

STUDY CIRCLES FOR DIVINITY

Volume Two

**FROM THE DISCOURSES OF
SRI SATHYA SAI BABA**



Compiled by
Dr Ron & Suwanti Farmer with Dr. Ron Woodward

Divine Print Publishers

www.divineprint.com

STUDY CIRCLES FOR DIVINITY

Volume Two

FROM THE DISCOURSES OF SRI SATHYA SAI BABA

Acknowledgements

All praise for the book goes directly to Lord Sai.
All failings and criticisms can be laid at the doors of the compilers.

With deep love,

Yours in Service

Dr. Ron and Suwanti Farmer
Dr Ross Woodward

Australia
April 2010



First Edition 2010
Published online by:
Divine Print Publishers
P.O.Box 389
Ormeau, 4208
Queensland
Australia

www.divineprint.com

Contents



Preface

Part 1:	Introduction
Part 2:	Study Circles
2.0	Introduction
2.1	Facilitating Study Circles
Part 3:	Understanding Emotions
3.0	Introduction
3.1	Emotions
3.2	Jealousy
3.3	Pride
3.4	Greed
3.5	Patience
3.6	Sorrow
3.7	Suffering
3.8	Compassion
Part 4:	Human Relationships
4.0	Introduction
4.1	Men
4.2	Women
4.3	Marriage
4.4	Parents
4.5	Children
Part 5:	Human Values Education
5.0	Introduction
5.1	Education
5.2	Knowledge
5.3	Character
5.4	Students
Part 6:	Spiritual Guidance
6.0	Introduction
6.1	Duty
6.2	Work
6.3	Power
6.4	Politics
6.5	Science

Preface

Sathya Sai Baba signed a copy of the original ‘Study Circles for Divinity’ during an interview including the present compilers, Dr Ross Woodward and Dr Ron and Suwanti Farmer. The three of them took that to mean that the book had been blessed as a valuable resource tool for understanding Sai’s teachings. Since that signal day in 1998 many individuals and groups have applied themselves earnestly to studying the material provided in that first volume. So committed has been their endeavours that, over the years, many Sai Groups and centres diligently worked through each one of the chapters two and even three times, and have been enquiring if further topics will be made available in a second volume of ‘Study Circles for Divinity’.

As readers will see from the contents page we have selected 45 new topics for the present volume, bringing the total to 90 over both volumes.

Volume 2 will not be published at this stage in hard copy but, along with the first volume , is freely available for reading and download on the website www.divineprint.com

In bringing together this present volume the compilers are grateful for having been granted the opportunity to immerse themselves once more in the vast nectarine ocean of wisdom sayings from Sathya Sai Baba.



1. INTRODUCTION



1.0. INTRODUCTION

“Only the foolish among men seek to satisfy themselves from the limited counterfeit happiness through worldly objectives. The wise know better....can the lake, which strikes us as invitingly charming so long as the mirage is on, quench one’s thirst? If one deludes himself with the belief that it can and runs towards the non-existent sheet of water, he can only get more thirsty. No other benefit can accrue to him.

Therefore, one should learn Atma Vidya, the process by which one becomes aware of one’s Atmic Reality; that is, one’s Divinity. By learning and living it, one can quench his own thirst and help to quench the thirst of all mankind.” (Vidya V 48)

THE WISDOM OF SATHYA SAI

Lord Sathya Sai Baba defines the word Vidya as the ‘educational process’, the ‘real teaching’, the ‘supreme wisdom’. It is the fuel for the fire of spiritual yearning. Without such knowledge and guidance the fire remains but a bed of coals steadily losing its warmth and glow.

Sathya means Truth. Lord Sai has said on many occasions that He has come to teach, “to repaint the signposts on the highway to God”. Without His words, the vast majority of the peoples of the world stumble along, driven by petty desires, grievances and jealousies, or weighed down by grief, sadness and disappointment with occasional bursts of temporary happiness. We are a lost tribe, uncomfortable and fearful of our fate, yet unaware that the eternal joy and happiness we all seek is but a hair’s breadth away.

Of course the illusion of happiness abounds on all sides; yet, underneath the surface of fun and pleasure, there lies great pain, despair and longing. In Australia we have no starvation, high standards of material welfare, education, sanitation and housing; and we are regarded by many as a peaceful country with an enviable multicultural harmony. Yet, in the midst of all this plenty, it has one of the highest rates of youth suicide in the world. How can this be?

One can only conclude that our society has lost its foundation of love and wisdom, and that the crumbling walls of Inner Knowing are exposing our youth to the dangers of greed, anger, envy, hate, pride and lust. So many of our young people look forward and see only darkness, both within and without. They are the canaries in the coal mine, dying from exposure to the gases of deceit and meaninglessness.

Lord Sathya Sai Baba has come at such a time to awaken us from this dream which comfortably accommodates youth suicide, politics without principle and business immorality. He has said that every word He speaks or writes has within it the potential for awakening: that any one sentence or phrase, if repeated and acted upon, is enough to bring lasting peace and joy to the diligent seeker.

In the teachings of Sathya Sai we have before us the greatest collection of written wisdom ever made available to the human race. It is pure, unadulterated by the mists of time and reinterpretation of scholars. It is complete, untouched by the decaying effects of war, religious

strife, neglect and privilege. It is immediately applicable to our age, to all cultures and climes, to all peoples and religions. With this wisdom, and the personal transformation it can produce when put into daily practice, we can re-lay the foundations for a happy and moral society, we can re-build the temple walls for a higher, lasting peace within ourselves.

Each one of us has latent unbounded wisdom waiting to be discovered. When two or more seekers after Truth gather together to share their limited understandings, the tiny flame of wisdom in each one is fanned into a bright fire by the enlightening words of the other. By discussing the great spiritual truths of Lord Sai, and indeed of all great religions, we can follow the path of the words and come to an understanding of the deeper meanings and the wisdom they contain.

Clearly it is not enough to make a decision to love God, and from then on to sing His praises and adorn His ornamental forms with garlands and jewels. We have seen that, unless we understand the words 'love' and 'God' and understand how to experience and live that Love, we will be light years away from achieving lasting happiness and universal peace.

To reach such an understanding, we need to devote time and effort to study and discuss the timeless wisdom of Lord Sai and other great Messengers from God.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

As with the first volume of 'Study Circles for Divinity', this second volume will be of great value to those with the role of facilitator in a Study Circle. It will also be useful for those individuals seeking a resource book for studying particular aspects or themes of the teachings of Sathya Sai Baba.

This book is ideal for the individual seeker who wishes to study a particular theme. This could include:

- The person who is struggling with a particular difficulty in life, such as lack of self-confidence, the death of a loved one or a broken relationship.
- The person who is endeavouring to resolve some confusion about a spiritual conundrum or principle, such as why we suffer or have 'accidents'.
- The writer who is preparing material for a book, article or talk on one of the different topics covered. For these people, each quotation is accompanied by its source, so that the reader can turn to it and read more about the subject or context.
- Seekers who are interested in comparing the words of Sathya Sai Baba with those of other great spiritual Teachers. Each section commences with relevant sayings from G.J.Gurdjieff, Sri Aurobindo, Paramahansa Yogananda, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and other notables from history. This is an important aspect of the book when we consider the emphasis Lord Sai places on the essential unity underlying all of the major religions and the one unchanging Truth.

The publication of the present compilation and the earlier volume of 'Study Circles for Divinity' is not a proclamation that it is the only material deserving of discussion in a Study Circle. Sai Baba encourages us to study the wisdom and wealth of all the great teachers.

Study Circles for Divinity. Volume Two Discourses of Sathya Sai Baba copyright Divine Print 2010

Material from the many Holy Scriptures may be studied and discussed, and is often fruitfully led by a member who adheres to the particular faith from which the material is drawn. Here it is advisable for the Study Circle convenor to be well-prepared with material from the words and pen of Sathya Sai, so that discussion does not falter in fruitless discussion about the accuracy or otherwise of certain phrases.

It must be remembered that almost all spiritual material in English has been translated from the original language of a Master, including that from Sathya Sai Baba who usually delivers His discourses in Telegu. It is unproductive to argue the meaning of a particular word. It is more productive to discuss the general meaning of what is being said. Always remember that even if we put into practice just one instruction of Lord Sai or other great Teachers with diligence, the rewards will be immense.

THE IDENTIFICATION OF SOURCES

Sources are not given for the quotes from the Teachers and Masters other than Sathya Sai Baba. Due to the passage of time, the uncertainties of translation, the existence of various versions, and familiarity with these texts the inclusion of the source did not appear necessary. Further, Lord Sai is taken to be the most recent and thus accurately-recorded teacher of Truth and, as such, identification of sources in relation to His words seemed necessary.

The following notations are used at the end of each quotation:

- 031192 would mean that the words were given in a discourse on the particular date, in this case on the 3rd November 1992. The discourse appearing in *Sanathana Sarathi* or 'Sathya Sai Speaks' indicates the date on which the discourse was given, with very few exceptions. Only the last two digits of the year are given, so that 92 represents 1992 and 09 means 2009.
- SSB 93,45 would indicate the quotation comes from a discourse reported in the 'Summer Showers in Brindavan' series, in the year 1993 and appears on page 45.
- Prasanthi V 17 would come from the Vahini series, in this case from 'Prasanthi (Supreme Peace) Vahini' and appears on page 17. The page number varies in some editions, but the quotation can be found if the adjacent pages are searched.
- SSS Vol.6 1966 201 would indicate that the quotation is from an undated divine discourse given sometime in 1966 and reproduced on page 201 in Volume 6 of the 'Sathya Sai Speaks' series.
- SS Oct 88,269 indicates page 269 in the October 1988 issue of *Sanathana Sarathi* and may refer to an article by a Sai devotee, or a divine discourse lacking the exact date of presentation.
- CSSB 93 means page 93 in the book by Dr John Hislop titled 'Conversations with Sathya Sai Baba', 1978 Edition.
- SSS Vol 15 Box 264 means that the quotation is in a 'box' on page 264 in Volume 15 of the 'Sathya Sai Speaks' series without any date or source given as to when Sai baba said or wrote the words.

- DBG 33 238 means that the quote can be found on page 238 of the book titled 'Discourses on the Bhagavad Gita, compiled and edited by Al Drucker, published March 1988. The number 33 means the thirty-third discourse on the Gita given by Sathya Sai Baba, during 34 days of evening discourses on this topic in August/September of 1984, to His college students at Prasanthi Nilayam, India.
- PD 2 84 means that the quote can be found on page 84 of Prema Dhara Part 2. Prema Dhara Part 1 and 2 are collections of letters written by Sathya Sai Baba to His students, teachers and others.

CONCLUSION

Each one of us is an actor in a play which is being directed by the Divine Hand and whose end is already written. Our role is to play the part we have been given with enthusiasm and to the best of our ability. It is our destiny to awaken to the One Self which abides in all. Some of us are not yet aware that we are in the play, while others are playing their part with varying degrees of awareness. However, without a doubt, each one of us is destined to become a star whose love and wisdom will illumine the world. Even those who now see only darkness will awaken eventually to sweet love and lasting joy.

The material in this book is only a minute fraction of the Truth which Sathya Sai Baba continues to reveal to the world. By studying and implementing this Truth we can become co-directors in the play whose final act is love, perfect equanimity and bliss.

It is our humble wish that this small selection of the vast wisdom teachings given to us by Sathya Sai Baba, compiled in the following sections and chapters, will be of some assistance to fellow travellers on the Path to the Divine. May the words of Lord Sathya Sai Baba and those of the other great Teachers and Masters resonate within the hearts of all aspirants and Study Circle participants.

2. STUDY CIRCLE



2.0. INTRODUCTION

“What is real Study Circle? ‘Study’ is for steady. ‘Circle’ is for purity and peace. Study Circle participants should experience oneness and constant steadiness....In a Study Circle, a book is selected, discussed and the meaning taken. A violin has four strings, and music is produced by playing on this. Each person takes a different meaning, but the ultimate meaning is one. Sugarcane has different names and forms but juice is one, and it is sweet.” (140595)

Attendance at Study Circles at many Sai Centres is often much less than for the devotional singing meeting. However some Centres have good attendance and perhaps the reasons for this can be seen by recognising what people want from a Study Circle. These include:

- ❖ A feeling of involvement, of being recognised by others as having a point of view worth considering, even though they might choose not to speak.
- ❖ A sense of joint exploration, a seeking of consensus as to what a particular phrase or paragraph means.
- ❖ The need to study topics which are relevant and practical.
- ❖ The opportunity to stay focussed on the chosen theme or topic, with the facilitator gently but firmly leading the group back to its message.
- ❖ A group feeling of inner peace, with argumentation and egoistic monologues being quickly diffused or pre-empted by the Study Circle leader or the members of the group.
- ❖ Occasional presentations by someone regarded as ‘knowledgeable’ in a particular aspect of Lord Sai’s teachings, although we are advised that this form of meeting is not really a ‘Study Circle’.

2.1. FACILITATING STUDY CIRCLES

Prepare

- Pray for a **topic** or subject, or let the group decide.
- Download the relevant **material** from Study Circles for Divinity Volume 2 at www.divineprint.com
- Have enough **copies** for people to at least share.
- Set up the room in a **circle** or a near-circle in front of an altar.
- Optional: have a board or hanging paper to **write** down important points.
- **Pray** for Sai Baba's guidance and presence.

Begin

- Welcome everyone and **explain** to newcomers the format of the program, that the participants regard the words of Sai Baba as being Absolute Truth (allowing for context and translation into English), and that the role of the group is to seek to reach a consensus on what He wishes to convey to us.
- Taking it in turns around the circle, the facilitator asks someone to **read aloud** a paragraph or more of the prepared material.
- Ask the group members to give their **understanding** of what the dictated passage means, or to ask a question about some or all of its contents.
- **Encourage** discussion by asking questions like, "What does this mean?", "How can we apply this?", "Who has encountered this?", "Why is this difficult?", etc.
- **Write** the main points on the board (optional).
- Allow **silences** to continue.
- Only ask for **volunteers** to say something; avoid one person dominating by selecting each speaker.
- Guide the discussion. **Keep to the topic.**
- Stop arguments when they start by **moving** on.
- Encourage personal **experiences** if relevant.
- **Relate** other relevant things Sai Baba has said or well-known devotees have written or experienced.
- **Act** as though you know little about the topic; offer your opinion only if the discussion lags, or briefly at the end of a particular discussion.
- **Never** criticise or judge or tell others they are wrong unless they first invite it.
- Let **others** speak – do not speak over the top of them.
- Endeavour to be **aware** of Sai Baba within each person.
- **Smile** and keep your sense of humour.

Finish

- **Summarise** the discussion.
- Ask for any final clarification needed or **short** points to be made.
- Try and let someone else have the **final** statement.
- **Close** with the Asatoma prayer in English or Sanskrit.
- Silently **thank** Sai Baba for leading the discussion.

STUDY CIRCLE MATERIAL

Convenors or facilitators of Study Circles might like to choose a topic for study and discussion by one of the following methods:

- Work through the sections in the book, one after the other in order of presentation;
- Pray and ask Lord Sai a few days prior to the Study Circle meeting to select one of the topics listed on the Contents page of this book. Be aware of the single word that will come to your mind. Alternatively, this can be done by selecting the topic from a bowl containing slips of paper on each of which a separate topic is written;
- Observe which themes are of immediate relevance to a particular member or members of the Study Circle. Different topics can be selected depending upon the activities of the group or the religious festivals at the time.

Alternatively, the group could discuss one whole discourse by Lord Sai available from the monthly magazine '*Sanathana Sarathi*' or the Sathya Sai Speaks series of books which contain discourses from 1953. Sometimes this is appropriate around particular festival days or dates in the calendar, such as Gurupurnima, Ladies Day or Christmas.

Books written by Lord Sai on particular themes are also available, such as the Vahini series; for example, *Prema Vahini* collates a series of articles dealing with Love written by Sai Baba. The Study Circle could steadily work through the book, reading aloud each paragraph and discussing the meaning and application to daily life.

3. UNDERSTANDING EMOTIONS



3.0. UNDERSTANDING EMOTIONS – INTRODUCTION

“Man has to undergo different experiences dominated by different qualities from time to time. Man has to experience pleasure as well as pain, sun as well as rain. Man cannot understand the value of joy unless he experiences pain. Pain and pleasure are like sun and shadow, both go together” (SSB 1993, 44)

In the first volume of Study Circles for Divinity we included a chapter titled ‘Managing Emotions’, within which we included compilations of Sai’s words on the individual subjects of Anger, Fear, Grief, Joy and Mind.

We continue this exploration of the emotional field in the present volume with compilations on the subjects of Emotions, Jealousy, Pride, Greed, Patience, Sorrow, Suffering and Compassion. Our challenge is to gain some understanding of these energy fields so that we can maximize the heart-opening, peace-inducing ones like patience and compassion, and profit by – or at least not be poisoned or blinded by – the negative, heart-closing ones like jealousy, pride, greed and sorrow.

Sathya Sai Baba has said that all emotions have a vital role to play in awakening us from our sleep of ignorance about who we really are. All of our feelings can be valuable tools in our quest to rediscover our divine nature, at one with all of creation. He says:

One must feel that all the hunger, thirst, joy and sorrow, grief and loss, suffering and anger, food and appetite are but impulses helping us towards attaining the Presence of the Lord. (Prema V 65)

To put it another way, every one of our emotions, whether they be positive or negative, can be regarded as spiritual ‘rocket fuel’ exquisitely designed to take us closer to our Godhead. But what we also need is direction, otherwise we can find ourselves being propelled away from the Source instead of towards it. Sai’s teachings of supreme wisdom give us the map for our inner journey so that we can guide this mortal craft in which we fly towards re-discovering our true Self.

The emotion itself implicitly tells us whether we are facing the wrong or the right way, whether we have filled our mind with un-Truth instead of Truth. We all know that, when we are feeling impatient, greedy or envious, something is seriously amiss and, like the fish out of water which thrashes about in its discomfort, we have a ‘divine discontent’ which makes us strive to relieve the discomfort. In contrast, when we feel compassionate, humble or patient, we seek to have more of this nectar – we know that we are facing our sun and have only to keep walking in that direction to find ourselves, to experience union with the Whole, the Infinite, the All.

As we all know so well, the mind is the key. Sai Baba says that if we turn it towards the 'right' – towards goodness, truth and beauty – the lock to our heart will spring open; if we turn it to the 'left' – leaving behind the noble, uplifting virtues – the heart will be 'locked up', unable to open to the delight and glory of our true nature.

Our time here on Earth is so short – when we look back on a few decades of missed opportunities – and yet we have such a rich load of gold to mine. Every emotion, whether low or high, negative or positive, dark or light, is a doorway into and an invitation to explore a vast interior world which embraces all of the external as well. Each influx or recession of feeling is an opportunity for the bubble of illusion to burst, for us to die once more to this identification with who we think we are – the little self – and to know ourselves a little more as the entire Ocean, the universal 'I' and the all-inclusive 'We'.

3.1 EMOTIONS

WISE SAYING

You must never judge by what you happen to be feeling; and whenever life is proving difficult for any reason whatsoever, you must not abandon hope and behave as if things would never improve. Do not imagine you have been utterly abandoned, even if I send you distress for a time, or take away some comfort. That is what the journey to the heavenly kingdom involves. (Thomas A Kempis)

From Discourses of Sai Baba

THE NATURE OF EMOTIONS

Man is constantly afflicted with some source of worry or other. He is never free from anxiety. Why? Because he is identifying himself with the body. How did he acquire this body? Through his past activities and deeds. What were they caused by? By the twin pulls of love and hate. How did they originate? They were born out of the entanglement in duality, in the opposites. And, why does he get snared by them? Ignorance of the Truth, the One. (201182)

If you are drawn towards pleasure-giving objects and other material gains, you are in for unending worry, fear and anxiety, absence of peace, in fact. The happiness they contribute is as unreal as the happiness you derive from similar things in your dreams. The experience of the waking state is as unreal and fleeting as the dream. The seen is a dream; the unseen is the real. There is a mixture of reality and unreality in the variety of the universe. That is why it deludes; that is why joy and grief are fleeting. (141064)

WE ARE NOT OUR EMOTIONS

While proceeding along the road, you can watch your shadow falling on mud or dirt, thorn or sand, hollow or mound, wet or dry patches of land. You are unaffected by the fate of your shadow, is it not? Nor is the shadow made dirty thereby. It does not worry in the least where it falls or what it wades through. We know that the shadow and its experiences are not eternal or true. Similarly, you must get convinced that 'you' are but the shadow of the Absolute and you are essentially not this 'you' but the Absolute itself. That is the remedy for sorrow, travail and pain. (010856)

When a plane flies across the sky, it leaves no mark on it, no streak that lasts, no furrow or pot-hole that interferes with further traffic. So too, allow all feelings and emotions to cross your mind, but do not allow them to cause an impression. This can be done by inquiry, by

quiet reasoning within oneself, more than by listening to lectures or study of books.
(SSS Vol.6 1966, 336)

When praised, man gets inflated; when blamed, he gets deflated. But for one who trusts in God, these reactions are signs of weakness. Man must withstand both praise and blame, success and failure, pleasure and pain; like the Meri Mountain peak, he must strive to be steadfast and unmoved. Once you collect desires, you become their slave; you will find no end to them. When they are attained, others assail you and still leave you discontented. Be aware of your innate Divinity and show these recurring desires their due place. The Atma in you is unaffected by desire or defeat or victory. They are passing clouds. The sun is not concerned with their comings and goings. (031081)

GUNAS AND THE EMOTIONS

Man is happy at one time, miserable at another; he is afraid one moment and courageous at another. Why? Because he is shaped so by the Gunas. Do you say no? Then how can you explain these changes? They alone can transform men from one phase to another like this.

If the three Gunas - Sathwa, Rajas and Thamas - are equally balanced, then there will be no change in him. This never happens; they are always out of balance. When one is dominant and the others are dormant, then Prakrithi (the world) makes him assume many roles. The three Gunas represent the three aspects of human nature. Rajoguna is the attachment that brings about desires and creates eagerness to enjoy the objective world that is 'seen'; it breeds desire for physical and heavenly pleasure. Thamoguna cannot grasp the reality; so it misunderstands easily and takes the false to be the true. It leads persons into negligence and error. It binds, instead of releasing. Sathwaguna controls the cause of grief and sorrow; encourages people to follow the path of real joy and happiness. Therefore, being single-pointed and un-affected by either of these three is the basis for purity and steadfastness.
(Geetha V 193)

There are three types of people: The Thamasic who are like iron balls, impervious to any softening influence; the Rajasic who are like cotton, absorbent but not changing their own nature; and the Sathwic, who melt as butter melts at the joy or grief of others, or at the mention of the leelas of the Lord. They dive deep into the source and spring of sympathy. Anger, envy, greed and intolerance are all so many holes in the pot; the waters of Shanti (Peace), happiness and contentment leak through the holes and the pot becomes empty. The pot has to be repaired and all leaks stopped so that it may be useful. (270960)

HUMAN EMOTIONS HAVE TO BE GUIDED

Human impulses and emotions have to be guided and controlled. Just as the raging waters of the Godhaavari have to be curbed by bunds, halted by dams, tamed by canals and led quietly to the ocean, which can swallow all floods without a trace, so too the age-long instincts of
Study Circles for Divinity. Volume Two Discourses of Sathya Sai Baba copyright Divine Print 2010

men have to be trained and transmuted by contact with higher ideals and powers. When the fruit is ripe, it will fall off the branch of its own accord. Similarly, when renunciation saturates your heart, you lose contact with the world and slip into the lap of the Lord. *(261061)*

In the past, emotions and feelings were trained and directed towards the achievement of humility. Why are personages like Shankaracharya, Ramanujacharya, Madhwacharya, Buddha, Jesus, Zoroaster and other such religious pioneers, revered in human hearts until this day? Is their scholarship the reason? No. Their virtues and lives reflecting those virtues -- these are the reasons. *(061181)*

Now the whole world is very agitated; it is full of discontent and anxiety, fear and petty faction and hatred. In order to calm and quieten it and remove the discontent and anxiety, you must have enthusiasm and courage. *(030958)*

REASONING WITH EMOTIONS

Your feelings and emotions warp even your thought processes; and reason is made by them into an untamed bull. Very often, egoism tends to encourage and justify the wildness, for a person is led along the wrong path by his very reason, if that is the path he likes! You very often come to the conclusion you want to reach! Unless you are extra careful to examine the very process of reasoning, even while the process is going on, there is a danger that you may be following only the trail you yourself have laid down. Reason can be tamed only by discipline, by systematic application of the yoke, the nose-string, the whip, etc. That is to say, by means of Daya, Santham, Kshama, Sahana, etc. (compassion, equanimity, discrimination, patience, etc.). Train it to walk quietly along small stretches of road at first and then, after you have become sure of its docility, you can take it along and tortuous road of the six-fold temptations: the road of lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride and jealousy. *(120459)*

Give each problem the attention it deserves; but do not allow it to overpower you. Anxiety will not solve any difficulty; coolness comes from detachment. Above all, believe in God and the efficacy of prayer. The Lord has said that he who does good, thinks good, and speaks good will not come to harm. That is the way to get equanimity, peace. *(261164)*

PURIFYING THE EMOTIONS

The Name of God, with all its halo of glory and majesty, can cleanse the mind of passion and emotion and can make it placid and pure. When the Name is repeated without concentration and without reverence, it cannot cleanse the mind. The vice and wickedness will remain.

The Truth that there is perfect identity between the individual and the universal is proclaimed at every breath by the silent announcement your breath makes: Soham ('I am He'). God is the

closest, the fondest, the most reliable companion. But man, in his blindness, ignores Him and seeks the company of others. God is present everywhere, at all times. He is the richest and the most powerful guardian. Yet you ignore him. The Lord is here, near, loving, accessible and affectionate. But many do not open their eyes to the great opportunity. The Name will bring him nearer to you. Now, the Name is on the tongue, the world is in the mind and the owner of the Name is in the heart. The world and its attractions are distracting you, obliterating the answer the Lord gives to the call of the Name. **(260268)**

Everyone who craves for good health must pay attention to the emotions, feelings and motives that animate the individual. Just as you give clothes for a wash, you have to wash the mind free from dirt again and again; otherwise, if dirt accumulates and you form a 'habit', it is difficult for the dhobi as well as harmful to the clothes. It should be a daily process; you should see that no dirt settles upon the mind; that is to say, you should move about in such company that dirt is avoided. Falsehood, injustice, indiscipline, cruelty, hate -- these form the dirt; Sathya (Truth), Dharma (Right Conduct), Shanti (Peace), Prema (Divine Love) - these form the clean elements. If you inhale the pure air of these latter, your mind will be free from evil bacilli and you will be mentally sturdy and physically strong. As Vivekananda used to say, you should have nerves of steel and muscles of iron. That is to say, you should have hope and joy and elation as an unshakable resolution, not despair and dejection. Your heart should be like glass, with the spiritual Light inside illuminating the world outside; the world outside reacting on the inner urges and making them lean towards service, sympathy and mutual help. **(210960)**

Do not engage yourself in the cultivation of Ichcha or the promotion of wants and desires. That is a never-ending process of sowing and reaping, whereby you will never reach contentment. **(140459)**

TEMPER THE MIND

There is nothing which can give unmixed joy; even if there is, when it is lost, it brings about sorrow. This is the very nature of things; so try to correct the very source of joy and sorrow, the mind; control it and train it to see the real nature of the objective world, which attracts and repels you by turns. **(201258)**

See things in their proper perspective, give them their worth but no more. There are greater things that grant joy and peace. Try to get hold of them; every one of you has a right to possess them. None can keep them away from your grasp.

Let not the temple of the Lord that is in your innermost heart be similarly overwhelmed by the sands of desire and anger. You talked of many rishis and yogis who have done tapas here, according to tradition. Well, those rishis and yogis knew which is real and which unreal. They controlled the vagaries of the mind and dwelt in Shanti (Peace). Fix your attention on these eternal values, then you will not be swept off your feet by gusts of passion or fits of fury. **(090959)**

Elation at profit, joy and cheer; dejection at loss and misery; these are the natural characteristics common to all mortals. What, then, is the excellence of the spiritual aspirant? He should not forget the principle: be vigilant and suffer the inevitable, gladly. When difficulties and losses overwhelm you, do not lose heart and precipitate some action; but meditate calmly on how they ever came to be. Try to discover some simple means of overcoming them or avoiding them, in an atmosphere of Shanti (Peace). (*Prashanthi V 14*)

The waters of a river leap from mountains, fall into valleys and rush through gorges; besides, tributaries join at various stages and the water becomes turgid and unclean. So too, in the flood of human life, speed and power increase and decrease. Those ups and downs might happen any moment during life. No one can escape them; they may come at the beginning of life or at the end, or perhaps in the middle. So, what man has to firmly convince himself of is that life is necessarily full of ups and downs, and that far from being afraid and worried over these, he should welcome them as adding to his experience. He should not only feel like this, but he should be happy and glad whatever happens to him. Then all troubles, whatever their nature, will pass away lightly and quickly. For this, the temper of the mind is essential. (*Dhyana V 14-15*)

The treasure that is unmistakably precious is the quality of equanimity, unruffledness. Practise this and make it your natural reaction. Why be put out when you see wrong? Why be attracted when you see evil? Remember evil has in it the potentiality to become good; good has in it the liability to turn evil. There is no fire without a wisp of smoke; there is no smoke without a spark of fire. No one is fully wicked, or fully infallible. Take the world as it is, never expect it to conform to your needs or standards. (*030958*)

MAKE YOUR HEART A SHRINE FOR GOD

Egoism, pride and greed have to be removed from the heart; truth, repetition of the Lord's name and meditation form the ploughing and the leveling; Prema (Love) is the water that has to soak into the field and make it soft and rich. The Name of the Lord is the seed and devotion is the sprout; desire and anger are the cattle and the fence is discipline; happiness is the harvest. (*231164*)

Remove from the garden of your heart the thorny bushes of greed and anger, jealousy and selfishness, the evil breed of 'I' and 'Mine'. Uproot them even when they emerge as seedlings. All this discipline is truly discipline for earning Shanti (Peace). (*Prashanthi V 31*)

Remove all traces of salinity from your hearts, adding to the soil the precious complement of the Name of the Lord. Water it with faith. Then plant the seedlings of Divinity; have discipline as the fence, and steadfastness as the pesticide to be sprayed. Then, you can reap a rich harvest of wisdom which will free you from the task of cultivation forever. (*102069*)

Sometimes the cloud of envy and hatred comes to darken relationships. This is due primarily to fear, fear that causes anger. All that will disappear within the emergence of Bhakthi

(devotion) and the humility and wisdom which come in its wake. Anger wastes time, health and character. Do not allow it free play. Do some inner 'cultivation' too, as you are now doing external cultivation in these field. That has to be done in the field of feelings, motives, desires and promptings. *(090959)*

RECOGNIZE THE ATMA

The one effective way to conquer all sources of physical and mental disease and debility, is awareness of one's Atmic Reality. That will bring about an upsurge of Love and Light, for, when one recognizes that he is the Atma, he cognizes the same Atma in all, he shares the joy and grief of all, and he partakes of the strength and weakness of all. When one yearns for the happiness and prosperity of all mankind, one is blessed with the wisdom and strength to mark out the way and lead men towards it. In everyone, the person sees his God. Every act of his will be as pure, as sincere and as sacred as an offering to God. *(201182)*

3.2 JEALOUSY

WISE SAYINGS

Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.
(St.Paul)

Where there is form there is shadow; so where there is human love there is jealousy.
(Hazrat Inayat Khan)

From Discourses of Sai Baba

ONE SHOULD ESCHEW JEALOUSY

In the ninth canto of the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna tells Arjuna, "Oh Arjuna, be free from the evil of jealousy. Become one who has no jealousy."

A person free from jealousy can convert Divinity itself into a little babe. And this is illustrated by the story of Anasuuya (one who has no jealousy). When Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara, came to her to test her chastity and purity, the three Divinities were turned into infants by the power of Anasuuya's purity. By freeing oneself from jealousy, one can even conquer the qualities of purity, passion and inertia (Sathwa, Rajas and Thamas). Jealousy not only does harm to others, it is also self-destructive. For the man filled with jealousy, there is no sleep and he cannot even eat heartily. It is like a consumptive disease which weakens the person from inside. It is a wasting disease which is widespread in this Kali Yuga (age of conflict). It is because of jealousy that man is a prey to peacelessness. (060984)

Jealousy is the source of great danger. No matter how great a scholar one may be or a man of authority and position or one may have acquired great virtues, when once one falls prey to jealousy, one loses everything in life. Here is a green tree full of blooming flowers. A pest enters this tree and destroys it in a short time. The pest is not visible as it eats away the roots of the tree. Jealousy is like the pest. A jealous man is not happy to see the happiness, health, wealth or higher performances of others. The feeling in a person that no one should excel him in life is the root of jealousy. Jealousy has three sons. They are desire, anger and hatred.

It is jealousy that causes the fall of man. Therefore, one should eschew jealousy. Jealousy is totally contrary to the culture of Bharat. Bharatiya culture has always considered humanity as one entity. That is the import of the Vedic prayer: "May we be protected and nourished together! May we perform heroic deeds! May we be filled with divine effulgence. May we never have any hatred between us! Om, peace, peace, peace". (270499)

Fortunate people get a chance to undertake sacred deeds in close proximity to the Divine. But those who do not get such an opportunity should not entertain any jealousy that others have received what they have not. The most incurable disease of all is jealousy. Cancer may have a remedy, but not jealousy. Cancer may be cancelled, but jealousy has no remedy whatsoever. Jealousy would frustrate and depress one to such an extent that one would perish in the process. *(241198)*

Jealousy expresses itself even in the form of finding faults in the Divine. It manifests itself in many forms. If one has earned a better name than others, jealousy develops towards him. Some people are even jealous of those who are more handsome than themselves. The jealous person cannot bear to see anyone who is better placed, more handsome or prosperous than himself. This is a sign of human weakness.

Once jealousy takes root in a man's mind, in due course it destroys all his other achievements. It promotes demonic qualities. It dehumanises the man. It reduces him to the condition of an animal. Because of its egregious evil tendency, jealousy should be rooted out from the very beginning. You must learn to enjoy seeing another's prosperity and happiness. This is a great virtue. *(060984)*

TWIN EVILS: JEALOUSY AND HATRED

Today we find jealousy and hatred dancing like devils all over the world. People with jealousy and hatred are pursuing the wicked path and bringing ruin on themselves. The best example for this is the Kauravas in Mahabharata. The brothers Duryodhana and Dussasana were the embodiments of the twin evils of hatred and jealousy. Krishna told Dharmaraja, the eldest of the Pandavas, that the Kauravas who were surcharged with these evil qualities could never improve and imbibe human qualities. Karna who was the embodiment of ego joined their company with Sakuni as the evil adviser adding fuel to the fire. Though Duryodhana and Dussasana were born in a notable royal family, they discarded the human qualities due to jealousy and hatred and brought ruin to the family and the clan. Krishna added that jealousy is a dangerous canker that eats at the root of the tree of life, while hatred is a pest that attacks the trunk of the tree. Thus the tree of life is completely destroyed by both these pests.

One may raise the question as to how to get over these dangerous pests of jealousy and hatred. Buddha was once confronted by a woman who was full of jealousy against Buddha because of his great popularity. When Buddha came towards her she expressed her wish to attack him with a knife and kill him, but Buddha smilingly told her, "I love you too demoness". This surprised the demoness who thought nobody would love her and changed her heart instantly; she became a dove and surrendered at His feet. Anger begets anger and jealousy begets jealousy. The only way to conquer this is the sense of Unity and Love. *(010194)*

The cultivation of good qualities implies getting rid of all bad qualities. Among the latter, two are particularly undesirable. They are jealousy and hatred. These two bad qualities are like two conspirators, one aids and abets the other in every action. Jealousy is like the pest which attacks the root of a tree. Hatred is like the pest which attacks the branches, leaves and flowers. When the two combine, the tree, which may look beautiful and flourishing, is utterly destroyed. Similarly, jealousy attacks a person from inside and it is not visible. Hatred exhibits itself in open forms. There is hardly anyone who is free from the vice of jealousy. Jealousy may arise even over very trivial matters, and out of jealousy hatred arises. To get rid of hatred one must constantly practice love. Where there is love, there will be no room for jealousy and hatred and, where there is no jealousy and hatred, there is real joy. This joy reveals itself in beauty. It has been well said, "A thing of beauty is a joy forever." If you see beauty in anything, you will derive joy from it. But what is it that one should seek which will be the source of permanent joy? Only God is the embodiment of beauty that is the source of everlasting joy. (060984)

The man filled with jealousy and hatred is a blind man who cannot see the sun however brightly it may shine. He cannot see God however near God may be. Blinded by ignorance, the man filled with jealousy and hatred cannot hope to see God, like a blind man groping for something which is near him. The man filled with good qualities like truth, love, absence of jealousy, ego and hatred, can see God without searching for Him. He becomes a man of spiritual wisdom. It has been well said: Death is sweeter than the blindness of ignorance. Students, who have to develop their character and conduct during their youth, should give no room for evil traits like jealousy. They must feel happy when other students do well in studies or sports. To feel jealous towards a student who has come first is a threefold offence. The first offence is one's neglect of studies; the second offence is to entertain jealousy towards the better student, and the third is to lament over one's own failure. Students should not have such narrow ideas. They should learn a lesson from Dhuryodhana's fate. Because of his hatred and jealousy towards the Pandavas, he brought about the complete ruin of himself and his family. (060984)

JEALOUSY AND EGOISM

Before you undertake any activity, you must examine whether it is right or wrong, whether it is good or bad. When such an enquiry is being made, sometimes an evil force enters. It is jealousy. It clouds your vision. This jealousy has an evil companion called egoism. This ego is constantly seeking to dominate the body and the mind. These two evil elements are always seeking to establish themselves, especially in the minds of the young. Every effort must be made to give no room for them. (070888)

Jealousy and anger are the twins born of the Mother self-conceit. Destroy the twins, and take 'the hot taste' of the self-conceit and keep it simply as 'I', so that you can get the thrill of "I am Brahman" with that instrument. That is the stage to be reached, the height to be scaled. 'The hot taste' in the 'I' is like the single seed which, if allowed to sprout, multiplies a

Study Circles for Divinity. Volume Two Discourses of Sathya Sai Baba copyright Divine Print 2010

thousand-fold and produces many bags of seed. It has to be crushed in the very first instance. Then the analysis of the 'I' starts and ends in the conclusion: "This 'I' is the Atma, which is Brahman." The two - That and This, Thath and Thwam - are identified and 'This' is found to be only 'That', when Thath Thwam Asi (Thou art That) is realized. What is this thing called Thath, the That? What is Brahman in other words? The fourth Mahavaakya (sacred statements of Supreme Truth) declares: "The Highest Wisdom" - Unity, One. **(201061)**

Do not feel jealous of anyone. Jealousy is an incurable disease. Praise and censure are inevitable for man. Only the tree that bears fruit is stoned. Likewise, only the good face problems. Do not attach importance to these trials and tribulations. The tree welcomes stoning because it is aware of the fact that people have recognized its value. Similarly, man should not feel dejected when he is censured. Treat dualities like pain and pleasure with equal-mindedness. Develop this broad-mindedness. Divinity blossoms in those with such a sacred attitude. Krishna declared: "All are sparks of My Divinity". Do not consider yourselves as mere mortals. Have firm faith that you are divine. **(221198)**

DESIRE BREEDS JEALOUSY

There are others who don't feel happy if they see others happy; in fact they grow jealous of others' happiness. They will always be looking for faults in others and criticising them. They cannot tolerate other people being happy. Thereby they ruin all aspects of love in themselves. Just as a cow feels jealous when a cuckoo sings well, these people feel jealous at others' attainments. Just as the crow ridicules the swan, these people ridicule good people. They are in the lowest level of love.

In every tree of life, love is present in the form of sweet juice in its fruit but this is covered by a skin called desire. Hence we are not aware of the sweet juice in the fruit. Only those persons who remove the skin of desire and throw away the hard seeds of anger and jealousy, can enjoy the sweet juice of the fruit of Love. When one throws away seeds of likes and dislikes and removes the skin of desire, he can enjoy the Divine Love, which is sweetness personified. **(230182)**

Jealousy is rampant to a considerable extent amongst people today. This is the root cause of anger, hatred and other evil qualities. If a person owns a car and travels in it, don't be jealous. Satisfy yourself that you have your legs to help you walk. If one is in a big house, don't get jealous. Be contented and happy with the dwelling place you have, though small. You should thus kill jealousy. Jealousy is contrary to human nature. Virtues and vices are reflections of your good and bad thoughts. The physical heart is on the left side while the spiritual heart is on the right. This will help you in the right direction. It is compassionate. But man breeds desires which contaminate the heart. These should be checked and restrained to a limit. **(170498)**

Society today is racked by jealousy and hatred. Jealousy is a disease, which gives rise to hatred. Develop forbearance and goodwill. That is the cure for jealousy. **(181195)**

No enemy can be so insidious as jealousy. When one sees a person more powerful, or more knowledgeable, or with greater reputation or more wealth or more beauty, or even wearing better clothing, one is afflicted with jealousy. One finds it difficult to acknowledge and accept the situation. One's mind seeks means to demean them and lower them in the estimation of people. Such propensity and evil tendencies should never strike root in the minds of students and the educated. These should not pollute their character. Students must learn to be happy and filled with joy when others are acclaimed as good and are respected for their virtues and the ideals they hold dear. They have to cultivate breadth of outlook and purity of motives. They must be ever-vigilant that the demon of envy does not possess them. That demon is certain to destroy all that is precious in them. It will ruin their health and damage their digestive system. It will rob them of sleep. It will sap their physical and mental stamina and reduce them to the state of chronic consumptives. Students must resolve to emulate those who do better than themselves and earn equal appreciation. They should strive to acquire knowledge and score marks as much as others. That is the proper ambition. Instead, if they wish for the downfall of others, leaving them as the only successful one, they are revealing their brutish nature. It will lead them to perdition. It is a deadly virus. **(Vidya V 78-79)**

BANISH JEALOUSY WITH LOVE

You will have to get rid of the animal qualities of ego, jealousy and hatred and develop human qualities of love, truth, sacrifice and happiness. Consider pain and pleasure as passing clouds. Happiness can be attained only by union with God. Worldly pleasure is transient. By nourishing good feelings in the heart you can transform yourself from bad to good. This is called Sanskar (sublimation). It is akin to converting paddy into rice to make the grain fit for preparing food. **(110494)**

Everyone should strive to rid himself of egoism, jealousy and hatred. This elimination cannot be achieved by mere study of books. Constant effort is required. By cultivating love and dedicating all actions to God, these evil traits have to be got rid of. As long as jealousy remains, to the slightest extent, it will destroy every good quality in us. That is why the Geetha teaches that the total elimination of jealousy is a primary requisite for the spiritual aspirant. **(060984)**

Remember, when Prema (Divine Love) is installed in the heart, jealousy, hatred and untruth will find no place there. Live in Prema. Live with Prema, move with Prema, speak with Prema, think with Prema, and act with Prema. This is the best and the most fruitful Sadhana (spiritual practice). Do not want Prema from others, while yourself refusing Prema to others. This is not a one-way traffic. Love to all should spontaneously flow from your heart, and sweeten all your words. **(300373)**

3.3 PRIDE

WISE SAYING

Each of us must guard against pride and empty boasting, telling everyone about all that we own, and how much we know, and all that we have accomplished. And we must also be aware of the natural wisdom, which is based upon the principles of this fleeting world. (St Francis of Assisi)

From Discourses of Sai Baba

THE CATEGORIES OF PRIDE

Man has to overcome the eight categories of pride -- pride of physical prowess, material wealth, scholarship, beauty, power and others. God's grace is needed to conquer these evil traits because they have such a powerful hold over man. When you wish to overcome a powerful enemy, you have to get the help of someone more powerful than your enemy. Sugriva had to seek the friendship of Sri Rama to overcome Vali after convincing himself of the superior powers of Rama. Likewise, to overcome the power of Maya (the delusion which subjects man to the physical and sensuous), man has to seek the grace of the Divine. Only the Divine is more powerful than Maya. By surrendering to the Divine and developing a heart filled with devotion and love, one can face all the challenges of life. **(010587)**

There are eight waves of pride which obstruct man's attempt to know himself - the pride of caste, of physical strength, of scholarship, of youth, of wealth, of personal charm, of overlordship and one's spiritual attainments. No one discovers that these are liable to disintegrate very soon. Sankara has warned men against placing faith in any of these sources of pride.

"The All-Powerful Time robs you of these in a trice", Sankara has said. Even while laughing and playing as a boy, youth overtakes you, and old age creeps in even while you imagine that youth is still with you. Death waits around the corner, even as old-age overtakes you. **(010625)**

Pride of wealth is another grievous human failing, which causes the downfall of man. All forms of pride, based on birth, wealth, power or scholarship, have to be given up totally. Only when egotistical pride is offered as a sacrifice at the altar of the Divine can man discover his true nature. This is the dedication that is called for as the first step in the spiritual journey. **(160188)**

Be careful: Sadhana (spiritual practice) can foster even pride and envy, as the by-product of progress. You calculate how much or how long you have done Sadhana and you are tempted

to look down upon another, whose record is less. You are proud that you have written the name of Sai ten million times; you talk about it, whenever you get the chance, so that others may admire your faith and fortitude. But, it is not the millions that count; it is the purity of mind that results from genuine concentration on the Name. Your Sadhana must avoid becoming like drawing water from a well, in a cane basket! You get no water however often you may dip and pull the basket up. Each vice is a hole in the basket. Keep the heart pure; keep it whole. *(030169)*

THE OBSTACLES OF PRIDE

As a consequence of pride in one's own strength and power a person might injure thousands, but the pride will injure that person most, being like a devil (difficult to exorcise) that possesses man. Man cannot claim to be man until this ego, that prompts him to ruin others and ride over others, is destroyed by Sadhana (spiritual practice). The Divine in him can manifest only when the dark forces of 'mine' and 'I' are rendered ineffective. To overpower the ego is a well-nigh impossible task. We have heard of the six internal foes that haunt man every moment of his life. But the sense of 'I' and 'mine' are far more deep-rooted. People have conquered the six foes -- lust, anger, greed, attachment, pride and hatred. Indeed there are many who have achieved this victory. But rare indeed is the hero who has demolished his ego and escaped from its nefarious urges. *(111078)*

Pride is the wall that hides the Atma from the Anatma (non-Atma), the curtain between them, between Truth and Untruth. This obstacle has to be removed in order that Unity might be realised and Divinity manifested. Many students develop this pest called pride, for, they have physical charm, educational attainments and monetary resources, but they must be vigilant enough to eradicate it soon. *(310281)*

Of the traits of ego, pride is the most poisonous. But the pride of the scholar, the pride of scholarship, is so thick that it is impossible for them to get rid of it. The dog feels proud of its master's home. So it barks at strangers trying to enter it. Man too is so attached to 'my home', 'my people', 'my property', that he too keeps people away, from the moment he awakes to the moment he sleeps. But, egoism is contrary to genuine human nature. In fact, it is the trait of an animal only.

The fully blossomed flower fades and falls apart within hours. Even while a person is proud of his physical strength, mental freshness and intellectual sharpness, old age creeps in, with its debilitating effects. And, wealth? And power over men and things? They are like lightning flashes, illumining only a fraction of a moment. They are here today, they are gone tomorrow. *(250582)*

TURN INWARD AGAINST PRIDE

God is the embodiment of love. Man, who is an image of the Divine, should have love as his basic quality. Why, then, is man infected with qualities like hatred, envy, pride and self-conceit? The reason is man's heart gets polluted by love being turned towards external objects. The image of the Lord cannot be imprinted on a heart that is impure. It is only when man realises the omnipresence and omniscience of God that he can comprehend the nature of Divinity. Only then will he recognize the Divinity within him. *(270862)*

Do not get puffed up with pride when you succeed; do not get punctured when you fail. Be like the tortoise that is able to withdraw its feet under its shell; withdraw into yourself the outgoing senses and be happy in the contemplation of your reality. Be also like the swan, which on coming up from the lake, gives a vigorous shake to its wings, a shake which scatters the water drops off; so too, the spiritual aspirant must shake off the attachments that are likely to grow when the world impinges on him. *(271164)*

Puffed up with pride of wealth or position, men forget the inner Divinity. They are relying on things which are essentially transient and impermanent. A bird swaying on the branch of a tree has no fear because it relies for its safety not on the branch but on its wings. Man, on the contrary, has no confidence in his own Inner Self. He is dependent on others. He is ready to abase himself for the sake of position or office. The basic reason for this lamentable predicament is the ill-conceived craving for undesirable things. Man's desires are limitless. Man is attached to things none of which will accompany him when he dies. He should realise that there is greater joy in giving, than in possession and accumulation. Renouncing is as essential as acquiring. If there is no exhalation of breath in the wake of inhalation, man will not be able to survive. *(SS May 86, 126)*

BE AWARE THAT YOU ARE BUT INSTRUMENTS

Love alone can root out the weed of pride from the heart. Love all, as so many Forms of God, appearing in these various roles. A heart without love is as dreary as a town without a temple. Spiritual pride is the most poisonous of all varieties of pride; it blinds and leads the person suffering from it into ruin. Beware of pride; be always aware that you are but instruments, in My Divine Mission of Dharmasthapanam, the Revival of Righteousness. Try to be more and more efficient as such instruments. The hand that wields the instrument knows how and when it has to be applied. *(130170)*

There is no real ground in any man to feel inflated about himself. When the Lord's feet, eyes, head and hands are everywhere and everything in the cosmos is permeated by the Divine, how can any man feel proud about his possessions or achievements? He is only an instrument of the Divine. Man should strive to recognize the Unity that underlies the apparent diversity which he sees everywhere. *(050987)*

Offer all the pride, all the separateness, all the delusion, all the attachment that the egoism has proliferated into. That is the worship you have to do. Bring to Me all the evil in you, and leaving it here, take from Me what I have, viz., Prema (Divine Love); learn the capacity to see all as 'moved and motivated by the One Paramatma'.

Examine every day what you do and with what motive; then you can yourself pronounce judgement on your progress. Select only pure motives, pure deeds. (270960)

DISSOLVE PRIDE WITH HUMILITY

So long as you have pride, you cannot earn wisdom. Man's behaviour should be like the behaviour of water; whatever colour you pour into water, it absorbs it and it never asserts its own colour. It is humble without conceit. But the behaviour of man is quite contrary. When he does a smaller service or donates the slightest amount, he is anxious that people should know about it. For this, he himself goes about prattling or arranges to get it published. The absence of such pride and ambition is what is recommended as humility. (*Geetha V 197*)

Another fatal weakness is pride, the desire to be talked about, to be praised; people take delight in tom-tomming their achievements and capacities. This makes them ludicrous and pitiable. They want their names and deeds should appear in the daily papers in big bold letters, as big as My head of hair! But it is not in the newspapers that you should strive to get attention. Earn status in the realm of God; earn fame in the company of the good and the godly, progress in humility, in reverence of elders and parents. If you are forever in the primary class poring over ABC and D, how can you make out the meaning of what these pundits say? These are all subjects beyond the reach of the senses and you must garner them and cherish them in your mind. Practise them and live in joy. (101064)

3.4 Greed

WISE SAYING

Be content with what you have; rejoice in the way things are. When you realize there is nothing lacking, the whole world belongs to you.
(Lao Tzu)

From Discourses of Sai Baba

BE AWARE OF GREED

The monkey that cannot pull out its clenched fist from the narrow neck of the pot lays the blame on the pot or the maker of the pot. But, if only it releases the hold of the peanuts it has grasped in that fist, it can easily take its hand out. The fault lies in itself. So too, man's greed is the reason for this want of time. No one thrust the hand into the pot; no one forced the monkey to grab the nuts. It has become the victim of its own rapacity, that is all.

Man too is suffering because he cannot rid himself of the greed for sense-objects and sense-pleasures. He knows that he has to give up whatever he earns and collects, sooner or later; but, yet his attachment waves instead of waning, as the years go by. If every man on earth could take with him on death, even a handful of mud from the earth, there would have been nothing much left and mud would have been rationed at so many ounces per head. When people forget the One and run after the Many, Dharma declines; for, there can be no love, no sacrifice, no detachment in human affairs then. (131264)

Do not harden your heart through greed and hate. Soften it with love. Cleanse it through pure habits of living and thinking. Use it as the shrine, wherein you install your God. Be happy that you have within you the source of power, wisdom and joy. Announce that you are unconquerable and free, that you cannot be tempted or frightened into wrong. So long as a trace of 'I-am-the-body' consciousness persists in you, you have yourself to search for God; you have to approach the mirror, the mirror will not proceed toward you, to show you, as you really are. Open the twin doors of lust and anger, remove the bolt of greed, then you can enter the sacred precincts of liberation, Moksha. (140170)

Evil thoughts cause ill-health. Anxiety, fear and tension also contribute their share. All these result from greed, greed to have more things, of power and of fame. Greed results in sorrow and despair. Contentment can come only from a spiritual outlook. The desire for worldly goods has to be given up. (300981)

Labouring under the delusion that the goal of life is to acquire gold, wealth, vehicles, mansions, and the like, man toils ceaselessly from dawn to dusk, to acquire and hoard such possessions beyond his needs. In the process he foregoes even food and sleep, thereby

endangering his health. In spite of knowing that all such possessions are temporary, he pollutes his mind by excessive greed and falls victim to untold suffering and sorrow. This is known as Greed Complex. **(250593)**

A farmer yearned to take up more land for cultivation and he went to the Thungabhadra area and the Naagaarjunasaagar area in search of land for cultivation. Finding that the price of land there was very high he went to Northern India. He learned that in a Himalayan state, good land was cheaper and easily available. So, he proceeded thither. The king promised to give him all the land he could walk around from sunrise to sunset on a single day. So, in his uncontrollable greed, he rose with the sun and, without wasting a minute for breakfast, he walked fast -- indeed, he ran very fast -- in order to cover as much land as he could. He never took a second's rest; he was happy that he could get a pretty vast area free; when the sun was about to set, he was within a few paces of the point from where he started. He was too exhausted to take even the few steps he needed; he fell down on the ground he coveted so much and breathed his last. His heart could not stand the strain of walking so fast, so long, with such hurry and tension. At last, he got only six feet of ground for his grave. Greed spelled his doom. In spiritual matters too people have this greed. They are immersed in worldly tumult for 23 hours and 55 minutes, and they remember God for five minutes only (when some fear overtakes them, it may be a few minutes more), but expect God to set right all their problems. To become pure enough to deserve Grace, you have to remember God, whenever you get the chance, wherever you get the prompting. **(SSS Vol.6 1966 201)**

GREED EMANATES FROM THE EGO

Envy and greed also emanate from the ego and have to be carefully watched and controlled. Like the tadpole's tail, the ego will fall away when one grows in wisdom. It must fall away; if it is cut, the poor tadpole will die. So, don't worry about the ego; develop wisdom, discriminate, know the ephemeral nature of all objective things; then, the tail will no longer be evident. **(140165)**

The greed to possess things that you see is caused by egoism. "I must have this", "I must be the proud owner of this valuable thing", this is how egoism prompts. It is a strong cord that binds you to objects. Withdraw the mind and treat all as manifestations of the Lord's Glory. Love all things as expressions of His Glory, but do not delude yourself into the belief that possessing them will make you happy. That is an illusion. Do not dedicate your life for their sake; use them for your needs, as and when necessary, that is all. That kind of impulse activating you will be a great handicap in your progress towards liberation. Whatever you may acquire as property will have to be given up some day. You cannot take with you on that last journey even a blade of grass or a pinch of dust. Keep this fact ever before the mind's eye and then you can realise the Reality. **(Geetha V 201)**

Mankind has progressed much in exploiting the material resources of the earth in order to promote the standard of life. But, neither the individual nor the society has learnt the way to inner peace and contentment. Envy and greed have fouled the relations between nations and

Study Circles for Divinity. Volume Two Discourses of Sathya Sai Baba copyright Divine Print 2010

between persons, suppressing the awareness of the Unity that underlies all Creation. The main cause of this calamitous situation is rank egoism, each one tries to grab for himself whatever adds to power and comfort. The ego is making puppets of them all. The words and deeds of men reflect this tendency of selfish aggrandisement. Every move is decided by the needs of the self only. No step is taken that does not promote one's selfish interests. *(131481)*

GREED ARISES FROM ATTACHMENT

Greed is the monstrous evil that drags man down. When Ravana lay dying, Rama directed His brother, Lakshmana, to go to him and learn from him the secrets of successful statecraft! Ravana taught him that the king eager to win glory must suppress greed as soon as it lifts its head, and welcome the smallest chance to do good to others, without the slightest procrastination. He had learnt the lesson through bitter experience! Greed arises from attachment to the senses and catering to them. Put them in their proper place; they are windows for knowledge, not channels of contamination. *(140170)*

Whatever he may earn, whatever he may achieve, the greedy man is incapable of renouncing anything. Such a one is ready to receive anything from anyone but is not willing to part with anything. Greed breeds the attitude in which one says: "What will you give me if I come to your house? What will you bring for me when you come to my house?" Greed promotes this sort of insatiable appetite for possessions. You have to give up an evil tendency of this kind.

The practice of giving up is known as Vairagya. The literal meaning of the word is "that which is opposed to Raga (attachment)". 'Raga' signifies attachment to the body. There is nothing wrong in attachment. 'Raga' includes: love for family and kith and kin. This attachment is not wrong. What should be noted, however, is that there should be limits to such attachments. *(110788)*

There is iron; there is, also, a magnet. The magnet will draw the iron to itself; that is the destiny of both. But, if the iron is covered with the rust, the grace of the magnet may not operate strong enough to draw the iron near. Greed for sensual pleasure will certainly act as rust! It acts as dust, which induces rust; the rust will ultimately burst the iron itself and change its innate nature. So, it has to be tested constantly and dusted. Then, when it contacts the magnet it too earns the magnetic quality and it gets rest from its quest. That achievement is the best, for both magnet and iron. The dust of sensual greed can be prevented by keeping good company, and putting into practice the axioms of good conduct that one can imbibe from it. *(110368)*

GET RID OF GREED

Greed is another cause of human misery. Greed makes a man distant from every kind of happiness -- material, intellectual or spiritual. Greed accounts for the failure of Duryodhana and Dussasana to feel happy despite all their wealth and power. Hence people must banish greed from the heart. How is this to be done? When they foster the spirit of sacrifice, greed will vanish. With greed-filled hearts there is no room for joy. You cannot fill a tumbler full of water with milk. First empty the tumbler and then fill it with milk. Likewise, get rid of greed and fill your heart with sacrifice. A mind full of evil thoughts has no room for good thoughts. (230997)

3.5 Patience

WISE SAYING

*Where there is patience and humility, there is no anger, nor even irritation.
(St Francis of Assisi)*

From Discourses of Sai Baba

PATIENCE IS AN IDEAL QUALITY

Purity of thought, word and deed is a basic requisite for man. Under any circumstances, man should not allow this threefold purity to be affected.

Patience is another ideal quality one should develop. Whatever troubles or obstacles one may meet with while doing his proper duty, he should bear with them. One should not get depressed when others blame or abuse him but should stick to the path of truth. The third quality is perseverance which is indeed a prime need for anyone in any field but more so in the spiritual path. *(191093)*

Patience or forbearance is one of the most important characteristics that every person should practise and possess. Many kings have been destroyed because they abandoned this quality of patience. Even great Rishis have lost all their spiritual merit because they neglected this quality. Countless scholars have come to ruin because they overlooked this invaluable characteristic. Patience can be thought of as the most important shield and armor for facing the battle of life. Human beings quickly lose all their human qualities if they lose patience. As you have already seen, the quality of patience is an extremely important sign of Stithaprajna, a great person possessed of abiding wisdom; without patience it would not be possible to become or remain a Stithaprajna. *(DBG 33 238)*

PATIENCE BRINGS REWARDS

I always act calmly. I never hurry. I do say, "Let it be so", to every request of yours. You have come into this world to reach the Lord. Ignorant of that purpose, you have hoisted on your head the weight of illusion and you are struggling to unload it, suffering under its weight. What is the use of running after external pleasures and temporary joy? So long as you are caught in this ignorance you can never taste the Bliss of Realisation; you cannot even recognize it much less attain it. But, if you are patient and calm, I shall grant you joy without fail. Do not yield to despair. Even the infant lotus buds will bloom, in their own good time. By the cumulative effect of the good done in many previous births, you have secured this

fortune; you do not know how much you have gone through, but, I know! And, whether you know or not, I shall certainly give you your need. *(SSS Vol.2 1961 117)*

Whatever be the circumstances we confront, we should not get excited or agitated. We should allow time for the nobler feelings to well up from inside us and manifest themselves. By practising patience and forbearance we will be able to acquire all the other important spiritual qualities, such as mind control, faith, renunciation, endurance and concentration. This will bring a state of inner purity and fill us with abiding peace. *(SS June 87, 162)*

CULTIVATE PEACE

One should cultivate patience, which is not commonly done in the present-day life. Haste makes waste, waste begets worry. So one should develop patience to avoid worry. Our mind is compared to the moon; when thoughts arise it is eclipsing the real nature just as the moon is eclipsed by the shadow of the earth. If you keep the heart pure of all the malaise of evil qualities, you will have no worry at all. You should not allow wicked thoughts to stick to you. In a pond, along with lotus flowers that bloom, you have leeches also thriving, which suck your blood. The lotus cannot sustain itself without water. So also human life cannot sustain itself without love. But you should not let the leeches of worry breed in your heart of love. You can travel in a boat on the surface of water but should not allow water to enter into the boat. You should not allow the attachment to worldly objects to enter into your boat of life. *(160498)*

In the days of yore, people did not have many material comforts, but they led an exalted life by cultivating firm self-confidence in the light of Atma Jyoti (radiance of the soul). In this Kali Age, science and technology have made great progress. Modern man has acquired wealth, comforts and prosperity. There is no dearth of people with riches, knowledge and intellect. But still there is no peace in the family and society. The reason for this is a lack of patience and sympathy amongst the members of the family living in a house. These two values are not seen in any family today. Why does man lack these two qualities? A rise in selfishness and the use of intelligence for one's own self-interest have brought about this decline. Because of this man is ruining his sacred life. *(021000)*

A resolute nature -- in other words, the quality of determination and being endowed with a firm resolve -- is the precondition for developing patience. Now a resolute nature should not be associated with a stubborn foolishness. In sacred tasks, in matters relating to the spirit, man's firmness and resolute nature may be described as a quality of the mind which is free from delusion and waveriness. Whatever obstacle is encountered, whatever troubles and problems arise, a man with a resolute nature remains firmly committed to pursuing the tasks which he has undertaken until he achieves his final goal. If you do not have this quality of determination, then patience will have no basis and cannot develop in strength. Patience and determination are twins; one cannot exist without the other, Without determination, patience cannot establish itself, and without patience, determination will degenerate into arrogance. *(DBG 33 238)*

3.6 Sorrow

WISE SAYING

Joy and sorrow are each part of the other. If it were not for joy, sorrow would not exist; and if it were not for sorrow, joy would not be experienced.
(Hazrat Inayat Khan)

From Discourses of Sai Baba

THE SOURCE OF SORROW

What is the sorrow that envelopes man? Sorrow envelopes man in three ways and afflicts him in many ways. One source of sorrow is ‘the unreal’. The second cause is ‘the darkness of ignorance’. The third cause is death. In this context the Vedanta mentions three categories: Prakriti (nature), Jivatma (the individual soul) and Paramatma (the Over Self).

As long as man does not give up what he ought to renounce, he will not experience bliss. As long as he is not aware of what he ought to know he cannot get bliss. Bliss will elude man until he reaches the goal he should aim at.

The world should not be treated as merely physical but should be looked upon as a Divine manifestation. It is only when man is filled with godly thoughts that he will be rid of sorrow. Hence, what should be given up is worldliness. Then alone the Bliss of the Spirit can be got.
(010192)

Sri Krishna has explained in the Geetha that sorrow is the fruit of Rajo Guna (the quality of passionate activity). He has also shown that only the person who recognizes this truth and removes Thamo Guna (the quality of sloth and inertia) from his heart, can be happy. As man has all the three qualities in his heart, he is bound. The entire world is a manifestation of the three Gunas (qualities). Of these three, Rajo Guna and Thamo Guna are the source of trouble. For all sorrows, grief, troubles and problems, these two qualities are responsible. There are six attributes for Thamo Guna -- sleep, drowsiness, fear, anger, laziness and inertia.

A farmer who wants to raise a crop in the field has to remove, at the outset, the weeds from his field. If different types of weeds grow, the crop will be affected adversely. Removing the weeds is an essential precondition for getting a good crop. In the same way, a spiritual aspirant who wants to realise the joy of Atma has to remove from his heart the various manifestations of Rajo Guna and Thamo Guna in the form of malice, desire, greed, anger, hatred and jealousy. These six types of enemies of man are the children of Rajo Guna and Thamo Guna. We won't be able to experience the joy of Atma as long as these weeds are there. Therefore Krishna asked Arjuna to remove Rajo Guna and Thamo Guna from his heart.

Krishna said, “Arjuna, you are taking Me as the charioteer of your chariot. Take Me as the charioteer of your life. The seat on which I am seated in this chariot is very clean and well decorated. Think how clean and grand your heart should be to make it a seat for Me if I become the charioteer of your heart. As long as Rajo Guna and Thamo Guna are there, the heart is not pure. These two qualities will go on polluting and dirtying the heart. Therefore, to begin with, remove the quality of passionate activity (Rajo Guna) and the quality of sloth and inertia(Thamo Guna) . Make every effort to remove the dirt from your heart”.(120984)

Man is subject to sorrow, from birth to death; joy or what he calls happiness is an interval between two sorrows, that is all. The sorrows arise as a result of three reasons : Adhyathmik (spiritual), Adhidhaiwik (deific) and Adhibhouthik (material). The objects that one craves for, endeavours to acquire and laments when lost, are all material (bhouthik); and so, the sorrows that sprout out of them are defined as Adhibhouthik (difficulties caused by the material world). The senses are the instruments of cognition; one sees an object through the eyes; yes, but, not through the material eye, but, with the eye operated by the deity that presides over it, namely, the Sun. You do not see in the dark! The Sun helps you to see; without Him, you're helpless! Each sense and limb, nerve and cell, joint and gland of the human body has a deity that activates it and is resident therein. If these deitics are hostile or displeased, the body suffers and sorrow ensues. This is the second reason for misery, the deific. Then we have the Self -- the witness of both inertia and activity, joy and sorrow, exultation and examination. When you ignore the existence of the Witness, when you divorce your daily life away from the awareness of that seat of peace, you invite sorrow to torment you. That is the Adhyathmic or the spiritual quality, the Cross that each man carries along the trail of life. (210570)

BODY CONSCIOUSNESS RESULTS IN SORROW

The real cause of sorrow is attachment to the body, identifying oneself with the body. All sorrow arises from the feeling of ‘I’ and ‘Mine’. It is essential at the outset to reduce attachment to the body.

Desires are a source of pleasure for man, but they are also the cause of his grief. The mind has to be brought under control. Even thousands of men cannot hold back a fast-moving train. But the train comes to a stop the moment the brake is applied. The same applies to the vagaries of the mind. When the mind is controlled, all sorrows will cease. (010495)

Man should also realise his essential nature and not be deluded by identifying his true being with the body-consciousness. For all the sorrows and suffering man experiences, it is the body- consciousness that is responsible. As long as this bodily delusion remains, the fruit of Ananda (bliss) cannot be got. The seed of bodily attachment has to be given up for the tree of life to grow and yield the flower of wisdom and the fruit of Ananda.

The Upanishads have declared that immortality can be achieved only through renunciation and not through rituals, progeny or wealth. *(231187)*

The joys and sorrows man experiences in daily life, his attachments and aversions, his pursuit of sensory pleasures, are all due to the vagaries of the mind. As long as man is subjected to the feeling of duality, he cannot be free from attachment and hatred. There can be no escape from dualism as long as man does not recognize his inherent Divinity. *(121294)*

DO NOT BE AFRAID OF SORROW

Embodiments of the Divine Atma as you are, do not be afraid of sorrows and losses that might come in your way. An orange is enveloped in bitter skin. You have to remove the skin and eat the sweet fruit that it has protected so long. The sweet fruit - that is, your life - is enveloped in the bitter skin of lust, anger, greed, arrogance, attachment and jealousy. Remove the skin and throw it away, so that the sweetness can be tasted. *(170373)*

Sorrows and disasters are as the clouds that flit across the sky; they cannot injure the blue depths of space. Your duty is to strive on, from this very moment. Do not vacillate or postpone. Who knows when death will knock? Maybe he may knock this very night, this very moment! Therefore, do not delay. Do not postpone for tomorrow the dinner of this day. Feed the spirit as scrupulously as you now feed the body. *(290165)*

Happiness and sorrow have to be experienced in the worldly life as they are inevitable like the sunset and sunrise. You think New Year will give better experiences. It is not correct. It is the mind that is responsible for pleasure and pain. If your mind is good you'll find anything good. You are embodiments of the Divine which is nothing but bliss. While being so, is it not a folly on your part to say that you are suffering from pain and grieve over this?

Life is a mixture of sorrow and joy just as day and night. If there is no night one cannot take the well-deserved rest after the day's hard toil. There is sweet juice inside the orange fruit. But it is covered by the bitter outer rind. It is the bitter rind that protects the juice inside. So we should put up with the bitter difficulties in order to enjoy real pleasure. Man is the embodiment of the quality of Kshama (fortitude, patience, or forgiveness. There is nothing in this world that you cannot achieve with this quality. *(010194)*

DO NOT BLAME OTHERS FOR YOUR SORROW

If the heart is pure, all that you think and do will be pure, just as water from a tank filled with pure water will be pure in any tap. If your thoughts and actions are impure, you are the cause of their impurity because you have polluted your heart. You are the cause of your joy and sorrow. Do not blame others for your troubles. It is a sin to do so. Blame yourself for your condition. Self-punishment is as important as Self-realisation. Through self-punishment you

get self-satisfaction, which promotes self-sacrifice. That is the prelude to Self-realisation. *(150293)*

Thoughts lead to action. There can be no action without thoughts. Hence, it is essential to entertain sacred thoughts. Everyone should realise that all the sorrows and miseries of modern man are due to his bad thoughts. Every man thinks that someone else is responsible for his troubles. This is not so. You alone are responsible for the good and evil that befall you. You blame others because of your weakness. *(120295)*

Weighed down by sorrow, Arjuna one day laid all the blame on his eldest brother Dharmaraja. He said, "On account of you our dear mother is separated from us, our wife is disgraced in the open court, my only son is slaughtered by wolfish cousins, our dynasty is forced into exile and our heritage is stolen before our very eyes." Dharmaraja replied, "When you blame me, remember you are blaming Dharma (Righteousness) ; no one can ever suffer through Dharma. Dharma fosters those who foster it. The pain which Dharma inflicts is a blessing, it is a shower of joy. Since we have stuck to Dharma, God will fight our battle and win victory for us."

God is the embodiment of compassion. He watches for a grain of goodness or humility so that He can reward it with tons of grace. *(SSS Vol.7 1973 81)*

TREAT JOY AND SORROW ALIKE

For all the experiences of the world relating to pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, the cause is one. All the troubles one experiences are stepping-stones to happiness. This is the essence of Vedanta. Hence, for man, the proper spiritual Sadhana (spiritual practice) consists in cultivating equal-mindedness, without succumbing to grief or getting elated over a happy event. In daily life, people experience all kinds of happiness and distress. The Scripture declares: "Treat joy and sorrow, profit and loss alike." *(210793)*

In the world, every living being aspires for happiness and seeks to banish grief. Although man hankers after pleasure, peace and bliss, what is the inner meaning of the fact that he is haunted by worry and sorrow? Sorrow, peacelessness and fear are the reflected images of happiness, peace and security. If there is no grief, there is no value for happiness. If peace is not absent, no one will seek peace. Therefore, these opposites are associated with each other and constantly follow each other. *(290591)*

CONTROL THE SENSES

All the sorrows and troubles man experiences are the result of abuse of the sense organs. It is for this reason that in the spiritual journey one is enjoined to cultivate control of the senses as the very first discipline.

However wealthy, powerful or knowledgeable one may be, if he fails to bring his senses under control he will not be able to make purposeful and worthy use of his power or position. One who is a slave of the senses is displaying his animal qualities. One who controls his senses demonstrates the sacredness of the human birth. **(111083)**

As long as the mind is active, there can be no escape from sorrow. To the extent that the mind is under control, you can experience happiness. One way to reduce desires is to get absorbed in activity. Idleness encourages the mind to indulge in all kinds of thoughts. If you are intensely engaged in reading, singing, playing or any other activity, the mind will have no chance to wander hither and thither. **(130388)**

3.7 Suffering

WISE SAYING

*Because you wrongly identify with the body, you see the world outside you and its suffering becomes apparent to you; but the world and its suffering are not real. Seek the reality and get rid of this unreal feeling.
(Ramana Maharshi)*

From Discourses of Sai Baba

THE VALUE OF SUFFERING

Human life is beset with ups and downs, joys and sorrows. These experiences are intended to serve as guide posts for man. Life would be stale if there were no trials and difficulties. It is these difficulties which bring out the human values in man. Because of the manner in which Harischandra faced all the trials in its life, the story has become a glorious chapter in human annals. Prahlada stands out equally as a great devotee who stood up to all the persecutions of his father.

People pray to Swami to rid them of difficulties and losses. This is a totally wrong kind of prayer. Difficulties must be welcomed and must be overcome. By overcoming trouble the Divine must be experienced. You cannot get the juice of the sugarcane without crushing it. You cannot enhance the brilliance of a diamond without cutting it and making many facets. The body is like a sugarcane stalk. It is only when it goes through various difficulties that you can experience the sweet bliss of Self-realisation. That sweetness is Divinity itself. Where does that sweetness reside in man? It is in every limb and organ. (020991)

Here is a story to illustrate the maxim, "No gains without pain." There was a gardener who used to water the plants in the garden carrying a pot on his head from dawn to dusk. One day while carrying the pot he got a headache and wanted to lay down the pot and go home. At that moment, the pot taught him a valuable lesson. The pot said: "Oh man! There can be no fruit without labour, no pleasure without pain. Learn the lesson from my own story. In the beginning I was just mere dust and mud, trodden upon by people. The potter gathered that mud, turned it into clay by pressing it under his feet, and made a pot from it by whirling the clay on his wheel. And finally I was placed in a kiln for firing. Whoever came to buy me, tapped on my sides with strength to test my hardness. It was because I went through all these ordeals that I earned the privilege of dancing on the heads of people. If I had not gone through all these trials how could I have achieved this eminence? Likewise, only if you are prepared to go through trials and difficulties will you be able to raise yourself in life." (060389)

The devotee should look upon pain and pleasure alike as designed for his good. He will not then be affected by troubles. He will regard them as stages in the evolution of his consciousness. Pain and pleasure are inseparable twins in life. One leads to the other, even as the new moon culminates in the full moon. These are manifestations of the wheel of time, expressions of the Divine Will. *(090188)*

You must become one who is torn by intense suffering to reach the Lord. Suffer the pangs of distress. You must realise that mere suffering is fruitless, without the knowledge of the path to attain the Lord. That is to say, you have to be transformed into a seeker. Analyse the four goals of life – dharma, artha, moksha, kama (action, wealth, liberation from birth and death, desire) -- and realise that liberation is the goal, the culmination. Start craving for that, as the lover of the truest gain. Seek that which, when secured, all else is secured. *(030365)*

TEST IS THE TASTE OF GOD

Never feel depressed when you are weighed down by difficulties. God will never impose on you the ordeals which you cannot bear. He tests his devotees in various ways. Test is the taste of God. Never fear any test. Be ready to sacrifice even your life for the sake of God. Only then God will protect you. *(251292)*

Do not get dejected when suffering comes and estrange yourself from the Lord, blaming Him for it. The loss will be yours and the repentance will be agonising. You have no hunger. If you have a genuine hunger I will not keep you suffering from it. Churn the mind and collect the butter and melt it in the yearning of the heart. When the butter has not melted, the reason is, the warmth of the yearning is insufficient.

I do not appreciate your extolling Me, describing My glory. State the facts. That produces joy. It is sacrilege to state more or less. Demand from Me as of right, the removal of your sufferings. Give Me your heart and ask for My heart; if you give Me only your word, you will get only a word in return. I give you just what you ask for, remember!

When sufferings come, why do you estrange yourself from the Lord? He gives you suffering, for your good, for the advancement of your devotion. If suffering is granted, you seek peace; you search for the knowledge of the mystery; you go to ten persons and they each tell you some aspect of the truth. Without suffering, sweetness cannot arise! When you suffer, if you feel, "The Lord is no longer mine," and stay away, the Lord too will declare, "He is no longer mine!" Beware.

Wherever you are, when you wholeheartedly seek to do obeisance to Me, My feet are there, before you. "Hands and feet everywhere," it has been announced. "Lord, do you not hear my prayer?" If you feel poignantly, My ears are there! "Don't you see, oh Lord?" If you cry out My eyes are there that instant. *(SSS Vol.2 1961 115)*

Whatever happens to you, be it profit or loss, pain or pleasure, have the resolute faith that it is good for you. When a person suffering from malaria consults a doctor, he will be given the

bitter quinine medicine. Unless he takes the bitter medicine, he cannot be cured of the fever. Likewise, have the firm conviction that difficulties and suffering are the ways and means by which God purifies you. There is a reason behind whatever God does. Without understanding the principle of cause and effect, people blame God for their suffering. Understand the truth that you yourself are responsible for the pain or pleasure that befalls you. Do not feel sad if someone were to criticise you, because criticising others amounts to criticising oneself as the same Atma exists in all. You should develop this equanimity. Identify yourself with the Atma, not the body which is temporary like a water bottle. (211199)

There are some who ask: "I have surrendered everything to God. Why, then, am I subjected to so many trials and tribulations?" One who has truly surrendered to God will not raise such questions. To say that, "After I have surrendered I am put to suffering", itself shows that the surrender is not real, because where is the place for 'I' after surrendering everything? To the person who has completely surrendered, everything that he experiences (good or bad) is a gift from God. (231187)

EVERY ACTION HAS A REACTION

Some people blame God for their suffering, ignoring their own defects. They argue, God does not keep His word. But God will never go back on His promise. Man does not understand this truth. Being fully immersed in physical and worldly feelings, he blames God for his suffering. God will never make anyone suffer at any point of time. But, each has to face the consequences of his actions. Every action has a reaction. It may take place immediately or in a few hours or in a few days or in a few months or in a few years or in a few births.

Good or bad, you cannot escape the consequences of your actions. Then you may question, why should one pray to God? One should pray to God not for the alleviation of suffering, but for peace of mind. Once you have peace of mind, all your problems will vanish. You can even escape the consequences of your actions if you have God's grace. After the expiry date, the medicine loses its potency; similarly, once you acquire God's grace, the consequences of your actions will have no effect on you. In order to make the consequences of your actions to 'expire', prayer is essential. You have to pray wholeheartedly. (290998)

It is only when you recognize your own faults that you can begin to understand the ways of the Divine. What we witness today is the tendency to forget one's own faults and go about blaming God for one's sufferings. Every action, however small or trivial, has its reaction. Nothing happens without a cause. Every object has its reflection. The Lord awards fruits according to one's deserts. Good actions earn good returns. Bad actions result in bad consequences. That is why the Lord is described as the dispenser of the fruits of action. (030587)

Man suffers because he has developed hunger as vast as the sky, with a throat as narrow as a needle. His throat must become as vast as the earth; his heart must blossom wide through peace and forbearance; that is, through equanimity and fortitude. Then the desire of man for full, lasting, undiluted happiness can be attained.

Once a being has evolved into man, there is no relapse for him into lower forms of life, for man alone is capable of discrimination and wisdom. When he suffers, he worries why suffering has become his lot. He concludes that the cause must be sought, not in the vagaries of God or the whims of others, but in himself, if not in the present life, then in previous lives. Man alone can analyse his mental reactions and feelings and draw conclusions therefrom.

There are millions of stars scattered all over the firmament, but we have only darkness at night; during the day, the sun which is a minute dot of light when compared to most of those stars gives us brilliant illumination. The reason is: the stars are far far away; but the sun is near. The star of highest wisdom is far far away; we do not bring it near, nor attain nearness to it. We are content with the dusk, that information, skill, scholarship and intelligence provide. We do not seek the magnificent vision that intuition clarified by spiritual practice can confer. *(251066)*

People suffer because they have all kinds of unreasonable desires and they pine to fulfil them and they fail. They attach too much value to the objective world. It is only when attachment increases that you suffer pain and grief. If you look upon nature and all created objects with the insight derived from the Inner Vision, then attachment will slide away, though effort will remain; you will also see everything much clearer and with a glory suffused with Divinity and Splendour. *(020258)*

BE AWARE OF THE INNER TREASURE

Man is suffering because he is not aware of the treasure he has in himself. Like a beggar ignorant of the millions hidden under the floor of his hovel, he is suffering dire misery. *(SSS Vol.7 1967 230)*

God is not far from you, or away in some distant place. He is within you, in your own inner altar. Man suffers because he is unable to discover Him there, and draw peace enjoyed from that discovery. A washer-man, standing knee-deep in a flowing river, washing clothes therein, died of thirst because he failed to realise that life-giving water was within reach. He need only bend and drink. Such is the story of man. He runs about in desperate haste, to seek God outside him and dies disappointed and distraught, without reaching the goal -- only to be born again. *(010167)*

It is the combination of the Atma and the body which explains the human predicament. By forgetting the Atma and involving himself in the claims of the body, man in subjecting himself to endless suffering. He grieves about things which are not worth lamenting over and does not grieve for the things that ought to make him sad. This state of delusion is the result

of his identifying himself with the body and forgetting his inherent Divinity. If he realises that he is one with the Omni-Self, he will have no cause for sorrow. He will be aware that truth and bliss are inherent in his spiritual reality. *(090188)*

Life is fraught with vicissitudes, trials and tribulations. The world looks attractive but it is the abode of suffering. Life is like a water bubble on a lotus leaf. The lotus is born in water, grows in water and depends on water for its existence.

The Atmic principle is the basis for everything in creation -- its origin, growth and dissolution. Considering the evanescent body as permanent and real, and leading a life devoted to worldly and mundane pursuits, man is lost in delusions which cause sorrow and suffering. Ignorance of his true nature is the root cause of all sorrow. When ignorance goes, there will be freedom from sorrow. *(260688)*

KEEP YOUR FAITH IN GOD

Whatever difficulties or trials may occur, they can be overcome with faith in God. People may not readily accept this, but there is no surer recipe for peace than this faith. Even if they do not have full faith, a small fraction of it will be of help. *(170391)*

Human life will find fulfilment only when one acts with courage and conviction in the face of adversity. Never get disheartened and never retrace your steps.

Everything happens according to God's will. Man who has been created by the Divine Will should sanctify his life by following the divine command.

No matter what others say or do, have unflinching faith in God. Only the good face obstacles in the path. Whatever happens is for your own good. Difficulties are part and parcel of human existence.

Once Kunti prayed to Krishna to give her difficulties in life so that she could remember Him always. She said, "Krishna, when my husband, King Pandu was alive, hardly I remember You because I was immersed in pleasures and comforts. After his death we were put to untold suffering, as a result of which we remembered You always. Now I realize the value of difficulties. They help me to remember You always. I am ready to face any hardship, but kindly ensure that my love for You never diminishes". *(140100)*

Whatever your difficulties, whatever the ordeals you have to undergo, in any situation, do not give up God. God is one. Whether you are affluent or destitute, whether you are a scholar or an ignoramus, whatever troubles you may be faced with, whatever spiritual practice you may adopt, whether you are regarded as a sinner or saint, "Do not give up God and realise God is one." *(290788)*

One should not allow one's faith in God to be affected by the ups and downs of life. All troubles should be treated as tests and challenges to be faced with courage and faith. We

should learn from the example of Ranthi Deva, who retained his faith in God and exhibited his compassion for the suffering despite the extreme privation to which he was reduced by the vicissitudes of life. To feed a hungry man, he and his family gave up the meagre food they had gathered and denied themselves, even water to relieve the thirst of a man crying for water. The Divine had subjected him to these ordeals and later blessed him with grace. (*SS April 86, 100*)

Whatever troubles you may face, whatever ordeals you may encounter, you should not allow your faith in God to weaken to the slightest extent. You must learn a lesson from the Chakora bird. There may be terrible thunder and blinding lightning in the sky, but the Chakora bird will follow the cloud to catch the raindrops in the sky and will not go to any other source for water. Nothing less than the pure raindrops from the cloud will satisfy the Chakora. Likewise, you should yearn always for the bliss of nearness to God, whatever difficulties or joys you may experience in life. (*100486*)

OVERCOMING SUFFERING

Suffering can be overcome only by yearning for the Lord. You must yearn to be free, to be rid of the chains that are binding you now -- the iron chain of poverty or the golden chain of riches. Yearn as helplessly as a baby which cries for its mother, as desperately as a calf mooing for the cow, as pitifully as a starving beggar prays for a morsel of food. Let the cry come from the depth of the heart, a heart that cannot bear the chain of attachments any longer. The Lord will not be drawn by noisy pomp or empty show. He will yield only to the claim of kinship, the call of Individual Soul to the Supreme Soul. (*231061*)

Whatever trouble you may face, you must learn to feel happy in any circumstance. If you're stung by a scorpion, you must console yourself that you were not bitten by a snake, and when you are bitten by a snake, you must console yourself that it has not proved fatal. Even if you are not able to own a vehicle, be happy that you have got your legs intact to enable you to walk. Even if you are not a millionaire, be happy that you have enough resources to feed yourself and your family. This is the way to experience joy even while in adverse circumstances. (*210794*)

Seek the light always; be full of confidence and zest. Do not yield to despair, for it can never produce results. It only worsens the problem, for it darkens the intellect and plunges you in doubt. You must take up the path of Sadhana (spiritual practice), very enthusiastically. Half-hearted, halting steps will not yield fruit. It is like cleaning a slushy area by a stream of water. If the current of the stream is slow, the slush cannot be cleared. The stream must flow full and fast, driving everything before it, so that the slush might be scoured clean. (*020252*)

Man today is racked by all kinds of troubles. Are these troubles designed to make man miserable or to elevate him to a higher level of existence? Every trouble is really a step in elevating man. If there are no troubles, man will have no proper lessons. Troubles constitute

good lessons. Trouble and pleasure are inexplicably mixed and cannot be separated from each other by anyone. Pleasure has no separate existence. It is the fruit of pain. This basic truth is not recognized by man. When grief smites him he succumbs to it. He gloats over some happy experience. His entire life is bound up with these varying experiences of pleasure and pain. Therefore, man has to cultivate a sense of equanimity in pleasure and suffering. There is joy in sorrow. There is suffering in happiness. It is only when man cultivates the sense of equanimity in all circumstances, in pleasure or pain, that he will be able to experience peace. *(100592)*

3.8 Compassion

WISE SAYING

Just as a mother responds to her small, beloved, and suffering child, when you develop a spontaneous and equal sense of compassion toward all sentient beings, you have perfected the practice of compassion. And this is known as great compassion. (The Dalai Lama)

From Discourses of Sai Baba

WHAT IS COMPASSION

What is compassion? Seeing a person in distress and expressing sympathy verbally is not compassion. Compassion must express itself in action to relieve the suffering. Nor should you adopt an attitude of aloofness or indifference on the plea that each one is suffering for his own folly. Though suffering may be due to one's mistakes -- mistakes to which everyone is prone -- we should seek to remedy such suffering just as we try to get rid of our own suffering. Some people try to show off their sympathy by setting up charitable institutions like hospitals, etc.

True compassion should emanate from the heart. It should not find expression in outward manifestations which only reveal one's vanity. In the Sathya Sai Organisations there is no place for such demonstrations of vanity. Everything that is done to help the poor or the suffering should be based on the feelings coming from the heart and appealing to the hearts of those who are helped. **(140784)**

Compassion is not mere display of kindness or sympathy to someone in distress. It calls for complete identification with the suffering experienced by another and relieving that suffering as a means of relieving the agony experienced by himself.

A calf was caught in a slushy pond while trying to reach a small pool of water. A crowd of urchins were watching with glee the plight of the calf which was unable to move forward because of the slush. An ascetic who was passing by saw the plight of the calf and, taking it out of the mud, carried it on his back to the pool of water. The urchins asked him why he had done this, while they were watching to see how the calf was going to get near the water. The sanyasi told them that the sight of the struggling calf had caused him great anguish and, to relieve himself of his agony, he had gone to the relief of the calf.

When any service or help is rendered to anyone, this is the spirit in which it should be done. You must feel you are helping yourself when you are helping another.

(SS April 86, 100)

This birth has been undertaken by you for this very mission: the mission of crucifying the ego on the cross of compassion. An opportunity to be of some service to fellow men comes to you as a gift from God. Serve with that sense of gratitude, for it is God who accepts it from you. Prepare yourselves for serving others, not only by learning the skill of first aid, the rules of the road, the technique of blood donation, the art of handling mikes and loudspeakers, wiring and fitting electric lines etc; but at the time when you are not actively engaged in some such activity, be busy with japam (recitation of the Name of God), dhyanam (meditation) or nama smaranam. Fill yourselves with God, lest you go dry and cruel. *(070171)*

COMPASSION IS THE GREATEST VIRTUE

Compassion towards all creatures is the greatest virtue, wilful injury to any creature is the worst vice. Have full faith in this; spread love and joy, through compassion, and be full of joy and peace, yourself. You do not have joy and peace now, mainly because, your vision is warped and wobbling.

The vision is now directed towards the faults and failings of others, never towards one's own faults and failings. The ears too delight when stories of the failures and foibles of others are related. No attempt is made to examine the failures and foibles of oneself. Really speaking, enquiry and the investigation have to begin with oneself. For, what we see in others is the reflection of our own selves, our own prejudices and preferences.

Besides, when your attention is focused on faults and failures, vices and wrongs, the mind too becomes infected with the pollution and it starts relishing only experiences that smack of such tastes. Hence, the lives of such people lose the peace and joy that are the heritage of the wise and the wary. *(251074)*

There was an Emperor once who asked the sages who visited his palace, "Who is the best among men? Which moment of time is most blessed? Which act is most beneficial?" He could not get a satisfactory answer even after a long time. At last, his realm was invaded and he was defeated by rival forces and he had to flee into the jungle. There he fell into the clutches of a primitive tribe who selected him as a victim to their goddess. While in this precarious condition, he was seen by an ascetic, who rescued him and took him to his quiet hermitage where he and his students tended him lovingly back to health and happiness. Then he discovered the answers to his questions: the best among men is he who has compassion; the most blessed time is the 'present', this very second, and the best act is to relieve pain and grief. You decide to start Namasmarana 'next Thursday', as if Death has assured you in writing that he

will not call on you till that date. Do not postpone what you can do today, now, this very moment. **(070966)**

Even if you falter in the adoration of God, do not falter in the service of the living God, who has assumed human shape and is moving all around you in such large numbers and wearing such manifold costumes of apparel and speech! Only those who can pour out compassion to fellow-men can claim a place in the Grace of God. This is also the highest spiritual discipline; it impresses on you the unity of the human community and the glory of God's immanence. **(251270)**

The Upanishads were not composed or collected by persons who craved fame or fortune; nor are they the vapourings of idlers and scribblers. They have the true ring of actual experience. They arose out of compassion for others wandering in the wilderness, out of concentration on the means of liberation from the dual chain of tears and triumph. Those upon whom the people are traditionally depending for guidance have become callous, forgetting their task, or involved in darkness and dialectics. So, there is the need to spread the message of Love, which is the message of God. Simplicity is the sign of Divinity. Pomp, paraphernalia, jaw-breaking formulae, abracadabra and dark, mysterious mumblings -- these are alien to the spirit of true religion. These are tricks by which man wants to monopolise or gain God. **(241167)**

A COMPASSIONATE HEART REFLECTS DIVINITY

The physical heart is like a machine with limited scope. The heart with compassion is God. If one has no compassion his nature is devilish. Compassion is the most essential quality of a human being. Without compassion, man is 'inhuman'. A compassionate heart reflects Divinity. **(190993)**

When the heart is filled with compassion, the hands are dedicated to the service of others, the body is engaged in constant help to others, the life of such a person is sacred, purposeful and noble. **(231193)**

Giving up narrow ideas and feelings, people should show compassion towards their fellow beings. Compassion is the hallmark of devotion. No one could hope to please God without showing compassion towards his fellow men. A loving heart is the temple of God -- God cannot dwell in a heart without compassion. If one has a compassionate heart, is truthful in speech, and uses his body for serving others, he needs nothing else to redeem his life. **(200396)**

The heart is called 'Hridaya'. It is made up of the two words, 'Hri' and 'Daya' (compassion). The Lord is described as 'Hridayavaasi', the Indweller in the heart. Love and compassion are inherent in every person. Each has to share this love with others. Failure to share one's love is gross ingratitude to society, to which one owes

everything. One should give one's love freely to others and receive love in return. This is the deep significance of human life. *(050694)*

EVERY HEART IS FILLED WITH COMPASSION

Every man has a heart. Every heart is filled with compassion. However, how many choose to share this compassion with others? Sharing the compassion in one's heart with ten others has been characterised as devotion. One who does not share his compassion with others cannot be called a human being. Today the human heart that should be full of compassion has become stone-hard. This is man's misfortune. What is the reason? It is because the heart is filled with the bitterness of differences of caste, creed and nationality that it has become stony. All human beings belong to one caste, one community, one nation. All are embodiments of the Divine. Krishna declared in the Gita: "All beings in the world are a fragment of Myself". It is tragic that man should forget his divine essence and behave like a demon. *(200396)*

Compassion is inherent in every human being. But few are prepared to share this with their fellow beings. Man is deluded by the trivial pleasures from mundane things and is filled with greed and lust. This is the main obstacle in the spiritual path. *(191093)*

HOW TO DEVELOP COMPASSION

Consider love as the Atma itself. However many scriptures you may read and however many spiritual exercises you may do, if you do not allow your heart to melt with compassion your life will be a sheer waste. All practices have to be directed towards softening your heart so that it will flow with kindness and love. Develop this feeling of compassion and allow it to flow fully and spread among all the peoples of the world. *(300387)*

Expand your hearts; enlarge your vision; enlarge the circle of kinship; take more and more of your fellow beings into the tabernacle of your hearts. And, adore them in loving worship. Wisdom is only compassion at its highest, for, through sympathy you enter the heart of another and understand him through and through; you go behind the veil of pretence and punditry, convention and custom; you go behind good manners and fashion that people put on, to hide their agony and ignorance from the rest of the world. Finding the unity in this diversity of roles is true wisdom. *(230271)*

The doctors among you can serve the poor by treating them without insisting on payment; give the poor all the attention and care that you lavish on the rich, paying patients. Do it for the sake of God; feel that it is the Puja (ritual worship) you are offering Him. The lawyers among you can help those who, for want of a skilled advocate, have to go undefended or have to suffer at the hands of unscrupulous men. Do not publish these acts of sympathy; do them spontaneously without fanfare. That

is more precious than demonstrating your service with the help of headlines and photographs. These reduce the worth of the deeds of compassion. You must be uncomfortable, when those around you are unhappy; when you ease their discomfort, you are making them happy and making yourself happy, don't you? Similarly, you must be happy, when those around you are happy. This is more difficult than the previous one, but it is the sign of the truly good. It is your duty to recognize all men as your kin and to share your skill with others so that the maximum benefits accrue therefrom. The skill is a trust, which must rescue all. Service done in homes for the disabled, the defectives, the feeble minded, the delinquents, the orphans, the refugees is indeed very beneficial and a good Sadhana (spiritual practice). So too, in jails and hospitals. Visit these places often, give solace in strength; light the lamp of devotion in the inmates. Do Bhajan; help them to write to their homes; give them books for reading or read books for them; be the kith and kin of those who have none whom they call their own. Your smile will be a lighted candle in their darkness.(**201267**)

Have constructive thoughts, consoling words, compassionate acts. Be on the lookout for eyes filled with tears, hearts heaving in sighing. I am sure My words will give you the strength of elephants when you need it to carry you through these tasks of service.

Your duty is to yearn for the attainment of the consciousness of the One, behind all this apparent multiplicity. Be centres of love, compassion, service, mutual tolerance, and be happy, very, very happy. That is the blessing I shower on you, this Guru Pournima. (**080771**)