads to coming together. You should control your vision initially. Many saints have prayed to God to give them the correct vision only to see good, ears to hear songs of Divine glory and hands to engage in worship.*

Jayadeva in a song appeals to the tongue not to indulge in untruth, not to speak ill of others and avoid excessive talk.

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. You should avoid gaudy dress. Your white dress reflects the inner purity of your heart. Dress should be simple but clean.

You must enquire “who am I” instead of asking everyone else “who are you?” You must uncover your reality which is hidden by the outer coats of ego and attachment. You have to remove them to see your bare chest. These represent, the three qualities of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas (goodness, passion and inertia) covering your innate Reality. You have to transcend them to realise your inner Self.

Young men and women! Character is the basis for all your behaviour, qualities and actions. None can be perfect. But you can make efforts to develop excellent character. Learn to turn over a new leaf even if you have not lived an ideal life in the past. *Do not brood over the past and worry about the future. Concentrate on the present. Take everything as the gift of God; discard worry.* You cannot demand sweet medicine for your illness from the doctor. You must take whatever is prescribed. Do not give room in the heart for anything else but God. The world outside is reflection of the Inner Being. Be happy within and joyful outside and have enthusiasm for service.

Do not bother about others heckling you as you are engaged in service to God. If some are questioning your faith in God, tell them that He is in your heart and the others have no business to question your belief. Have strong and unshakable faith. Be fearless and avoid ‘crying’. You should shed tears of devotion only for God. Such tears have spiritual meaning, because Nara means water and Nayana means eyes. Both together make Narayana. Difficulties are like passing clouds. There are no permanent clouds at all.

Even though there are millions of youth in the world, only those of you who have come here are lucky to experience this unique chance. Wherever you go for service, Swami will always be with you. Whatever happens I shall protect you. Do not be carried away by profit or loss. Think of God ceaselessly. Even the great saint composer Thyagaraja doubted for a moment the power of Rama, but immediately repented and said the fault was his to have doubted, but, God was all powerful. Never give room for doubt. The inner current of all the nine types of devotion is Prema - Love for God.

The teachings you have heard here during the four days should follow you like a shadow wherever you go. The cow consumes plenty of grass wherever it sees a green patch but goes to its shed and slowly chews the cud. Similarly, you should go to your places and recapitulate all that you learnt here and follow them scrupulously. You should stick to the principles of faith in God and unity in diversity. *Swami is prepared to do anything for you if you follow the path explained to you and become good and useful to the society. This is My only desire. You must spread the message to others, each one instructing hundreds of persons in your places.*

When you go out for service, do not fail to take permission of your parents. If they object, tell them softly that this body is given only for doing service and not for wasting in eating, drinking, sleeping and idling. They will not object once they are convinced that you are going for genuine service. You must behave in an exemplary manner.

Usually, a father distributes sweets when a son is born. But a father will be really happy only when the society respects his son. True happiness is derived only when you earn a good name. Be good. See good. Do good deeds. This is the ideal Swami wants you to imbibe. Because of emotion you may sometimes lose self-control. You should avoid getting emotionally charged and upset. You must control emotion, reduce your talk and practise Truth. Make your life blissful. Worldly pleasure is only temporary. Permanent bliss can be had only in association with the Divine. It is ‘heart to heart and love to love connection’. You have Swami’s blessings in abundance.

Source: Valedictory Discourse, First World Youth Conference, July 19, 1997, Prasanthi Nilayam

Transform Yourself to Transform the World

Embodiments of Love! Goodness means good behaviour, good conduct, good discipline, and good character. Truth, righteousness, peace, love and nonviolence are verily the five life principles of man.

Human life is a journey from 'I' to 'We'. This journey is subtle, and the goal is very near. But man takes many births to reach the destination. Why should he take such a long time, undergoing hardships, to attain the goal, which is so near? *Modern youth are making every effort to know all that is happening in the world but are not making any effort to understand the fundamental truth of human life. No benefit accrues from acquiring such information, which does not lead you to the goal of life. There are thousands of intellectuals, scholars, and eminent educationists in the world today. But all the worldly knowledge and skills will be a mere waste if one does not know oneself. The primary duty of man is to understand who he really is.*

Man has achieved everything in life but has lost human values, which amounts to losing his five life principles. As a result, he has become a living corpse. Faith in God is very essential for man. You may question who God is and where God is. Truth is God. Truth is one and the same for everyone, irrespective of caste, creed, religion, language, nationality and ideology. There is no greater Dharma than adherence to truth. This fundamental Truth is God. Likewise, Love is God. So, live in love. *True love is related to the heart, not to the body. Divine Love is 'heart to heart, not body to body'. Body is like a water bubble, mind is like a mad monkey. Don't follow the body, don't follow the mind. Follow the conscience.* Only then can you experience the Truth.

What is the path to Divinity?

Your life is a long journey, and your desires are the luggage. Less luggage, more comfort makes travel a pleasure. So, reduce your desires. Human birth is gifted to serve others, not just to eat, drink, sleep and make merry. The best way to love God is to love all and serve all. Man's foremost duty is to serve his fellowmen and make them happy. Your life will be redeemed only when you involve yourself in the service of society. The highest sadhana is to transform love into service. Service will lead you to devotion.

There are many instances in history wherein even mighty kings had to leave their mortal coil despite having access to the best medical facilities and the best doctors. Doctors by themselves cannot cure diseases. Divine grace is essential. There is no point in safeguarding your body if you do not uphold morality. For this, lead a life of truth and love. Modern youth do have love, but their love is artificial. It is limited up to saying 'hello, hello', and is in fact hollow within. So, their life has become artificial like a drama.

Man can rise to the level of the Divine only through the path of service. When man is not able to understand humanness, how can he understand Divinity? First, know thyself. Human life is noble, since it is essentially Divine. In fact, man and God are not two different entities; they are one and the same. Truth is one, but scholars refer to it by many names. Your life will be redeemed once you understand this truth.

The Divine power latent in man is not found in any other being. Since man is unable to understand his own Divine nature, he is undertaking various spiritual practices such as penance, meditation and yoga. Spiritual practices bereft of love are a mere waste of time. Love is most important in life. Any work you undertake with love is Dharma. So, in the first instance, develop love. Lust, greed, hatred, jealousy, anger and pride are animal qualities. These qualities are the result of the impurities in the food man partakes of. These are of one's own making. Man is forgetting his Divine nature because of these evil qualities.

Man should make proper use of his Mati (intellect), Gati (destination), Sthiti (situation) and Sampatti (wealth). Wealth here does not mean worldly treasures. It refers to the power of the senses. This power should be utilised for service of society. The words Seva and Prema may be very small, consisting of only two syllables, but they possess infinite power.

Enquire and understand who you really are. Know yourself and you will know all. When you say, "This is my handkerchief," it means the handkerchief is different from you. Similarly, when you say, "This is my body, my mind, and my intellect," it means you are different from all these. Then the question naturally arises, "Who are you?" Enquire into this. Body, mind and intellect are mere instruments. Identifying yourself with these instruments is absurd. You are the master. Master the mind and be a mastermind. Never be a slave to your body, mind, and senses. In fact, they should be under your control; you should not be controlled by them.

One of the speakers quoted Swami, “My life is My message”. She also referred to the statement, “Your life is My message”. You should understand the meaning of these statements clearly. Saying that your life is Swami’s message and indulging in wicked activities and unrighteous deeds is treacherous. That constitutes your message, not My message. You can declare that your life is Swami’s message only when you take to the path of truth and righteousness, install peace and love in your heart, and uphold nonviolence.

How can youth manage their thoughts?

All that you see outside is a reflection of the inner being. Good and bad do not exist outside; they are mere reflections of what is within you. No one has the right to judge others. Give up all that is bad in you and you will find goodness all around. As the colour of the glasses you put on, so is the colour of the world you visualise. The defect lies in your vision, not in the creation.

Heart is the dwelling place of God. So, only noble feelings should emerge out of it. If there are any evil qualities like lust, greed, and anger in it, then it ceases to be a human heart. It is verily the heart of an animal. If your conduct is devoid of humanness, then you are not a human being. Act in a manner that befits your human birth. When you are angry, remind yourself, “I am not a dog, I am man.” When your mind wavers, tell yourself repeatedly, “I am not a monkey, I am man.” Patiently think about your real nature.

Never act in haste. Haste makes waste. Waste makes worry. So, do not be in a hurry. Take time and think calmly. All these evil qualities can be eliminated by developing good thoughts and feelings. The remedy for all your mental ailments lies within you.

How should youth make the most of their education?

Only young men and women are capable of eradicating the evils prevailing in society. If we have virtuous youth, all ills of society can be removed. Today, the whole world is embroiled in wicked thoughts, wicked company, and evil acts. Excessive desires are the main cause for the suffering of man. Keep a check on your desires. As a student, discharge your duties diligently. Study well and obtain good marks. Respect your parents and serve them. Keep in mind the welfare of the society and nation at large. Earn a good name in society.

Do not feel proud of your education. Your education is a mere waste if it is not utilised for the welfare of society. The education you have received from society must be dedicated to it by way of service. The essence of education does not lie in merely acquiring degrees, securing good jobs, and amassing wealth. Service is the hallmark of the educated one.

Morality is most essential for human life. No doubt money is essential, but it should be under certain limits. Excessive money makes many wrongs. Money comes and goes, morality comes and grows.

First and foremost, make efforts to understand your true nature. The difference between God and man is very subtle. As long as you do not understand the Truth, you remain a human being. Once you recognise it, you are God. *Service is the best way to understand your innate Divinity. Service should be for self-satisfaction, not for name and fame. Experience the bliss that you derive from selfless service. Share it with others. Before serving others, serve yourself by making your mind broad and pure. Get rid of the narrow feeling of ‘I’ and ‘mine’ and extend your love to one and all.* Love is the binding force that brings together the entire world as one family. I wish that you develop love and live like brothers and sisters.

This body has been engaged in service right from birth. You should also spend your life in serving others. This is My message. I practice whatever I preach. I love all and serve all and exhort you to do the same. You are not able to understand My love as your feelings are narrow. That is your mistake, not Mine. Today, conflicts are on the rise as there is no proper understanding and adjustment among people. Adjustment will be possible only when there is proper understanding.

Only love has been constantly with you right from birth. It is love that remains with you all the time, not your relatives or friends. This love is God. Enjoy the bliss of love and share it with others. Absence of love is the root cause for all the unrest in the world. Develop love and uphold truth. Truth does not mean describing what you have seen, heard or done, as it is. Truth is that which is changeless in all the three periods of time. The Vedas call this permanent truth Rutam.

Just as you change your dress, you have to change your body one day or the other. That is why it is said, ‘Death is the dress of life’. Therefore, you should have no fear of death. Life is not permanent. It is like a passing cloud. As long as there is life in the body, use it for the service of others. Engage yourself in service till your last breath. Service to man is service to God. Have control over your senses, because loss of sense control engenders demonic qualities in man. Service without sense control is an exercise in futility.

How can youth develop the identity of oneness with all?

Today, we do not have ideal parents. There are no ideal teachers either. We do not have ideal friends and relatives too. How then can we find fault with the youth? First of all, the parents should be good. The teachers should also do their job of teaching in right earnest. Good company is very important. How can one be good if one is in the company of bad people always?

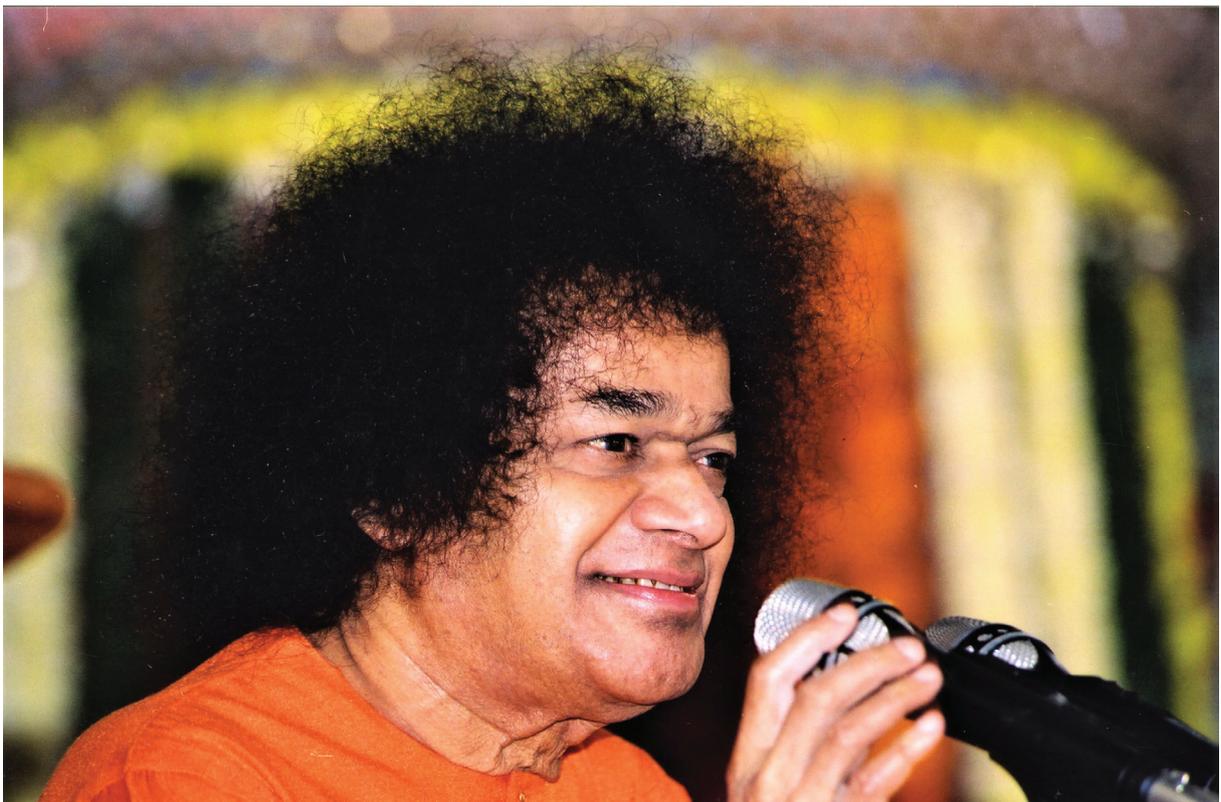
You are all virtuous and noble. Make every effort to enhance this goodness. Run away from bad company and bad feelings. Cultivate noble thoughts and noble qualities. Develop the Atmic relationship with all, since all are your brothers and sisters. Lord Krishna said in the Bhagavad Gita, 'The eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being'. The sun is one, but it has many reflections. All that you find in this world is the reflection, reaction, and resound. Do not get carried away by them. Aspire to attain the reality. In order to experience the reality, give up body attachment and try to understand the Divinity within.

Divinity is latent in everyone, but you are not making any effort to realise it because you are deeply engrossed in worldly matters. You are the embodiment of pure, unsullied, true and eternal Atma. Experience this reality. Discharge your duties keeping this truth in view. Help ever, Hurt never. This is the essence of the Vedas and sacred texts such as the Bible, the Bhagavad Gita and the Quran. All these holy texts speak of the same fundamental truth. It is a mistake to entertain differences based on religion. 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. Travel from 'I' to 'We' through the path of service.

Serve the whole world. Understand the truth that you are born to serve society. It is not government service. It is the service of mankind. Do not lead a selfish life amassing wealth. Do not be satisfied by filling your own belly; understand that there are millions in the world, who are hungry and suffering. Your life will be sanctified only when you help the poor, the sick, and the downtrodden. That is true spirituality.

Spirituality is a way of life. It is not something separate from life. That should be your way of life. In order to acquire a worldly degree, you need to study various subjects. But in spirituality there is only one subject and that is love. Undertake service activities in a spirit of love. Do not give scope for hatred, jealousy, and ostentation. Be a humble devotee and render humble service. That is the true human quality.

Source: November 18, 1999; Inaugural Discourse, Second World Youth Conference, Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam



Youth are future torchbearers of Sri Sathya Sai Organisations

Young men and women, future citizens of the world! The future of the world, good or bad, depends on your conduct. The country will be safe, secure, peaceful and prosperous only when your conduct is good. What the world needs today is not affluence and material comforts but men and women of noble character. The country is bound to disintegrate if the behaviour of the youth is not on the right lines.

A true human being is one who adheres to Satya, Dharma and Tyaga. Truth is Neeti (morality), righteousness is Reeti (procedure), and sacrifice is Khyati (fame). All these three constitute Manava Jati (human race). Human race has originated from Truth. Human race cannot survive without morality.

Today the whole world is engulfed in troubles and turmoil on account of injustice, falsehood, and unrighteousness. Only youth are capable of restoring the declining human values. Only when humans uphold morality can there be equality, fraternity, and freedom in society. To uphold morality, one should adhere to truth.

The Himalayan mountains form the boundary for India on the northern part. What is the inner meaning of Himachala? Hima means ice, which stands for purity and peace. Achala means that which is steady. *So, Himalaya signifies purity, peace and steadiness. The perennial rivers Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati symbolise the continuous blood circulation in the human body. The great epics of this land, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, and the Bhagavata, bring out the quintessence of human nature. One can be called a Bharatiya (Indian) in the true sense of the term only when one puts into practice the ideals that Bharat stands for.*

In the word Bharat, 'Bha' refers to Bhava (feeling), 'Ra' refers to Raga (tune), and 'Ta' connotes Tala (rhythm). Bharatiyas are those who worship God, harmonising the three: Bhava, Raga, and Tala. 'Bha' also stands for effulgence. So, Bharatiyas are those who are in pursuit of Divine effulgence. *Take pride in the fact that you are a Bharatiya. There is no greater qualification than this. Bharat is the country that propagates spiritual knowledge to the rest of the world and wishes the welfare of the entire world.* May the whole world be happy!

What is the correct approach to doing Seva?

You are all one, irrespective of the countries you belong to. Bulbs may vary, but the current is the same. Likewise, countries, bodies and feelings may vary, but the principle of Atma is one and the same in all. Therefore, give up all differences based on caste, religion and nationality and spread the message of unity. Nations are many, but earth is one. Jewels are many, but gold is one. Stars are many, but sky is one. Cows are many, but milk is one. Bodies are many, but breath is one. You can experience bliss only when you render service keeping in mind the unity of all beings.

You are born in love, brought up in love, and merge in love. The five elements are the embodiments of selflessness. The sun sustains the creation by giving light and life. Trees accept poisonous carbon dioxide and give back life-supporting oxygen. Mother earth teaches a lesson in patience and sacrifice. All these elements help mankind without any expectation of reward. There is no greater example of selfless love than nature. It is a shame that man, having been born and brought up in nature, does not imbibe the ideals demonstrated by nature and leads a life of selfishness and self-interest. Youth should resolve to eliminate selfishness and self-interest with no traces whatsoever.

Jesus declared, "All are one my dear son, be alike to everyone." All are born of the same mother earth, breathe in the same air and drink the same water. In such a case, why should there be differences at all? Eschew all differences and live in unity. Recognize the unity in diversity and act accordingly.

You may go to villages, serve the needy and undertake various rural development programmes. By doing so, you are not doing any great service. In fact, all this is your duty. You are born to serve. So, spend your life in serving others. Do not crave power and position. Sevak (humble worker) cannot become a Nayak (leader). In fact, a true Sevak alone is a true Nayak.

What is real Meditation?

People are under the mistaken notion that Japa, Tapa and Dhyana constitute spiritual practice. They do meditation without knowing what it is! They feel that they are meditating on God not knowing who God really is! They chant Rama,

Krishna, Jesus, Allah and Zarathustra as Gods and meditate on them not realizing the fact that all are embodiments of God. They mistake concentration for meditation. Concentration is associated with the senses, whereas meditation is beyond senses.

Meditation should not be confined to a particular time and place. It is a way of life. Whatever is done with the spirit of love is meditation. Sitting in meditation for hours together without expressing love for fellow beings is no meditation at all. True spiritual practice lies in joining hands with rest of the community and working for the progress of society.

How can we transform work into worship?

Heart bereft of love is like a barren land. All activities should be suffused with love. *Just as it is impossible for a new-born baby to attend degree classes, so also it is not possible to attain the supreme state of love instantly. One has to gradually progress by undertaking spiritual practices. It is imperative to undertake these practices — Pravritti, until one turns one's vision inward — Nivritti. Perform all activities with a spiritual outlook.* There is no greater spiritual practice than adhering to the principles of truth and love. Truth and love are synonyms for God. Without these two, there is no point in undertaking spiritual practices.

Young men and women! Consider love and sacrifice as your very life breath. Control your senses. Sense control is essential for the success of any spiritual practice. Humanity can rise to Divinity through sense control. Anger is the quality of a dog. Monkey is known for its wavering nature. Satya, Dharma, Shanti, Prema and Ahimsa are true human values. These values are the five life principles of man. Losing any one of these values amounts to losing life itself. Each value cannot exist without the other. Today man has become a living corpse since he has lost all these values. Develop faith in these values, uphold them, and experience the bliss derived therefrom.

Today, every man aspires to be blissful. For that, faith is essential. Bliss cannot be attained easily. Bliss is Brahman, which is steady, pure, eternal, and beyond dualities. Man cannot attain this supreme bliss without giving up the evil qualities. Heart is the altar of God. Do not pollute it with evil thoughts and feelings.

Self-effort is very essential to achieve success in any human endeavour. Even small activities like picking up a flower or plucking a fruit from a tree requires the cooperation and effort of various limbs of the body — eyes, hands, legs, etc. The body is gifted to undertake righteous actions and set an ideal to society, not for sleeping, eating, drinking, and making merry. God has gifted man with all the powers, but man is unable to realize his innate potential.

Whenever you take up any activity, keep in mind the welfare of others too. Do not lead a life of selfishness. Think in terms of collective benefit, not individual benefit alone. Often, spiritual practices like Japa and Dhyana are done with a selfish motive. Instead, it is better to chant the Lord's name and serve society. This will confer benefit on the individual and society at large. This constitutes real Sadhana. Whomsoever you serve, serve with a feeling that you are serving God.

The sight of a dead body, a sick person, an old decrepit person, and a sage was enough for Gautama to get transformed into Buddha and attain Nirvana (liberation) because his heart was filled with compassion. Though you come across innumerable dead bodies, old persons and sick individuals, it is a pity there is no transformation in you whatsoever. Unfortunately, your heart has become as hard as a stone, indifferent to the sufferings of others. To attain Nirvana, identify yourself with others and make efforts to alleviate their suffering.

Bend the body, mend the senses, end the mind. Mind will be non-existent when the senses are controlled. Mind can be annihilated when noble thoughts are entertained. Today the world is in disarray because the thoughts of man are going astray. Whatever you do is God's work. For example, the process of inhaling and exhaling is in itself a spiritual practice. The process of inhaling is associated with the sound So (that); and exhaling, with the sound Ham (I). Soham means 'I am that' (God). So symbolizes Divinity, and Aham signifies ahamkara (ego). So, Soham drives home the lesson that you should take in only Phala, that which is good, and eject Mala, that which is filthy.

This process of inhaling and exhaling repeats itself 21,600 times a day. It means your inner voice is reminding you 21,600 times a day that you are God. Unfortunately, you are not receptive to this message. It is to understand this reality God has gifted you with this body. Do not limit God to your shrine. God is your life breath.

What is the connection between the individual and God?

Just as hands, eyes, ears, and nose are limbs of the body, human beings are limbs of society. Society is a limb of nature, and nature is a limb of God. Therefore, you can infer that there is an intimate relationship between individual and God. When inanimate objects like telephones are connected, should there not be a connection between human beings and

God? The former relationship is artificial in nature, whereas the latter is heart to heart.

There are two types of telephone calls: one, which can be answered by anybody (number call), and the other, which needs to be answered by a specific person (particular person - PP call) for whom the call is intended. Similarly, your contacts should be directly with God, like the personal call, and not with all and sundry like the number call. If you have the sincere feeling that you want God, then God Himself will come and talk to you. You cannot expect God to respond when you make a 'number call'. Number call corresponds to negative thoughts. So, give up negative thoughts and develop positive feelings. Body, mind, senses and intellect are all negative in nature. Only the conscience is positive. Just as the mic is useless without the current, so also are the body, mind, senses and intellect without the conscience.

The conscience that exists in everyone is one and the same, just as the current that flows through different bulbs is the same. All are one, be alike to everyone. So, do not hate, harm or criticize anybody. He is a noble one who conducts himself without hurting others and himself not being troubled in the process. True Sadhana lies in considering every work as God's work, not just in doing Japa or Dhyana.

God is all-pervasive. It is based on this that the Veda declares, 'With His hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth and ears pervading everything, God permeates the entire universe. You may hoodwink anyone, but not God. He is always watching you. He is the eternal witness. He is present in you, just as the power of vision resides in your eye. Not even a blade of grass can move without His Will.

How can we give up the sense of doership?

It is foolishness to get carried away by the sense of doership. So, do not feel proud of your achievements. Develop the sacred feeling that God is the doer and the enjoyer too. *Consider everything as God's Will. Whatever happens to you, be it profit or loss, pain or pleasure, have the resolute faith that it is good for you.* When a person suffering from malaria consults a doctor, he will be given the bitter quinine medicine. Unless he takes the bitter medicine, he cannot be cured of the fever. *Likewise, have the firm conviction that difficulties and suffering are the ways and means by which God purifies you. There is a reason behind whatever God does. Without understanding the principle of cause and effect, people blame God for their suffering. Understand the truth that you yourself are responsible for the pain or pleasure that befalls you.*

Do not feel sad if someone were to criticize you, because criticizing others amounts to criticizing oneself, since the same Atma exists in all. Identify yourself with the Atma, not the body, which is like a water bubble. If someone were to beat you, do not retaliate. The same principle of Atma exists in both. God is the one who beats and also the one who gets beaten. The entire creation is a mono-action play of God. So, do not hate anybody. Love all.

All that I say is for your own good and to make you aware of Divinity. All My teachings and actions carry a profound inner meaning. Our college students have white dress as their uniform. What is its inner significance? White color symbolizes purity. Similarly, when you see someone in ochre robes, it reminds you of renunciation. This is to convey the message that you should be pure and free from all attachments. Only then you can attain the Divine.

Is it correct for youth to go after fashion?

As youngsters, you have too many desires, which cause physical as well as mental strain. Desires are the luggage in the journey of life. Less luggage more comfort makes travel a pleasure. Your destination is the abode of supreme peace i.e. liberation. Why do you trouble yourself with heavy luggage, when you are going to the abode of supreme peace? Be satisfied with the minimum requirement of food, clothing and shelter. Food is meant to sustain your body and clothing to protect you from cold. *The modern youth are fascinated by fashion dresses and cloth themselves gaudily. Youngsters, especially women, should not indulge in dressing fads. The dress you wear should be good and sober. Do not imitate the cinema culture. Imitation is animal nature and creation is Divine.*

Control of desires leads to sense control, which in turn leads to Divinity. Sage Patanjali said, "Yogaha Chitta Vritti Nirodha," controlling the vagaries of the mind is Yoga and allowing the senses to have their own way is Roga (disease). Today's man has become a Rogi (diseased one) because of lack of sense control. One should become a Yogi, not a Rogi.

What is Yoga?

Yoga is attained not by Bhoga (worldly pleasures), but by Tyaga (sacrifice). Once you attain Yoga, you will never be afflicted with Roga. *Yoga does not mean leading the life of a recluse in a forest. Some people mistake physical exercises like sitting cross-legged and standing on one leg for Yoga. True Yoga lies in unifying your love with the Divine. God does not want*

anything from you. He never insists on your doing meditation or Yoga. He only wants you to fill your hearts with principles of love and sacrifice. If you obey His commands with sincerity and devotion, He will take care of all your needs without your asking. The lives of Shabari and the bird Jatayu from the epic Ramayana bear ample testimony to this truth.

What can we ask from God?

You do not need to ask God for anything. If you have purity of heart, He will Himself take care of you, just like a mother who attends to the needs of the child without its asking. Be like a child, and the Divine Mother will take care of you. That is total surrender. *Leave everything to the Will of the Divine Mother. Do not ask for petty things lest you should lose Her proximity. The one who asks for food will be directed to the kitchen, but the mother will feed the child herself who cannot ask. Only those with ego and those immersed in worldly life ask. But the one, who surrenders himself to the Will of the Divine Mother like a child, will lead a peaceful life.*

You would have observed a dancer making rapid movements with her hands and legs while dancing, but her attention is always focused on the rhythm. Likewise, your mind should always be fixed on God while discharging your duties.

You might have heard the story of Rani Lakshmbai of Jhansi. She had a small child. When she was left with no other choice but to go to the battlefield, she tied the child to her back, took a sword, and waged a fierce battle with her enemies, riding on a horseback. But all the while, what was uppermost in her mind was the wellbeing of her child. *Similarly, you must necessarily discharge your worldly duties, but at the same time your mind should always be focused on God. This is the meaning of the maxim, 'Hands in the society, head in the forest'. You do not need to undertake any specific spiritual sadhana. Whatever you do, do it as an offering to God.*

Which vices should Sai Youth give up?

In order to have sacred thoughts, give up vices like consumption of non-vegetarian food, smoking and drinking intoxicants. Do not waste food, money, time, and energy. Eat as much as you can, but do not waste, because millions are suffering for want of food. You all know what a miserable condition that the people of Odisha are in after a severe cyclone devastated the state! In some places, people are scrambling even for a morsel of food. You may not know the value of food, but they know it very well. So do not waste food. Food is God.

Similarly, do not waste money. *Some students waste a lot of money eating in hotels, in playing cards and gambling. Misuse of money is evil.* Do your work yourself. Do not depend on others. Whenever you find time, wash your clothes yourself. Why do you give your clothes to a washer man when you can wash them yourself? You have no right to waste your father's money.

Time is God. Time wasted is life wasted. Do not waste time in the pursuit of worldly pleasures. Instead taste Divinity by chanting His name.

Do not waste energy! Energy is God. Today, students are wasting a lot of energy through unsacred vision, bad thoughts, bad hearing and excessive talk. Our body can be compared to a radio. When the radio is turned on continuously, the cells get 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. Once the latent energy develops, your memory power as well as the power of concentration will increase.

Some students are not able to perform well in examinations because they are not able to concentrate even for a moment. They are constantly engaged in listening to radio news and cricket commentary with the textbook in their hand! With such distractions, how can they concentrate and retain their memory?

In olden days education was imparted to students in the Gurukulas. Students had to rely entirely on their memory power and concentration to acquire knowledge, since there were no papers, pens or pencils to jot down what the teachers would teach. Their learning consisted of merely listening to the teachers, yet they could acquire high education. Though the modern students have access to papers and pens, they fail to excel in studies because they lack concentration and memory power.

Young men and women! You become Divine once you safeguard your physical, mental, and spiritual powers. Let your body be engaged in good actions, mind entertain noble thoughts, and intellect merge in the Divine. Body, mind, and intellect are merely instruments. Understand the principle that makes instruments function.

The modern system of education has become computer oriented. There is craze for computers everywhere. You are not a computer. You are a composer. After all, what does the computer do? It does whatever you program it to do. It cannot function on its own accord. God-gifted brain is the real computer. Make proper use of it. *Unfortunately, modern man depends excessively on the machine to the exclusion of the God-gifted brain. The situation has deteriorated to such an extent that people depend on calculators even for simple arithmetic calculations. You should be self-reliant.*

Receive help from God only, none else. His work is only to help others. Emulate Him.

Help ever, hurt never. Sage Vyasa said, 'Helping others is merit, harming others is sin'. This is the essence of all sacred texts. Do not give scope for misunderstandings and quarrels amongst yourselves. Unity is the greatest strength. Therefore, work in unison. Where there is unity, there is purity. Where there is purity, there is Divinity. If you have purity of heart, God will certainly fulfil your wishes. There is nothing that you cannot accomplish with purity of heart.

It is impossible to understand God. When you are unable to know your true Self, how can you know God? First try to know yourself. None can ever comprehend Me.

How should Sai Youth develop a good Character?

Character is of paramount importance for the spiritual growth of an individual. Sage Kanva established a Gurukula in order to impart teachings to the inmates of the Ashram. Shakuntala was one such inmate, who grew up under the loving care of Sage Kanva. One day, king Dushyanta happened to visit Kanva's ashram. There he met Shakuntala and married her. Bharata was born to the couple. Having been born and brought up in a palace, King Dushyanta was inclined toward worldly pleasures. On the other hand, his son Bharata, who was born and brought up in Kanva Ashram, was a repository of moral, spiritual, and ethical values. Ashram education inculcates all noble values in man.

Bharata became a paragon of all virtues because he received ideal education right from his childhood. On the other hand, Dushyanta had worldly and material wealth. He was a mighty emperor. What was the use of all that he possessed when he lacked character? This clearly demonstrates the difference between urban education and Ashram education. Urban education is associated with Shrama (hardship), whereas ashram education is without any Shrama (A-shrama).

There is nothing wrong in enrolling as students of colleges in towns, provided one keeps in mind the purpose of education. *One should not develop unnecessary contacts and get distracted from the designated path. Your character depends on the environment around you. In olden times, people felt: If wealth is lost, nothing is lost; if health is lost, something is lost; if character is lost, everything is lost. On the contrary, modern youth feel that if wealth is lost, everything is lost and if character is lost, nothing is lost.*

Remember that you are the future torchbearers of Sri Sathya Sai Organisations. The elders of the organization today may be aged and have their own constraints. Youth have to take the initiative to lead the organization from the front. Each state organisation should have its own youth leader to take up major responsibilities. Ensure that you keep yourself distant from politics. Work for the welfare and progress of society. That is the greatest Sadhana.

Let your behaviour be exemplary wherever you are. As long as you are in Prasanthi Nilayam, you lead a disciplined life. Continue to do the same even after you leave the place. Be always immersed in the Divine, not in 'deep wine'. *Only those who are immersed in the Divine are dear to Me and are My dear friends. If you want to be dear friends of Swami, conduct yourself in the Divine manner. In such a case, you do not need to come here; I will come to you wherever you are. I am with you, in you, around you and behind you. I am not separate from you. I and you are one.*

Serve, without any expectation of reward. That is Nishkaama Yoga. No benefit accrues to you if you expect reward for the service rendered in various villages. Do not boast that you have served in many villages. Work silently; definitely, God will shower His grace on you.

Source: November 21, 1999; Valedictory Discourse of Second World Youth Conference, Prasanthi Nilayam

Cultivate True Love only for God

We see many living beings in this world. But none of them has the greatness, wisdom and discrimination of man. That is why it is said, 'Of all living beings, human birth is the rarest'.

Everything in this world is constituted by five elements. These five elements are present not only in man but also in animals, birds, insects and trees. But what is the use if man does not make proper use of these five elements? Today man is engaged in the pursuit of knowledge. How vast is this knowledge? It is as vast as an ocean. Similarly, man makes efforts to develop common sense. His common sense touches the height of the Himalayan mountains. *Despite all his knowledge and common sense, man's power of discrimination is zero. What is good and what is bad? What should be done and what should not be done? This power of thinking is zero in man today. That is why humanness has suffered a great decline. The value of humanness depends only on discriminatory power.* Man may possess anything and everything, but what is the use if he has no discrimination? People keep on comparing themselves with others in many ways. But nobody is making efforts to know if his discrimination power is more or less. Today man is engaged in amassing wealth. But he does not use his knowledge of discrimination to know whether he needs that much money or not. Wherever we see today, we find people hankering after money.

Who are we in reality?

The mind of man is very powerful. But man's mind today is deluded. What is this? (Showing His kerchief) This is cloth. How does it take the form of cloth? It becomes cloth by weaving thread. But where does this thread come from? It comes from cotton. So, first cotton, second thread and third cloth. In the same way, you are not one person but three: the one you think you are, the one others think you are, the one you really are. The thread and cloth come only from cotton. Similarly, though man is constituted by five elements, he owes his origin to Divinity. *All of you are in search of God. But there is no need to search for God, because you yourself are God. When you have light in your own house, where is the need to go to the houses of others in search of light?*

You develop the feelings of 'I' and 'mine' due to the delusion caused by body attachment. Body is, in fact, the cause of all attachments. But, how long does this body last? It is desired only so long as there is life in it. When the life principle goes out of it, the body is mercilessly put on fire. Then, to whom does this body belong? Therefore, you are not the body. You say, "This is my body, this is my hand, this is my leg, this is my mind, this is my Buddhi (intellect)." Everything is my, my, my. Then, who is that 'my'? When you say 'my leg', you are separate from your leg. Then who are you? Man today is deluded by his attachment to his body and senses. But you are not the body, you are not the senses, you are not the intellect, you are you. You should realise, "I am I". That universal 'I' principle is only one. Truth is one, but the wise refer to it by many names. But the individual 'I' represents ego. When you cut this 'I', it becomes the cross which is worshipped by the Christians. It means, when you give up your ego, you become your true self.

You are not an ordinary person; you are God yourself. There is no need to search for God. Wherever you see, God is there. This cloth is God, this flower is God, this table is God, everything is God. It is only due to your ignorance that you give scope to differences like 'I' and 'you'. You are not a separate entity. I am I. I am not Sathya Sai Baba. Sathya Sai Baba is the name given to this body. I don't have any particular name.

Your body is the gift of your parents. This body is endowed with Pancha Bhutas (five elements), Panchendriyas (five senses) and Pancha Pranas (five life principles). These Pancha Pranas are the same in everyone. Therefore, you are not different from others. Those who are unaware of this spiritual principle become victims of ignorance and are subjected to delusion.

Everything in this world is reaction, reflection and resound. Where does the resound come from? Here I am speaking. Where do My words come from? They come from My heart. *You think that you hear with your ears. But it is not so. All your senses are, in fact, like decorations to your body; they cannot function on their own without the life principle within you.*

There is no need to search for God. Have faith that God is within you. When you have faith in God, you develop love. From love emerges peace; peace gives rise to truth. This truth is God. Truth does not exist separately. There is no need to search for truth. Truth has no form. Truth is truth. Who has created peace? Peace is peace. It also has no form. Love is love. It is not anybody's creation. Love is God, Live in Love.

What are the human values?

They are Satya, Dharma, Shanti, Prema and Ahimsa. They have no form. These formless principles are imprinted on your heart. All that we read and write corresponds to physical and worldly education. It cannot be called education in the true sense of the term. What is true is educare? Educare means to bring out our latent values. *They are immanent in our heart, but we cannot see them. They have to be manifested through self-enquiry. True Sadhana lies in recognising and manifesting peace, truth and sacrifice that are present in our heart.*

You undertake various spiritual practices like meditation and Japa. What do you understand by Japa? You think Japa means counting the beads of a rosary. But it is not so. All these spiritual practices are merely our imagination. They are all artificial, not real. Science teaches many things. It gives only that knowledge which we acquire through our senses. There can be no science without senses. We are leading an artificial and mechanical life by acquiring this knowledge. It is not true life.

First and foremost, you must have faith. You can recognise your true form only when you have faith. From faith comes peace. Truth emerges from peace. This truth is God. God does not have any separate form. God manifests from the truth within you. You undertake many spiritual practices. Despite all practices, you are unable to experience truth. Do not waste your time in unnecessary pursuits. Time waste is life waste. First of all, you should understand that truth is your goal. You will have no obstacles when truth is on your side. Your senses and mind are very strong when you are young. Your intellect is also very sharp. Being endowed with such great power, why should you feel weak and helpless?

What is True Love? How can we experience it?

Love is not your individual property. It is universal and belongs to all. Love is in everyone. Love is there in you, Me and everyone. We attribute various names to this love and try to experience it. You should not think otherwise. *Today even school children develop a tendency for artificial love. But this is not correct. This artificial love makes man weak. This weakness can cause many diseases. Do not develop such love which gives rise to diseases.* The principle of love is the principle of Divinity, nothing else. Accept that love which comes from God. Do not accept that love which comes from others. Your love for God is true love. Whomsoever you love other than that, it cannot be called true love. Man develops attachment to many people, but he is unable to experience true love. True love originates only from God. God is the embodiment of love. Love is God. Live in Love. You should experience only Divine love, not worldly love.

It is very easy to attain God. If you ask which is the easiest thing to attain in this world, it is only God. You can attain God in no time without undergoing any strain. It is very easy to experience love. Love is very powerful. There is nothing in this world which can surpass it. When you look at it, love appears to be very small. But it is as deep as an ocean and as high as a mountain. It is inexhaustible and infinite. You should realise this principle of love. Nobody can describe the principle of love because of the limitations of the circumstances and experiences.

Source: Inaugural Discourse to the Third World Youth Conference, Prasanthi Nilayam; July 26, 2007

Internalise the Spiritual Fundamentals and Attain Divinity

Every living being in this world, right from an ant to an insect, bird, beast, or an animal has emerged from Truth only! Those who realise this truth are real Yogis. Devoid of Truth, nothing will move in this universe. Hence, one should never forget Truth. Dharma (righteousness) is the reaction, reflection and resound of Satyam. In fact, there is no Dharma greater than adherence to Truth. Today, we are teaching several branches of knowledge in secular education. But, this is not true education. True education relates to the Truth that emerges out of one's heart. It has no name and form.

What could be the form of Truth? What is the form of Dharma? What is the form of Shanti? *Satya, Dharma, Shanti, Prema and Ahimsa are all formless. One has to manifest these human values from one's heart. The kind of Divine energy that is present in a human being is not to be found in any other living being. Hence, a human being is verily God. He is God in human form.*

Who am I? Where can I find God?

You all consider a human being as a mere human being. That is the reason why you are committing so many mistakes. You are not merely a human being. You are verily God. You think that you are God and you will become God. As are the feelings, so is the result. When you think of bad, you will get only bad thoughts. All people in this world love someone or the other. However, there are differences in such love. The students love their fellow students. The ladies love other ladies. God is present in this lady as well as the other lady. Both are embodiments of Divinity. The one God is present in all bodies. We must love every human being. Love all Serve all, since God is present in all human beings. There is no place in this universe where God is not present. Thus, everything in this universe is the embodiment of Divinity.

We forsake such omnipresent Divinity and worship God in the form of some idol in a temple. No doubt, you can worship those idols. Nothing wrong in that. But, you must realise the truth that the same God in that idol is present in every human being, nay, in every living being. I don't say it is wrong to worship those idols. But, you yourself are God. Consider yourself as God first and then begin to see the same God in every living being.

Your body is a temple. There is Divine energy in that temple. However, a little discrimination is to be exercised in this context. You have to enquire whether this energy is God. In fact, the body is also God. God is immanent in every atom and every cell of the human body. There is no place in this universe where God is not present. Hence, do not entertain any doubt about the existence of God. Do not forget God. In fact, if you forget your Self (Atma), it amounts to forgetting God.

You must constantly enquire into yourself, "Am I forgetting God?" You must always be aware of your true nature and remind yourself, "I am I". If you are firmly established in that truth, there will be no scope at all to entertain any evil thoughts about others. Not realising one's own true nature, fools and ignoramus think otherwise. God is present in all human beings. All the heads of all human beings in this world are verily God's own heads. That is the reason why God is described as Virataswarupa (embodiment of cosmic Divinity). His is the cosmic form. Each one in that cosmic form is having a different form. However, God is immanent in every form.

Do not entertain any doubts or differences of opinion in this regard. Strengthen your love, that is the proper Sadhana. If only the fruit of love in your heart is ripened, the juice of that fruit can be shared with one and all. Hence, let that fruit of love ripen in your heart first. If only you fill your heart with pure love, that love can be shared with all. All will then truly become embodiments of love. Then, there will be no scope at all for hatred and violence in the world.

How do youth manage their Mind?

The mind alone is responsible for all the sorrows and difficulties as well as happiness of human beings. Several people consider mind as very bad and call it 'monkey mind'. In My opinion, it is not monkey mind; it is 'man-kind'. It is always kind. If only you can keep the mind in proper state, nothing can be bad. You consider the mind also as Divine. Then you will always be happy.

You call it Atma or mind or consciousness – all are one. We ascribe different names to the same principle, according to our convenience for reference. For example, this body has been given the name Sathya. This name is given to the body and not to Me. I am not the body. I am not the mind. I am not the intellect. I am not the Chitta. I am not imagination. I am I. You must develop such firm faith. It is possible that the minds of some people are susceptible to some disturbances due



to changes in food habits and recreation. It is also possible that they may be influenced by some friends in this regard. Hence, I advise you to join the company of noble souls. Good company leads to detachment; detachment makes one free from delusion; freedom from delusion leads to steadiness of mind; steadiness of mind confers liberation.

It is possible that everyone can attain Mukti (liberation). But, when? The moment you establish yourself in the truth “I am Atma”, you will attain liberation. Always think, “Swami is in me. I am in Swami.” However, there will be no use if you simply repeat, “I am Swami, I am Swami”, with a fickle mind. Develop firm faith, “I am Swami, I am God.” It is only when you develop that firm conviction, you will attain Divinity.

On the other hand, if your mind is polluted with bad thoughts, everything will turn out to be bad for you. Nowadays, even water is polluted. The human body will be afflicted with several diseases on account of this water pollution. It is therefore necessary that the physical body is also protected to a certain extent. *What is the purpose for which this body is gifted to you by God? It is only to make you realise your own Self. But, you forget this purpose and concentrate your mind on the physical body. After all, what is there in the physical body? The body is like a water bubble. The mind is like a mad monkey. Don't follow the body. Don't follow the mind. Follow the conscience.*

If only you learn this simple principle, your life will be sanctified. You need not pay heed to whatever people may say. Purity of consciousness is the fruition of knowledge. It is only when your consciousness is pure that you will attain wisdom. *Purity of the mind is of utmost importance. Keep your mind pure, free from all kinds of pollution. Whenever evil thoughts enter your mind, remind yourself, “This is not good; this is not mine,” and drive away those evil thoughts. Tell yourself, “These are all not my property; my property is good thoughts and good ideas only.”*

Constantly remember the truth that love is God. Live in love. If you can cultivate such positive and noble thoughts, everything will turn out to be good for you.

What Sadhana should youth undertake?

There are several people who are deluded by ephemeral things. No doubt, you are pure at heart. You have only pure thoughts. But, certain amount of pollution sets in now and then. You must ensure that it does not happen. That is Sadhana for you. What is Sadhana? Is it sitting in meditation and doing Japa? No. That is not Sadhana. What do you think is the meaning of meditation? You think it is sitting in a lonely place and contemplating on the Lord's name. Not at all! Contemplate upon the pure thoughts in your mind. Contemplate on the Truth in you. If you really wish to know the secret of Sadhana, it can be explained through very simple methods. For example, make your mind steady and still for as short a period as eleven seconds. You can attain realisation even in such a short period. Just eleven seconds of stillness of mind would be enough. But you don't do even that. You can achieve a lot during this period. Hence, do not trouble yourself unnecessarily.

You are, at present, putting your body to a lot of trouble. You are wasting a lot of money too. Time waste is life waste. Money waste is an evil. Hence, do not waste money and time. Time is God and God is Time. Hence, whenever you find time, think of Swami. I will certainly appear before you. Not only that, I will even talk to you. I am receiving several letters saying that Swami has appeared before them and talked to them. You can also do such Sadhana. Develop such unflinching faith in Swami. You will surely succeed in your Sadhana. Several people have come here as devotees. They have, no doubt, deep devotion towards Swami. But, what is devotion? What is the hallmark of a devotee? This has to be analysed first. First and foremost, you have to develop faith. Where there is faith, there is love; where there is love, there is truth; where there is truth; there is God. Truth is God. You need not have to make any special efforts to know Truth. In fact, eleven seconds are enough to realise truth. You just contemplate in your mind for a period of eleven seconds on Truth and you will be able to have God's darshan. You are unnecessarily taxing your body by sitting for hours together in meditation. At the end, you are suffering from pain in legs and hands and back ache. Do not give scope for such painful joints. You ultimately land in a doctor's clinic who will diagnose your trouble as rheumatic pains. They are not rheumatic pains at all. They are the result of misguided Sadhana. Stick to the time schedule of eleven seconds and you will have no pain.

What kind of food should youth consume?

About food, you have to know certain subtle things and observe some restrictions. *You should not consume non-vegetarian food like meat and fish. In fact, foreigners are used to non-vegetarian food only. This type of food causes diseases like cancer. Hence, give up such food, totally.* Not only that. They also like cheese very much. The more you consume cheese, the weaker you become. You should not take milk in excess quantity. Too much milk is very bad. It should be in limit. The

milk should be diluted with water in equal proportion. Same is the case with curd. It should not be thick. It should be semi-solid. Thus, you must control the food you eat daily. Proper food at proper time is very much necessary for contemplating on God. If you take proper food and observe discipline in your habits, you are sure to have God's Darshan. You need not have to undertake rigorous Sadhana for months and years. You can always be blissful. Bliss is the form of God.

You desire to have bliss. But, from where do you get bliss? From a shop in the market? Or by having a sumptuous meal with a variety of dishes in a hotel? No, not at all! Bliss has to come from within. You are, in fact, the embodiment of bliss. You were blissful at the time of your birth. But, once you started developing attachment with the world, you began crying. Hence, you have to reduce your worldly attachments. You are at present having a lot of attachment with the world. Thereby, you are weakening your body. Ultimately you will end up in sorrow.

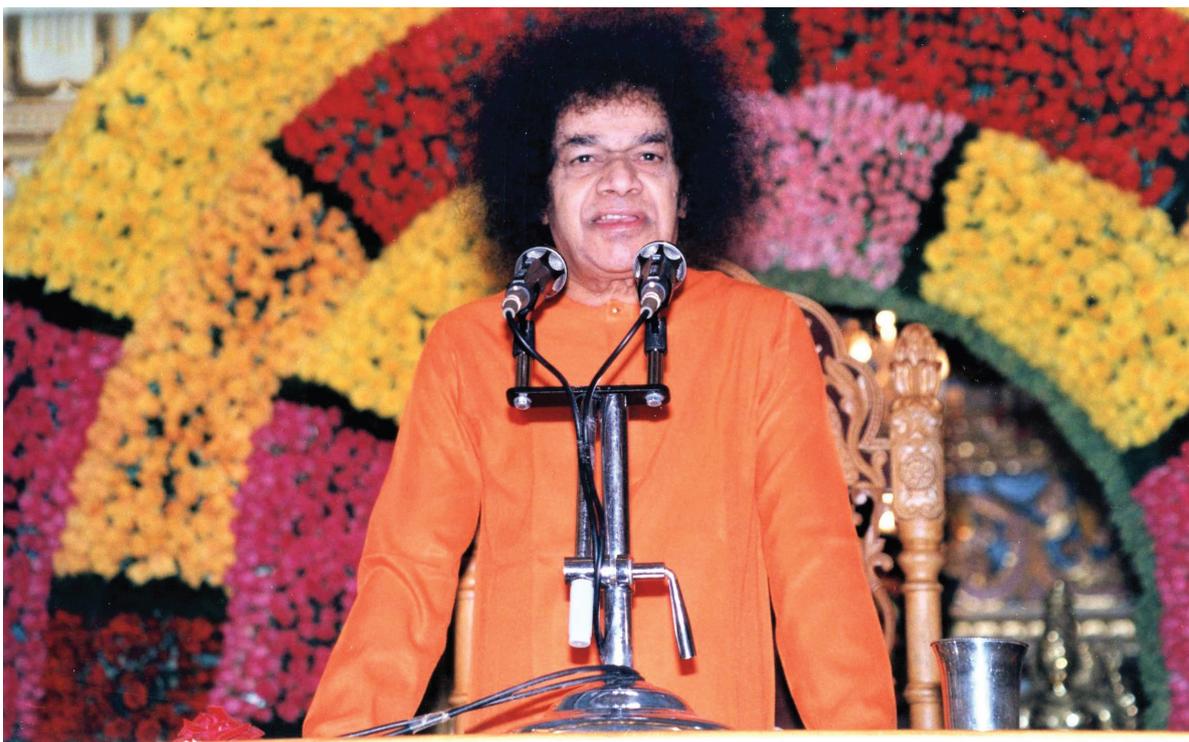
Worry is a very bad quality. Hurry, worry and curry – these three together make the heart very weak. Hence, keep them at a distance. *Whenever you are in difficulties, just assure yourself that these are passing clouds and will move away. Whatever comes, has to go. They are momentary. Same is the case with the human body. Hence, you have to give importance to the body only to the extent required.* The body must be maintained within proper limits. Otherwise, it will decay. Those who are engaged in Sadhana and wish to have the Darshan, Sparshan and Sambhashan (vision, touch and conversation) with God, must follow My advice in this regard. You are sure to have His Darshan and can even talk to Him.

What is True Devotion?

Devotion is not merely performing certain forms of worship or undertaking religious vows or doing Japa. *Real devotion presupposes unshakeable love towards God, devoid of delusion. You have to cultivate such steadfast love towards God. Then you will certainly attain Divinity. Since people are at present attached to the world, demonic qualities are growing in them.* Both desire and anger are the worst enemies of a human being. You must always be happy, smiling and loving. When you are smiling, love will automatically develop in you. There are, of course, some people who will put up a 'castor oil' face. You must always be smiling and cheerful. God is always blissful. He does not at all worry for anything. Sorrow and worry are nowhere near God.

There is no medicine more efficacious than love. My love is a powerful medicine to all of you. Always be happy and peaceful. Live like members of the same family with love and affection. *Do not be weighed down by petty difficulties and suffering. Do not give scope to any worry. Even if your wife or children suffer from any disease, do not get perturbed. Go back to your places with firm faith that everything will turn out to be good. Lead a happy and peaceful life.*

Source: Valedictory Discourse at the Third World Youth Conference, July 28, 2007, Prasanthi Nilayam



The Ten Commandments for Sai Youth

(Based on Divine Guidelines given during World Youth Conferences)

Speak the Truth, Act Righteously

1.



Speak the Truth, in a pleasant way. Avoid speaking the truth that hurts others. Never speak untruth. Speaking with love is Satya and doing work with love is Dharma. It will give you Shanti.

Maintain sterling Human Character

Whatever country you may hail from, whatever language you speak and whichever faith you follow, you should maintain sterling human character. Individual sacredness and purity ensure sacredness of society and country. When all countries are filled with such noble people, the world will be blooming with peace and prosperity.



2.

Give up Vices

3.



In order to have sacred thoughts, give up vices like consumption of non-vegetarian food, smoking and drinking intoxicants.

Consider Mother, Father, Teacher and Guest as God

Youth must respect their parents even after marriage, since they gave birth to you and brought you up. Wife is your selection. But mother is not. Mother should be given first place. You must talk to her sweetly, softly and respectfully.



4.

Practice Simple Living and High Thinking

5.



Youth should develop the discipline of simple living and high thinking. They should avoid gaudy dress. Dress should be good and sober, simple and clean. The white dress reflects the inner purity of the heart. Youngsters, especially women, should not indulge in dressing fads. Do not imitate the cinema culture.

Seek Good Company

6.



I advise youth to join the company of noble souls. Good company leads to detachment, detachment makes one free from delusion, freedom from delusion leads to steadiness of mind, and steadiness of mind confers liberation. Many youth mix with persons of the opposite gender, calling themselves boyfriend and girlfriend. If you really love each other, you must get married and not continue living as friends.

Undertake Selfless Service

Youth must consider service to fellow beings as their foremost duty. Your life will be redeemed only when you involve yourself in the service of society, especially the rural and the poor. The highest Sadhana is to transform love into service. Service will lead you to devotion. Doing selfless service is the best way to cross the ocean of Samsara.



7.

Respect All Religions

8.



Before serving others, serve yourself by making your mind broad and pure. Get rid of the narrow feeling of 'I' and 'mine' and extend your love to one and all. Do not entertain differences based on religion. All holy texts speak of the same fundamental truth.

Talk Less, Work More

Excessive talk is waste of time and energy. Youth must make it a practice to observe silence for at least one hour daily. It saves cosmic energy within, ensures peace of mind, increases memory power and concentration.



9.

10.



Ceiling on Desires

Do not waste food, water, time, energy and money.