

Seek the *Guru* Within You

In His discourse on Guru Poornima Day on July 30th, 1996, Bhagavan Baba said that if we turn our mind Godward, we will experience the divine bliss. The two qualities expected from devotees are shraddha [earnestness] and bhakti [devotion]. Develop the sense of spiritual oneness by continuous practice. The primary requisite is love for God.

*All the stars are Brahman;
The Sun is also Brahman;
The Moon is Brahman; Water is Brahman;
Swarga is Brahman; Vaikuntha is Brahman;
Speech is Brahman; the individual is Brahman;
Birth is Brahman; Sustenance is Brahman;
Death is Brahman;
All actions are Brahman; the body is Brahman;
The whole of nature is Brahman;
Life is Brahman. This assembly is Brahman.
The Sai proclaiming this Truth is Brahman.*

*The tree growing out of the soil returns to the soil;
The individual arising from Brahman returns to
Brahman;
This truth is not easily perceived
That is the mystery of this marvelous creation.*

Embodiments of Brahman! When a seed is sown in the earth, it sprouts as a sapling and grows in due course into a big tree. In the tree, the branches, the leaves, the flowers and the fruits all appear as distinct from each other. Moreover, each of them is used for a specific purpose. But all of them are different forms of the mud from which they have originated.

Seeing a rope at a distance, suspecting that it may be a snake, a man develops fear. Soon another person arrives and assures him that it is not a snake but a rope. The moment he realizes that what he feared was a snake was only a rope, he gets rid of his fear. During all the stages, the rope was only a rope.

Likewise, the ignorant man mistakes the phenomenal world for Brahman till a *Jnani* reveals to him that what he thought was Nature is in reality Brahman. All that one sees in the entire universe is a manifestation of the Brahman. Some people declare: "Where is Brahman and what are we petty human beings? How can we be equal to the all-encompassing Brahman?" This is not correct. You are that omnipotent, all-pervading Brahman. Because of your worldly attitude, you are not recognizing the Reality. You are separating yourself from the Divine. All that you see is Brahman. To search for God as something different from you is a delusion. But this truth is not easily recognized by man.

When you look at the ocean, its endless series of waves and the foam from the waves, they all appear separate from each other. But the truth is they are all one. The water in the waves and in the foam comes from the same ocean and has the same qualities.

Likewise, from the infinite ocean of *Sat-Chit-Ananda* (Being-Awareness-Bliss), innumerable living creatures emerge like waves. While the Divine is in the state of *Sathyam-Jnanam-Anantam* (Truth-Wisdom-Infinity), man is in the state of *Sat-Chit-Ananda*.



Fill your vision with love

Embodiments of Divine *Atma*! When you fill your vision with love, the whole creation will appear divine to you.

The cosmos appears to you as a manifestation of diversity, but in reality there is no diversity. No one makes any effort to discover the unity that underlies the diversity.

In every human being, both Divinity and the *Maya* [illusion] principle are immanent. How is this to be comprehended? *Sat-Chit-Ananda* represents the Divine in man. The names and forms that man perceives are expressions of the *Maya* principle.

On the ocean, the wind is the cause of waves; on the ocean of *Sat-Chit-Ananda*, the wind of *Maya* gives rise to the innumerable living creatures. Therefore, the individuals who have emerged from the ocean of *Sat-Chit-Ananda* are manifestations of the Divine. Divinity is everywhere. But because of man's ignorance, man is a prey to numerous troubles. Here is an example: Today is described as *Guru Poornima* Day. This is not quite correct. The day got its name because of some *gurus* who wanted to have an occasion for receiving offerings from their disciples. The right name for this day is *Vyasa Poornima*.

Vyasa was born on this full-moon day. He completed the codification of the writing of the 18 *puranas* on this day. Owing to the passage of time *Vyasa Poornima* came to be called *Guru Poornima*.

The Trinity and the three *gunas*

The true meaning of *guru* is "one who dispels the darkness of ignorance." Another meaning of the word is "one who is beyond attributes and forms, namely, the Supreme Self (The Brahman)." When this Self is within you, where is the need to search for someone to teach you? A teacher who teaches others has had a teacher himself. The one who has no *guru* above him is the true *guru*. The Sanskrit stanza that hails the *guru* as Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheshwara and as *Parabrahman* is misinterpreted. The right approach is to consider Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheshwara as the *guru*. These three are symbolized by the three *gunas* [qualities]: Brahma is *Rajas*, Vishnu is *Satwa*, and Shiva is *Tamas*. The whole cosmos is constituted by the three *gunas*. The three *gunas* are present in man. The Trinity are present in the form of the three *gunas* in every human heart.

Hence, you are your own *guru*. You need not seek him elsewhere. The so-called *gurus* of today seek to impart some *mantras* and receive fee-offerings as *guru-dakshina* on *Guru-Poornima* day. The *mantra* is whispered in the ear, and the palm is stretched for an offering. This is what happens today. It is not the proper sign of a *guru*.

You are a *guru* unto yourself. All potencies are within you. This is indicated by the *Gayatri Mantra*. You must always feel your inherent divinity, which is also present in everyone. When you help or feed someone you must feel that the Divine in you is feeding the Divine in others.

Follow Swami to get the powers

Embodiments of Divine *Atma*! For many years you have been pursuing wrong paths because of the feeling of separateness. The truth is you are part of the *Samashti* (collective). This collective is a part of *Srishti* (creation). Beyond creation is *Pushti* (the cosmic energy). Transcending that energy is *Parameshthi* (the Supreme Omni Self). You are all these as an embodiment of the Divine. You must proceed from the individual to a realization of the Omni Self.

All are manifestations of the Divine. You may ask whether you can ever acquire the powers possessed by Swami. Follow me. You are bound to get that power. That power is latent in you. But you are not aware of it. You want to experience bliss. If you truly follow Swami, you will discover that bliss is within you. Nor is that all. You will find that bliss all around you, wherever you go. You cannot find that bliss in the physical world. It is wholly within you. Consider yourself as Brahman (Divine) at all times and in all situations. You will thereby become one with the Divine.

Turn your mind Godward and you will experience the bliss of the Divine. It is for this reason that Swami gives you advice from time to time as to what you should do and what you should avoid. All this is not for my sake but for your own good, to make you take to the path of God-Realization, to teach you the supreme truth about the Brahman, and to make your sacred life an ideal one.

Every man should strive to become an ideal human being. This means that everyone should testify to his Divinity. Imagine how happy everyone would be if the entire world was filled with this pure, sublime, and sacred ideal. Recognize that God is your preceptor. He is the preceptor of preceptors. When you have such an all-pervading *guru*, why should you hanker after *gurus* of lesser breed?

Names vary but the Lord is One

All are children of God. All are embodiments of the Divine, as declared in the *Gita*. Vishnu is described as the Lord carrying in His four hands the conch, the discus, the mace, and the lotus. These four represent the cosmic power of sound, the wheel of time, the puissance of the Lord, and the heart in which the Lord dwells. There is a certain naivety about the way in which *Vaishnavites* [followers of Vishnu] and *Shaivites* [followers of Shiva] adore the same deity, Venkateshwara. *Vaishnavites* hail Him as "*Venkataramana*," while *Shaivites* hail Him as "*Venkateshwara*." The votaries of each sect derive some special satisfaction from using a particular name, though the Lord they worship is one and the same. The names vary but the Lord is one.

Shiva is called *Pashupati* (the Lord of cattle). Krishna is worshipped as *Gopala* (the Lord of cows). The emblems of Shiva and Vishnu have common characteristics. Sectarian differences are out of place in the worship of the Divine.

Students should learn a lesson from a musical instrument like the *Veena*. It has different strings producing different vibrations. But if the vibrations are discordant, the music jars on the ears. Just as there should be harmony in playing on the *Veena*, there should be harmony among people in a country professing different faiths.

Shraddha and Bhakti

Shirdi Baba used to ask for two rupees from devotees who came to him. The two rupees symbolized *shraddha* (earnestness) and *bhakti* (devotion). These are the two qualities he expected from the devotees. The combination of the two is essential for spiritual progress. Only then bliss will emerge like a plant from a seed.

From this day onward, give up all differences and concentrate on realization of the Brahman (the Omni Self). All are embodiments of Brahman. In due course all will realize this truth by eschewing narrow-minded differences. Develop the sense of spiritual oneness by continuous practice. This sense is bound to grow if you act up to Swami's injunctions. The primary requisite is love for God.

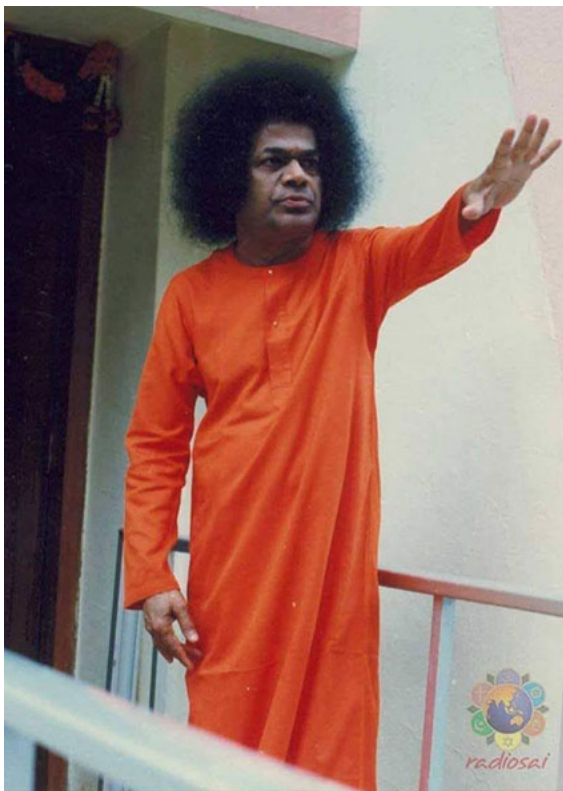
Source: *Sathya Sai Speaks*, Vol. 29

The Divine Surgeon

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba came into our lives during the latter half of 1978 when we were transferred to Raub, Pahang, Malaysia. Prior to that, although hailing from a Hindu religious family, much controversy and corruption of religious ethics, coupled with fanaticism of a certain ideology, shattered whatever belief and devotion I had for Hinduism.

Light came after a short period of darkness when in Raub we were 'introduced' to Bhagavan Baba in His own way. Love sprouted spontaneously for Bhagavan and my family was put in the right direction and devotion. Things began to fall in the right perspective, and our lives have become smooth and peaceful under the guidance of the Divine *Guru*.

Bhagavan's miracles were many and amongst others the latest is when Bhagavan became a surgeon to correct a bone deformity of my youngest child—Roshan.



Roshan, a boy of 8 years, is the youngest of my three children. This boy was born with a bowing deformity on both legs, but more pronounced in the left. It never struck us that the boy, who was walking by throwing his left foot across the right in the form of a 'T', needed treatment until one day on July 10th, 1981, he was referred to the Orthopedic Consultant in the Kuala Lumpur General Hospital. The consultant, who was from India, on examining the boy opined that he was having a rare bone deformity that could only be corrected by surgery. The consultant fixed an operation date, but on our plea he arranged for a second X-ray. He had a good look at a set of X-ray pictures taken prior to seeing him.

With heavy hearts we returned home thinking to ourselves the pain and agony the child would be undergoing if surgery was to be performed. We were more worried about the outcome of it. What would happen if something were to go wrong? Thoughts of the consultant's words that the leg bones must be "reset" sent cold waves down our spines. We prayed to Bhagavan Baba for help.

My wife, who easily breaks down due to motherly affection, was expressing her sorrow and simultaneously endeavoring to conceal it. As the father, I was trying to put up a bold front. However, both of us had one common stand. Leave it to Bhagavan Baba and apply His BLESSED *VIBHUTI* on both his legs before he goes to bed. My wife did it continuously for three days.

On the fourth day, as usual the boy was having tuition from his mother at home. Suddenly he complained of severe twisting pains in both his legs, but more pronounced in the left. The pain, according to him, was felt right up to his hips. The mother doubted the words of the boy, as he was known for his tricks to avoid his lessons. He would seize the slightest pretext to run away. But continuous pain inhibited the boy from learning further and he went to bed in tears. The whole matter was left at that stage, and I was not made known of it either.

The next day, when I was having my lunch my son happened to pass by, and something caught my eyes. It appeared that there was some change in the style of his walking. Without making him aware, I asked him to walk to a certain point in the house and what did I see? The boy walked perfectly normally. There was not the 'T' formation when he walked. I called my wife and even without informing her about my experience requested her to observe the walk. We could not believe our eyes. We asked the boy to run a short distance on the road opposite our house. It was done. The Divine Surgeon, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, had done it. What shall we say? How shall we express ourselves over this MIRACLE?

On 9-12-81, we had an appointment with Dato Dr. Sivanantham, Head of the Institute of Orthopedics and Traumatology, General Hospital, Kuala Lumpur, as the previous consultant had returned to India. We went into the doctor's room loaded with a fresh set of X-rays taken on that very day. We informed the doctor that we are Sai Baba devotees and told him of Baba's miracle that had taken place. We requested his professional opinion even though we needed no further proof. The X-rays were seen, the boy's legs were thoroughly examined, and a brief silence preceded before the doctor commented that the legs were perfect. In his own words 'I wish the doctor (from India) was here to witness this'. We requested Dr. Sivanantham for a statement of his professional findings, which he kindly consented to give. I reproduce below, with his permission, the report he gave to us:

'Roshan, an eight-year-old Indian male, was seen in the Orthopedic Clinic on 2nd September 1981 with a complaint of bowing deformity of his left leg since the time of his birth. He is handicapped by this deformity in his games in school and was shunned by his classmates as he could not run fast. He was seen on the 7th of October 1981 by a Consultant Orthopedic Surgeon in my Institute who confirmed that the boy had a medial torsion deformity of both tibiae (leg bones) more pronounced on the left than on the right. Patient was advised to undergo surgical treatment, but the parents wanted time to think over it before giving the consent for surgery.

'Patient was seen again by me on the 9th of December 1981, and to my surprise I could not detect any deformity in both the legs. X-rays of the legs did not show any deformity in the bones.

'It is a well-known fact that deformity in children can get corrected spontaneously, but this process takes many years. In this particular case the deformity has corrected itself within two months. According to the parents the boy complained of twisting pain in the legs for a few days and suddenly one fine morning they noticed him to be walking and running normally without any deformity in the legs. I cannot explain it in any other way except by saying that this is a miracle that is to be seen to be believed'.

How can we thank Bhagavan Baba for this? We only pray that Bhagavan Baba gives us strength to follow all HIS teachings and be worthy of HIS LOTUS FEET

—K. Karthikeyan, Raub, Malaysia
Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, August 1982

51st Annual Memorial Day Weekend Retreat

Rain and freezing temperatures failed to dampen the joy for more than 500 attendees during Region 2's 51st Annual Memorial Day Weekend Retreat, May 22-24, 2026, in Poyntelle, PA.



With the theme: 'Be the Light, Share the Light,' the retreat featured inspirational talks, soul-stirring *bhajans*, informative workshops, delightful cultural programs, and delicious healthy meals. The featured speakers, Dr. Sanjay Mahalingam and Ms. Aparna Murali, shared engaging stories about personal interactions with Swami, giving thoughtful insights for many to reflect upon.



Region 2 President Sreejith Narayan noted that Swami's blessings were profoundly felt this year, "first when *vibhuti* manifested in Swami's room during the camp set up, and especially when a storm caused a power outage. In that unexpected moment, everyone stepped up, helped one another, and truly lived the retreat theme by being the light and sharing the light."

The retreat opened on Friday night with rousing *bhajans* in the camp's gymnasium, with *omkar* and *Suprabhatam* on

Saturday morning. Participants conducted the retreat *sadhana* (spiritual practice)—STEP (Strides Toward Everlasting Peace) with Sai, in conjunction with *Vedam* chanting and *nagarsankirtan* around the camp. The procession ended with a flag hoisting outside Swami's room.



Dr. Mahalingam, who lived in the presence of Swami for seven years as a student and research scholar at the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, gave examples of effective ways to align ourselves more deeply with the Lord, noting that Swami once said to him with sadness in His voice, "All these people are looking at Me. As My wheelchair is passing, they still are thinking that there is something here that is not inside them."



Dr. Mahalingam challenged listeners to, "Go to the next step of evolution, moving from doing, having and becoming to embracing being an expanded, responsive being. Replace your inner noise with the presence of Swami in your heart. Dare to fall in love with your own self and not be afraid to say that Swami, you and I are one."

Ms. Murali, the Zone 1 Education Coordinator, shared three insights and three stories that tied in with the retreat's theme, expounding on the

definition of light and darkness and explaining that in darkness the light shines bright. "Blessings can come out of both. Every single one of us is blessed because He has lit the lamp of love in our heart and that is our good fortune," she stated. "There are so many things that we cannot see with our eyes but are filled with light," and she encouraged everyone to be aware of Swami's grace and blessings.

The weekend's four workshops included discussions on how to reduce our environmental footprint; how to use Sai's teachings to overcome challenges in our daily life; how to use positivity and kindness to brighten our everyday life; and how to improve one's health through holistic, preventive health care in general and specifically for the bones.





Additionally, two uplifting cultural programs drew inspiration from Swami's core values. 'Fist of Faith,' a presentation by SSE children, gave examples of how one can practice right action even when they believe God is not watching. A Young Adult play, "It's All in the Head," beautifully depicted how surrendering one's ego and respecting others can transform a toxic workspace into a productive environment.



Always—The Word

While waking, working, meditating, eating,
Chanting, writing, reading, writhing in pain
Or happily walking or talking with chums,
Unheard, the inner voice, it hums,
Sairam, Sairam, Sairam.

When worries and trials bark at me
I drown their clamor in a trice
Chanting Sairam, Sairam, Sairam.

When trivial pleasures tempt me
Or petty cravings haunt me,
I free myself from tangle

Saying Sairam, Sairam, Sairam.

When I fast, I live on Thee;
When I break my fast, I taste Thee;
For, Thou art the Food sustaining me,
Thy Name, my tonic, Sairam, Sairam.

Every night when Thou appear
In dream, I cry in joy;
Every morn, when my eyes do fall
On Thy Picture full of charm,
"I shout in great delight—
Sairam, Sairam, Sairam.

In the depth of slumber
When I am all alone
With nothing to distract,
And none to draw my thoughts,
I whisper mute, with every breath—
Sairam, Sairam, Sairam!

—Dr. Somasunderam

Jaffna (Ceylon [Sri Lanka])

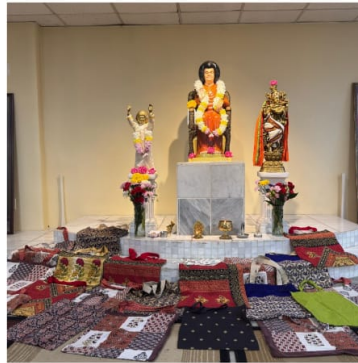
Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, July 1968

Sri Sathya Sai Group of Malvern: Sacred Sari Service

The "Sacred Sari Service", an initiative started by Geetha Bhatt from SSSIO Region 4, brought Sai devotees together in collaboration with the medical team to make tote bags from gently/rarely used saris for donation at a medical camp in Uganda in June this year.

For the Sri Sathya Sai Group of Malvern Women's Wing, on May 17, Ragini Bhoopathy lovingly guided them in selecting the required fabric, patiently teaching them how to stitch the bags, and was an inspiration throughout this activity. They are very grateful to be part of this service where they learned a new skill that brought them happiness, inspiration, and a beautiful sense of togetherness.

Swami says, "Unity with Purity leads to Divinity", and the Sri Sathya Sai Group of Malvern's Women's Wing felt Swami's guiding hand while they lovingly made these 20 bags that they made for donation in the medical camp in Uganda. The bags were submitted at the Mid-Atlantic Region Retreat held during the Memorial Day Weekend.

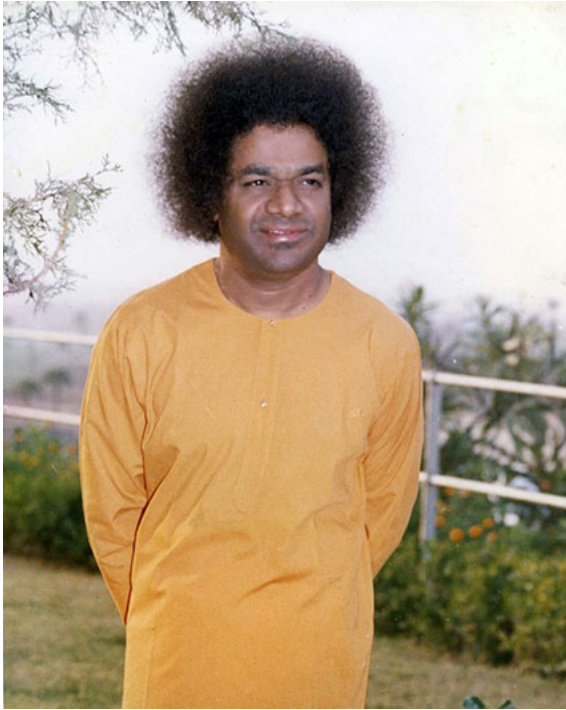


The "Sai" Dream

I have some kind of disbelief in the dreams I see of Bhagavan. I am inclined to view half-heartedly and suspiciously the veracity of such dreams, unless confirmed by Him (in that case I ask no questions!).

One simple reason for this is that most of the dreams have been unfulfilled. So, I convinced myself that the dreams I saw (those of others may be different) were merely those of wish-fulfillment and no relevance whatsoever to the reality.

Another reason is that most dreams have soothed me and comforted me, that is, they occurred in the way I would have wished them to occur. So, I was further convinced this was only a manifestation of my own dream-consciousness, asserting its authority in the dream-world, though it could not move a blade of grass in the sensuous world.



Moreover, a good part of my consciousness was filled with Bhagavan, and so if I had to dream, the probability of dreaming about Him was high. Such dreams would be natural phenomena, and not explicitly the result of His *Sankalpa*.

But another thing that struck me very much, and which I discovered, to my great discomfiture, only recently was that I never could dream without 'myself' being present in it in some form! Either I was present as the central figure (as in most cases) or at least as a spectator.

However, I am yet to come across a single person who has dreamt without being present in some way or without being connected in any way in the dream. That is why Bhagavan has said: 'I' is the identity that PERSISTS in sleep, dream, and waking. And since *Patanjali* has called *Samadhi*, "experience without dreams" it is well-nigh impossible, and if ever it occurs it would be in the highest stage of spiritual elevation, and I am not in that, I know only too well!

The same thing also happens in our thought, sleep...etc. I can't visualize anything in the cosmos without ME! Either as spectator or as something else, because 'I' am the identity that will PERSIST everywhere, always! This is also a sign of the ego or whatever may be left in us of it after having been cut to size by HIM.

However, I did dream another one last week, which I was forced to believe because of its extraordinary nature. I will 'censor' the "wish fulfillment" part, which in any case will center around my EGO and tell you the more interesting part.

Though I have always been speaking, thinking ...of Swami for nearly 9 months, (after the summer course), I never had a Sai dream, not even one of wish fulfillment, during this period. On that particular day, I was not quite well and so, incidentally, I had comparatively less time to think of Swami than on other days. Yet, the dream did come after 8 months, nearly.

I saw Bhagavan on the 1st floor of our house in my study-cum-*puja* room. He was sitting on my chair beside my table that was full of papers and trash. I was standing. The first question I asked Him was: "Bhagavan, when I am with you (i.e. in Parthi) I am alright, but when I come here (to Trivandrum [southern part of India]) I am not at all well. See the state of table, dirty and disorderly, could you not find a way out of this impasse, please?"

Bhagavan: "Yes, Yes, that is why I have come"

Me: "Bhagavan, I have composed so many songs on you. What is your opinion about them, are they good?"

Bhagavan: (Love is vibrant in His voice, to quote Mr. Murphet) "Why are you asking such a question? Was it not I who gave those songs to you? Then what is the meaning of your question?"

(I am silenced for a moment)

Me: "You seem so close to me now, and so loving, but when I come there, sometimes you do not see me, you are so neglectful, why do you do this?"

Bhagavan: "Why do you ask such things? How can I neglect anyone? After all, I and you are one and the same. Then is it proper to speak of neglect here? Do you think so?"

(Baba continues) "You must know to discriminate between the real and the unreal. Now, there is dream. As a dream, it is real, but as otherwise, it is not. This is relative reality, as distinct from original reality (probably the word was absolute reality). You think the world you see around you is real. No, it is only relatively real. The true reality can be perceived only by the ATMA. Remember."

I must confess I cannot disbelieve such dreams easily because of the depth of thought involved therein. Moreover, this dream's course was not charted by me, it went in a surprising direction.

—S. Sankar, Summer Course Student (1978)

Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, May 1979

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

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



Conscientious Composting

Tidbit: Did you know that composting a) cuts down on the amount of trash in a landfill, b) reduces the costs and carbon emissions from transporting the material to a landfill, c) enriches the soil with nutrients, d) Increases the soil's ability to retain moisture, thus helping to prevent erosion, and e) prevents and suppresses plant diseases and pests? Also, composting can help capture carbon thus this activity helps to reduce our carbon footprint.

What is composting?

Composting is nature's way of recycling. It involves us collecting organic waste—like food scraps and yard trimmings—and allowing it to naturally decay while providing it air and some water to keep it moist so that the microorganisms break down the organic material. The result is a dark, crumbly, nutrient-rich material called “compost.” This is very good for use as a natural fertilizer for plants.

Pile Composting

This method involves creating a pile or bin where organic materials are mixed and allowed to decompose with the help of air and microorganisms.

Materials you can use: Grass clippings, kitchen scraps, and vegetable peels.

Prohibited Materials: Meat products, dairy, pet litter or pet waste.

The mix ratio: Combine 2 to 3 parts “brown” material (dry leaves, cardboard) with 1 part “green” material (kitchen scraps, peels) by volume.

Maintenance: Keep the pile damp and turn the pile every 2–3 weeks for fast results, or less frequently if you prefer a slower composting process. The turning prevents the development of anaerobic conditions (low to no oxygen) which we don't want to happen for healthy composting.

Trench Composting

Trench Composting is a simple and effective way to recycle kitchen food scraps. Instead of using a compost bin or pile, food scraps are buried directly in a small hole or trench in the garden, where naturally occurring soil organisms, fungi, and earthworms break them down over time.

As the scraps decompose, they return valuable organic matter and nutrients to the soil, improving its structure, moisture retention, and fertility. Once the hole is covered, the process happens naturally underground with little odor and without attracting most pests.

By rotating the burial location around the garden, you create rich, healthy soil while keeping food waste out of landfills. It is an easy composting method that requires no special equipment and only a few minutes of work.

The below photos by sister Shailaja Rabindran, Region 2 Envirocare Coordinator, demonstrate the simple steps of this method.



More references for composting

- [EPA: Composting at Home](https://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home#backsteps) – (https://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home#backsteps)
- [NRDC: Composting 101](https://www.nrdc.org/stories/composting-101) – (https://www.nrdc.org/stories/composting-101)

Swami Says...

“Thus, man is deriving innumerable debt from Nature, and enjoying the amenities provided by Nature in various ways. But what is the gratitude he is showing to Nature? What gratitude is he offering to the Divine? He is forgetting the Divine who is the provider of everything. That is the reason for his becoming a prey to various difficulties and calamities. While he is receiving countless gifts from Providence, he is offering nothing in return to Nature or God. This shows how unnatural and heartless is the behaviour of man. When we are enjoined to return good for evil, how unbecoming it is to fail even to return good for good? Man is not learning the great lessons Nature is teaching him. The foremost lesson is doing service with no expectation of return.”

~ [*Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 21, 12 July \(1988\)*](#)

Thought of the MONTH

Breath

The very first act with which the career of a living being starts is “breathing and vibration of vital airs”. When one thinks of it, it is wonderful how it happens. It is an amazing mystery. No human being resolves, at the moment of earthly life, to draw in and breathe out the air that exists around him. It proceeds without being willed or wished for. Not only people but every living organism is evidence of this great marvel.

~*Sathya Sai Vahini*

It is said, “*Easwarah sarva bhoothanam* (God is the indweller of every living being).” But with what form? How can one contemplate on God with an invisible form? What is the use of such contemplation? Divinity is the very life breath that can be perceived and heard. How can one recognize and experience the sound of this divine breath?

The *Upanishads* have given the names of *Brahman* and *Atma*—invisible divine breath in human beings. But one cannot understand these abstract concepts with any amount of explanation.

What is the meaning of *Easwaratwa* (Divinity)? It can be understood as the divine auspicious breath of *soham* that emanates from a human being. *Soham* means “I am that” (Divinity). The sound of the breath in human beings, i.e., *soham* establishes the

nature of Divinity. If one tries to contemplate on the form without recognizing the sound, he will not be able to understand the nature of Divinity. *Soham* is *satwic* (pure, serene) in nature. This *satwa guna* is *Easwaratwa* (the Shiva Principle).

There is another principle that emanates from this divine breath, namely, *Vishnutwa* (the *Vishnu* Principle). What is the form of this *Vishnu* Principle? The feelings in the mind. In other words, mind is the *Vishnu* Principle. There is yet another form that emerges from the navel of *Vishnu*, namely, *Brahma*. Thus, the principles of *Brahma*, *Vishnu*, and *Maheshwara* are emanating from the *Soham Tatwa* in a human being itself.

~Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 35 (2002)

Before you start *dhyana*, your meditation session, chant *Soham*, inhaling *So* and exhaling *Ham*. *Soham* means—'He is I.' It identifies you with the Infinite and expands your consciousness. Harmonize the breath and the thought. Breathe gently, naturally; do not make it artificial and labored. It must flow in and out, soft and silent. If you have some flour on your palm and hold it near the nostrils, it should not get fluttered the least; the breath must be as soft as that! The faster the breath, the sooner you are burnt up, the shorter becomes your life span! Slow breath quietens and calms the emotions. The mood of relaxation produced by this *Soham* recital is a precondition for a profitable session of meditation.

~Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 9 (1969)

Sorrow springs from egoism, the feeling that you do not deserve to be treated so badly, that you are left helpless. When egoism goes, sorrow disappears. Ignorance is just a mistake, mistaken identity of the body as the Self! In fact, you must each one try to become egoless, and then the Lord will accept you as His flute. Once, when a number of people were asked by Me what they would like to be in the hands of God, I got various answers. Some said the lotus, some the conch, some the discus, but no one mentioned the flute. I would advise you to become the flute, for then the Lord will come to you, pick you up, put you to His lips, and breathe through you. Out of the hollowness of your heart due to the utter absence of egoism that you have developed, He will create captivating music for all creation to enjoy. Be straight, without any will of your own. Merge your will in the will of God. Inhale only the breath of God. That is divine life, that is what I want you all to achieve.

~Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 1 (1953-60)