

SLIDE 1 – Module 8 Title

- Module 8 of the SSIO Orientation Programme focuses on Sathya Sai Baba's teachings on Selfless Service.

SLIDE 2 – Module 8 General Outline

- In the first part of the module, we will begin by understanding selfless service as a spiritual discipline. We will then recall how the good fortune to be an office bearer in this Divine organisation is truly a golden opportunity to serve ourselves and society. Then we will look at different service activities that take place within the framework of the SSIO and explore nature as being the best teacher, as Swami Himself has said.
- In the second part of the module, we will take a closer look at the ladies section and young adults' programmes, as well as the role and work carried out by medical units within the SSIO.

SLIDE 3 – Question for reflection...

- In order to help make this module interactive from the very start, I would like to invite you to participate now by answering the following question sharing and typing your responses in the chat box. (*Read question*).
- Please remember to share your contributions to everyone and not just to the presenter, thank you.
- (*Read through contributions*). Thank you very much.

SLIDE 4 – Title: Selfless Service as the highest Spiritual Discipline

- Let us begin by diving into the content of this module by understanding selfless service as a spiritual discipline.
- As we covered in Module 1, Sathya Sai Baba 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 and active, involved and caring. All His actions, whether small or big, were founded by His pure, selfless, unconditional and eternal love.
- He demonstrated how to render selfless service through His own personal example. Swami 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.

SLIDE 5 – Selfless Service as a Spiritual Discipline

- (Read quotes)
- Therefore as Sathya Sai reminds us in this second quote, all three wings are interconnected and we cannot regard them as separate. Although as members in the SSIO we may tend to gravitate towards a particular wing, we are strongly advised to participate to every extent possible in the activities of all three wings, as these are important for our spiritual growth in different facets.

SLIDE 6 – See Everyone as Yourself and Yourself in Everyone

- (Read quotes)
- Thereby, service to man is indeed service to God.
- Swami further states that: *"Through service you realise that all beings are waves of the Ocean of Divinity. No other spiritual practice can bring you into the incessant contemplation of the Oneness of all living beings. You feel another's pain as your own; you share another's success as your own. To see everyone else as yourself and yourself in every one is the core of spiritual practice. This spirit makes you humble before the suffering of others. When you rush to render help, you do not calculate how high or low one's social or economic status is. Thus, the hardest heart is slowly softened into sweetness by the opportunities of service."*
- He also explains: *"Selfless Service without idea of Self is the very first step in the spiritual progress of man. For, it trains you to transcend all the distinctions artificially imposed by history and geography and realise that the human community is one and indivisible. Learn this truth; experience it in action. That is the duty of the Seva Dal Organisation (the Service Wing). How can a person be held 'divine' unless he has established himself in the sense of this Unity and shaped all his actions thereby?"*
- Since God is indivisible, permanent and One without a second, all three: the person who serves, the act of service and the recipient are all One. This brings us back to the deep comprehension of experiencing Unity behind the apparent diversity as we saw in Module 4.

SLIDE 7 – Examine the True Motive behind Every Act of Service

- Let us now examine the true motive behind every act of service. (Read quotes)
- Thus, *"the fulfilment of human life consists in the service that man renders, without any thought of return, in an attitude of selflessness. Service rendered in this spirit sheds light in the dark interior of man, it widens the heart, it purifies the impulses and confers lasting bliss"*, according to Sathya Sai.
- This takes us now to understand the benefits derived from Selfless Service.

SLIDE 8 – The Inherent Benefits derived from Selfless Service

- *(Read first quote).*
- So we see how service provides us with the opportunity to develop empathy towards others less fortunate, to help reduce personal ego and to open the hearts of those who are serving.
- Furthermore, service rendered as a group reveals the joy of communal work and reduces the sense of individual ego.
- *(Read second quote)*
- I am sure we have all experienced this aspect of how, when we engage in service, the greatest recipient is ourSelf.

SLIDE 9 – Service as a 24 Hour Job!

- *(Read quote)*
- This deepens our understanding that service is not an activity as such but rather a constant attitude, the constant availability of translating love into action!

SLIDE 10 – Title: Office Bearers as Servants of Society

- We shall now move on to seeing the office bearers as servants of society.

SLIDE 11 – Quote: You should recognise that along with you...

- *(Read quote)*
- Swami further states: *"Attain oneness by doing service to society. You will find divine bliss in oneness. When you travel alone, you may be afraid and may have to face several difficulties. But when you travel with ten people, the strength of all of them will be yours. To experience the strength of unity is bliss".*

SLIDE 12 – Quote: Everyone must strive to promote the peace...

- *(Read quote)* This again brings us back to the feeling of Oneness and interrelationship with all.

SLIDE 13 – Quote: Man exists for service...

- *(Read quote)*

SLIDE 14 – Title: Service Activities within the SSIO

- At this point, we will take a brief overview of the service activities that take place under the framework of the SSIO.

SLIDE 15 – Service Activities within the SSIO

- We have already seen how Sathya Sai emphasises that every act of selfless service, performed with unconditional love and the attitude of serving God residing in those being served, confers immense spiritual benefit. Service is primarily a spiritual discipline that allows compassion, love and peace to blossom within and helps to get rid of the ego.
- Within the SSIO, members engage in service activities depending on local needs, resources available (both human and financial) and the interest of the members.
- Among these are: providing food, water, and clothing to the needy, orphans and physically/mentally challenged; visiting hospitals, nursing homes, or shelters for the homeless; organising medical camps and blood donation drives; initiating disaster relief programmes; adopting under-privileged neighbourhoods and communities; participating in community development and environmental protection practices under the 'Serve the Planet, Protect the Planet' initiatives, etc.

SLIDE 16 – Important Aspects to Consider & Remember

- *(Read through slide)*
- After third point: as Sathya Sai says, indeed service begins at home. We must pay special attention to make sure we are not leaving our duties towards our family members & home aside, and serving 'outside' without beginning with that attitude of selfless service at home with our parents, partner, siblings, children, etc.

SLIDE 17 – Title: Nature is the Best Teacher

- For the final section of this first part of Module 8, we will look into Nature as the best teacher.

SLIDE 18 – Nature is the Best Teacher

- *(Read quote).*
- In his ocean of teachings, Swami has given us so many examples of what nature teaches us, such as the sun that shines for everyone, the hard work and team work of ants, etc.

SLIDE 19 – Quote: Foster the seed of love...

- *(Read quote).* Here Swami invites us to expand our love more and more, to share it with more and more living beings.

SLIDE 20 – God, Man & Nature: The Oneness of All

- Coming to end of this first part, I would like recall Swami's words on the Oneness of all. *"Nature is a great gift of God to humanity, but even more important, it is the vesture of God. The ultimate truth is that Nature is the manifestation of God. Every cell, every atom, every moment in the universe is permeated by divinity, which is love itself. We owe our very existence to Nature. Like a compassionate mother, Nature nurtures us, sustains us, and protects us by giving us food, water, air, land and natural resources that often are taken for granted. Nature is your school, your laboratory, the gateway to liberation, and the panorama of God's majesty. Seek to know the lessons it is ready to teach."* Sathya Sai Baba, 4 October 1970
- *"Nature is in essence, Divinity itself. All this is Divine. All this is God. So, tread softly, move reverentially, utilize gratefully."* Sathya Sai Baba, 15 October 1966
- The SSIO has implemented and is continuously implementing many environmental and Go Green initiatives to instil love and service for Nature, the practice of ceiling on desires, and the practice of human values with respect to the environment.
- So, to finalise, once again, in our dearest Sathya Sai's words: *"Only when we engage ourselves in selfless service can we can experience the essence of pure love. Service is, love in action. For those immersed in love, everything appears vibrant with life. The power of love is boundless. Love All, Serve All."*

SLIDE 21 – Title: Ladies Programme

- For this second part of the module we will take a closer look firstly at the ladies section, then the young adults' programmes and finally the medical units. So let us begin with learning a little more about the ladies programme.

SLIDE 22 – Quote: This day of 19th November...

- Sathya Sai Baba has explained that the ancient scriptures have accorded women a pre-eminent status in society as they are the embodiments of sacrifice. As the first preceptor for their children, they mould the lives of their children to develop good character, love for God, and service to society.
- As we can see in His words: *(read quote)*.
- Thus, the role of the woman, especially the role of the mother, is given utmost importance in Swami's teachings that He even established a special day to honour them and their noble task in society.

SLIDE 23 – Mother Easwaramma

- Taking about the importance of mother, I would recall, the role of Swami's mother. *(Go through slide)*.

SLIDE 24 – The 3 Wishes of His Mother

- We already saw in Module 1 of this programme, mother Easwamma'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).*
- And as we also saw, not only did Swami 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.
- As He states in the following quote:
- *(Read quote)*

SLIDE 25 – Ladies Section

- So, a Ladies' Section may be established in Sathya Sai Centres depending on local customs and circumstances – however, it is not a requirement to do so.
- *(Read through slide points first and then quote)*

SLIDE 26 – Title: Young Adults Programme

- Now we will dive into the Young Adults programme within the SSIO.
- We know how much emphasis Swami has always placed on the youth, on the interaction, guidance and loving care with His students.
- In His discourses He has highlighted the important role of Young Adults in fulfilling His noble mission.
- Baba has also stated: *"All my students are gold. Only I know the feelings of my students, no one else. Students are ready to give their lives for Me, I too am always ready to give My life for them. Students should live a happy and prosperous life, wherever you may be, I am always with you, in you, around you. Whatever work you may do, always do it as if it is Swami's work. My dear ones, may all of you live happily and be prosperous in your life. I will take care of your future and present. I have no other place to live, your heart is verily My home, My mind is always on My students. Swami openly declares without you Swami is not existent. If I am there, you are there. If you are there, I am there. You and I are One."*

SLIDE 27 – Quote: Youth, the architects of the future...

- He further states:
- *(Read quote).*

SLIDE 28 – Quote: Youth alone can transform youth...

- Swami has also said: *(read quote)*.
- Here we can see the importance of working, as we already do, with our elders, with their valuable support, experience & advice from senior members, of course along with our enthusiasm to serve and dynamic vision.

SLIDE 29 – Young Adults Programme

- *(Read through slide)*

SLIDE 30 – SSIO International Young Adults Sub-Committees

- As you may already be aware, a key component of the Sathya Sai Young Adults Committee, is the International Young Adults Subcommittees which lead various global YA initiatives.
- Over the past few years, we have seen a significant growth in the YA movement worldwide and the success of the subcommittees have engaged YAs globally allowing for better communication and outreach among them.
- Currently there are nine subcommittees under the auspices of the International Young Adults Committee. Leadership and membership is reviewed on an annual basis to identify new talent and create a platform to accommodate as many YAs as possible to develop their leadership skills.
- *(Go through slide)*
- *(Share a short sentence explaining about the work of each sub-committee.)*

SLIDE 31 – Title: Medical Units

- Finally, to end this module, we will just see an overview about the medical units that operate within the SSIO and as tools to expand Selfless Service.

SLIDE 32 – SSIO Medical Committee

- *(Read through slide and quote)*

SLIDE 33 – MediCare

- We saw in Module 1 how 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.
- Thus, we can see that... *(Read through slide)*

SLIDE 34 – Love All, Serve All; Help Ever, Hurt Never

- Therefore, these medical units are indeed a perfect expression and reflection of Swami's dictums "Love All Service All; Help Ever, Hurt Never"
- This brings us to the end of Module 8. Thank you!

Om Sai Ram