

What are the Three Types of Transformation?

Human life is full of many secrets and mysteries. It is full of many powers. It is full of attraction. Man is a powerful magnet. He is a powerful electric generator. There are three kinds of transformation that are very essential for developing humanness within oneself. The first one is spiritual transformation, then comes transformation in the society, and finally, individual transformation. First and foremost, we need to understand what spiritual transformation is. Only then will there be social transformation in us, followed finally by individual transformation. Without these three transformations, a man cannot be called a man.

The three types of transformation

How do bad feelings enter man? Bad feelings enter man in many ways. Wrong thinking and bad thoughts enter a man and lead to several contacts and relations. Wrong thoughts poison man's mind. First and foremost, therefore, you should have purity in feelings. Even if we are forced to be in bad company, we must think of doing something good. Then you can achieve individual transformation.



Second is social transformation. How do you get it? Stealing, speaking untruth, playing cards, and many types of bad habits get into your character. Students, both boys and girls, get into bad company and destroy their own lives. By this, they lose all that they have studied in addition to the good experiences they have had, and the transformation that had taken place in them. Wicked people not only destroy themselves, but also destroy others. If you have bad habits, there cannot be any social transformation.

The third phase is spiritual transformation. What is this spiritual transformation? Speaking truth, practicing *dharma* [righteousness], respecting others, loving your parents, and taking a vow to serve others are signs of spiritual transformation. It is Sai *sankalpa* [Divine will] to bring about this transformation. It is the spiritual change that is required first and foremost.

In spiritual change the first letter is 'S'. In association (social) change, the first letter is 'A'. And in the individual change the first letter is 'I'. All three together become 'SAI', the combination of all these three changes. Bhagavan came with this name to bring about these changes. You must start with 'S', that is spirituality first. But many of you are thinking of starting with 'I'. 'IAS' means Indian Administrative Service. That is only a degree. But 'SAI' is not a degree. It is inner behavior, inner joy, inner change, inner practice, and inner life. Therefore, we must start with 'S' and not with 'I'. There is an intimate relation between 'SAI' and 'IAS'. 'SAI' and 'IAS' both are the reversal of each other. Sai gives you many types of teachings. Swami will never teach anybody for His own sake.

Many times you would have heard that after a discourse Swami sings 'Rama', 'Krishna,' or 'Hari'. But He never sings 'Sai'. Swami is so selfless. Right from hair to toe, Swami is selfless. Swami does not do anything for Himself. He does not desire anything. He won't tell you anything. Whatever Swami says is for your own good. This age of yours is sacred. It is a golden age. When you transform yourself at this age, you will become ideal individuals in the society. Today we need ideal citizens in the country. These are the three qualities of an ideal citizen—Spiritual change, Associational change, and Individual change. With these three changes humanness shines forth.

Start early, Drive slowly, Reach safely

Sometimes when Swami speaks to you harshly or punishes you, you start accusing and blaming Swami. You may accuse Me, you may blame Me, but you should be very good. For that sake alone I am doing everything. You should not entertain undesirable thoughts. Having such thoughts within, you see the same reflection in everybody. Everything is reflection, reaction, and resound! Buddha was travelling through various villages with many youngsters. And even now Swami likes youngsters very much. Even Shankara was like that. Every great sage and incarnation tried to transform the youth. The reason is that the youth start early, drive slowly, and reach safely. If you start when you are young, only then will you be able to drive your family home safely once you become a householder. You will be able to bring the changes that you want in the family. When you start the process of transformation from young age, you will have mature discrimination power that will enable you to put things into practice.

Once while Buddha was walking with some youngsters, a man suddenly confronted him. He started blaming Buddha as he liked. He said, "You are spoiling the youngsters. What will happen to the future of these youth?" He started blaming Buddha in many ways. Buddha was quiet and continued walking. For a long time, this man kept on following Buddha and accusing him. But Buddha did not reply. After sometime this man became tired and went away. The disciples then asked Buddha, "Lord, why didn't you shut that man's mouth? He criticized and accused you in many ways. He ascribed those qualities to you that are not there in you. Why did you let him go like that?" Then Buddha smiled and said, "O foolish men! When you do not pay any attention to

a visitor who comes to your house or at your door, he will go away along with his luggage. If, however, you pay attention to him and inquire about him, he will come into the house with his luggage. That man came to us and went on speaking as he liked. But since we did not talk to him, he will never enter our company again and those accusations won't affect you. If you enter into an argument with him, you are bound to get affected by his allegations. You should not get into any argument. He is an ignorant passerby, and he speaks due to his ego and because of the impact of his bad time. That is why he speaks like this. It is because of reflection, reaction, and resound that he sees all this around himself. And it does not apply to me. Whatever I eat will benefit only me. It doesn't go to another person. Similarly, whatever he says applies to him alone."

Who is Swami's true disciple?

A person comes to you for food. With great compassion, if you try to give him something, he may not accept it. Or he may take it and throw it off. Why should you subject yourself to a certain feeling? If you don't give him anything it is good. If you offer him food and if he accepts it, his hunger will be satisfied. If he does not, you can always take it back. There is no loss to you in it. But you should not go in for criticism or discussion on it. In the spiritual path, whatever other people may talk, you should never enter into any argument. You should never reply.

In the spiritual path there is no scope for or question of any argument. Enmity increases because of argumentation. Others are different and you are different. They will follow their own feelings. They won't follow our feelings. Their habit, their behavior, and their discipline is different. Earlier also it was like that. We may tell them about sacred things, but they may not accept our advice. They follow a path that is contradictory. But the one who teaches feels bad because the person is going astray. They do not know what is going to happen in the future because of their behavior. But those who can forecast the consequences warn him against it out of concern for him.

Bad company is like sweet poison for you. Rather, it is poison covered in sweet. Ignorant people don't know it. But Swami knows it. Therefore, it is My duty to tell you that which is not good for you. What is the use of repenting later? To tell is My duty. And it is the duty of the *guru* to tell right things to his disciples. Only he who follows Swami's commands is a true disciple. He will explicitly obey Swami's command. He will not do anything else. If someone is not a true disciple, he will not practice what Swami says.

The true offerings

Swami does not hate anyone. He loves everyone. My property is love. Swami looks at everyone only with love. But people do not realize this 'Love' principle. They try to compare Swami's love with their own love. They try to bring down Swami to their level. But if you must come up to Swami's level, then love everyone, love all the creatures. Consider a person climbing a hilltop. It is very difficult for him to move

upward, but very easy to go downward. If you are at the top of the hill, it is very easy to come down to the foot of the hill. It is very difficult to move upward. Even a lorry made up of iron strives hard to reach the top of the hill.

Spiritual attainment is an uphill task. The human life finds it difficult to achieve it. People cry, but ultimately they reach the destination. Sometimes they do not recognize the truth. It is difficult and a great suffering to move upward. It is like water, which comes down rapidly even if we put it at the top of the hill. Spiritual progress is like fire, the fire burns pointing upward. The fire goes upward, and the water flows downward. You are the image of the water. That is why you become 'Nara'. *Nara* means water. You must get water, but what kind of water? You must get water from the eyes. It must be tears of joy.

One should offer either a leaf or a flower or a fruit or water to God. What is leaf? It is not the *Bilva* or *Tulsi*. Leaf is the body, flower is the heart, fruit is the mind, water means tears of joy. What is the use of offering to Swami fruits that perish? Today they are there and tomorrow they just perish. There are many types of flowers. You offer them in the morning, and they fade away in the evening. That is not the flower you must offer. You must offer the '*Hrudaya Pushpam*'. Swami will not appreciate and admire the other types of flowers you purchase. If you give the flower of the heart, He will accept it with compassion. That is *Hrudaya Kamala*, lotus of the heart. That lotus is required. It will never fade; it will never perish. That type of *Hrudaya Pushpa* is required. You must keep God in your *Hrudaya Pushpa*, the flower of the heart.

Source: *My Dear Students Vol. 3*, Divine Discourse Feb. 22, 1999, Trayee Brindavan

Understanding the Relationship between Man and God

Many imagine God to appear before them in response to *Yagnas* and *Yagas* [Vedic rituals] that they perform. All these are illusions. It is just imagination. What ultimately manifests before you directly is the ultimate truth. In reality God does not have any manifest form. These are all imaginations created by the mind. The mind keeps prompting for such imagination. If you think of God as Krishna, the feelings of Krishna are aroused in you by your mind. Depending on your feeling you see the manifestation. These are all imaginations.

Ultimately you have to discover the truth. These are all the actions of the mind. Till the mind vanishes, you have to proceed on the path. Mind keeps on prompting you for such imaginations. You have to control the mind. You have to focus on the *atma* [soul]. *Atma* has no form, no name. You have to install within yourself that nameless, formless *atma*. The whole world is the manifestation of the *atma*. Everything was created from the truth. Ultimately everything merges in the truth.

Can you try to find a place where there is no impact or power of truth? Wherever you look there is truth. '*Ekatma Sarva Bhootantaratma*'—the one *atma* is present in all beings. In all the beings, whether they be small insects, birds, animals, or humans, there is the same *atma* pervading. Therefore, whomever you see salute them. You are not saluting the individual but the *atma* within. Even if you look at the beggars, salute the *atma* in them.



Wherever you see, there is nothing but Divinity and God. If you have 1,000 pots filled with water, the reflection of the sun shining above will be the same in all the pots. Similarly, our body is like the pot, the water is desire, and the reflection is the same *atma* in all beings. Depending on what is there in the pot, the nature of the *atma* is manifested. Therefore, everything is the reflection, reaction, and resound of one's own actions. Therefore, whatever you do comes back to you. You see your own form in the mirror. If you hate others you hate yourself. One must not blame God for one's actions.

God is attributeless, sacred, pure, and wise. It is man's ignorance to attribute qualities to God. In fact, God is beyond qualities. He is *nirmalam* (sacred), *nischalam* (steady), *niswartham* (selfless). He is beyond time and space. Don't try to imagine God in a form. Install the principle that God is the *atma* present within you and contemplate on Him. In every step, everything you see, God is present. God is the current that makes fans work, the mike that absorbs the sound, and the speakers that help others listen. If you

put off the main switch, all the lights will be put off. That is Divinity. When you forget Divinity, you forget everything. Love God.

Love God, conquer the demons of bad qualities, and develop the society. Only a person with character can develop the society. Only the one having love for God can lead a life of morality. Morality is the life-principle of man. Without morality there cannot be a community. It is not just *jaati*—a community. It is *manavajaati*—the caste of humanity. It is the society. The caste of *brahmins*, *kshatriyas*, *vaishyas*, and *shudras* does not constitute a community. These are some rules and regulations created by man for leading his life and are not God given.

There is only one thing that God has given everyone—love. When you have love in your heart you will love everyone. When you don't have love, you hate people and people become your enemies. 'Love all, Serve all'. If you uphold these two principles you can prosper very well. A person with morality is one who does good things, helps others, and helps the poor people. It is not right for us to love only some people and forget others. The whole world is the embodiment of God. All animals, even ants, are embodiments of God. We should not differentiate that this is an ant and that is God. It was Thyagaraja (saint-poet) who said, "O Rama! You reside in an ant and in Brahma. You are in Shiva and Keshava." Therefore, in every animal, there is God. We must not hate anyone. We must not get angry with anyone. We should not have the sense of difference with other people. Only when you lead such a life, you will realize your true Self.

You say "I". 'I' is *aham*. Till this *aham* exists you don't realize it. "I" is *aham* (symbolized by a vertical line). When you cross it by a horizontal line (symbolizing the cross), we have removed the head that is *aham* (ego). Then you become God. With the sense of belonging we say—'this is mine, that is yours'. It becomes *dwaita bhava*—sense of duality. It is not correct to have such differences. Such ideas are not accepted by the *Upanishads*. *Upanishads* teach the single undifferentiable *atmic* principle. Then how can individuals have such differences when the *atma* is undifferentiable? The human body has been given mainly to discharge one's duty. Duty is God. You have to do your duty. At the *atmic* level all are one and the same. Because of the body relationship you define a person as your relative. Because of the bodily relationship there is son and there is son-in-law. But ultimately there is no one. We are ourselves creating the differences where there are no differences. Therefore, you have to believe in the oneness of God.

In *Ramayana*, the same thing is taught. The streets of Ayodhya were decorated with wonderful decorations made of gold, pearls, and diamonds. The bazaars were filled with plenty and prosperity for the marriage of Sita and Rama. Who is Rama? One who really delights is Rama (*Ramyate Iti Ramaha*). So, if you delight yourself, then you are Rama. Who is Sita? Sita is the *atma*. The marriage of Rama and Sita was the marriage between *atma* and Rama, and the people came to witness and enjoy the marriage of *atma* and Rama. Likewise, all have come here to this hall to have *darshan* [sight of a

holy person] of Swami. Many people may come and go but the focus here is Swami. After Rama's marriage, Sage Vishwamitra went back to the Himalayas. Wherever he went he discovered Rama. He is not Vishwamitra just for name's sake. In reality, he is the friend of the world. He is the one who taught wisdom to everyone. All that we do is for attaining the love for God.

Source: My Dear Students Vol. 2; Divine Discourse on June 4, 2009, at the Prasanthi Nilayam Campus Auditorium

Some Experiences with Divinity

I could not believe that He was what He claimed to be. It was the 22nd day of October, 1983. I was sitting in the *darshan* line. The day was bright and sunny. A cool breeze blew sometimes, shaking the leaves of the coconut trees and it seemed that the leaves of the *Neem* [*Azadirachta indica*] trees were dancing with joy as it was the time for having the Lord's *darshan*.

It was a unique opportunity and a wonderful experience to sit on the sands in front of the beautiful Prasanthi Mandir amidst many devotees who hailed from various parts of India and many foreign countries. I had never seen such an assemblage of men and women from different parts of the world sitting quietly for hours, some even closing their eyes and meditating and waiting to have a glimpse of an Indian-born God. I, too, was very eager to see Him and was waiting for His arrival.

After some time, there was a sudden stir amongst the devotees. I looked around and saw that all eyes were riveted on a door from which He was expected to appear. To the joy of everyone, a short figure clad in a red robe appeared and first headed toward the lady devotees, and then slowly came gliding toward us. There was pin drop silence. All eyes were fixed on Him. He talked a little here and there, took letters from some, smiled at others, looked sternly at some, and simply ignored some. Some devotees were crying, some smiling, some trying to touch His feet, some trying to attract His attention toward them, but most of them longed to get a slight glance from Him.

I was looking at Him and the devotees with wonder. The short figure with curly hair, peaceful countenance, and gracious movements, was a wonderful phenomenon. I looked at Him and could not believe that He was God, the Lord of the Universe. I thought, "Oh! He is a great *Yogi*, a great *sadhaka* [a person who follows certain spiritual practices]; see how weak He has become by doing strict *sadhana* [spiritual practice]." My heart was filled with love for this figure. Also, a sense of respect came into my being for such a great soul. He went past without looking at me, turned

toward the *mandir* [temple], reached the portico, and disappeared. All devotees started getting up from their places after *darshan*.

I was now engrossed in the thought as to who this figure really was? What was it that I had seen just then? Could God be a man, a little man? If He were God, then why didn't He talk to me? Why didn't He enquire into the purpose of my visit? Many such questions arose in my mind and vanished. Who could answer these questions?

I had my own conception of God from my childhood days. I had read many stories of Shiva, Parvati, and other Gods and Goddesses and had a firm conviction that God is the greatest of all. He is omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent. His *darshan* can put an end to all sorrows and sufferings. If by chance in the journey of life we were to come across God, He would bless us with His *abhayahasta* [protection-affording hand-pose]. After that our lives would be full of *ananda* [bliss] and we would become Divine, too.

But here I was not getting this sort of experience, and so I started doubting from the very first day. Strange are the ways of the Lord. We do not understand the mystery of His workmanship. He works on us in different ways. He cuts, grinds, and polishes us. Has He not said, "Man is a diamond; he must shine"? I really did not know what it meant. I was in the process of being cut and crushed in His hands. Little did I realize that the next day would bring quite a different experience for me. The next day, luckily I got the first line for *darshan*. He came with His enchanting smile. He came close to me and stood in front of me. I hesitantly touched His Lotus feet with both my hands. To my utter surprise, my hands received an electric shock, and I was in bliss. He did not look at me but passed on.

During the evening *darshan*, I came with a long letter in which I had poured my heart out. As He came closer, I saw His half-smiling face in full majesty. I extended the letter toward Him. He took it with one hand and blessed me with the other. Suddenly a flash of light emerged from His palm and entered my eyes. Ah! What a wonderful experience! I had received what I wanted from my Lord—the *abhayahasta*. How could I now deny His omniscience? This act of the Lord was the answer to many of my questions. Now I started contemplating on the mystery of the Lord's creation and His mysterious nature. I read a lot about Him and made up my mind not to leave this place if possible.

Many months passed in His presence. I had many experiences. Swami would come in my dreams and give me advice or predict some future incidents. Many a time I used to ask questions in front of Swami's picture, and He in person would answer during *darshan*. Swami, in one of my dreams, gave me an interview. He walked for a long time, and I narrated all the misfortunes I had in my life. Swami listened to everything with rapt attention but did not comment on it. He simply looked at me compassionately.

In another dream, Swami called me near Him and said, “You shall continue your studies”. I was unable to believe that I would become a student again, and so asked, “Will I Swami?” He said, “Yes, Yes, certainly. You shall continue your studies.” And needless to say after a long lapse of almost five years I became a student again and started renewing friendship with my old friends (books), with new zeal and growing interest.

The following incident not only shows the omnipresence of Sai but also His love and care for His children. It was May 1985; I was on my way to Manipur, my home state. I was nearing the crowded Howrah junction in West Bengal. As I was alone, I was afraid that I would not get a reserved seat. The train stopped and I started praying to Swami in my heart of hearts. While I was about to proceed toward the enquiry office, suddenly I smelt *Vibhuti* [sacred ash]. I looked around and found no one nearby. But the fragrance was so strong that I didn’t take time to realize that Swami was there to take care of me. I got a seat and continued my journey happily.

But a greater proof to show the Lord’s care for His children waited on the border of Nagaland and Manipur. Everybody is aware of the fact that in the border states such as Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, and Mizoram, unless one has an identity card showing that one is in government service or a student, one cannot enter these states.

I did not have any identity card with me. The police personnel were very strict, and they had become all the more strict due to the impact of 'Foreign Nationals issue'. A person without the necessary documents was sent to prison or sent back. Since there was no way out, I started chanting, “Sairam, Sairam, Sairam ...” Three police personnel got into my bus, checked everyone, and questioned all the passengers and asked them to show the necessary documents. But, surprisingly, I was neither questioned nor asked to produce any documents. A policeman came in front of me, sternly scolded some passengers around me, looked at me, too, but did not ask for anything. After few minutes I was proceeding to my hometown.

I met my parents, and after a very short stay I came back to Prasanthi Nilayam. Swami called me for an interview and narrated all that I had spoken to my parents in Manipur, which is nearly 3,500 miles away from here.

He, in that interview, said, “I am you. You are Me.” The essence of all the divine wisdom, the only truth of the universe, the relation between the creator and the creation—is contained in this sentence.

Every minute in Prasanthi Nilayam we get a unique experience with Swami. But we have to be alert and watchful. Today I don’t have any doubts about Sri Sathya Sai Baba. He is God, “The Lord of the universe”.

~D.P. Sharma
Alumnus, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning
Source: Sai Nandana 1995 (70th Birthday Offering)

Baba is the Breath of My Life

The world is a big theatre where the sky is the roof of lights
Big and small. The Earth is carpeted green dotted with colors
And all the lives in the sea, in the air, and on the earth
Are actors, playing various roles, at His command
Some enjoying, some suffering, some jumping, some fallen
This variety show has marvelous interest, with two screens
Called Day and Night, brilliant, on the stage, for one and all.
Into this world, I am ushered in, by Baba
To play my role of a fool, now smiling, now weeping
Never steady in devotion to one great and grand idea.
But, Baba likes me, as He has made me by His own hand
And plays with me, as a child will play with a pup!
And so every breath of mine is from Baba
Who sits in my heart, blowing life through me
His breath ambrosial, for my joy.

O my ecstasy is beyond compare!
O.....Baba, Thou art Sai (the Mother), Baba (the Father)
Thou art the *Bandhu* (the Relative) *Sakha* (the Friend)
How can I forget Thee and live here?
If thou wert not with me, nay life would collapse
And nothing would be left of me.
Now, I am able to breathe, sing, and speak
Because Thou art the Life of my life, the Breath of my breath
Thou art the root and the fruit of my life
Thou art my God in all His Glory;
Yea...Thou art Lord Sri Krishna, come down to earth
To lift all souls submerged in world's restless Ocean of *Samsara*
I saw Thee and I See Thee, and my glory is in clinging
To Thy sacred Feet and washing them with my tears
Before offering the flowers growing in my heart
For Thy Worship and Thy Love,
Down the valley, up the mountain,
All over the dwelling places of men
Baba's footprints blaze with love
To enrich the soil and the soul of man.

I am a poor and humble devotee
Who has drunk deep Baba's *manna*
My joy has risen full to its brim,

My Peace is dancing before my eyes;
I love nothing but Baba's beaming eyes
I love nothing but Baba's beaming smiles
I owe nothing to anyone but to Baba
Whose Grace abundant has fertilized my heart
Whereon resplendent harvest has been garnered
To fill the Earth with my joy and peace.
Let me fulfill Baba's Commandment
That nothing but Peace and Joy we shall have.

~Dr. K. Vaidyanathan, M. A., Ph. D.

(Dr. Vaidyanathan full of "ecstasy beyond compare" shed his physical body last month. His was a dedicated life saturated with Divine grace, as these and other poems and writings of his that we have offered to readers have revealed.) Ed.

Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, May 1966

Sri Sathya Sai: The Omniscient One

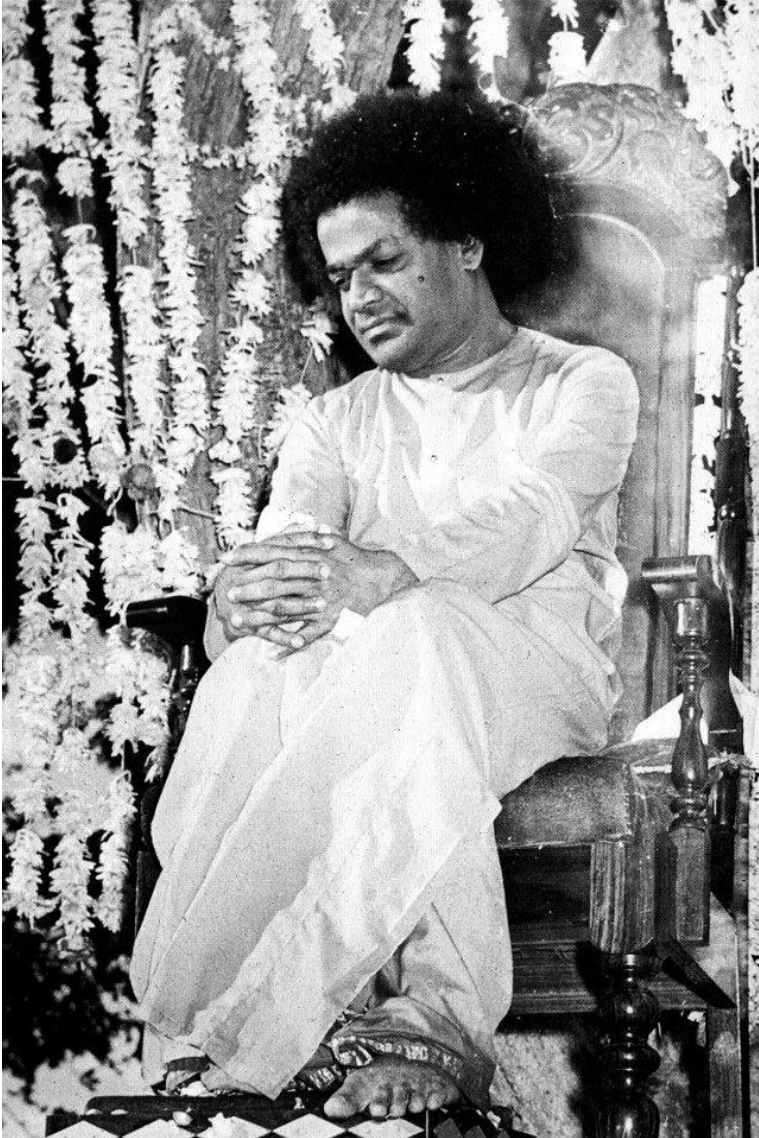
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Someone once said, "The cause for all misery in the world is misunderstanding." Misunderstanding leads to hatred. Is there anyone on the earth who is all knowing and has correct understanding of each and every aspect of the world so that there remains no hatred in him? If there, he would be the ocean of love and compassion without a speck of hatred in him. God has incarnated to lift man from the abysmal depths into which he has fallen.

Bhagavan is the omniscient One who is the Master of the past, present, and the future. In the interviews granted by Him, He discloses the innermost thoughts of the person instantly. "It is not", He says, "that I first enter your mind, and probe it, then come out and tell you what you are thinking or feeling. Actually, I am always residing in your mind and so I am fully aware of all that goes on all times. There is nothing hidden from Me."

Innumerable numbers of devotees have experienced this supernatural phenomenon. They have been wonderstruck and have received an answer to their problems as well as His spiritual guidance on how to improve their character and morality. He says, "People come to Me with prayers of all sorts. What I wish to give them is the boon of

liberation. If I confine myself wholly to giving it, no one will turn up here! Therefore, I have to start at their level, granting all their boons initially so as to ultimately equip them to desire what I desire to give them.”



The frail 5 feet, 3 inch embodied being answers the devotees unasked, “I know, I know.” Achyut Prasad Sharma, a retired Additional Commissioner of Assam, during an interview wanted to ask a question about his son, Manas Pratik. Even before he could finish his sentence, Baba told him, “You are worried about your son, who had meningitis. He is fully cured. There will be no adverse aftereffects.” Sharma then wanted to enquire about his younger brother, who had become an alcoholic. Before he could put the question Swami interjected, “I know your brother. He drinks a lot. Doesn’t he?” He did not say anything further on the subject. Sharma’s brother died soon thereafter. Then Sharma wanted to ask about the welfare of his children

whom he had left behind at Guwahati in the care of his relatives. Baba said, “You have three children, no? Don’t worry. Swami will take care of them.” On another occasion, during an interview, He told Mamuni, the younger daughter of Sharma, who had appeared for her high school leaving certificate examination. “You have not done well in one paper. Don’t worry. All will be well.” On the next day she received the news that she had passed in first division.

Swami takes by complete surprise several of the first-time visitors to Prasanthi Nilayam. He picks them from a crowd of thousands in the *darshan* lines and correctly informs about their country or place of origin. He told Anthony Y. Boafar, Assistant Headmaster of Achitoma School, a reputed school in Ghana, “You are from Ghana.”

My father, George Melkay, was a member of the *Seva Dal* from Kerala. He was on duty at Prasanthi Nilayam for two weeks in the month of January 1994. He was suffering from heart disease, and the doctors advised him to undergo surgery. Then he enquired at the Super Specialty Hospital, he was informed that as there was a long waiting list of patients, it would take at least three years for his turn to undergo surgery. So, he wanted to seek the blessings of Swami and waited for the final day of the visit when Swami gives special *darshan* and blessings to the volunteers returning home. When Swami came near, he stood on his knees and told Swami in Malayalam, "Swami, I am in deep trouble. I don't know what to do." Before he could say anything further, the all-knowing Swami assured him. "Are you afraid? Don't fear at all. The surgery will be done here." Within three weeks he was called to the hospital by telegram and the operation was performed successfully. Now he is as healthy as before and has come closer to Bhagavan. This incident led our family to turn toward Swami and made us receive His grace.

Swami knows everything. Everything that takes place in this world is according to His Divine *sankalpa* (will). He says all that happens is for the good of everybody. We must be able to see good in each and everything. If we feel that something that occurs to us is bad, it is just a mistake in our vision. Let us pray to Him to help us rise to His expectations.

Source: *Sai Nandana* 2005 (80th Birthday Offering)

Q&A

WITH BHAGAVAN

Sadhana

Hislop: Once one has tasted sugar, one never mistakes salt for sugar. If that bliss of which Swami speaks is our real nature, how is it that we confuse the unreal for the real?

Sai: You have not tasted either the salt or the sugar but are just looking at them and imagining them.

Hislop: When one is merged in the Divine bliss, is one aware of it?

Sai: He is the witness of his bliss. The person loses his limited awareness for God's total awareness. Deep sleep is *samadhi*, where there is no world and no mind but only the experience of 'I.' Freedom is that same experience in full awareness.

Hislop: At various times, Swami mentions happiness, joy, bliss. Is there a difference?

Sai: Happiness is temporary; it is given to us by others. Next comes joy. One is joyful while filling the stomach—it comes and goes. But bliss is one's rightful nature; it does not come and go. Bliss is not something that comes to one; it is one's real nature and is permanent.

Hislop: If one is wholly absorbed in God, who will take care of the body?

Sai: In waking and dreams, the mind is there, but who takes care in deep sleep? God takes care. Who takes care of the body at any time? One side may be paralyzed; can you make it move? The genuine saints and *yogis* in the Himalayas—they have no way to take care of their bodies. It is God who takes care.

Hislop: Baba says that in *sadhana* at a certain stage the exterior nature ceases. How is that?

Sai: There are ten stages in *sadhana*, each cognized by sounds of various types ranging from just sound, through vibrations, bell, flute, conch, Om, thunder, explosion. The 10th is pure form. Then the senses are transcended. Until then, everything is in the sense realm. Above the senses, there is the state of bliss, the universal body of God, which is light.

Hislop: Is that state of bliss there only for a time? What happens then in the daily round of living?

Sai: That state when fully realized as natural always remains. Then the world is bliss, always bliss. Think God, eat God, drink God, breathe God, live God.

Hislop: Does everyone pass through these *sadhana* stages?

Sai: No. One may go directly to the transcendental state, or to the stage number 6 or 7 or any way at all. It is not uniform.

Hislop: What should be one's attitude to these *sadhana* stages as one encounters them?

Sai: The states change, but the attitude should be unchanging.

Hislop: But what value should one give to the various stages?

Sai: The *sadhaka* will not be satisfied with any of the states because it is complete union that is desired. Desire remains strong and constant until the transcendental bliss is realized and then desire ceases. Who is the poorest man in the world?

Hislop: The man without God?

Sai: No. The man with the most desires is the poorest. Until we realize the desireless state of pure bliss, we are in poverty.

A Visitor: One gains a measure of spiritual understanding, but in the next life it is all swept away, and all is lost?

Sai: We say, 'I am not the body, mind or intelligence, because they are impermanent.' These are of the same matter. They are not of different material. Just as butter, curds, buttermilk, ghee cannot again be joined to the others to constitute into milk once again, in the same way the quality of spiritual being, once separated by churning the milk of the world, does not go back again into the world. The spiritual beingness is never lost once it is manifested.

Thought of the MONTH

Be Unaffected

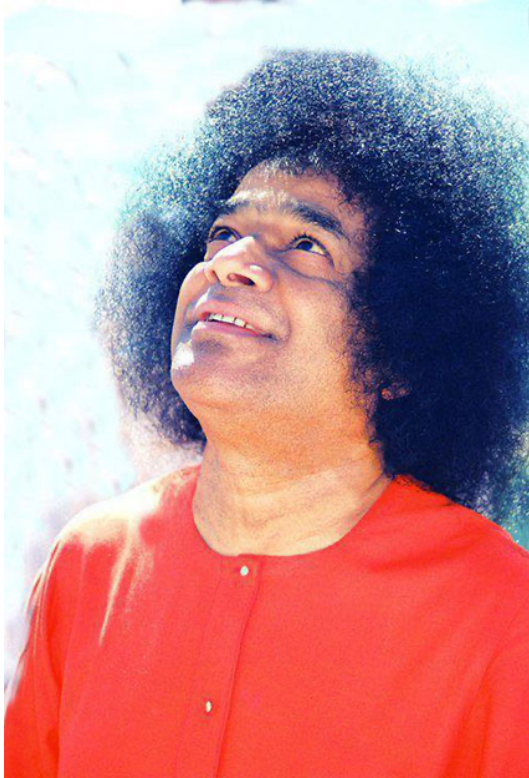
In a normal baby, there exists real *samachittha*, for there is no desire (except the instinctive desire for food, drink, and maternal protection), to agitate it. The baby is the inheritor of immortality; so it is unaffected by anxiety that haunts the adult. The word *samachittha* is in common parlance taken to mean sheer equanimity—an unshaken balance when confronted by success or failure, loss or gain, pleasure or pain. But '*sama*' has another and more significant meaning, namely Brahman, the Universal Eternal Absolute principle. *Samachittha*, therefore, in its philosophical sense means a consciousness established in the Absolute Brahman, and as a consequence above and beyond the storms and stillness of the world of duality.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 12

Do not pine for more years on earth but for more virtues in the heart. The Buddha knew and made known to the world the truths: Everything is grief. Everything is empty. Everything is brief. Everything is polluted. So, the wise man has to do the duties cast upon him with discrimination, diligence, and detachment. Play the role but keep your identity unaffected. Have your head in the forest *ashram* (retreat), unaffected by the aimlessly rushing world. But it is your duty, a duty you cannot escape, to fully engage yourself in your work, unconcerned with loss or gain, failure or success, and slander or praise.

You must only engage yourself in work that is purifying, with an attitude that sanctifies. Most people do not know how to set about on this most rewarding adventure. They waste their lives in sorrow, wading through disappointment and despair, for they cling to something as theirs and treat something else as belonging to others. They grab and grieve, and labor to acquire and lose. Desire multiplies desire, and man sinks deeper into discontent and distress. The behavior is artificial; it does not conform to man's real nature, the prompting of his *atman*, which is Divine. In the universal, eternal sea of change, the *atman* alone is above change.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 13



If you really want relief from this life, then even while God is prepared to take you away any moment, you should be prepared to give up your life and become one with God. If you do not want this and you still want to become a realized soul and merge in God how is it possible? While it is necessary for you to plan for your future, you must not have a fear of death. Do not be afraid of death, do not forget God, do not get yourself involved too much in this world. It is necessary for you to remember all these three and have faith in the Divine.

Summer Showers 1974

A man can get on without many things in life. But he cannot get on without love. Love is at the root of all action. This love is Divine. It is unchanging, pure, and unsullied. It is unaffected by joy or sorrow, loss, or gain. Feeling elated in a moment of joy and getting depressed in a moment of grief

is the mark of worldly love. Divine love is spiritual and is infinitely precious. It is not fickle and changing from moment to moment. One who is immersed in the ocean of Divine love will have no words to express its greatness and sweetness. He will speak in the language of silence. He will keep away from idle talk or debate. Those who experience the bliss of Divine love will be filled with an inner joy, whatever the external troubles they may encounter.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 26

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Sai Sarathi welcomes submissions of articles, transcriptions of talks, and student stories about Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, His teachings, and personal experiences at His lotus feet. To submit text or photos, please email them to "editor@SaiSarathi.com."