

SLIDE 1 – Module 1 Title

- Module 1 of the SSIO Orientation Programme for Office Bearers is about Sathya Sai Baba, His Life and His Teachings.

SLIDE 2 – Module 1 General Outline

- We will begin by learning a little more about who Sathya Sai Baba is through his early years and childhood. We will also see how He is viewed by different people.
- This will then lead us to take a deeper look at His Mission, an overview of His main teachings and of course His life and work, which is the pure expression of selfless service.

SLIDE 3 – Title: Who is Sathya Sai Baba?

- I would like to invite you to participate by using the chat box and writing a few words sharing who Sathya Sai is for you. Just a few words that come straight from your heart describing who Swami is for you. Please remember to share your contributions to everyone and not just to the presenter, thank you.
- *After reading their contributions...*
- Sathya Sai Baba is viewed by different people in different ways. To a spiritual aspirant, He is a divine master, to a rationalist, he may be considered as a great humanitarian, to thousands of people he is an inspiring leader with a dynamic vision and to a devotee, he is simply Divinity in human form. Those of us who have had the opportunity to experience Swami, consider Him to be Pure Love.
- Clearly, at a human level, Sathya Sai Baba has set an example of an ideal, fully integrated, loving and selfless human being.
- Taking a look at Swami at a level that goes beyond our reasoning, he reaches out to all his seekers through his Omnipresence... and without any publicity; thousands of people are drawn to Him just for one reason, and that is His Pure Love. Evidence of His grace comes in the forms of dreams, insights, miracles, all of which can only be understood through experience, which I am sure we can all relate to.

SLIDE 4 – Who is Sathya Sai Baba?

- We shall now take a closer look at His life. Sathya Sai Baba was born as Sathya Narayana Raju on the 23rd of November 1926, in the village of Puttaparthi in the state of Andhra Pradesh, South of India. There were many unusual incidents and miracles accompanying His birth as well as during his childhood. (*share one story/anecdote of your choice*)

- Even as a child, His spiritual inclination and contemplative nature made the villagers see him as a *Brahma Jnani*, that is the knower of God.
- Just a short glimpse about Sathya Sai Baba's parents, Pedda Venkama Raju and Eashwarama, both came from poor families. Eashwaramma, which literally means Mother of Ishwar, that is mother of God, was known in the village because many times when her husband gave her some money for the household expenditure, she would always separate part of this money to buy food, prepare it and distribute it among the children of the village.
- Going back to Sathya, even in primary school He was a great leader and role model for his classmates. His adherence to truth and exemplary character at a very young age surprised the teachers and especially the headmaster who recognised His divinity.
- Though from a poor family, Sathya Sai never hesitated to give away his portion of food to the needy. Swami would take advantage of any given opportunity to turn the minds of both young and even elders towards God.
- However, it was not until the age of 14, on the 20th of October 1940 when He made the historic declaration stating that He was divinity incarnated in Human form.

SLIDE 5 – Historic Declaration

- That morning, Sathya left for school as usual however returned home within minutes stating the following to his parents: *"I am no longer your Sathya. I am Sai. I do not belong to you. I have my work, my devotees are calling me."*
- Taking a look at Swami's name, we can see how His name itself contains all the attributes of God:
 - **Sathya**, Truth... that which does not change in space or time, that which is eternal, that which was, is and will always be.
 - **Sai** – That is to say, divine mother and
 - **Baba**, which is father.
- So Swami is our divine father, mother and an embodiment of truth himself.
- Thus, as we just recalled, it was at the age of 14 that He declared to his parents that He had come to this world with the aim to re-establish the principle of righteousness, to motivate love for God and service to fellow man.

SLIDE 6 – I have a Task

- Furthermore, on the 25th May 1947, when Sathya Sai was 20 years old, he declared the following in a letter to his brother (*read quote*)
- As we can see, Swami's mission is clearly to benefit the whole of humanity. Yet, although His Teachings are to benefit the world on a larger scale, I am sure we all have the experience of how he guides each one of us personally, on a one-to-one basis, through direct heart-to-heart communication.

SLIDE 7 – His Purpose & Mission

- As a highly revered spiritual leader, Sathya Sai Baba has inspired millions of people through His Life and Message to lead more spiritual, purposeful and moral lives.
- As we saw, at the age of 14, he declared to his parents that He had come to this world with the mission to re-establish the principle of righteousness, to motivate love for God and service to fellow man.
- He did not come start a new religion. His Mission was to give us faith in ourselves, in the Divine source that resides within; He encouraged us to follow the spiritual path or religious belief of our choice and to in turn become better Christians, Hindus, Muslims, Jews, Sikhs, etc.

SLIDE 8 – Quote: I have come to light the lamp...

- I would like to now share one of Swami's quotation which we have all surely read many times. As he said in July 1968 (*Read quote*)
- This quote clearly underlines Swami's mission, which is to spread the light of Love. Just like thousands of candles can be lit from one single flame, similarly thousands of hearts are lit by infinite and boundless love.

SLIDE 9 – Quote: You will learn that I am Prema...

- (*Read quote*)

SLIDE 10 – His Teachings

- Let us now move on to His teachings. He has repeatedly said that it is more important for us to understand what He teaches, and not 'who the teacher is'. He has said: "*You must not waste your time in trying to understand Me and My nature. You will understand Me only through my work*".
- Through His discourses and writings, Sathya Sai Baba has offered an ocean of wisdom and guidance on all aspects of spirituality and value-oriented living. He has often repeated that it is not necessary to drink the whole ocean to know its taste, and that it is not necessary to read all the scriptures to live a life of joy, peace and love. It is enough to put into practice at least one teaching.
- Once again, before moving ahead, I would like to ask all of you to participate by sharing any one of Sathya Sai Baba's teachings that has transformed your lives. It can be in the form of a quotation or writing it in your own words. Whatever comes straight from your heart. So, I will pause for a minute or two so you may share your valuable contributions.
- In an attempt to capture the essence of Sathya Sai Baba's teachings, in the next slides we will see a general outline of His central teachings:

SLIDE 11 – Know Thyself

- Firstly and most importantly, Swami encourages us to recognise who we really are. He says we are not one person but three, the one that we think we are... the body; the one others think we are... the mind; and the one we really are... the *Atma*, that is to say, the eternal changeless spirit.
- Recalling upon the ancient Greek philosopher Socrates, he taught the art of self-inquiry and he invited us to ask ourselves the question "Who am I?" Nowadays in our modern society, many times we are carried away by our iPads, iPods, iPhones, and forget about the most important I, that is... "Who am I", what is my true nature. (*Read quote*)
- We can discover and manifest who we truly are by turning inwards with faith, by diving within and activating our inner vision.
- So Swami invites us to know ourselves, know thyself and recognise our divine nature. He tells us that our conscience is our true master. He constantly invites us to discover the true master that resides within each and every one of us. When we follow our conscience, our thoughts, words and deeds will be pure, noble and consistent. Therefore, Sathya Sai encourages us go directly to the inner source of wisdom and in doing so we recognise our true Divine nature and that we are all bound together by Divine Love.

SLIDE 12 – Love All, Serve All

- Sathya Sai led by example "*My Life is My Message*" and spent His entire life in compassionate activities for the upliftment of humanity. He demonstrated that a spiritual life does not mean living in seclusion, but a full and dedicated life rendering loving service to all. He demonstrated that goodness is not passive but dynamic & active, involved and caring. All His actions, whether small or big, were founded by His pure, selfless, unconditional & eternal love.
- As we know, Sathya Sai has demonstrated how to render selfless service through His own personal example. He has repeatedly said that the highest spiritual discipline is selfless service. That hands that serve are holier than lips that pray. And He reminds us that we do not serve others, we actually serve ourselves, and the divinity that resides in every living being.
- Many activities are organised at the national and international levels for the public as well as SSIO members who would like to participate and serve others with the feeling that they really serve themselves and not others.
- (*Read quote*)

SLIDE 13 – The Five Human Values

- Sathya Sai reminds us that the five Human Values of Love, Peace, Truth, Righteousness and Non-violence are latent in every human being and cannot be found outside, as they are our very natural characteristics. *(Read quote)*

SLIDE 14 – Unity

- Swami has said that there is only one God, although He may be called by many names. Therefore, all religions and spiritual paths lead to the one and only divine source. He asks us to sincerely follow our respective religions and live our daily lives in consonance with the teachings of ethical behaviour and morality. *(Read quote)*
- Sathya Sai uses the word Unity so many times and He highlights the importance of Unity in His teachings: Unity of Faiths, Unity of Head, Heart and Hands, Unity in Diversity. Just like the example of a garland, which may have different flowers, with different colours and fragrances, however are all bound together by the same invisible thread; similarly, although we may observe apparent diversity, we are all bound together by the same Divine Love.

SLIDE 15 – Ceiling on Desires

- Swami also invites us to reflect upon and practice the 'Ceiling on Desires' programme *(in the fields of food, money, time and energy)*. He has said in repeated occasions that the mind key to our transformation, our mind is bound by our desires and many times when we do not place a limit to these desires, then our body and senses take control of us and lead our life rather than our conscience. Thus, we must learn to go beyond our senses, and let our conscious guide our actions, and not our senses. *(Read quote)*
- Thus, after outlining His main teachings, we can see that the organisation bearing the name of Sathya Sai is built on the pillars of Love, Selfless Service, and Human Values, encouraging each and every one of us to discover and manifest our true nature, to place a ceiling on our desires and to experiment unity.

SLIDE 16 – His Life & Works

- We shall now take a closer look at His work...

SLIDE 17 – A Life Dedicated to Selfless Service

- Clearly, Swami's life is a pure expression of selfless service, "love in action" as He described service himself.

SLIDE 18 – The 3 Wishes of His Mother

- We already saw mother Eashwaramma's caring nature and her concern to help and provide assistance to those in need. She had three wishes which she had expressed to her dearest Sathya (*read through them*).
- Sathya Sai leads through example, and not only is He an extraordinary spiritual leader but he also was an exemplary son and as such, He fulfilled these three pure and loving wishes of his mother.
- Not only did He fulfil them but He inspired thousands of people to engage in selfless service activities. As He said "*Expansion is My Life*" and as we know, the SSIO carries out many service activities provided in the fields of EduCare, MediCare and SocioCare.

SLIDE 19 – EduCare

- Taking a deeper look at education... He established a model education system at all levels – primary schools, secondary schools and universities, offering undergraduate, Masters, and Ph.D. degrees.
- In these institutions, no fees are charged to students, and admission is open to all, regardless of race, religion, caste or economic status.
- Emphasising the pursuit of academic excellence, Sathya Sai Baba's system of "integral education" is designed to foster all aspects of human personality: physical, mental, emotional, intellectual and of course spiritual.
- As well as an intensive academic curriculum, students are required to take courses on morality and spirituality and devote several hours each week to community service.
- Sathya Sai Baba says that "*the end of education is character*". If we look at the quotation on the slide, he reminds us that "*Education should not be information, education should be transformation.*" So education is not about theory, it is about practice. Like he says, Educare is to bring out what we have within, to put into practice and not only recognise the Human Values but also manifest them.
- Sathya Sai schools not only in India but all around the world, as well as Institutes that train teachers on how to implement the self-transformational programme of Sathya Sai Educare.

SLIDE 20 – MediCare

- If we recall, the second wish Swami's mother had was to provide health care for the villagers. Once again, he even 'expanded' this wish further...
- Sathya Sai laid the foundation stone of the 1st General Hospital in Puttaparthi in 1954. Then a 2nd General Hospital was inaugurated in Whitfield in 1976.
- In 1991, a modern Super speciality hospital was built in Puttaparthi, based on His teachings providing healthcare services rendered free of cost to the patients; delivery of healthcare with love and compassion that treats not only the body, but also the mind and spirit of the patient.
- Motivated by Sathya Sai Baba's teachings to serve humanity, doctors, nurses, and workers from all parts of the world serve at the hospital and render extraordinary, compassionate, and loving care to all patients.
- A second Super Specialty hospital was inaugurated in 2001 in Bangalore. These hospitals have been called "temples of healing", for their high standard of medical care in a loving atmosphere that is devoid of commercialism. The two hospitals have served over two million patients.
- Additionally, fully understanding the need of the villagers, Sathya Sai Baba started the mobile hospitals to provide healthcare to needy patients at their very doorsteps.
- Also, inspired by the ideal healthcare provided by the medical institutions established by Sathya Sai, thousands of doctors and healthcare providers of the SSIO, under the guidance of its Medical Committee, provide free medical services through medical camps, permanent clinics, mobile clinics and tele-medicine in over 35 countries.
- So as with EduCare, MediCare initiatives and projects also take place all around the globe under the SSIO framework.

SLIDE 21 – SocioCare

- After fulfilling Eashwaramma's third wish of providing drinking water to the villagers in Puttaparthi, Sathya Sai Baba implemented a large humanitarian service project to provide an adequate supply of pure drinking water to 1.5 million inhabitants of the State of Andhra Pradesh in India who were living in drought-stricken conditions. The Prime Minister of India travelled to Prasanthi Nilayam to inaugurate the project.
- He also implemented a large project to rebuild a channel to Chennai which provided pure drinking water to over 8 million people in this large city. He demonstrated that it is the duty of society to ensure that all people have access to the basic requirements for a happy, human life.
- So as we see, not only did Sathya Sai fulfil his mother's wishes but exceeded all her expectations providing care at larger and larger scales.

SLIDE 22 – The SSIO

- In the next module we will take a closer look at the SSIO, the Organisation that loving bears His name. We will just share a short glimpse at this point...

SLIDE 23 – Quote on the SSIO

- When we ask ourselves, why has Swami given us the opportunity to participate in an organisation that bears His name, in His own words: The purpose of the SSIO (*read quote*)
- Thus the objective is Oneness, Unity, to realise our inherent Divinity. Actually, not just to recognise this Divinity but also MANIFEST it. Swami's emphasis has always been on practical implementation.
- The inspiration of Sathya Sai Baba's example and message of unconditional love and service has resulted in the establishment of nearly 2,000 Sathya Sai Centres and Groups in over 120 countries throughout the world.
- Our role as members and leaders within the SSIO is to "*First be, then do, and only then tell*".

SLIDE 24 – Be Happy!

- And what is the main purpose of our lives? To realise and manifest our divine nature in order to BE HAPPY!
- Sathya Sai in His infinite compassion has said... (*read quote*)
- He has said that His duty will not be over until each and every one of us fulfils our own duty, as a loving master he takes us by our hand, He leads us, guides us, and accompanies us in every step that we take. And what is the reason behind this, nothing else than His pure and boundless love!