

## **Help Ever, Hurt Never: In THOUGHT, WORD and DEED**

### **THOUGHT**

"You should help others, never hurt them. "Help Ever, Hurt Never." These are some of the guidelines for a purposeful living that you must follow. The one is blessed who conducts oneself in such a way that one does not hurt others nor gets hurt in the process. You have to learn these skills, which are not available in the textbooks. Watch your thoughts and see that they do not go astray. Each time a thought arises in your mind, analyse it. "Is it good or bad?" If you feel it is bad, do not allow it to persist. Just let it pass. If it is a good thought, put it into practice so that you and others also will be benefited."

-SSS 42-13

"All that you have to do to achieve purity in thought, word and deed is to follow these five injunctions:

See no evil; see what is good.

Think no evil; think what is good.

Hear no evil; hear what is good.

Talk no evil; talk what is good.

Do no evil; do what is good.

When you adhere to these five prescriptions as the very breath of your life, you will achieve purity of mind and experience ineffable bliss."

-SSS 20-06

Additional material from Swami on how thoughts impact our world may be found here-

<http://us.sathyasai.org/tehehn/thoughts.html> ..

### **WORD**

"Learn to speak good words. Never hurt anybody with harsh words. Speak softly and sweetly to make all people happy."

-SSS 35-21

"You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly"

Additional material related practicing Help Ever, Hurt Never in Word may be found here-

<http://legacy.sathyasai.org/publications/TeachingsOfBSSSB-Vol02.html#Chapter-Oblige>

### **DEED**

"Calamities must deepen your courage, enlarge your faith, your spiritual practice must be intensified when the weather is inclement....."

-SSS 04-15

“Men should develop the awareness that the five elements--Ether, Air, Fire, Water and Earth--are divine entities and should be utilised appropriately in that spirit. The divine has equipped man with five Jnanendriyas (organs of perception) to make use of these elements.” -SSS 24-15

In light of recent natural calamities and in our interest in preserving Mother Earth, the team has chosen to support projects which “Help Ever, Hurt Never” with respect to nature.

### **1. ZERO WASTE**

3 simple habits to cultivate in daily life

- a. Carry reusable bags for groceries and produce
- b. Carry to-go beverage mugs and water bottles, to avoid Styrofoam, plastic cups
- c. Minimize the use of paper towels by using cloth napkins instead

More information -

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1bUrMwNR2GysQ3hinIWKyKne\\_LfJ6HgajDlw5w-AXGTk/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1bUrMwNR2GysQ3hinIWKyKne_LfJ6HgajDlw5w-AXGTk/edit?usp=sharing)

### **2. SERVICE**

Service projects related to Mother Earth – Help Ever, Hurt Never

Some ideas provided here - <http://us.sathyasai.org/tehehn/tehehn.html>

### **3. ADORATION**

Chant 2 simple prayers daily

- a. Gayatri Mantra

More information - <http://sathyasai.org/gayatri>; [Swami chanting the Gayathri mantra](#)

- b. Samasta Loka Sukhinoh Bhavantu

More information - <http://sathyasai.org/devotion/lokah.html>; [college boys chant the mantra](#)

### **4. ILLUMINATION**

Swami has advised us to use “Information for Transformation”. Swami’s words are provided as Study circle materials to raise our awareness of the theme/sub-theme so that we may implement in our daily life.

- a. Swami’s words on the theme, “Help Ever, Hurt Never” -

<http://www.region7saicenters.org/saidocuments/HELPEVERHURTNEVER.pdf>

- b. Swami’s words on the sub-theme, “Thoughts, Words and Deeds” -

<http://www.region7saicenters.org/saidocuments/HelpEverHurtNeverInhoughtWordandDeed.pdf>

**THE EARTH: HELP EVER HURT NEVER - THOUGHTS (1995)**

One bad thought is more potent and damaging than a hundred good ones. It is like putting one drop of poison in a glass of pure water. So watch your thoughts and your actions. Never forget that you are the creator of your destiny and God is the witness.

Never underestimate the power of thought. The fact that people can pick up your thoughts on the other side of the ocean speaks for itself. In the same way, loving thoughts can heal people in far away places. Your thoughts and thoughts of others fill the universe. Every thought is known to God and recorded for eternity.

You will never get a clearer picture of the power of thoughts, and you should share this knowledge with others. The world is sick, poisoned by man himself. But all is not lost, and the day of awakening will come and lead to the golden age. All of you should play a part in bringing about that transformation; the instrument you should use is love.

Let the world be filled with love, loving thoughts pouring out from a million sources. This is the way to cleanse the earth and overcome the evil that has tarnished the very atmosphere. - Baba.

This project in our service program ***The Earth - Help Ever Hurt Never*** is a study circle on the power of thought. Our mental environment is as important as our physical environment, and indeed it has a big effect on our physical environment. Swami has said that the way to cleanse the earth is to let the world be filled with loving thoughts pouring from a million sources. So, we help the earth not only by changing our physical habits but also by changing our mental ones.

A great text for a study circle on thoughts and their effect on the environment is a discourse that appears in ***Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA***, Fall 1995. Swami's words on thought permeate the discourse; they are just not in one place. However, the discourse deals with other things as well, and there is more than enough food for thought in the parts that deal with thought! On the other side of the page, we have excerpted these parts for a possible study circle.

After studying Swami's words on thoughts, let's put them into action. Let's cleanse our thoughts and thereby cleanse the environment.

**Excerpted from Swami's Discourse**

18 June 1989 (in ***Sathya Sai Newsletter***, Fall 1995)

All wrong thoughts come because of bad environment. The air we breathe is everywhere, and a lot of bad words are mixed in the air. When we breathe such air, bad thoughts come to our minds. The kind of smoke we get depends upon the fire. Smoke is responsible for the clouds, and the rain depends on the clouds. From the rain come the crops, and food comes from the crops. The mind is made up of food. Thus, our thoughts are spoiled by polluted air. So too, there are radio frequencies and sound waves all around us broadcasting from radio stations. All the useless songs and sounds merge in the air. With the exception of marriage, people play the radio's useless songs. That causes pollution of the air. Repetition of the Lord's name (*Namasmarana*) is a way to purify the air. By

singing or saying the name of the Lord, you can become purified. Meaningless songs are also played on tape recorders. However, if you chant the names of Rama, Krishna, Govinda, you will have sacred thoughts.

Don't ignore the divine name; have faith. Many atrocities nowadays are caused by lack of purity. There are educated people in the world, but they don't have purity and sense control.

If you want to enjoy life, fill yourself with good thoughts. Develop love. You can develop love by giving and forgiving. Getting and forgetting enhances selfishness. Ingratitude makes you selfish. If you want to develop love, develop forbearance and charitable giving.

There are so many things to learn in life, but take care not to have any dirt in the mind. Drive away all bad thoughts from your mind. Dakshinamurthi, a great sage, conveyed spirituality by his looks, without any words. While traveling, he came to the ocean's shore and heard Omkar (the sound of Om) in the sound of the sea. Dakshinamurthi learned a great lesson from the ocean. He noticed that as soon as rubbish fell on the ocean, it threw the rubbish onto the shore by a series of waves without retaining the rubbish even for a moment. Dakshinamurthi spoke to the ocean, 'How selfish you are. You are boundless and fathomless, so can't you make some space for this poor stuff? Because of your vastness, it is highly selfish on your part not to tolerate these things.' The ocean gave a nice reply. 'Lord, there is nothing that is not known to you. If today I allow this piece of dirt to remain with me, before long I will be filled with it, and my entire form will be changed. I can maintain my purity by throwing off any dirt and polluted objects from the very beginning.'

Likewise, every person should throw off even the smallest bad thought the moment it seeks to enter the mind. To consider it as small or trivial would mean allowing such things to enter the mind and, in due course, fill it entirely. In that process, the entire nature of a person is changed. His human essence is undermined. Hence, every effort must be made to keep out all bad thoughts and feelings and to promote human qualities as much as possible.

Everybody wants peace and happiness, but how do you get peace and happiness? You get these only by controlling the mind. You get this by close proximity to the Divine. A beautiful answer was given in the Bhaagavad Geetha, when the seeker wanted to know how to get peace, happiness, and victory. The answer was, 'Wherever Lord Krishna and Partha (son of Earth (*Prithvi*)) live together, there you get peace, happiness, victory.' Thus, when a person lives close to God, they attain everything. Establish God in your heart.

You should realize that whatever Swami wills and plans to do has a lot of significance behind it. You may not understand this now, but gradually, with time, you will understand.

## **You Cannot Always Oblige, But You Can Always Speak Obligingly**

### **Speech Promotes Friendship as Well as Differences**

In this world, speech carries more value than the currency note. In ancient times, people used to give immense value to speech. With the help of speech they were able to become rich and prosperous; they could even win kingdoms. Man becomes virtuous only when his speech is good; he becomes evil when his speech is bad.

Speech promotes friendship. It also brings about differences between friends. Speech promotes affinity among relatives. It also creates discord. Effects of speech are not confined to ephemeral and worldly matters only; speech affects our spiritual progress also. Speech may even cause death. Speech can save one's life, too. Sweet speech brings you name and fame. Since man today has lost his pleasant speech and sweet temper, he is subjected to innumerable ordeals and sufferings. That is why I tell the students now and then, you cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. When the speech is good, man becomes a hero. But man will become a zero if the speech is not good

-Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 32, Part 1

### **Wound Inflicted by the Tongue Can Never Be Healed**

Never use harsh words. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. Bodily wounds can be cured by the use of medicines. But the wounds inflicted by the tongue can never be healed. That is why I repeatedly tell you to cultivate love and talk with love. I never use harsh words even when I appear to be angry. I always speak lovingly. You too will become Divine when you cultivate such Divine love.

Cultivate good thoughts. Good thoughts lead to good actions. Good actions lead to good company. Cultivate love. Everything is based on love and love alone. Man is born in love, is sustained in love, and ultimately merges in love. Love is the basis of human life. But you are forgetting such true love and are getting carried away by worldly and physical love, which is not love in the true sense.

-Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33, Chapter 19

### **See No Evil; See What Is Good**

The image of every seen object gets imprinted in the mind. Therefore first of all one must have right vision. Right vision is that which is untainted by the baneful influence of evil feelings, evil thoughts, and evil deeds. See no evil; see what is good. That which develops your insight to understand what is good, eternal, and true is right vision.

Next comes right listening. You should lend your ear only to good speech. Under no circumstances should you listen to evil talk. For this, you should listen to sacred texts, devotional songs, and talks about sacred acts.

Everything in this world is impermanent. The *Vedas* say, "All that is seen is bound to perish." All that you see will disappear one day or the other. For the nine-fold path of devotion, good listening is the beginning. Listening, singing the glories of the Lord, constant remembrance of the name of Vishnu, serving the Lord's feet, worship, salutation, servitude, friendship, and self-surrender are the nine paths of devotion. The first step to the final act of self-surrender is listening. Ancient scriptures are derived from listening only.

## **Right Vision and Right Listening Lead to Right Speech**

The next virtue is right speech. Right vision and right listening lead to right speech. Your speech should be good. Never utter harsh words. Speak softly and sweetly. That is why I tell you often, "You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly." Say what you have to say without harshness. Speak softly so that only the person for whom your words are intended may hear you. Such soft and sweet speech should be developed. Good vision, good listening, and good speech lead to good thoughts. "As are your thoughts, so is the result." Right thoughts lead to right action. Without good thoughts, it is not possible to perform good actions.

Buddha performed penance for many years to put his five senses on the sacred path. Mere bookish knowledge is of no consequence. It is in fact artificial. Mere textual knowledge will not lead you to right vision. Similarly, your sense of hearing does not become holy by listening to the expositions of a teacher. Good thoughts cannot be acquired by reading scriptures or by listening to the teachings of the preceptor. By self-effort you should put your senses of sound, touch, form, taste, and smell to right use. That alone leads you to proper spiritual practice.

## **Sanctify Your Senses**

When you put your senses in the right direction, your life will also enter the right path. For the wrong attitude of man today, senses are the cause. As the senses become impure, the entire life too becomes impure and unsacred. If you want to make your life sacred, you have to first sanctify your senses. So, Buddha, who did penance for several years, understood that all ritualistic practices were useless. He declared right vision, right listening, right speech, right thoughts, and right acts as the five primordial principles for the guidance of man.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 32, Part 1

## **Speak with Love**

The food you eat is impure. The air you breathe is impure. Everything is impure. Then how can you escape disease? If you do not want disease, eat pure food, breathe pure air, drink pure water, and be pure. But wherever one looks, there is only impurity. When you are surrounded by impurity, how can you get purity? When purity manifests from within, you can experience its reflection, reaction, and resound in the external world. First and foremost, you have to infuse purity into society. To whomever you speak, speak sweetly, not with hatred, anger, and jealousy. First you have to learn this. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. Speak with love.

## **Show Humanness in Action**

From head to foot, man is filled with anger today. He has become like an animal. Even an animal is better than man. An animal has a reason and a season. Today man has no reason and no season. If you behave in this manner, how can you call yourself a human? To call yourself a human, first and foremost show humanness in action.

Just because you have a human body, you cannot call yourself a human. The human body will have value only when you cultivate human values, namely, truth, righteousness, peace, love, and non-violence. Of what use is human birth if human values are absent? First demonstrate humanness. Develop love. By doing so, all will become your friends. What kind of friends? Those who are full of love. Your real friend is only God. God is love personified. He is full of love.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 34, Chapter 10

## **Speak Good Words**

You should help people even if you have to undergo some difficulties. Never indulge in reviling others, for the same *Atma* is permeating every living being. If you abuse others, it amounts to abusing your own self. If you do not like them, keep yourself away from them, but never abuse them. Any amount of good work done by you will be of no use if you do not give up bad qualities.

If you cannot do good to others, at least speak good words. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. If you find someone suffering, try to help him. Today it is his turn, but tomorrow it could be yours. Always keep this in mind. Nobody can escape pain and suffering. Always pray for the welfare of all. It is only in this context that the universal prayer "May all the people of the world be happy!" is addressed.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 35, Chapter 23

### **Make All People Happy**

Learn to speak good words. Never hurt anybody with harsh words. Speak softly and sweetly to make all people happy.

*Embodiments of Love!* Good words bring good actions. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. When you thus speak obligingly, how much your status grows! The society will respect you.

-Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 35, Chapter 21

### **Keep Silent When You Are Angry**

When you converse with others, you should do so with respect. You should not use harsh words. "If you cannot oblige, speak obligingly," is the golden rule you should follow. When you salute others, it goes to God. When you criticise or abuse another person, that also goes to God. You must discourage and control the emergence of bad qualities.

When you are in a bad or an angry mood, keep silent. Do not exchange words, which cause the anger to multiply. That is why we say, "*Om Shanti, Shanti, Shanti*" at the end of the devotional singing session. Why three times and not four times? It is to cover the three entities: body, mind, and *Atma*. You should have *shanti* (peace) in all three levels.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 31, Chapter 20

### **Talk Less, Work More**

Students! See that the words that you speak are sacred. "You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly." That is enough. Try to speak sweetly and softly. I have told you many times, "Talk less, work more." The one who talks excessively cannot work. The one who works will not talk. What is the reason for your not remembering all that you read? It is excessive talk. By talking less, your memory power will increase. Not merely this, your *Atmic* power will also improve.

### **Put into Practice What You Hear**

Whatever you hear, try to recapitulate, then put into practice. Listening, contemplating, and practicing – these three are very essential. Listening can be compared to cooking in the kitchen. Contemplating can be compared to bringing the food to the dining hall and serving it. Practising can be compared to the eating process. When all these three are unified, you will have health and happiness.

So, if you want to lead a life of contentment, contemplate and practise whatever you have studied. Today we find bookish knowledge everywhere, which is nothing but superficial knowledge. This superficial knowledge is of no use. You should be thorough in practical knowledge.

-Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 31, Chapter 30

### **Speak Softly and Sweetly**

Love always gives and never receives. Such selfless love is only with God. You have gathered here to experience that love. No one has sent you any invitation. It is only love that has brought you here. What is it that I am giving you? When I just ask you, "When did you come?" you become ecstatic. There is so much sweetness even in the words that I utter.

You too should learn to speak softly and sweetly. "You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly." Harsh words are like atom bombs. When someone visits your house, even if you do

not give him anything to eat, at least talk to him sweetly and softly. It can even appease his hunger. Instead, if you speak harshly, that will not only increase his hunger but also dishearten him.

-Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 31, Chapter 33

### **What Is the Best Way to Love God?**

Students! You do not need to fight for rights. Discharge your responsibilities, and rights will follow. Do your duty. Duty is God; work is worship.

What is your right? To make everybody happy is your right. Serve everybody, and make everyone happy without expecting anything in return. Service is God. The best way to love God is to love all and serve all. Speak softly and sweetly. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. That is the essence of the culture of India.

Education does not mean "Twinkle, twinkle, little star, how I wonder what you are." All this is artificial education. True culture of India is one that fosters spirituality and human values.

-Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 31, Chapter 43.

### **Purify Your Mind and Fill It with Positive Feelings**

Some people say that they have not received any benefit in spite of chanting the Divine name for twenty to thirty years. No benefit accrues from chanting the Divine name if the mind is filled with impurities. First purify your mind and fill it with positive feelings. Only then you can experience the benefit of chanting the Divine name. Bad thoughts and bad feelings will not help you in any way. Even if you happen to come across anything bad, do not let it enter your mind.

God's work will never fail. So, all the work that is done with Divine feelings will never meet with failure. If you fail in your endeavour, it means you do not have Divine feelings. You will always be successful if your feelings are pure and Divine. At least from today onward, cultivate noble feelings. Talk sweetly and softly. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 32, Part 1, Chapter 9

### **Always Speak with a Smile on Your Lips**

Service is the easiest path to attain Divine grace. Offer service and receive the love of God. Love and service are like two wings by which man can soar to higher levels of consciousness. If you have the spirit of love and service, Divine grace will follow you like a shadow wherever you may be, be it in the forest or in the sky, village or city, river or mountain cliff.

God has created man in His own image so that his conduct should be in consonance with His command. You should not cause harm to anyone, for God exists in all. Always speak with a smile on your lips. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 32, Part 2, Chapter 9

### **Do Not Fritter Away This Life**

Today unrest and violence have gripped the world as truth and righteousness have declined in the hearts of people. All that you find outside is nothing but the reflection, reaction, and resound of your inner feelings. Human life is highly sacred, most precious and Divine. Do not fritter away this life by indulging in unsacred activities. It has to be lived in the proper way by exercising control over the ten senses.

Speak sweetly and softly. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. Pray for the well-being of all. May all the worlds be happy! Sanctify your senses by serving all. If you exercise control over your senses, you can achieve anything in life. If God is not pleased with you, you will be looked down upon by everyone in the world.

You may think that you have given away ten bags of rice in charity and distributed clothes to 500 people. Such accounts are to be submitted to the income tax department and not to God. God is not



interested in quantity; He sees the feeling behind your acts. So, whatever act of charity you undertake, do it with the spirit of love and sacrifice. -Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33, Chapter 12

### **The Tongue Is Given to Make Others Happy**

One who calls himself a leader should always speak sweetly and lovingly. He should not indulge in criticism. Criticism is nothing but the reflection, reaction, and resound of one's wicked qualities. The bad qualities that one sees in others are nothing but the reflection of one's own inner feelings. No one has the right to find fault in others. He is the worst sinner who indulges in faultfinding. The tongue is given to make others happy and to sing the glories of the Lord. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly.

The hands are given not to hurt others, but to earn one's livelihood and perform acts of charity. The ears have been given not to listen to vain gossip, but to listen to the sacred stories of the Lord. In this manner, man should put each of his limbs to proper use and sanctify his life. Today science has advanced, but senses have become polluted. What is the use of acquiring education, which does not confer sense control? -Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33, Chapter 14

### **Senses Are Responsible for Both Merit and Sin**

Direct your mind on God instead of directing it on the senses. As I pointed out yesterday, senses are responsible for both merit and sin. If you put them to misuse, you will incur sin. If they are used in a proper way, it results in merit. Speak softly and sweetly, and cultivate a good mind. Only then will you earn the respect of others. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. Cultivate right vision. Evil looks will put you in danger. Keechaka cast his evil looks on Draupadi, which eventually led to his death at the hands of Bhima. Do not listen to evil talk.

-Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 34, Chapter 4

### **True Humanness Lies in Understanding Unity in Multiplicity**

The *Vedanta* (*Upanishads* which teach Self-knowledge) declares that the *Atmic* Principle is the underlying unity in diversity. Bulbs are many, but the same current flows in all of them. Likewise, the *Atmic* Principle exists in all. Man's inability to understand this principle of unity is the cause of his ignorance. True humanness lies in understanding unity in multiplicity. You have to develop right vision in order to develop unity. This was Buddha's first teaching.

Next, He stressed the need for sacred speech. One should speak only those words that cause no annoyance to others and that are truthful, pleasant, and helpful. Whatever you speak should not cause any disturbance to others. It should be truthful as well as pleasing. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. Sacred speech is the manifestation of Divinity.

-Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 34, Chapter 9

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### **As You Think, So You Become**

In order to sanctify your senses, you should utilise them in the service of others. As you think, so you become. If you have bad vision, listen to bad talk, indulge in bad activities, you will ultimately ruin yourself. If you cannot undertake any service activity, at least speak softly and sweetly. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly.

Today man speaks harsh words that hurt the feelings of others. He puts his senses to misuse. Then how can he expect to be happy and healthy? In order to enjoy perfect health, make sacred use of your senses. You may be a pauper or a millionaire. You may have money or not, but God has given each one of you five senses. Make proper use of them, and sanctify your lives.

-Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 35, Chapter 2

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### **What Is True Education?**

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When you have a visitor to your house, you should greet him with respect and love. These days you cannot find any such courteous behaviour at all. That is why I often say, "You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly." But today's education is making the children veritable demons. There is no humility or friendliness in them. They learn the material given in books by rote, go to the examination centre, empty the material in their heads on the answer papers, and return home with empty heads. Is this education? Not at all. True education is that which is imprinted on the heart of the learners. It should remain unchanged over the years. Such sacred feelings are not to be found in today's students.

### **Lead the Life of a True Human Being**

Everyone pretends to be a devotee without any trace of devotion. What is all this acting for? People learn such false values from cinema, TV, etc., which are ruining them, especially the children. The world today seems to be happy with TV and cinema. But Swami does not approve of them. Are cinema, TV, etc., helping in the redemption of mankind? Everyone should cultivate human qualities and lead the life of a true human being. But there are few such people to be found. There are, of course, a few parents who bring up their children with great love and affection and put them on the right path. Only such parents can be called ideal parents. Their children grow up to be ideal and noble.

-Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 35, Chapter 9

### **Too Much Talk Diminishes Memory**

Do not slide into lazy habits the moment you leave the Institute. Laziness must be avoided at all cost. Laziness is rust and dust, whereas realisation is best and rest! Realisation must be your goal in life, and laziness can make that goal elusive.

Excessive talking must also be avoided. Too much talk diminishes memory and dulls intelligence. Therefore do not talk much. Others may try to drag you into pointless conversation, but deftly dodge them. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly! Talk only when you must, speak sweetly when you do, be ever courteous, and never fail to respect your parents. It is only when you conduct yourself in this manner and base your actions on love that you can truly be called an educated person.

-Summer Showers in Brindavan 2000, Chapter 1

### **Excessive Thought Can Lead to Harm**

You should not lend your ear to all that is being said. Similarly, thoughts too must be kept in tight check. Thoughts must centre around appropriate matters. The questions – when, where, and what you must think are all important. Excessive thought can lead to harm.

Excessive thinking (plotting) is what the Kauravas did, and they eventually paid dearly for it. They were always seized with evil thoughts and spent all night devising mean and wicked ways of harming the noble Pandavas. The Kauravas came to ruin because they constantly harboured foul thoughts about the Pandavas, who were the very embodiment of righteousness. Therefore always avoid bad looks, listening to bad words and talk, and also bad thoughts. Do not ever utter unbecoming words. Always say good things and speak pleasantly. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly! Students must cultivate such good qualities for they alone are the true ornaments.

### **Bad Looks Encourage Bad Thoughts**

Students — boys and girls! In this phase of life, there are many virtues that you must acquire; later, you must make good and active use of them. Only if you accumulate wealth now, can you spend it later. If there are no "earnings" now, what can you do later? You must therefore firmly resolve to develop right now good intellect, good habits, and good speech.

Buddha repeatedly stressed the need for right vision and never tolerated any violation of this maxim by His disciples. Bad looks encourage bad thoughts, which ultimately lead to ruin. Looks must therefore be strictly controlled. -Summer Showers in Brindavan 2000, Chapter 4

### **Always Be Immersed in Divine Feelings**

Be polite, courteous, and humble when speaking to elders. Never be rough or rude. Your humility would please the elder to whom you are speaking. At times, you may not be able to do what you are asked to do, but you can be courteous while being non-committal. As Swami often says, "You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly." Cultivate this practice.

Always be immersed in Divine feelings. If you happen to see a wicked person, do not immediately think of that person as being bad. The bad actions of that person are due to the body, but within that person is the same *Atma* that is also in you. This unity, this *Atmic* Principle is what you must focus on. Deal with this other person with the feeling that the Self in you is also present in him. This is the way to develop love for all beings. Also, do not bear ill will towards any country, but be alike to all. Do not criticise the culture of other countries. Love your culture as your mother, just as people of other lands love their respective cultures. -Summer Showers in Brindavan 2000, Chapter 15

### **Share Whatever You Have with Others**

India is a sacred land, a land of sacrifice and spirituality. It is being converted into a land of material pleasures. Spirit of sacrifice is very essential. Share whatever you have with others. A small amount of food is enough to satiate your hunger. Why crave the entire River Ganga when a small glass of water is all that you need to quench your thirst? Do not harbour greed and other evil qualities lest you should suffer the same fate as that of Duryodhana and his tribe. Fill your heart with love.

Students! Talk softly and sweetly. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. You are all young. Make efforts to mould your future in the proper way. Develop the spirit of love and sacrifice. Share your love with your friends. For example, if you have two pens, give one to someone who needs it. If your parents raise an objection to this act of charity, convince them by saying, "What is the use of having an extra pen? It is better that it is given to somebody who needs it." This will certainly make them happy.

### **As You Sow, So Shall You Reap**

There is no wealth greater than love. Respect and revere your parents as God. Offer salutations to them when you wake up in the morning, before you go to school, and when you go to bed at night. Never argue with them. Try to convince them with love. Remember that as you sow, so shall you reap. Whatever you do to your parents, your children will do the same to you. Never talk to them rudely. Be obedient. -Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33, Chapter 9

### **Respect Women and Be Respected**

Today people are conferred various titles like *Padmashri*, *Padma Vibhushan*, etc. (honours and titles conferred on people for their distinguished services and achievements). But the titles conferred on women, such as *Grihalakshmi* (prosperity of the house), *Illalu* (head of the house), *Dharmapathni* (companion for righteous living), *Ardhangini* (better half), etc., are very high and sacred. How can women with such exalted titles to their credit be inferior to men? But, unfortunately, today due to the effect of the *Kali* (Iron) Age, men look down upon women and treat them as mere servants. This is a big mistake. The more you respect women, the more you will be respected.

You should see to it that women do not shed tears. Otherwise, the family will face hardships. A thorn can be removed from the foot, but a harsh word, which has wounded the heart, cannot be

taken back. So, never use harsh words. Talk sweetly and softly. The husband has the right to point out the mistakes of his wife, but he has no right to use harsh words and hurt her feelings. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. The family will attain peace and prosperity once you observe these principles.

### **Destructive Power of Anger**

Usually the element of anger is found more in men than in women. If you get angry once, the energy gained by you from the food consumed over three months will be destroyed. Not merely that, it also boils your blood, which will take nearly three months to cool down. Such being the case, imagine what would be your fate if you lose your temper time and time again.

The story of Jarasandha bears ample testimony to this. Many times, Krishna challenged him for a battle. However, when Jarasandha would come with fierce anger, Krishna would run away from the battlefield. Seeing this happen time and again, Krishna was asked the reason for His strange behaviour. Then Krishna replied, "Don't be under the mistaken notion that I am running away from the battlefield out of fear. I can kill him in no time, but this is not the right time to kill him. By arousing his anger time and time again, I am draining out all his strength." Gradually Jarasandha lost all his strength and ultimately met his doom.

Krishna never considered it an insult to run away from the battlefield because He was acting according to His own master plan. He adopted this method of conquering His enemy to teach an important lesson. All the plans of God are meant only for the welfare of others. He does not do anything for Himself. God always does only good, which may appear to be bad to some people. The mistake lies in their vision, not in God's creation. Whatever God does, it is always meant to help you and develop your sacredness.

-Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33, Chapter 11

### **Each Limb of the Body Has Its Own Purpose**

Many people say, "Swami, I am losing my teeth. What is the use after I lose all my teeth?" Swami says, "You may lose your teeth, but the tongue is still there." All the teeth are strong. Strong things go first. The tongue, which is soft, remains. When you go, the tongue always goes with you. The tongue should be kept safe. That is why it is said, "You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly."

Talk softly and sweetly. Speak the truth. Follow righteousness. Chant the name of the Lord, and make others listen to it. Do you know why the tongue is given? Is it to eat everything? Do you know why the feet are given? Is it to travel in the lanes and bylanes? Each limb of the body has its own purpose. You should do good and perfect deeds. The body is gifted to undertake sacred activities. You should never be unrighteous and never utter falsehood. Let your body tread along the righteous path. Swami expects you to earn a good name.

-Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 34, Chapter 16

### **Use Discrimination to Enrich One's Character**

Our character is reflected in our words, behavior, and conduct in daily life. So we should speak pleasantly and not hurt others with our harsh words. It is true that we cannot always oblige but we can always speak obligingly.

While cooking, women select appropriate vessels according to the quantity of rice to be cooked. It does not make sense if a large vessel is chosen to cook a small quantity of rice. Discrimination should be used to select the vessel and the intensity of the flame required for cooking. In the same way, discrimination should be used to enrich one's character.

-Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 34, Chapter 20

### **Develop Love for Students and Mould Their Character**

There is a bond of pure love between teachers and students. Students can win over any teacher's heart, and a teacher can win over students' hearts. If you want to be loved, you have to love others

first. First and foremost, we should aspire for truth. The basis of Indian culture is "Speak truth, practise right conduct." I was always very humble. Now also I teach the same thing to students. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly! But sometimes one needs to be strict. That is what I do. I can be harder than a diamond when the situation demands. Otherwise, I am softer than butter. Teachers understood this nature of Mine.

Teachers! If you want to take students into your confidence, you have to approach them with love. You have to point out their mistakes and lead them on the right path. Only then will they follow the right path and accept their mistakes. For the progress and prosperity of the nation, teachers should develop love for students and mould their character. Then the society will obtain many good citizens.

-Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 34, Chapter 21

### **Never Show Anger towards Children**

It is not enough if you start an institution. The students must be brought up in the right way. Speak gently. Never show anger towards the children. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. Talk to the children softly and sweetly. Interaction between the teachers should also be pleasant. Then the children will be encouraged by their example. Every little thing should be taught to the children to the best of your ability. Only then the children will learn with enthusiasm.

-Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33, Chapter 15

### **All the Noble Souls Have Taught Sacred Things**

You are attributing various names and forms to God for your own satisfaction, but God is essentially one. Be He Rama, Krishna, Allah, or Jesus, all their teachings are meant for the emancipation of man. No religion preaches violence or to harm anybody. Some evil-minded people are misinterpreting the sacred teachings and are indulging in wicked deeds. All the noble souls have taught sacred things. They said, "Love all." They did not preach hatred. God never tells anybody to kill others. No one has any right to kill another because the same *Atmas* present in all.

In the name of God, people are committing heinous crimes. It is not good for anybody. Love all, serve all. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly. There is no God greater than love. Love is God, God is love. Live in love. Destroy wicked qualities. The mean-minded people try to attribute their meanness to God. It is a sign of ignorance. Do not pay heed to such people. Have faith in your own Self. Otherwise, you cannot have love for God. Due to defects in the modern education system, love is diminishing in man day by day. Hatred is on the rise.

### **The More You Love Others, the Greater the Joy You Will Experience**

Man is forgetting truth and thereby subjecting himself to danger. He has forgotten humanness by developing animal tendencies. True spirituality lies in destroying animal tendencies and transforming humanness into Divinity. It is not possible to attain Divinity without getting rid of animality. Today man is behaving like an animal because of his selfish love. Such a person can never enjoy happiness. He will always be immersed in misery. The more you love others, the greater the joy you will experience. The more you develop hatred, the more miserable your life will be.

-Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 34, Chapter 24

### **God Alone Is Your True Friend**

Students must primarily foster and develop good ideas. Reduce excess talk. Do not enter into friendship overly. What is this friendship? Who is the true friend? These worldly friends are not real friends. As long as you are rolling in wealth, position, and power, they swarm over you, saying, "Hello! Hello." As long as there is money in your pocket, they say, "Come on, let's go to the cinema."

As you gradually lose your money, power, and position, you will find that there is no one to even say good-bye to you! They will try their best to avoid you. These are not your friends. God alone is your real friend. Wherever you may go, He is the friend who will never leave you.

*You may be in the forests or the skies;*

*You may be in the city or the village;  
You may be on the hill or on the plateau below;  
To those who see no direction to their life,  
God is the only succour.*

Your earthly friends will desert you when all is lost. As long as there is water in the pond, the frogs croak. The instant the water dries up, there will not be even one frog left there. Earthly friendship and relations are all like that. You are experiencing it daily. How many such friendships have you developed in your life? Where are all those friends today?

As long as you are in the college for two or three years, they will move about with you, saying "Hello!" After college studies are over, they disperse in various directions. One friend is in the east, and one is in the west. If they want to meet, north and south block the path in between! That is not the type of friendship to be developed. Certainly, you must speak well to all and move about with them amiably. But do not become attached and excessively friendly. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly.

### **The Lord Is Always behind You**

Do not develop hatred; at the same time, excessive friendship must also be avoided. Be as close as is required and no more. Friendship must be within limits. Friendship beyond limits must be with God alone for He will not let go at any time.

*All the relations will come only to the doorstep;*

*The Lord's name is your only saviour that will never leave you.*

Wherever you may go, the Lord is always behind you. No friend on earth will ever be able to keep up with you like that.

-Summer Showers in Brindavan 1996, Chapter 12

### **Practise Compassion and Morality**

Your destiny is not achieving the most pleasure, but climbing the peak of bliss. Compassion and morality will take you higher and higher, until you reach the summit. So, practise these qualities even in your smallest acts, to the best of your capacity.

You cannot always oblige, but can you not talk obligingly? You can, but you don't! The tongue has the extra power to harm and hurt, so you must exercise extra control over it. Do not pain anyone through your words; spread love; be full of love. If you cannot love man, how can you hope to love God?