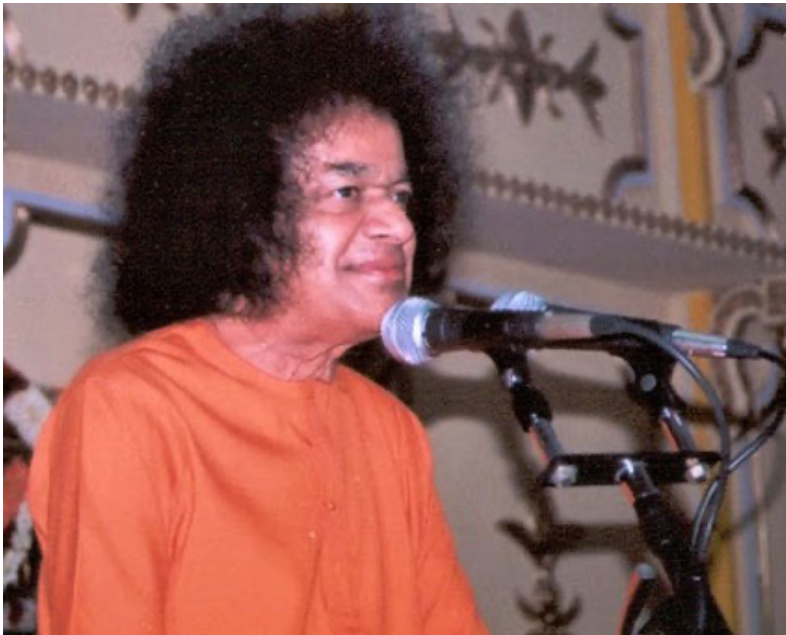


Noble Mothers Breed Noble Sons

Embodiments of love! This entire cosmos is under the control of God. God is subject to truth. Truth is governed by the noblest persons. These noble beings are embodiments of the Divine.

Students! Today you must all become messengers of peace and security to the world. To prepare yourselves for this role you must cultivate the spirit of sacrifice. Only the individual who cherishes sacrifice and renounces pleasures can be qualified for a life of sacrifice. It is only when the distinction between this renunciation (of pleasures) and acceptance (of a life of sacrifice) is rightly understood can one experience the joy of sacrifice.



Even if the soil is fertile, if the seed is of poor quality, it cannot grow into a good tree. On the other hand, if the seed is good but the soil is unfertile, a strong tree cannot grow. If children are to become culturally refined young persons, the parents should have the refinement of culture. When the parents observe exemplary conduct based on culture, the children will also imbibe

these practices. As Dr. Sushila Nayyar observed (in her speech earlier), students have to cultivate simple living and high thinking. Students must learn to lead simple lives. At the same time their ideals must be of the highest order.

There are many examples of people who have led simple lives with high ideals.

Putlibai and Gandhi

Gandhiji's mother, Putlibai, was a lady who believed in the two principles of truth and right conduct. She adhered to the practice of taking her morning breakfast only after hearing the first call of the cuckoo. One morning, the cuckoo's call was missing for a long time and Putlibai did not take her breakfast. Seeing this, the young Gandhi went to the backyard, cooed like a cuckoo, and came and told his mother that she could now take her breakfast. Putlibai, who could easily guess the trick her son was playing, felt very sad about his behavior. She thought; "What sin have I committed that such a son should be born to me? There is no use blaming you for what is the result of my own sin. How sinful am I that I gave birth to an untruthful son." Unable to bear her grief, she slapped the boy on the cheek and went inside.

That very moment Gandhi took a vow: "I must never again utter an untruth in my life. What life is it that causes grief to a mother? In a country in which everyone is enjoined to revere the mother and father as God, I have caused grief to my mother by an act of deception." From that day he resolved only to speak the truth and never indulge in falsehood.

Mothers of those days were women of great piety and noble character. They practiced virtue and set an example to the children. Only from wombs of such noble women were born sons of high character.

The mother of Adi Sankara, Aryamba, was a high-souled woman. Hence, Sankara could achieve greatness and world fame. Vivekananda was another illustrious figure. Adhering to the instructions of his mother, he led an exemplary life and achieved name and fame. Their lives shine in the pages of history as examples for mankind.

As is the seed, so is the tree. Similarly, some are born with noble character and some are born differently. These differences are the result of their careers in previous lives.

Chaitanya's yearning for the love of the Lord

Once Chaitanya went to Puri and prayed to Lord Jagannath: "Oh Lord of the universe! Lord of Life! Master of my body! Lord of Creation! I am not concerned with surrender and salvation. I am incapable of doing *yoga* or *dhyana* [meditation]. Nor am I interested in mundane pleasures. I only desire one thing. Give me the all-consuming love for you. With that love I can accomplish everything. Without your love, of what use are all the pleasures of the world, all the talents and powers one can command? Of what avail is scholarship or intellectual brilliance? I must earn the love of the Lord. Confer that love on me, Oh Lord!"

By revering their parents and following their noble examples, many great men achieved glory and fame in the past. If today we do not have high-minded youth, it is the parents that are responsible. In this context, let me relate the story of Easwara Chandra Vidyasagar, the great scholar of Calcutta, who was inspired by his mother

to educate himself for a career of dedicated service to the people. His mother told Easwara Chandra: "True education must lead you to God. Academic education must help you to serve society and promote the welfare of mankind. You must be an example to other men and lead an ideal life." Despite their poverty, the son followed the mother's advice and by his own diligence got a degree. In due course, he got a job, pursued higher studies, and attained a position of eminence. Having accumulated some money, he approached his mother and asked her whether she wanted anything. She said: "I have no desires. I only want you to earn a name as a man of good character, dedicated to the service of the nation."

The three wishes of Vidyasagar's mother

The son pressed her again after some time to indicate what she wanted by way of jewels or clothes. She told him; "I am now past the age for wearing jewels or flaunting gaudy dresses. However, I desire three ornaments about which I shall tell you later on."

After a period, having saved some more money, Easwara Chandra asked his mother; "What are your three desires?" "The first one," she said, "is a primary school for the children of our small and backward village. The second one is a small village hospital for the local population. My third desire is that you should not sell your knowledge, nor feel proud about it. Cultivate humility and consider yourself the servant of all. Service is the pathway to leadership. These are the three ornaments I seek."

Carrying out his mother's wishes, he established a primary school in the village, a hospital for the villagers, and dedicated his entire life to the service of his fellowmen. He became famous as Easwara Chandra Vidyasagar, known for his knowledge and spirit of service. He became well known as a speaker who attracted large audiences of men and women. His talks were ennobling and inspiring, summoning the people to a life of sacrifice and service.

A young officer learns a lesson

Once, a senior officer was keen to listen to Vidyasagar's speech and set out for the place of the meeting by train with a suitcase. On alighting at the station, he called for a porter to carry his suitcase. As no one appeared, an old man who had got down from the same train offered to carry the suitcase. From the simplicity of the old man's dress, the officer took him for a poor villager and allowed him to carry the suitcase up to the place where he was to stay. After depositing the suitcase, when the old man was about to leave, the officer offered him a rupee for his labor. The old man declined the money and said that what he had done was in a spirit of service and not to earn money. After thanking him the old man (who was none other than Easwara Chandra) told the young officer before leaving: "Your practice does no credit to your education. After so much education you are not able to attend to your own needs. You have made yourself unfit. Humility is the ornament for education. Education without humility is no education at all. Self-conceit is also not an index of good education. Arrogance and attachment are bad qualities, which you must get rid of."

Later in the day large crowds were assembling at the place of meeting. All were eagerly waiting to welcome Vidyasagar. As Easwara Chandra got up on the stage, he was profusely garlanded. The young officer was in the audience. He saw the speaker on the stage and wondered whether he could be Vidyasagar: "Is he the same man who carried my suitcase in the morning?" He felt ashamed of himself. "What a shame that I should have treated with disrespect such a venerable person out of my pride and arrogance!" The officer felt that he had learnt a good lesson that humility is the true hallmark of real education.

Easwara Chandra Vidyasagar was in the habit of examining his faults, if any, and trying to correct them. But students today entertain bad thoughts or do wrong things and justify their behavior by the specious argument that "to err is human." They should realize that because they are human, they should observe right conduct. They should not take to bad ways. Bad conduct is utterly unbecoming of one who calls himself human. The natural qualities of a human being are good thoughts and good conduct. Students should strive to live in this manner.

Parents are responsible for children going astray

The world has witnessed any number of great personalities who have led ideal lives. Today mothers who brought up such noble beings are becoming rare. Parents often tend to encourage the improper behavior of their children rather than correct them. Parents today are primarily responsible for their children going astray.

Here is another story of a mother and son who came as refugees from Burma. The son starved himself to feed his mother from the food he was getting by begging. One day when a house owner offered to give him food as he was starving, the boy said he would not eat the food there but must carry it home. He fell down in front of the house and the owner heard the feeble words coming from the boy's lips; "First mother, then myself." With those words, he breathed his last.

Such examples of filial and maternal affection are becoming rare these days because of the trends in modern education. Maternal love has vanished. Filial duty is absent. What a testimony to the tragic results of modern education! There is no reverence for elders, no recognition of obligations to parents. Selfishness has become the bedrock of life. The nation is a prey to all kinds of ills because of this all-pervading selfishness.

Education should make students service oriented

There was a time in the past when men were prepared to sacrifice their all for the sake of the people and the welfare of the nation. Today this spirit is absent. Selfishness is rampant. The educational system is responsible for this situation. Education should make students service minded, not job seekers. Parents have also a duty in this regard. They must reform their children by setting the example themselves.

You must be prepared to make any sacrifice for the sake of the nation. Welcome sacrifice, banish pleasure seeking. Discover the joy to be derived from sacrifice.

When *Bharatiyas* [Indians] got their independence, Nehru was the Prime Minister and Vallabhbhai Patel was the Home Minister. Dr. Sushila Nayyar was then the Health Minister. It was at that time she came to see me in Delhi. Later in 1962 she came to Puttaparthi together with Vinoba Bhave. Since then, she has been associated with Swami. Vallabhbhai used to tell Sushila Nayyar: "Sushilaben! You lead a simple life. As a minister you should appear more impressive." Patel used to tease her in this manner.

Vallabhbhai's daughter used to live with him. She was an exemplary daughter. She used to spin the yarn from which the clothes were made for her father, and she used to make a *sari* for herself out of the old *dhotis* of her father. The national leaders of those days were ideal leaders. They fought for the freedom of the country. In those days, it used to be said that the white rulers were oppressing the black natives. Alas! Today the black natives are oppressing the black natives. In those days, there were men who were prepared to sacrifice their all for the nation. Today we have men who are prepared to sacrifice the nation for their self-interest. What kind of leadership is this? Whither have the ideals fled? What we need is devotion to God, which will fill us with the spirit of sacrifice. Only then can real humanness prevail. Sacrifice is the key to immortality. Today people seek nectar in intoxicating drinks. Is this a mark of culture? No. Sense-control comes first. Life is a challenge. Meet it.

Students should become crusaders for peace

Students should become crusaders for peace in a country riddled with conflict and disorder. Sanctify your education by a life of dedicated service. I told the girl students yesterday that Duty and Discipline should be like two bodyguards for Devotion. All of you should set an example to the nation in leading a life marked by devotion, duty, and discipline. I bless you all that you should become worthy servants of the nation.

Dedicated services of Sushila Nayyar

I have seen Sushila Nayyar on several occasions. Recently she came to Brindavan and stayed there for two days. After the passing of Gandhiji, she has been working in Gandhigram with dedication. She has faced many trials and tribulations. Whenever she comes to Swami, she experiences peace and joy. She is working hard to promote the activities in Gandhigram. Swami's grace has been available to her in plenty in this mission. She need not worry on this account. She is far advanced in age (96). Despite the infirmities of age, she is actively engaged in social service. What ails our young people that they are not attracted to social service? The only service they are rendering is to feed themselves. But the body is given for the pursuit of *dharma* (righteousness). If it is not used for this purpose, why have it at all? Don't bother to fatten your body. Rather, you should wear it away in the service of others. It is through such service that you should redeem your lives.

Develop devotion to God through meditation and contemplation. Take a pledge to render service to your fellowmen.

Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, March 1995

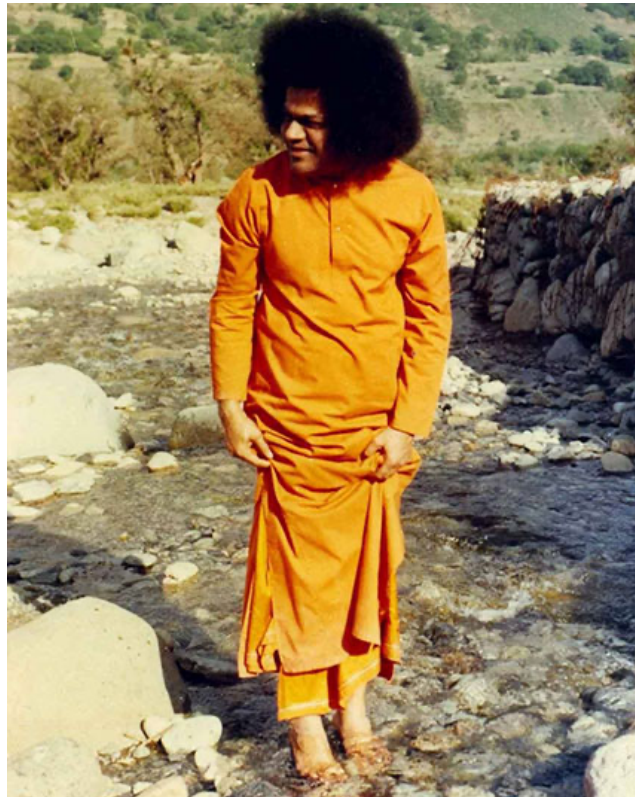
Prasanthi Nilayam

Prasanthi Nilayam.... the Abode of Peace. The heart leaps at the very mention of the name. How we long to be there! We greet with joy those who are just returning from there, hoping that some of the luster and grace of the Sai-drenched devotees may rub off on us.

To me, Prasanthi Nilayam means, simply, Home. It is my Mother's place. When Mother calls, I go to Her. She knows what is needed. She gives it, namely Her *ananda* [bliss] in plenty. One returns from the Mother rested, restored, and refreshed in body and spirit always. Many of the trees in the Nilayam can be recognized in mediaeval paintings, depicting scenes from Lord Krishna's career on earth. Near the *Mandir* [temple] on the west side is a beautiful tall tree, which blooms around early *Dasara* and wafts the lovely fragrance into Mother's Room. This tree can be noticed in many of the Rajasthan miniatures painted by mediaeval artists devotees as well as the Deccani and early Mughal painters. The neem, the coconut, the tamarind, the banana, the rose, the jasmine, and mogra bushes all offer their beauty and their scent for us to admire and offer gratitude to the Mother.

Mother's *darshan* [seeing a holy person] is the morning! A flash of red, the graceful Form arrives closer and, finally, a deep look and a compassionate smile—can any mother on earth cause such an ecstatic flutter in all hearts? Mother is loving, yet detached—every movement, gesture, flash, smile has a meaning and a lesson. Only Mother knows the agony of each of [our] each step, especially to those of us who have already taken the wrong ones. If Mother smiles, all is well; the heart is light and filled with joy.

But let her turn away or look over us into the beyond, then gloom descends. "What have I done now?"...a great deal of interpretation and interrogation in



the quiet of the room. And soon the answer comes. A prayer for forgiveness, a promise not to repeat the mistake, and a renewed dedication to please the Mother and the Mother only—regardless of what others may say or think. Please her with each little thought, word, and deed—and peace reigns again.

Mother smiles at the afternoon *darshan*. Ah! I was right! Even the slightest deviation from the path toward the ideal is noted by Sai Mata, for She is Omnipresent. She is everywhere, in us, with us, beside us, and behind us. A poem written in the room to Her reaches Her as soon as line is formed in the mind. A wish, a thought, all is known, and if only you trust in Her, she keeps the lines straight and true. She is the world's greatest teacher of the art of positive thinking. As soon as you grasp the universal laws of love, service, and compassion as taught by Her, Mother takes you closer. She is helpful; you make less mistakes. Sai is pure bliss. Mother, i love Thee.

Since at Mother's house, I am carefree of kitchen chores. Mother has a lovely Dining Hall, with many varieties of delicious and nutritious dishes, very lovingly prepared by devoted hands. Out of sheer happiness, I had all four meals on the first day—breakfast, lunch, tea, and dinner. But it was really too much. I restrained myself to one meal a day, with some banana and curds, now and then. Mother spoils us thoroughly with Her love. She knows that we must relish the stay with Her, away from kitchen chores. She is such a practical *Avatar* [incarnation].

The *Gokulam* milk is the world's most blessed milk. It is rich, sweet, and sustaining. Behind the Hill is the Meditation Tree, and this is the place I go to in the early dawn. Just before sunrise, the hills are purple and the dark green forests and fields oblige us and give a glimpse—a silvery glimpse—of the river, Chitravati. The golden sky is streaked with pink and orange. Oh! How Mother would enjoy a morning walk in the cool crisp air listening to the tinkling of the cow-bells, as She used to do for years in the past and as Krishna in Brindavan! I am wrong in believing that this is not being done now. She must be with me now, as I watch these skies and fields, for how can I visualize the beauty if She did not reveal it to me? She has taken upon Herself the heavy burden of saving mankind. Multitudes are following Her whenever She goes or stays. Mother is busy with prayers from all around the globe; She has to watch every child of Hers while it sleeps. The child may forget the world, but the Mother cannot forget the child.

The day of departure arrives. The tears well up, the hand quivers, as Sai Mata comes for a last look and smile. Ma! Ma! I am going today.... "*Accha!*".... She is off. In a trice, teaching us the higher Truth, the Reality, that She is in every atom of the Universe, and that we cannot go to any place where She is NOT.

Prasanthi Nilayam...leaving Mother is so hard. The last glimpse of Mother, among Her children.... and the last cry..."Mother! Call me again soon!"

~*Yasmin Sikal*

Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, June 1978

Hide and Seek

We landed in Madras, but He was nowhere to be spied—
That slice of Orange Robe amidst the crowd—
We suspected that the fellow who tipped us off had lied.
And we scolded him in words, harsh and loud.

But he knelt and begged our pardon—
Said he couldn't take the blame;
That Swami's plans and movements
Were a 'hide and seek' game.

He sent us off to Whitefield
To enquire for Swami there
But warned us, this could also be,
A 'hit and miss' affair.

We caught the train to Bangalore.
From there to Whitefield hied—
Then we heard He'd left for Ooty
And we very nearly died.

We waited with the monkeys
Outside His Whitefield House;
We waited like a patient cat
Watching the hole of a mouse.

"He'll be back in a couple of days," they said,
"Or a week or two at most."
"He was seen in Bangalore yesterday"
"Or, may be, it was the Holy Ghost."

After waiting a week, we set out for Ooty
And got there, late, the next day;
We were greeted by someone snooty
Who said, "Swami is in Bombay"!

Disappointed, frustrated, and down at heart
We sat and bewailed our fate;
When a lady kind said, Swami was back,
And we could see Him at the gate.

But all we saw was a dome of hair
That filled the back of the car

And a radiant smile as He raised His Hand
To us who had come so far.

He'd gone off on some sudden mission—
Nobody quite knew where;
But would definitely be on the 21st
At Puttaparthi for a Festival there.

We headed for Andhra's rocky wilds
By train, pony-cart and bus;
And while the wheels were turning round
My mind was churning thus.

"Even if You stood before me now
A foot away in space,
I'm so annoyed, I would not deign
To look upon Your Face."

But at Puttaparthi, our fate was the same;
And our luck, we did deplore
As we saw the white car drive out of the gate
And head for God-knows-where.

I stormed and fumed, I fretted and cried,
And wished I'd stayed at home and sighed,
"I'll wait for you in my little room—
"Resplendent Lord of Parthi, please come soon."

He came to me, soon, in a Vision,
With a Love greater than mine;
I could scarcely bear to look at Him,
His gaze was so Divine.

"Through how many ages in vain,"
He said, "Have I chased after this heart!
But now it is mine, O Dearest One,
Can anything keep it apart?"

~Anon

Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, June 1977

Can We Accept Gifts from Everyone?

Aparigraha means not accepting things from others. You have every right to receive gifts or other things from your parents. You are the product of your parents and hence you can accept from them whatever they give. *Aparigraha* has certain subtle implications. For instance, it is not proper to accept gifts even from one's uncles or in-laws or even from one's brothers. When any gifts are received from these relatives you have to reciprocate them by equivalent presents. Today the *aparigraha* rule is blatantly violated.

For instance, boys after their education receive dowries at the time of marriage. This is very wrong. It even amounts to a sin. A girl who has been brought up well is offered to a young man in marriage. That itself is a great gift. Why should one ask for money along with the bride? The parents of the girl may give her whatever they choose. But the bridegroom should not expect or accept anything.



This is the attitude one should have toward gifts from others. It is because many of these injunctions have been given the go-by that today *Bharat* [India] is experiencing various troubles. Gifts can be accepted from parents, the preceptor, and God. These are the exceptions to the rule of *aparigraha*. From these four, you can receive anything. But even from the parents you should not seek to get anything by compulsion or litigations. What is offered by the parents with love should be received with love. There are limits to what you can receive from the parents. But there is no limit to what you can receive from God. You can accept anything from God because He is the Lord of everything. He can free you from sin and redeem you from the consequences.

God encompasses all relationships and hence one should identify oneself with God. The feeling that 'You and I are one' should be cultivated. Attributing relationships like mother and father to God sets binding limits to the association between God and man. In the vast ocean of *sat-chit-ananda* (being-awareness-bliss), the myriad human beings with different names and forms are like waves. But as the waves are made up of the same water as the ocean, all human beings are sparks of the Divine. *Sat-chit-ananda* is present in every human being. People out of their ignorance go in quest of *sat-chit-ananda* elsewhere. *Ajnana* (ignorance) is the cause of *aviveka* (stupidity). Stupidity is the cause of *ahamkara* (egoism). Egoism gives rise to attachment. Attachment leads to hatred. Hatred gives rise to *karma* (action). *Karma* is the cause of birth. The original cause of the chain of processes leading to birth is ignorance.

What is ignorance? It is the state of *bhinnatvam* (divisiveness). To regard *Tat* (That) as different from *twam* (you) is ignorance. To differentiate God from you is ignorance. All are fragments of the Divine, sparks from the same flame. When the sparks are near the fire, they retain their heat and light. But when they are away, they turn into charcoal. Likewise, when one is near God, *sat-chit-ananda* will be in him. When he is away from God, he will lose the attributes of the Divine. He will be immersed in ignorance. It is not mastery of books and scholarship that makes a person a *jnani* (knower of the Supreme Truth). '*Advaita Darshanam Jnanam*' (To perceive the One without a second is knowledge).

Sat-chit-ananda

It is only when you manifest the bliss that is in you, *sat-chit-ananda*, that you can call yourself *vyakti*, the manifested individual. The term *vyakti* cannot be applied to all and sundry. He alone can be called *vyakti* who manifests the invisible Divinity within him.

What is meant by *sat-chit-ananda*? *Sat* is 'Being', that which is eternal and unchanging. Sugar has the quality of sweetness, which remains in whatever form it may be used. For purposes of analogy, sugar may be described as *sat*. *Chit* may be compared to water. It has the quality of mobility. When sugar and water are mixed, you have neither sugar nor water as such, but a new product—syrup. When *sat* and *chit* come together, you have *ananda* (Divine bliss).

People imagine that this bliss is to be found in jobs, marriage, property, or progeny. That is not the case. You hope for happiness in one thing after another—education, jobs, marriage, children, and so on. But happiness eludes you. The only enduring happiness is got by oneness with the Divine. The answer to the question, "Where is happiness?" is "Happiness is union with God." Students tend to forget this in the pursuit of worldly pleasures. It is only through the ripeness of experience that this realization can come. For instance, you see a barren field in the summer. After a night's rain, you find grass coming up. Wherefrom did it come? It is from the field.

What was present in the form of seeds in the earth came up as grass after the rain. Likewise, the bliss within you will sprout when you water your parched heart with the rain of Divine love.

Scientists today have made many astonishing discoveries. But they lack peace. They have failed to understand the *Vedantic* truth about their true nature. Hence, they are unable to experience the bliss of the spirit that is in them. People should not underrate the powers present in the atmosphere. For instance, it is filled with radio waves coming from different broadcasting centers. But the waves maintain their individual wavelength and do not collide with the others. This electrical energy is Divine. It is one of the secrets of creation. The body is like a radio set. When you do not tune in properly by concentration you will not get the right station. Concentration is essential for every kind of activity in life. Students should realize how much can be gained by reducing one's desires. They may experiment in a small way with reducing the consumption of coffee. They will find power increases. As desires are reduced, their willpower will grow. This *ichha-shakti* (will power) is being undermined today. The result is their ability to act is also reduced. Consequently, even the *jnana-shakti* (the power of wisdom), is lost.

Source: *My Dear Students Volume 2*

Q&A

WITH BHAGAVAN

There is Only One

Bhakta: How can delusion disappear, Swami?

Swami: When you grasp its secret through inquiry, the many merges in five, the three in one, and the I exists as I. You get headache, you apply ointment; it disappears, you are as you were. The delusion that 'I am the body is like this. It will disappear if you apply the ointment of *vichara* or inquiry.

Bhakta: Can everyone adopt this path of inquiry?

Swami: No, my boy. It is only for those whose *chitta* [will] has become ripe.

Bhakta: Then what should we do to reach that ripe stage?

Swami: Now we have come to the place from which we started! Have you not got things like *japam*, *dhyanam*, *puja*, and *pranayama* for this? Steadily, through these, you became ripe and become capable of understanding the 'I' by inquiry into Reality. For such men, the *atma* [soul] is not something different from themselves or yourself. All is *atman*!

Bhakta: But, Swami, You mentioned only *japam*, *dhyanam*, *bhajana* etc. Some advanced persons adopt *mounam*, the vow of silence. Of what use is it? What exactly is *mounam*?

Swami: The illumination of the soul is *mounam*! How can there be *mounam* without the *atma* being illuminated? Without that, merely keeping the mouth shut is not silence. Some adopt the vow of silence, but communicate writing on paper or slate; or they point successively to the letters of the alphabet on a chart. All this is pseudo-*mounam*! It is only another way of talking without interruption! There is no need to attain silence. Silence is ever with you. What you have to do is only to remove all things that disturb it!

Bhakta: But many persons do not open their mouth to speak. You mean that this is useless?

Swami: Who said so? If you do not use the tongue, if you are silent in order to keep out the external obstacles to *sadhana* [spiritual effort], you certainly can develop your thoughts, you can desist from disturbing others, you can escape criticism and worry from others, you will get concentration, your brain will be saved from unnecessary burdens, and it can improve much. With such a brain, you carry on *smarana* [remembering] of the Lord's name better. All these advantages you will realize when you do *sadhana*.

Bhakta: Then for the full *jnani* [enlightened person] all this is unnecessary?

Swami: There is no full *jnani* in the world! He is in no need of the world itself; then why does he need all this?

Bhakta: If that is so, who are those people called *janis*?

Swami: The silent men I spoke about just now. *Jnani* is a term applied by courtesy; a full *jnani* is nonexistent in the world. The *jnani* must know 'All as one'! Your *janis* are all either experts in logic, or experts in the knowledge of the world; they have not known the Reality.

Bhakta: Who are the real *janis*?

Swami: He who knows the *atma* as *atma* will know himself, as milk added to milk, oil to oil, or water to water. When the physical body dies, they likewise merge in the *atma*. But some may have some traits still persisting. They continue to have some resolutions and desires.

Until these are exhausted, they will wander in the world with body. Such men are called also 'Bits of Divinity born as Men, *Daivaamsasambhuthas*.' This is also as per the Lord's will.

Bhakta: Why should this difference arise, Swami?

Swami: It arises out of each one's *sadhana* and *sankalpa* [will]. Eat a mango and you belch its smell. How can you prevent it? The belch brings the perfume of the thing eaten.

Bhakta: Will such men, too, have limitations? *Upadhis*?

Swami: Without *upadhis*, how can work get on? They, too, have it, but only in a subtle form until they attain trans-corporeal *mukti*, *videha mukti*.

Bhakta: What is that, Swami?

Swami: Their acts are like the line drawn on water, seen while the line is being drawn, absent as soon as it is finished. While being done, you notice it, in an instant it is not noticeable anymore.

Bhakta: Swami, you said that a *jnani* has renunciation as his hallmark. How does this agree with that?

Swami: That is true! Renunciation is his hallmark. If out of the traits of previous birth he gets attached, he must know that it is only for the body and not for him. This attachment damages the bliss of *jivanmukta* [liberated person]; *jnana* [knowledge] is most important for *videhamukti* [liberation after death].

Bhakta: Even if one has no *jnana*, can one attain *mukti* by mere *vairagyam* [detachment].

Swami: What a foolish question! How can the fruit be sweet without ripening? *Vairagyam* cannot arise except from *jnana*. There is no *moksha* [liberation] without *vairagyam*. Be sure of that!

Bhakta: Then where does *bhakti* come in?

Swami: We have come to the very beginning again! Earlier than *jnana* it is in the form of *bhakti*. Earlier than *bhakti* it is in the form of *anurakti*, affection. All these are one. *Anurakti* is the flower; *bhakti* is the fruit; it ripens as *jnanam*; *Vairagyam* is the sweet juicy final stage. Without one, you cannot have the next. To tend the fruit until the juice and taste are developed, you must practice daily prayer, etc., mentioned above. But from the first, have in view the Oneness of all. Understand that there is no 'other'.

Source: *Sandeha Nivarini*

Thought of the MONTH

One-pointedness/*Ekagratha*

The wayward mind wanders hither and thither, but it is possible to fasten it on one fixed point by means of steady discipline and persistent training in spiritual discipline. This condition is called One-pointedness (*ekagratha*).

It is also referred to as single-mindedness (*dharana*). The uninterrupted flow of oil from one vessel to another is a fine symbol of the mental process called single-mindedness.

The mind plans and executes innumerable deeds and roams over vast expanses, all in the twinkling of an eye! It operates with unimaginable speed. It conceives an object and dallies with it a little, but it soon discards it for another more attractive object toward which it flees and about which it begins to worry.

The spiritual aspirant has to be ever watchful of this tendency of the mind. When the mind flits from object to object, it must be brought back to the right path and the right object. That is the correct spiritual practice, the path of concentration and meditation. If, however, the aspirant does not struggle to achieve this one-pointedness but leaves the mind to itself, following its vagaries from this to that and that to this, the process deserves to be called monkey-meditation (*markata dhyana*), a type of meditation that is indeed very harmful to spiritual progress.

Dhyana Vahini

Truth is more fundamental than the atom. Every atom and every star manifest the Truth to those who have the eye of wisdom. Each aspect of science has a special feature when it applies to some one group of things or beings. What is the special feature of man? If he too lives and dies as any animal, how can his supremacy be justified? His supremacy lies in his capacity to become aware of his Truth. We use the phrase 'one-pointedness' when referring to *sadhana* [spiritual effort]. The meaning that we generally give to that phrase is not correct. Each sense organ or faculty has 'a point' that makes it valid.

Don't we say, 'There is no point in it,' when we condemn something in an argument? Seeing is the 'point' of the eye; hearing is the 'point' of the ear. If there is no point or *agram*, it is blind or deaf. The sense is then afflicted with some disease, it has some defect. Even if you catch a slight cold, the nose loses its 'point' for it cannot discover smells. Now what is the 'point' of the mind? When we say 'one-pointedness', it must

mean that the mind should be pointed toward the One, the One that is denoted as being without a second, the One that has willed that It may become the many. Unless the mind lays aside all other pursuits and seeks to become aware of the One that has become the many, it can be said that the mind too is diseased and is suffering from some defect.

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 13

Plunge the wayward mind, which is fleeing in all directions, in contemplation of the name of the Lord; the effect will be like concentrating the rays of the sun through a piece of magnifying glass. The scattered rays develop the power of a flame to burn and consume. So, too, when the waves of intellect and the feelings of mind get One-pointedness through the converging lens of the *atma*, they manifest as the universal divine splendor that can scorch evil and illumine joy.

Everyone can gain success in their profession or occupation only through one-pointed attention. Even the pettiest of tasks needs the quality of concentration for its fulfilment. And even the toughest problem yields before unswerving endeavor.

Dhyana Vahini

Visit *Sai Sarathi* on the web
at SaiSarathi.com

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. We also welcome SSE student projects and announcements for regional events.

To submit text or photos, please email them to "editor@SaiSarathi.com."

