

SATHYA SAI INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION

ORIENTATION PROGRAMME FOR OFFICE BEARERS





FOREWORD

Leadership Qualities of Office Bearers in the SSIO

“The sole objective of all the Sathya Sai Organisations is to enable man to discover his innate divinity, regain his self-confidence and faith in God.”

Sevadal, April 1983, page 4

“This Organisation is intended to broaden your love, to channelise your activities through devoted service.”

Sathya Sai Baba Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 3, page 44

The sole purpose of our role as officers (office bearers) in the Sathya Sai International Organisation (SSIO) is to journey along the integrated pathway of devotion (*bhakti*), wisdom (*jnana*) and selfless service (*seva*) to reach our ultimate and only destination, Self-realisation. Everything else – the position, duties, rules and regulations, activities/projects, etc. – are simply means to focus our time and energy constructively on this integrated pathway so that we steadily proceed towards our destination.

In addition to being conversant with the SSIO Guidelines and Operations Manual to properly discharge our duties and guide SSIO members, it is very important that officers dive deep into the teachings of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, given in His divine discourses and in His writings. These teachings will provide the understanding necessary to discharge our duties befitting the Sathya Sai name. They will help us to constantly self-reflect and to strive each day to remove the imperfections within us so that we may lovingly embrace all.

We may not have a complete understanding of Sathya Sai Baba’s teachings in the beginning because of all the training we have received beforehand from elsewhere. Yet, we hold office not to advance the vision and ideas dear to us, but, as Sathya Sai Baba said, *“to overcome your ego, to inspire others in the Godward path and to relieve distress.”* (Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 8, page 28)

Additionally, He said, *“Do not seek to exercise authority over others, seek rather to discover chances to be useful to them ... Be a servant; a servant of God ...”* (Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 6, page 262)

Swami says serve all and be nothing: Let go of the attachment to our desires and the ways that may have served us well in our profession and socially, so that we may learn to serve in the “Sai way”.

Sathya Sai Baba always told us to love His uncertainty. Particularly when the way forward cannot be seen, this requires that officers have faith and surrender to Him, so that He may manifest His work in every aspect of the SSIO.

Our involvement as officers in the SSIO is an opportunity given to us by our Guru and God to improve ourselves and to earn His love by practising His teachings in our every thought, word and deed, and by expressing our love and service to all. It matters not what others may say or do, it is imperative that we help ever, hurt never.

This opportunity is to be treasured, for, once lost, it may not come again in many life times. It is worth reminding ourselves from time to time that Sathya Sai Baba tells us never to leave His SSIO, particularly when disappointments or disagreements surface, as they inevitably will from time to time.

The goal of every officer is, ultimately, to transform himself; this transformation is indispensable to achieving the sole purpose of our service in the SSIO. Transformation becomes easier when we use the means within the SSIO and walk its pathway with the torchlight of Constant Integrated Awareness – which is God within – by following His teachings.

With everyone's united effort and His grace, all projects will be completed only according to His will. Thus, even if the outcome is not what we wished for, there can never be failure. With this understanding, there is no place for impatience or anger (which are born of the ego), there is only a need for acceptance. Officers can be confident that the Lord receives every *seva* offered with a pure motive and that, in return, He showers His grace abundantly.

SSIO officers need to be vigilant about the six inner enemies of desire, anger, greed, attachment, pride and jealousy, which “*are responsible for one's misconduct and suffering.*” (Sathya Sai Baba, Divine Discourse, Oct 10, 2002)

All is lost when we allow these enemies to infest our service in the SSIO. Therefore, we always need to watch our Words, Actions, Thoughts, Character and Heart (W.A.T.C.H.).

The spiritual journey of every officer is only to “Put apart the i” (Puttaparthi).

The Qualities of an SSIO Office Bearer

There are many qualities every Sathya Sai officer is encouraged to nurture:

Gratitude and Humility: Swami said that only those whom He calls can serve Him. For the benefits conferred on us, we must show our gratitude by our actions. When our ego descends, His work through us ceases. Therefore, it behooves every officer to discharge all duties with humility and sincerity. Swami said: *“Be always in the attitude of servants; that is the best training to become masters.”* Sanathana Sarathi, January 1978, page 259

Faith and Self-Confidence: We should have faith in Bhagawan, His teachings, His works and His organisation. Once we have absolute faith we accept everything as a sign of His grace. Properly understood, self-confidence is thinking all the time that God is within us; that God is doing everything.

“Feel that you are an instrument in His hands; let Him shape you and use you as He knows best.”

Sathya Sai Baba, Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 6, page 262

Character and Selflessness (Be): SSIO officers should have an exemplary character to inspire others. Their goodness, respect of others, soft speech, caring attitude towards all members, refusal to speak ill of others, desire to understand others’ needs, etc. will be honoured by all and followed. Love is selflessness; officers should be selfless.

Vision and Initiative (See): Swami said only people with unshaken faith in His Avatarhood, with the vision and yearning to serve, and who seek only ananda in serving Him should be chosen as leaders (Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 7, page 18).

He added that they should practise detachment, simple living and steady *sadhana* (spiritual practise). When officers have single minded-dedication to His Mission and to their personal *sadhana*, He will guide them on the steps they need to take, people will be sent to assist them, the SSIO work will progress with vigour and enthusiasm, and the personal affairs of the officers will be taken care of by the Lord Himself.

Sai Vowels (A-E-I-O-U)

4 A’s: Sathya Sai officers should have *Ability* (the skills to perform the tasks); *Availability* (have the time, interest and enthusiasm to participate); *Affability* (be cheerful, have a positive attitude and be a good team player); and *Accountability* (in discharging their duties righteously, lovingly, with self-sacrifice and being accountable for their actions).

5 E’s: Sathya Sai officers should have *Equanimity*, *Empathy*, *Enthusiasm*, *Energy* and *Empower* others to take the divine mission forward.

4 I’s: Sathya Sai officers should have *Integrity*, *Intensity*, be *Innovative* and *Inspire* others.

2 O's: Sathya Sai officers should be *Outstanding* and see the *Oneness* in all.

2 U's: Sathya Sai officers should practise *Unity* and *Understanding*.

Skills and Hard Work (Do): Know that all our previous education and experiences have been given to prepare us to serve Him and not for our personal gain, that is necessary but incidental. Always improve ourselves, seek the skills we require to serve – technical, inter-personal, leadership, etc. It is never too late to learn. Leaders should encourage others with special skills to serve in the team, because their success is our success. We should be good examples, by working hard with dedication and diligence.

Patience and Perseverance: Officers undergo many tests; these serve an important purpose and so should not be a reason to give up our duties. Tests cause us to open our minds and hearts to listen to the views of others, they teach patience and perseverance, and they build fortitude. They teach that all happens at the right time and by His will alone.

“Hear all and say nothing. Give all and take nothing. Bear all and do nothing. Serve all and be nothing.”

Sathya Sai Baba, Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 6, chapter 27

Understanding and Communication (Tell): One of the most important qualities every officer requires is the ability to listen to others, not just to hear them. Listen with an open mind and heart, even if their words are not always pleasant. It may be time consuming but understand their needs and decide whether these can be met within the goals and rules and regulations of the organisation. If they cannot be, “speak obligingly”. Know that differences of opinions are inevitable, not personal. If help from seniors is needed, seek it. Communicate lovingly and effectively – lovingly first, because that is a big step to communicating effectively. Give of ourselves in understanding and communicating, the Lord sees our pure motive.

“They shall not command or punish; they can only persuade and advise.”

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 10, page 227

Acceptance: Practise acceptance with trust that everything happens by Swami's will and surrender to Him. Then, we will receive His divine love, His grace and infinite blessings, and we will be worthy instruments to take His divine mission forward.

Orientation Programme for Office Bearers

(Offered with love at the feet of our beloved Sathya Sai Baba)

Sathya Sai Baba, the founder of our Organisation, stated that: “The most fundamental objective of the organisation is to awaken in man the awareness of the Divinity inherent in him.” (Sathya Sai Baba, 14 January 1981)

Further, He advised *“The acquisition of the love of God should be the primary aim of members of the Sai Organisations”*. (Sanathana Sarathi Nov 1995)

It is through our service and devotional practises, the growth of our learning and spiritual wisdom and the practise of the five Human Values in all aspects of daily life that we progress towards these goals.

The following four quotes from Sathya Sai Baba provides members and office bearers with clear guidance as to what He expects of us as members of these Organisations.

“Who can be members of these Organisations, and what are their qualifications? Of course, they must be eager aspirants for spiritual progress. They must have full faith in the Name that the organisation bears and in spreading that Name, in the manner suited to its Message and Majesty. Besides, the member must have won recognition as a good person. That is all the qualification needed; nothing else counts. There is no need to have money or lands, or scholarship, influence or authority or official position.”

– August 1967

“What are the duties of members and office-bearers? You know that the State requires you to take a solemn oath, when you take up an office or enter upon an assignment. Similarly, each member and office-bearer must take an oath, from the very depths of the heart, before engaging themselves in the activities.

“When you rise from bed at dawn, pray thus: Swami, save me from any act of commission or omission which will affect adversely the three qualifications You have laid down. Bless me with the skill, intelligence and enthusiasm necessary for the task I am dedicating myself to carry out for my own uplift. Guide me along the correct path; shower on me Your Grace so that I may earn a fair name in this attempt; guard me from temptation and wrong steps.”

“At night, when you go to bed, ponder over your activities during the day, examining them, whether you went against any of the conditions of membership, and if any wrong had been committed unconsciously, pray that it may not happen again. Decide to dedicate yourself in this manner, with these ideals for the work ahead.”

– April 1967

Centres and groups form the very core of the Sathya Sai International Organisation (SSIO). They must be places where there is an atmosphere of love, happiness and harmony with a focus on selfless service to members, to the Organisation and to society at large. It is through our devotional practises, our service, the growth of our spiritual wisdom and the practise of the five human values in all aspects of daily life that we move progressively towards this goal.

This office bearers orientation programme has been prepared to assist countries, regions and centres to stage an effective orientation for their office bearers and members. The programme can be held at national, regional or centre level. It can be held either over a weekend or over a period suitable for the members. This will depend on the distances across each country and membership composition. It also provides an opportunity for motivated Sai devotees to take on the role of speaker for the proposed sessions and to research the various aspects presented as part of their own service and spiritual upliftment.

The programme aims to support office bearers with an improved and deeper understanding of the principles which we adhere to in an office bearer's (servant) role in the SSIO. It deals with both personal conduct and with the harmonious and effective functioning of centres and groups. It aims also to help us to be leading examples and inspiring members of this sacred Organisation.

The programme would be staged over a day and a half, with modules covering nine topics. Each module has a duration of approximately one hour, allowing time for two speakers and interactive sessions.

The programme provides for the first four modules to be covered on the morning of Day 1; the next two modules on the afternoon of Day 1 and the final three on the morning of Day 2. The evening of Day 1 may be used for organisational meetings as necessary. Adequate time has also been built in to conduct plenary sessions for further clarification or reflection of points raised in this program.

The Nine Modules are:

- The Sai Avatar, His Life and Teachings.
- The Sathya Sai International Organisation (SSIO)
- The SSIO Structure
- Unity
- First "Be" then "Do"
- Loving Communication - Personal and Organisational
- Sathya Sai Centres and Groups
- Service – Work is Worship
- Devotional and Education Wings

Facilitators' guide sheets and a page of relevant Sathya Sai quotes are provided for each module topic. Facilitators are encouraged to compile their own presentation with the assistance of these guides, so as to cover all points outlined. Programme coordinators are requested to ensure a gender balance in selecting the speakers, so as to reflect the membership of the SSIO.

The individual quote sheets may also be used for study circles in Sathya Sai centres and groups, as stand-alone topics for discussion and reflection, or with the appropriate connecting modules.

Key reference documents are attached, as follows: the *Guidelines of the Sathya Sai International Organisation* and the *Operations Manual for Sathya Sai Centres and Sathya Sai Groups*, and the SSIO structure. These and additional resources are available on the website of the SSIO (sathyasai.org). Links to these are found on the Resource page at the end of the document.

Speakers are allocated 15 minutes per presentation, followed by group discussion, allowing for interaction between participants. Two to three minutes of time should be allowed between speakers for a brief introduction and for the speaker to take his/her place.

Speakers are requested to be self-disciplined, by keeping strictly to their allocated time slot, out of respect for those who follow and in accordance with Sathya Sai Baba's Ceiling on Desires programme. In this way the programme will stay on time and no topic or speaker will be disadvantaged. To support this process, it is recommended that sessions have an MC and a time keeper, who will respectfully work together to maintain the time allocation and programme flow.

For group discussions, small groups of 4-5 members are encouraged, to allow all to participate within the time frame. Participants may select from the suggested questions for discussion; or create their own more relevant questions, if necessary. For plenary sessions, it is recommended to have a panel of senior members and/or office bearers who can respond to questions.

Several links relating to inspirational Sathya Sai discourses for office bearers, which are strongly recommended for study before serving as an office bearer, can be found on the Resource page at the end of this document.

May all who have been inspired by Sathya Sai Baba and chosen to serve in a more active way in the SSIO experience his ever flowing Love and Grace.

DAY 1

“Without discipline one cannot be a devotee.”

Sanathana Sarathi Aug 1994, p.218

“Time is the most important element of your life.”

Baba The Breath of Sai p.181

“Time is the very form of God. Birth and death are encompassed by Time. Everyone, therefore, should regard Time as Divine and utilise it for performing sacred actions. You should not waste a single moment. Time wasted is life wasted.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 24 p 1: 1993

Sai Baba’s advice for disciplined adherence to time allocated:

- 8.45 am Welcome and outline of the two-day program, setting the tone.
- 9.00 Module 1 – The Sathya Sai Avatar, His life and teachings.
- 10.05 Module 2 – The Sathya Sai International Organisation (SSIO)
- 10.55 Morning tea break
- 11.15 Module 3 – The SSIO Structure
- 12.00 Module 4 – Unity
- 12.55pm Lunch
- 1.30 Module 5 – The Office Bearer - First “Be”, then “Do”
- 2.30 Module 6 – Loving Communication - Personal and Organisational
- 3.30 Afternoon Tea
- 3.50 Breakout - Group discussion on challenges and solutions
- 4.35 Plenary Group – Reporting and commentary from senior leaders
- 5.15 Free Time
- 6.30 Dinner: followed by wing/programme meetings as necessary

DAY 2

- 8.45am Welcome and outline of the second day’s programme
- 9.00 Module 7 – Sathya Sai Centres and Groups
- 10.00 Module 8 – Service: Work is Worship
- 11.00 Morning tea break
- 11.20 Module 9 – Devotional and Education Wings
- 12.20pm Plenary session – Questions, discussion and reflections from attendees
- pm Summary, Acknowledgements and Close

MODULE 1

Sathya Sai Baba, His Life and Teachings

“I have come to repair the ancient highway to God.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 2 p36:1962

“I have come to inscribe a golden chapter in the history of humanity, wherein falsehood will fail; truth will triumph; and virtue will reign.”

(Sathyam Sivam Sundaram part 3, p.23)

This introductory module is intended to be inspirational, through a reflection on the birth and early years of Sathya Sai Baba. It outlines His exceptional childhood, His school years, the declaration of His love-based mission as an Avatar; His life service to humanity; His humanitarian works and the legacy of His teachings.

First Speaker: Who is Sathya Sai Baba? (15 mins)

- The Village of Puttaparthi and His parents, Pedda Venkamma Raju and Easwaramma
- Birth of the Avatar on 23 November 1926
- The wonder child who amazed, enthralled and challenged villagers and elders.
- Sathya, the compassionate child and ideal student with extraordinary spiritual wisdom
- Declaration and separation from His family. On 20th October 1940, 14-year old Sathya declared to his sister in law, “I don’t belong to you; Maya has gone; My devotees are calling me”.
- Baba’s growing fame and His letter to Seshama Raju, His concerned brother (key points to be read)

Interactive Session 1 (10 mins)

- Ask the group for their individual thoughts about who Sathya Sai Baba is.
- Which particular incidents in Baba’s early life were significant to them?

Second Speaker: Sathya Sai Avatar’s Mission and Message (28 mins)

The Avatar’s Purpose (7 mins)

- To awaken the latent divinity in every person
- To reveal the unity of all mankind
- To strengthen belief in the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man
- To transform humanity through Divine Love
- To avert the crisis which has come upon humanity

MODULE 1

Sathya Sai Baba, His Life and Teachings

Sathya Sai Baba's Central Teaching (14 mins)

- Individual transformation through practise of the 5 values will change the world
- Service to man is service to God. Service is one of the best spiritual practises
- The world will change through Education in Human Values
- Love all, Serve all. Help ever, Hurt never
- Love God, fear sin, observe morality in society
- The purpose of human life is to realize our true Self.
- Awaken to the Unity of all life.
- God is the source, sustenance and goal of all.
- God pervades everything and is immanent in everything.

His Life And Works (7 mins)

- Educational Institutions and Education in Human Values established and spread globally
- Free medical care in super-specialty hospitals, general hospitals, medical clinics and in medical camps
- Drinking water projects on a massive scale to deprived and desperate communities
- Established the Sathya Sai Organisation in India and globally in 120+ countries
- Provided humanity with a legacy of more than 26,000 pages of discourses and writings.

Interactive Session 2 (10 mins)

- Ask for examples of how Baba's life and teachings (the Five Human Values and Selfless Service) have brought positive change, personally and societally

MODULE 2

Sathya Sai International Organisation

“The Organisations named after me are not to be used for publicising my name or creating a new cult around my worship. They must try to spread interest in recitation of God’s name, meditation, and other spiritual exercises that lead man Godward. They must demonstrate the joy derivable from devotional singing and remembering the Lord’s name, the peace that one can draw from good company.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 8 p 6: 1968

Speaker 1: The SSIO: Aims, Objectives and Goals. (15 mins)

- Have knowledge of the structure and functions of the SSIO as noted in the websites (national, regional and international), the publications of the SSIO, and the communications of the SSIO in print, online, audio and video.
- Share the above information with all SSIO members to inform, inspire and motivate them to serve in the divine mission.
- Highlight key points from the SSIO Guidelines.
- Refer to relevant material from the Operation Manual.
- Importance of practising Ceiling on Desires in one’s life.
- Speak on the importance of the 9 Point Code of Conduct and Ten Guiding Principles.
- Transformation of the individual through the practise of Sathya Sai Baba’s teachings.

Interactive Session 1 (10 mins)

- What are the most important elements in the SSIO Guidelines?
- What distinguishes the Sathya Sai Organisation from conventional organisations?
- What are the most significant guiding principles of the SSIO?
- How is the SSIO able to contribute to the upliftment of society?

MODULE 2

Sathya Sai International Organisation

Speaker 2: Sathya Sai Baba's teachings on the SSIO (15 mins)

- Baba's advice on the Sathya Sai Organisation. (Module 2 quote sheet)
- SSIO is a spiritual organisation, not a religious one.
- Unity of Faiths – One omnipresent Divinity.
- A voluntary, non-proselytising organisation.
- No collection of money. voluntary contributions only.
- Members to put Sathya Sai's teachings into practise in their daily lives.

Interactive Session 2 (10 mins)

- What is the difference between a spiritual organisation and a religious one?
- How should we demonstrate our belief in the unity of all faiths?
- What should SSIO members strive for in their daily lives?
- How has active involvement in the SSIO helped you?
- How do we describe the SSIO to members of the public?

MODULE 3

SSIO Structure, Roles & Responsibilities

“Do not fret against the rules and regulations which the Organisation imposes on you; they are laid down for your own good. Regulation is the very essence of creation. ... How, then, can this Organisation escape the prescription of certain rules and regulations? Devotion has to be guided and controlled by discipline and duty.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 13 p 20: 1976

“You must work together joyfully as brothers and sisters. When any differences of opinion crop up between you, how can service be done with uniform attention and enthusiasm? You have to reconcile such differences silently and with love and place service at the forefront of your activities.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 15 p 32: 1981

This module deals with the structure of the SSIO and how it functions through its various wings and programmes.

First Speaker: The Structure of the SSIO (15 mins)

- Structure of the SSIO at an International and Zonal level
- International Committees
- Structure of the SSIO in each country
- Role of central coordinators and national presidents
- Role of region and centre/group presidents
- What distinguishes a centre from a group?
- Consultation and discussion is used to reach consensus
- The SSIO model of leadership for office bearer is as a servant of members

Interactive Session 1 (10 mins)

- Can you explain the line of authority in the SSIO?
- How should we resolve disputes or disagreements over centre or region decisions?
- Office bearers are selected, not elected. What process is used to select new office bearers?

MODULE 3

SSIO Structure, Roles & Responsibilities

Second Speaker: 3 Wings, Young Adults, Ladies, Special Committees (15 mins)

- Devotional, Service, and Education Wing Coordinators – their tasks and responsibilities
- Young Adults and Ladies Programs
- Special units and committees; Trusts, Medical Units, Media, IT, Public Outreach, Humanitarian Relief, etc.
- SSEHV, Institutes of Sathya Sai Education, and Sathya Sai Schools (Under International Education Committee)
- All parties to work together cooperatively and lovingly

Interactive Session 2 (10 mins)

- How can a centre president foster and inspire respectful/considerate collaboration between wings/units?
- How to inspire individual members to become more involved in their centre activities?
- What are the principle strengths that you see in the Sathya Sai Organisation?
- How do we resolve disharmony between individuals when it arises?
- How to promote discipline and unity at all levels of the Organisation?

Guidelines for numerous topics are available at this page:

- <http://sathyasai.org/about-us/organisation/guidelines>

MODULE 4 Unity

“When individuals change, society will change; and when society changes, the whole world will change. The welfare of the individual is bound up with the welfare of society as a whole. Unity is the secret of social progress and service to society is the means to promote it.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 1 p 29: 1983

“Forbearance is a potent instrument...that is the reason why scripture has commended collective forbearance at the very outset of the spiritual quest. What is the inner meaning? Let us live and move in harmony. Let us grow together. Let us cherish the wisdom that we have acquired together. Let us live in complete harmony without any misunderstanding.”

Sathya Sai Speaks vol 26 p26: 1993

This module will examine and reflect on the role of volunteering in a loving, spiritual setting of unity and how this influences individual motivation, team dynamics, ensuring engagement and the subtle art of reflection and recognition. Unity in diversity develops our ability to balance individual and cultural diversity to build strong relationships and manage conflicts with unity, love and understanding through service to others.

First Speaker: The oneness of all – the essence of Sathya Sai philosophy (15 mins)

- Spirituality leads one to realise the oneness of all beings
- The belief that God is the inner truth in every thing and every being
- There is only one God, the Supreme Divinity, that is present in all beings
- The One became many; every one of the many is real only because of the One within it.
- Only unity will generate universal love
- Brotherhood of Man and the Fatherhood of God
- All religions are but facets of the One Truth
- God is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent
- The physical heart is on the left. the spiritual heart is on the right. Follow only the right.

MODULE 4 **Unity**

Interactive Session 1 (10 mins)

- Can we define unity from a personal and collective perspective?
- How can we become exemplars of Sathya Sai Baba's teachings, demonstrating unity in diversity?
- What is the practicality of Sathya Sai's Philosophy in our own spiritual journeys?

Second Speaker: Application of the unity principle (15 mins)

- It is love that drives away the feeling of separateness and promotes the feeling of oneness
- Unity is the secret of social progress and service to society is the means to promote it
- To whatever country you may belong, cherish love for your country. All are One, be alike to everyone
- Cultivate the feeling of Oneness and do not be critical of any faith or religion
- If you foster the feeling that the same Atma (soul) resides in all, you will be able to Love all
- Let the different faiths exist, let them flourish. Let God's glory be sung in all languages ...
- If anyone finds fault with another's faith, he is casting a slur on his own faith
- Believe in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man
- Recognise the Sai resident in every heart and all will be smooth and sweet for you

Interactive Session 2 (10 mins)

- How does service to society promote unity?
- When asked to lead a team with unity, how are the above principles relevant?
- What needs to be done to ensure unity in this process?

MODULE 5

The Office Bearer: “First Be, then Do”

“You are office bearers and so you have the responsibility to carry out in actual practise, in your own lives, the rules and restrictions and recommendations laid down by me.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 11 p 3: 1971

“Be an example to others. Do not scatter advice, without the authority born of practical experience. Love, cooperate, help, serve.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 9 p35: 1969

“To achieve liberation man has to go beyond the vagaries of the mind. He should follow the Antah-karana (Inner Voice).”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 30 p 26: 1997

This module examines desirable spiritual and personal character and the qualities of an office bearer so that they can be an example to others when performing their duties.

First Speaker: First Be! The Office Bearer as the Example (15 mins)

- Is truthful
- Is loving and respectful of all
- Has unshakable faith in the Sathya Sai Avatar
- Is loyal to the Sathya Sai Organisation and its objectives
- Does not injure anyone with hurtful speech or public criticism
- Maintains their equanimity, even in challenging circumstances
- Recognises that an office bearer is a servant of the members
- Practise what you preach
- Will not command, only persuade and advise; Be humble before the majesty of Sai in each one
- Understands that our lives are His Message

Interactive Session 1 (10 mins)

- What is good character and what are the most important qualities of an exemplary office bearer?
- Why is having good character given such a prominent place in leadership roles?
- What qualities in an office bearer have the power to inspire others?

MODULE 5

The Office Bearer: “First Be, then Do”

Second Speaker: Then Do! (15 mins)

- “You are required to do your duty to the limit of the task” (Sathya Sai)
- Do every act as an offering to Sathya Sai, without being elated by success or dejected by defeat
- Don’t waste time, undertake actions for good of society
- Stress the importance of Love of God, Fear of Sin and Morality in Society
- Service done with a big heart can yield great results. Serve with love
- Discipline is an essential means to an end, whatever it may be
- Go humbly among people with love in your heart and softness in your speech and sweetness in your acts
- Accept the collective wisdom as being greater than that of an individual, by using a consultative approach
- Work hard and more important still, work together with others in loving kinship
- What you feel is more important than what you think

Interactive Session 2 (10 mins)

- How can we demonstrate good examples of Sathya Sai Baba’s teachings in our community engagement programs and in society generally?
- What are some specific challenges, strategies, and virtues to bear in mind when working with volunteers and interfacing with groups outside the SSIO?
- Why is exhibiting good character and dealing with people lovingly, more important than technical knowledge or skill?

MODULE 6

Communication: Personal and Organisational

“In order to promote harmony, the first rule you must follow is control of the tongue. Do not give all your thoughts immediate expression; select, ponder and then speak out. Speak softly, sweetly, without malice in your heart; speak as if you are addressing the Sai who resides in everyone.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 5 p 15: 1965

First Speaker: Personal Communication (15 mins)

- Strive to speak respectfully and lovingly at all times
- If your mind gets agitated, stay silent
- Your thoughts, words and actions should be in harmony
- The state of your mind is inescapably reflected on your face, in your words, tone of voice and in your body postures and gestures. As far as possible keep your mind free from irritable and negative thoughts
- Good communication involves listening carefully and respectfully to the opinions of others
- Allow time for inner reflection before expressing your views or offering advice
- Do not react to provocation or criticism. Acknowledge the criticism and thank the critic for their advice
- Moderation of speech is an important part of good communication.
- Have an optimistic outlook at all times, for Swami is the Director
- Be always happy remembering that God is within you and everywhere and that all that happens is for our own good. God is the Director of all

Interactive Session 1 (10 mins)

- How can all levels of communication, words, body language, actions and feelings be improved when communicating with others?
- How can we recognise and manifest our own divinity and that of others when communicating?

MODULE 6

Communication: Personal and Organisational

Second Speaker: Communication Within the SSIO (15 mins)

- Seek Swami's guidance and blessings prior to all meetings
- Praise publicly, critique privately – acknowledgement is a vital part of good leadership
- Consider others' faults as insignificant and yours as very big and strive hard to correct your own faults
- Follow email protocols. Acknowledge receipt of messages
- All SSIO networks are to be used solely for SSIO communications
- All information for dissemination to be forwarded promptly, if possible within 48 hours
- With emails, only copy in those who need to be involved in the matter. Beware of the "copy all" button
- Speak directly to individuals if a correction is necessary. Do not put it in an email
- Keep email composition concise and have appropriate subject headings
- Before using social media, be aware of the social media guidelines
- Use inspiring language with uplifting messages when formally engaging at meetings
- When chairing meetings, each to have a reasonable opportunity to speak. Respect all opinions.
- Smile more!
- The chairperson should ensure that an agenda has been circulated prior to a meeting
- Let your words be few, fair and felicitous. Soft speech adds sweetness to living. Even when you are engaged in discussion amongst yourselves, be short of speech and polite in behaviour.

Interactive Session 2 (10 mins)

- How can we be exemplars of Sathya Sai Baba's teachings when communicating within the SSIO?
- How can we minimise misunderstanding and enhance the self-esteem and self-confidence of others through our communication?
- What are the easy pitfalls for poor communication? What are the consequences?

MODULE 7

Sathya Sai Centres and Groups

“The main goal of the Sai Organisation is to enable members, workers and officers to lead ideal, perfect and happy lives. Therefore we must live up to the high ideals of the Organisation and transform ourselves into ideal human beings, thus helping others to follow our example.”

Divine Discourse, 21 November 1988

This module outlines the expectations of Sathya Sai Centres and Groups as places of learning, love and inspiration. It also briefly outlines planning procedures for activities relating to centres/groups.

Speaker 1: Devotional meetings (15-20 mins)

- Centres/groups are places where we practise, inspire and promote love in an ambience of love
- Centres may set up a small area for the sale of Sai literature and other spiritual material, photos, DVDs etc, following the appropriate laws of the land governing the sale of such items
- A public meeting hall (either rented or owned by centres) is recommended, rather than private premises, for devotional meetings. Were it is owned by the centre, this hall should be utilitarian rather than operating as a temple, suitable as a base for delivery of service to the community
- Demonstrate the universal nature of the Sai Organisation and Sathya Sai’s teachings in the program and in the decoration of the hall
- The altar should be simple, with Swami’s picture and the logo with the 5 values, which are at the core of all faiths. The wearing or not wearing of shoes during devotional meetings is unimportant.
- Men and women are to be seated separately
- Devotional singing practise is recommended to keep the quality high
- Discipline must be followed to ensure the program starts and finishes on time
- Multi faith prayers are recommended for inclusion in the program
- All members to take responsibility for welcoming newcomers
- A short spiritual talk may be given at the conclusion of the devotional meeting
- The rituals of any one religion should not dominate in a centre/group. Minimise ritual practises
- Meetings should be conducted acknowledging local cultural sensitivities and regulatory constraints.

MODULE 7

Sathya Sai Centres and Groups

Interactive Session 1 (10 mins)

Questions generated by the participants for clarification regarding the general expectations for the running of centres and groups

Speaker 2: Planning of Activities in Centres, Groups and Regions (15-20 mins)

- Appointment of Office Bearers. Selected not elected - refer to Operations Manual
- Centre planning meetings to be held at least quarterly to decide on all activities. Office bearers and all active members are expected to attend. Planning meetings are open to all members.
- Aim to reach a consensus
- Study Circles are strongly encouraged. (May be held after a devotional meeting or on another day)
- The 3 wings; young adults; and ladies to lovingly cooperate in all centre programs
- Keep all members promptly informed of centre, region and SSIO activities
- When planning activities, have regard for the culture of your community/ country
- Strictly obey the laws of the land and follow appropriate procedures regarding sales of Sai material
- A centre or region's finance and resource needs are determined at the quarterly meetings
- Financial contributions are to be voluntary, without solicitations at any time
- Finance reports need transparency. All expenses and income statements should be available to all active members, without giving names of donors. This could be shared at quarterly meetings or annually.

Interactive Session 2 (10 mins)

- Questions and/or reflections generated by the participants for clarification regarding the general expectations for the planning and running of activities within centres, groups and regions.

MODULE 8

Sathya Sai Baba's Teachings on Service

“Love all, serve all; Help ever, hurt never”.

Sanathana Sarathi July 1994 p170

“I am evincing all this enthusiasm to teach you the proper attitude to Seva (service), for Love expresses itself as Seva; Love grows through Seva; Love is born in the womb of Seva. And God is Love.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 10 p 23: 1970

First Speaker: Selfless Service - As a Spiritual Practise (15 mins)

- Service to man is service to God
- Service provides opportunities to develop empathy with others less fortunate, to help reduce personal ego and to open the hearts those serving
- Service rendered as a group reveals the joy of communal work and reduces the sense of individual ego
- No service given from the heart is too low
- Office bearers should regard themselves as servants of society
- First serve your own family, then your community and then with time available, serve society
- Expenditure on service activities needs to be kept within the limits of available resources.
- Do service in the same location every week so that those being served can become known to the servers. Devotees will then find additional ways to help certain individuals and love will grow.
- When seeking funds for service activities, identify the budget need - contributions are unsolicited and voluntary.
- Service is a 24-hour job
- Time given as an office bearer of the SSIO is also regarded as service
- Remember always that Swami is the doer

Interactive Session 1 (10 mins)

- How can we be exemplars of Sathya Sai Baba's teachings when engaging in service activities?
- How does selfless service promote our own spiritual transformation?

MODULE 8

Sathya Sai Baba's Teachings on Service

Second Speaker(s): Ladies Program, Young Adult Programs and the Medical Units

“Understand that the purpose of life is to know the Embodiment of love, namely, God, through love, and demonstrate through your own Love that you have known Him.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 13 p 9: 1975

Ladies Programs (10 mins)

- Baba accords a high status to women as embodiments of sacrifice and love
- Ladies are encouraged to be available for all leadership roles in the Organisation
- Mother is the first teacher and women excel as teachers in education
- Women come together in many activities and roles: to advance their spiritual growth; to be exemplary leaders in their families, the Organisation and in society

Young Adults Programs (10 mins)

- Young Adults from 18-40 years share the love and joy of Sathya Sai Baba's teachings
- Cultivate life/leadership skills and self-confidence based on the practise of the five human values.
- To associate/collaborate with like-minded YAs who are guided by high spiritual ideals
- To learn how to engage and serve the world through the lens of Sathya Sai's teachings.
- Prepare to become the new generation leaders within the SSIO and in society

Medical Units (10 mins)

- Medical units report through the Zone medical unit Coordinator to the SSIO Medical Committee
- Offer medical professionals the opportunity to serve the needy with free medical care
- Demonstrate loving and compassionate professional care to all
- All members of the team and their contributions are equally important.

Interactive Session 2 (10 mins)

- How can we foster the feeling of serving God in those being served?
- How do we remind ourselves that service is aimed to reduce the ego?
- What are the key benefits of selfless service?

MODULE 9 Devotion and Education

“Where my devotees sing, there I install Myself.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 1 p 29: 1960

Group devotional singing has a different purpose from silent individual prayers. It is a mutual effort of spiritual practise to overcome the six foes of man: lust, anger, greed, attachment, pride, and hatred.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 13 p 8: 1975

“Sai Spiritual Education is the primary basis for the great movement to restore righteousness (dharma) in the world ... The ideal is to raise a generation of boys and girls who have a clean and clear conscience. The actual syllabus is not as important as the creation of an atmosphere wherein noble habits and ideals can grow and fructify.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 14 p 3: 1978

First Speaker: The Devotion Wing (15 mins)

- The objective of the devotion wing is to encourage the transformation of members by fostering their devotion to God, their knowledge of the teachings of Sathya Sai and of the unity of all faiths
- The Devotion Coordinator arranges devotional singing practise to ensure high quality
- The Devotional Coordinator to present proposed programs and activities to the quarterly centre planning meeting
- Encourage all to make an effort to understand the meaning of their songs and prayers. If not understood it is only “mysterious mumbling” (words of Sathya Sai)
- Encourage composition of songs in local languages which reflect local culture and traditions
- Devotional singing to be arranged at a time convenient to members
- Help members to understand the benefits and practise of meditation
- The devotional coordinator should not impose his/her views but accept the collective wisdom of their membership

Interactive Session 1 (10 mins)

- Discuss the service provided by lead singers
- What principles are to be followed to ensure spiritually uplifting devotional meetings?

MODULE 9

Devotion and Education

Second Speaker: The Education Wing (15 Mins)

- Study circles in Centres and Groups are an important part of education wing— topics to focus on the practice of human values in daily life – the aim is personal transformation.
- Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) classes are primarily for the children of members of the SSIO.
- SSE classes will focus on Sathya Sai Baba as an Avatar, His teachings, and Education in Human Values. Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV) classes can be offered to children of families who are non-members, and this may be done by trained SSEHV teachers or in conjunction with an ISSE.
- Training of SSE teachers prior to teaching SSE ensures quality.
- SSE teachers need to be fully aligned with SSIO guidelines and teaching methodologies.
- Where centre membership is low, centres can combine or join a bigger centre for their SSE program

Interactive Session 2 (10 mins)

- What role does the education wing coordinator play in fostering interest in SSE in their centre?
- How can centres nurture the innate goodness in children by creating an environment where character can blossom?
- How do we encourage parents to have their children attend SSE and SSEHV classes?

APPENDIX A Key Discourses

The following links relate to inspirational Sathya Sai Discourses for office bearers and are strongly recommended to be read before undertaking any role as an office bearer.

Sathya Sai Seva

Volume 7, Chapter 18; <http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume07/sss07-18.pdf>

The Heart of the Organisation

Volume 8, Chapter 44; <http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume08/sss08-44.pdf>

Why Organise?

Volume 13, Chapter 20; <http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume13/sss13-20.pdf>

Call to Samithi Members

Volume 15, Chapter 17; <http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume15/sss15-17.pdf>

Lessons on Seva Sadhana

Volume 15, Chapter 31; <http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume15/sss15-31.pdf>

The Fingers Five

Volume 15, Chapter 32; <http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume15/sss15-32.pdf>

Death: A Welcome Voyage

Volume 8, Chapter 6; <http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume08/sss08-06.pdf>

The Revelation, Divine Discourse at First World Conference, 17 May 1968

<http://sssbpt.info/collections/divine-nectar.pdf>

Sai's Proclamation Rejecting Intermediaries

Volume 5, Chapter 18; <http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume05/sss05-18.pdf>

APPENDIX B Websites and Pages

Inspirational and informative websites used in the production of this programme are listed below.

Facilitators and speakers for the 9 Modules should familiarise themselves with the material in these websites to help with their own personal journey of enlightenment, and to assist them in guiding others. Many of these sites have further links to other uplifting and useful material.

Website of the Sathya Sai International Organisation (SSIO)

<http://sathyasai.org>

Overview of the SSIO, including a brief video

<http://sathyasai.org/about-us/organisation>

Annual Report for the current year, and the archive of reports from past years

<http://sathyasai.org/organisation/annual-report>

Background material for SSIO Office Bearers

<http://sathyasai.us/resources>

SSIO Guidelines for various areas such as Centre Operations, Group Pilgrimages, etc.

<http://sathyasai.org/about-us/organisation/guidelines>

Operational Manual for Centres and Groups

<http://sathyasai.org/guidelines/operationsmanual>

Letter outlining His mission from Sathya Sai Baba to His brother (includes a video)

<https://sathyasai.org/writing/bhagawan-sri-sathya-sai-babas-letter-to-his-brother>

Official SSIO logo with downloadable files

<http://sathyasai.org/ssio-logo>

Radiosai has numerous audio and video materials, including live streams of events and numerous articles and interviews.

<http://radiosai.org>

Quotations from Discourses and Writings of Sathya Sai Baba

MODULE 1

Sathya Sai Baba, His Life and Teachings

“I have come to repair the ancient highway to God.”

SSS 2.36: 28 April 1962

“I am You; You are I; that is the Truth. There is no distinction.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 10 p 16: 1970

“My home is your heart.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 7 p 45: 1968

“I have come to inscribe a golden chapter in the history of humanity, wherein falsehood will fail, truth will triumph; and virtue will reign. Then character will confer power, not knowledge or inventive skill or wealth. Wisdom will be enthroned in the councils of nations.”

Sathyam Shivam Sundaram, Part 3, p 23

“The totality of divine energy has come as Sathya Sai unto humanity to wake up the slumbering divinity in every human being. I will not forsake you. I have come to help, to accompany and to carry you. I can never forsake you. I will never forsake my children: but I shall be very grateful to each child of mine who helps in my task.”

My Baba and I (by Dr. John Hislop), p 170

“You are listening to Me and what do you get when you so listen? You agree that I am giving you bliss, is it not? Well, what do you give Me in return? Give Me the practise of what I am telling you, practise what I teach. That is enough. That is all I ask.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 3 p 30: 1963

“I know you have the enthusiasm to carry My Message among the people of this country and other countries. Let Me remind you that the best and the only successful way in which you can do it is to translate the Message into your own lives. Your thoughts, words and deeds must be saturated with the Message. Then, they will spread effortlessly and efficiently, and the face of the whole world will be transformed.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 8 p 19: 1968

“I am the embodiment of all the forms that men have imposed on Godhead in order to cherish it in their hearts. I have no name. All names are Mine... I shall respond to whatever name you know Me by ... I have no place that you cannot identify as Mine ... all places are Mine. I am the propeller in every heart ... My words must prevail ... everything is My Leela ... every Leela of Mine has significance ... I am the witness of time and space. When you love Yourself, you are loving Me ... you cannot run away from Me, denying and decrying Me. I have come to churn the mind of man and cleanse it. I am God ... you too are God!”

Loving God, p 362

“When people heed my words, I am ready to help them in every way and confer happiness on them. I do nothing for My own sake. This is My Truth.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 28 p 2: 1995

“Along the lines already familiar to you, continue the worship of the God of your choice; then you will find that you are coming nearer and nearer to Me; for, all Names are Mine and all Forms are Mine. There is no need to change, after you have seen Me and heard Me.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 5 p 22: 1965

“The Avatar behaves in a human way so that mankind can feel kinship, but He rises to super-human heights so that mankind can aspire to those heights.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 3 p 9: 1963

“Many hesitate to believe that things will improve, that life will be happy for all and full of joy, and the Golden Age will reoccur. Let Me assure you that this Dharma Swarupa, this Divine Body, has nor come in vain. It will succeed in averting the crisis that has come upon humanity.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 5 p 11: 1965

“Swami’s glory, fame and sacredness have not been achieved by publicity. They are the results of Swami’s actions. I have no concern with publicity. Action alone counts. What is achieved through publicity will disappear through publicity.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 27 p 9: 1994

MODULE 2

The Sathya Sai Organisation

“The sole objective of the Sathya Sai Organisation is to enable man to discover his innate Divinity; to regain his self-confidence and faith in God. The power and strength derived from the faith in Self, from faith in God, will be enduring and ever sustaining. The objective of the Sai Organisation is to make people again become aware of this truth and live in this awareness.”

Seva Dal Magazine, April 1983

“I do not need temples and churches. I do not need rituals like Yagnas and Yagas (ritualistic worship). Our actions are our offerings (Yagnas) and service makes up our rituals. Hence our Organisation should not indulge in activities collecting money for temples and rituals. I have been repeatedly saying, over and over again, that we should have no interest in or relationship with money. We are associated only with good conduct and character... We are only in the business of exchanging love”

Divine Discourse, November 21, 1988

The main goal of the Sai Organisation is to enable members, workers and officers to lead ideal, perfect and happy lives. Therefore we must live up to the high ideals of the organization and transform ourselves into ideal human beings, thus helping others to follow our example.”

Divine Discourse, November 21, 1988

“Through the sense of unity, the willingness to sacrifice and the softness of compassion, all objectives can be gained. So the Sathya Sai Organisation must move forward with heartfelt enthusiasm in the field of service.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 15 p31: 1981

“Sai has resolved to transform the individual and society by promoting this mutual regeneration, by the action of one on the other. Hence the formation of this Sai Organisation and the establishment of its units in all countries for the sublimation of the human into the divine.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 12 p 23: 1974

“Promote harmony among members. You cannot avoid making distinctions such as president, coordinator, member and the like, but these distinctions are functional only and have no place at the spiritual level. God is present equally in all, from the president to the ordinary member. You should recognise this oneness.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 28 p 30: 1995

“If all in our Sathya Sai Organisation engage themselves in service to the poor and needy, without any fanfare or exhibitionism, they will be giving expression to their sense of divine brotherliness and putting Sai’s teachings into practise.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 14 p 56: 1980

“Very soon, the glory of Sai will spread to every part of the world. It will increase a thousand-fold. The reason is the essential goodness of the Sai mission. It is totally free of any taint. Every act is done out of the purest of motives. Everything that is said is based on Truth. All activities are conducted without depending on any outsider.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 26 p 34: 1993

MODULE 3

SSIO Structure, Roles & Responsibilities

“The acquisition of the love of God should be the primary aim of members of the Sai Organisation.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 28 p 30: 1995

“Love, respect, tolerance, mutual co-operation, forbearance – these must flow the hearts of each to all. There should be no eagerness to capture office from another’s grasp, or to hold it back when another is ready for it.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 10 p 35: 1970

“How do you give Me Ananda? By taking to heart what I say and putting it into daily practise. Deciding to move high but attracted by the low, you betray yourself. Improve your character and conduct; when your feelings become cleansed and your impulses pure, you can see My Form in its Reality. I shall tell you the thing in a nutshell: Make the intelligence that has to understand Me free from crookedness; let it become straight and sharp”.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 1 p 31: 1960

“Again, you must work together joyfully as brothers and sisters. When any differences of opinion crop up between you, how can service be done with uniform attention and enthusiasm? You have to reconcile such differences silently and with love; and place service in the forefront of your activities.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 15 p 32: 1981

“The president, vice-president and secretary must be keener than the members in this endeavour and must be examples for the rest. These offices should not be regarded as positions of authority or ‘prizes’ for devotion. They must be accepted with humility and executed with love towards the members and the public.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 8 p 20: 1968

“Members of the Sai Organisation should cultivate certain desirable practises. For instance, they should regulate their diet, because one’s food influences one’s thoughts. Smoking and intoxicating drinks have to be given up. They are ruinous for the health. Meat eating should also be given up because eating animals as food promotes animal tendencies. The fourth evil that has to be got rid of is gambling. Those who take the spiritual path should avoid as much as possible these four bad practises.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 28 p 34: 1995

“Restrictions, rules and self-control are the royal roads leading to the goal of self-realisation. They are not just to bind, limit or control you. Everyone has an Atma, but the mind wanders and gets agitated. These rules must be adhered to, to control such wanderings of the mind.”

Seva Dal Magazine, February 1981 p 8

“Even if you cannot oblige, you can at least speak obligingly. This means that you have to cleanse your speech of cynicism and sarcasm and be ever sincere and sweet.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 14 p 13: 22 1978

“No good deeds can be wasted. By taking to heart what I say and putting into practice what I say and the 9 Codes of Conduct. Improve your character and conduct; when your feelings are cleansed and your impulses have become pure, then you can see My true form in reality. I shall tell you the secret in brief form: let your intelligence, your faculty of discrimination, be free of distortion and become keen and pure.”

Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, p.59

“If you feel any doubt regarding the propriety or advisability of those instructions, talk them over with the leaders alone, in a spirit of friendliness. Do not disregard or modify those instructions at any cost. The leader has to pay attention to the overall situation which may not be so clear to you.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 13 p 18: 1975

MODULE 4

Unity

“Every worker in this Organisation must rid himself of the idea of separateness or distinction between one person and another, on the basis of caste or creed, poverty or richness. He must be always eager to share the sorrows - and what is more difficult - the joys of others.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 10 p 32: 1970

“Have you improved in any way? Has there been any refinement in you? Are you participating in these activities whole-heartedly, with a sense of conviction and love from the depths of your heart or are you continuing out of some compulsion from others, just for participation’s sake? You have to put to yourself these questions and seek answers from within yourself. ... Those who are leading must themselves follow; those who command must themselves carry out what they expect others to do.”

Seva Dal Magazine, April 1983 p 6

“Each new day should be celebrated to remind everyone of their divine nature and of the unity of existence.”

Sathya Sai Newsletter USA, Summer 1995 p 4

“Forbearance is a potent instrument....that is the reason why the scripture has commended collective forbearance at the very outset of the spiritual quest. What is the inner meaning? Let us live and move in harmony. Let us grow together. Let us cherish the wisdom that we have acquired together. Let us live in complete harmony without any misunderstanding.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 26 p 26: 1993

“The universe is the body of God; every particle in it is filled with God, His glory, His might, His inscrutability. Believe that God is the inner truth in every thing and being. He is truth he is wisdom. He is eternal. Be humble before the evidences of his power and majesty.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 12 p 34: 1974

“When individuals change, society will change, and when society changes, the whole world will change. The welfare of the individual is bound up with the welfare of society as a whole. Unity is the secret of social progress and service to society is the means to promote it.”

Divine Message to International Symposium in Rome on the theme “Unity is Divinity,” held on October 30-31, 1983

“Choose men and women who have unshaken faith in this present avatar, with this name and this form. That will save the units from many complications later on, arising from loyalties which may dissipate or divert the energies of the office-bearers. The leaders of these units lead, because they have the vision and the yearning, not because they have the votes or the purse.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 10 p 1: 1970

“There is an internal relationship between Nature and Divinity. The ocean, the moon and man are interrelated. The scientists should develop an integral approach towards Nature, Man and Spirit. Only then can he realize the underlying divinity that unites man with the cosmos”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 1 p 4: 1985

MODULE 5

The Office Bearer: First “Be” then “Do”

“To be is the source of leadership, the aggregate of all there is in a person, the person’s values, qualities, and knowledge, his or her total being.”

Sai Baba’s Mahavakya on Leadership, p.17

“Among the qualities that make up a flawless character, love, patience, forbearance, steadfastness, and charity are the highest and have to be revered.”

Prema Vahini, chapter 1, p 3

“Be a servant; a servant of God – Then all strength and joy will be added unto you. Try to be a master; then, you will arouse envy, hatred, anger and greed in everyone around you. Feel that you are an instrument in His hand; let Him shape you and use you as He knows best.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 8 p 44: 1968

“Only a young man with good qualities can become a good leader. He must take part in social service as a preparation for leadership. Everyone should realise that his happiness is bound up with the happiness of society as a whole.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 26 p 35: 1993

“All are one. Be alike to everyone. Don’t give room for difference of race, creed or nation. There is only one race, the race of humanity. There is only one caste, the caste of humanity. There is only one religion, the religion of spirituality. There is only one language, the language of the heart. There is only one God, the supreme divinity that is present in all beings and permeates the entire cosmos.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 28 p 12: 1995

“All are entitled to acquire knowledge of human values. ... But this is not enough. Everyone should practise Sathya, Dharma, Shanthi, Prema and Ahimsa (Truth Right Conduct, Peace, Love and Non-Violence)”.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 19 p 5: 1986

“One should acquire that knowledge which makes one immortal. It is the knowledge of the five human values, namely, Sathya, Dharma, Shanti, Prema and Ahimsa.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 39.17: 2006

“It is only the five human values of truth, righteousness, peace, love, and nonviolence that confer inner bliss. A person who cultivates these five human values will always be happy.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 42 p 17: 2009

“Truth, righteousness, peace, love and non-violence are the five human values to be cultivated by a human being. You learn these five human values and put them into action. Then your life will go on smoothly.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 39 p 19: 2006;

“You are Office-bearers and so you have the responsibility to carry out in actual practise, in your own lives, the rules and restrictions and recommendations laid down by Me.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 11 p 3: 1971

“This endeavour is not for the sake of Sai. It is done through these Seva Organisations so that members of the Organisation get the chance to do service and redeem themselves.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 17 p 16: 1984;

“Office-bearers in this Organisation are leaders who bear the brunt themselves, guide who walk along the path they wish others to take. They shall not command or punish; they can only persuade or advise.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 14 p 13: 1978

MODULE 6

Communication: Personal and Organisational

“In order to promote harmony, the first rule you must follow is control of the tongue. do not give all your thoughts immediate expression; select, ponder and then speak out. Speak softly, sweetly, without malice in your heart; speak as if you are addressing the Sai who resides in everyone”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 4 p 15: 1965

“If anyone speaks to you on any subject; having understood it wrongly; do not think of other wrong notions which will support that stand but grasp only the good and the sweet in what he says.”

Sandeha Nivarini. Ch.7; p.32

“One should do good, speak the truth and act righteously. Suppose you are facing a problem – don’t tell the truth, don’t tell a falsehood – just keep quiet. That is the correct path.”

Sathya Sai Newsletter USA Spring 1995, p.18

“Criticism of others is a very great sin. Criticism of others is like a great disease. It is an incurable disease. There is no medicine at all for this disease. Criticism of others is like cancer. Do not criticise, comment or make remarks about others at any time. We get into various difficulties by criticising others. Be at a distance from criticism of others.”

Advaita through Seva; Volume 2, p 10
Divine Discourse, 21 November 1987

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.

Summer Showers in Brindavan 2000.1: 15
May 2000

“Cultivate a sweet temper, and sweet speech which is its natural consequence. Speak without anger or spite, without any artificiality or formality, straight from the heart. Then you will be spreading joy and love among all.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 3 p 24: 1963

“Be polite, humble and sweet in your responses to the commands you receive. It is imperative to have strict discipline; no exception or concession can be tolerated. One word, one road – that should be the motto.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 10 p 23: 1970

“Speak the truth but speak pleasantly. Simply because a statement will be welcome to the hearer, don’t speak it out to win his approval; if speaking the truth will cause grief or pain, keep silent. That is the vow of truth in ordinary daily life. Don’t have hypocrisy or crookedness in your speech. Both unpleasant truth and pleasant untruth have to be avoided”.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 7 p 46: 1967

“Falsehood has become the order of the day. Falsehood may please others but not your conscience. Strive to satisfy your conscience before satisfying others. Under all circumstances follow the path of Truth. In case the utterance of truth is likely to lead to some danger, remain silent.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 35 p 4: 2002

“When a word of bliss is spoken to a person sunk in despair, it charges him with elephantine strength. When a word of despair is spoken to a person extremely strong and happy, he slumps on the ground overcome by sorrow. – one must learn the habit of making one’s words sweet, soft and pleasant.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 15 p 20: 1981

“Do not talk ill of others. Do not talk of others, but if you must, talk only of the good in them. All are good. If you see bad in them, it is because there is bad in you.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 9 p 9: 1969

“The mind of man is like a gramophone plate. The good and evil thoughts of man are indelibly impressed on his mind and show themselves up. His thoughts and feelings are easily gauged by an onlooker. ... the face of a man is like a guide post, revealing the direction in which his thoughts are travelling”.

Summer Showers in Brindavan: 1993

MODULE 7

Sathya Sai Centres and Groups

“I am evincing all this enthusiasm to teach you the proper attitude to Seva (service), for, Love expresses itself as Seva; Love grows through Seva; Love is born in the womb of Seva. And God is Love.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 10 p 23: 1970

“I consider Seva (service) as the most important activity of the Samithis (Sai Centres), for it is the highest Sadhana.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 11 p 35: 1971

“First, it has been decided that the Sathya Sai Seva Samithi (Sathya Sai Centre) will hereafter be the key unit, of the Organisation. Units like Sathya Sai Sathsang, the Sathya Sai Baala Vikaas, the Sathya Sai Study Circle, the Sathya Sai Bhajana Mandal, and the Sathya Sai Seva Dal will be subordinate to the Samithi, and supervised by it. The Samithi is the heart, and the units are the limbs. The limbs cannot act independently, as if they are a law unto themselves.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 11 p 35: 1971

“Sathya Sai Seva Samithis (Sathya Sai Centres) have to bear in mind the word, Seva (selfless service), and take up Seva work enthusiastically. Seva must be directed towards the removal of physical distress, the alleviation of mental agony, and the fulfilment of spiritual yearning. Some regions are affected by floods, some by drought; the Samithi must make efforts to bring relief to the sufferers from these and other natural calamities.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 7 p 18: 1967

“The main goal of the Sai Organisation is to enable members, workers and officers to lead ideal, perfect and happy lives. Therefore we must live up to the high ideals of the Organisation and transform ourselves into ideal human beings, thus helping others to follow our example.”

Divine Discourse, 21 November 1988

“Understand that the purpose of life is to know the Embodiment of love, namely, God, through love, and demonstrate through your own Love that you have known Him.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 13 p 9: 1975

“I want that every (Centre) Samithi (and every Unit complementary to it) must be bubbling with joy at the work already achieved and with enthusiasm for the work ahead. Love, respect, tolerance, mutual co-operation, forbearance—these must flow from the hearts of each to all.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 10 p 35: 1970

“The purpose of life is to grow in love, expand that love and to merge with God who is love, and this is best done through service. There is no discipline like service for the eradication of the ego.”

The Embodiment of Love p 227

“Love all, serve all. Help ever, hurt never.”

Sanathana Sarathi July 1994 p 170

MODULE 8

Sathya Sai Baba's Teachings on Service

“Man exists for service. Every man has to return to society by way of service what he has received from it. That service should be rendered selflessly in a spirit of sacrifice. Service is thereby converted to spirituality.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 27 p 7: 1994

“Whenever you see a sick person, a dispirited, disconsolate, diseased person, there is your field of service. Every blood cell, every nerve, must tingle with love, with eagerness to share that love with the forlorn. When love has filled the heart, it has really transformed into divinity, for God is love and love is God.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 10 p 6: 1970

“Suppose you go to a forest and try to cut a sandalwood tree with an axe. Does the sandalwood tree curse the axe that cuts it? No. Instead, it imparts its fragrance to the axe also. Similarly, good people will impart their goodness even to those who try to harm them”.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 29 p 85: 1996

“Plunge yourself in society and take part in service activities. When women are doing such splendid services, why should men lag behind?”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 27 p 37: 1993

“In our Seva Organisations there are hundreds of thousands of workers who are rendering service of various kinds. The office bearers should not feel that they are apart from the workers. All are workers. No one can consider himself a master.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 28 p 34: 1995

“It is a misconception to think that we are serving others. We should attain the feeling that we are serving God in the form of others. When we develop the feeling that it is our good fortune to be able to serve others, and when we serve with sanctity, purity and selflessness, only then can it be called service”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 28 p 34, 1995

“When seva calls you, all must come together as one. There should be no politicking in the region of service you do. No trace of politics should pollute the seva. No idea of separateness should tarnish your thoughts. Do not talk harshly to anyone: ... Through soft and sweet speech, we can transform even demonic persons into decent individuals.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 15 p 32: 1981

“In rendering service, see that you do it for the satisfaction of your conscience and not to impress others. Treating service as an offering to the divine, do it perfectly. Remember that god is watching everyone of your actions. Be your own watchman to scrutinise what you do. When you do everything to satisfy your conscience, you are well on the way to Self-Realisation.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 28 p 34, 1995

“A word of caution here. Do not attempt to do such sacred work beyond your capacity. You need to do it only within your means, A portion of whatever resources you have must be set apart with a view to do some service and provide satisfaction to jivas in need.”

Summer Showers in Brindavan 1974,
Part 2, Ch.25

MODULE 9

Devotion Wing

“Devotion (Bhakti) means diverting the pure and unsullied mind towards God. People do not know the real meaning of love (Prema). The love you have for other beings is only temporary. God is the only one that is eternal. Love of God is Bhakti.

Sanathana Sarathi Oct. 1994 p 266

“Devotion directed to the Lord is called Divine Love and is the easiest of all paths for the realization of the goal”.

Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba p 77

“God can be worshipped in many ways: His name can be repeated, His glories chanted, His true nature contemplated in meditation. In every instance (of worship of the personal form of God) the main essential is the Divine name.”

Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba p 19

“Devotion to the Divine will give you Bliss, and Prosperity and Peace. It cannot inflict pain, perturbation or personal anxiety. It fosters Love and brings all together as one band of brothers.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 9 p 113: 1969

“Whatever scholarship one may attain, whatever power and position one may enjoy, one cannot be happy without the peace of mind that is got by pure devotion”.

Sanathana Sarathi Oct 1994 p 265

“You may install idols and worship them. But do not forget the inner significance of all worship. All external activities are necessary only to help you to get into the spirit of non-duality and experience unity in diversity. Love and sacrifice are very important.”

Sanathana Sarathi Oct. 1994 p 266

“What is devotion? It is not merely offering several types of worship or going on a pilgrimage. Unalloyed and true love for love’s sake alone constitutes devotion. True devotion is the love flowing from a pure heart unpolluted by selfish motives. Love is the intimate bond of relationship between the devotee and the Lord.”

Sanathana Sarathi 1995 p 162

“Devotion does not consist of having a photo for worship and giving it aarati everyday and shouting Baba, Baba. True Bhakti means that there must be a transformation in your behaviour. God is within you, around you and in you. He is omnipresent. Recognising this truth, you must arrive at the result that you and God are One”.

Summer Showers in Brindavan 1978 p 202

“One may raise the question whether it is possible for everyone to realize the goal through the love of God. One may not achieve this instantaneously, but can do so progressing step by step. By Bhajans and other forms of worship one may advance towards the goal of final emancipation.”

Sanathana Sarathi Oct 1994 p 266-7

“The Lord confers full grace on those whose hearts are totally filled with devotion. Spiritual aspirants may follow any one of the nine paths of devotion and realize the Divine. Among these, the attitude of friendship towards God is one to be cherished because God is the only true and enduring friend for everyone.”

Sanathana Sarathi Aug 1994 p 199

MODULE 9

Education Wing

“True education is one that instils compassion in you. Patriotism coupled with sacrifice; devotion coupled with love should become part and parcel of your life. Education confers humility. Humility confers deservedness; deservedness secures for you wealth as well as divinity and devotion to God.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 29: November 22, 1998,
Prasanthi Nilyam

“What we need today, however, is a transformation of the spirit. Education should serve not only to develop one’s intelligence and skills, but also help to broaden one’s outlook and make him useful to society and the world at large. This is possible only when cultivation of the spirit goes along with education in the physical sciences. Moral and spiritual education will train a man to lead a disciplined life.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 19: 1986, Madras.

“What is education? It is of two types. The first type is collection of facts and knowledge about the external world and sharing them with students. The second type is Educare. Educare involves the deep understanding of the knowledge that springs from within and imparting it to students.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 30: 2001,
Prasanthi Nilayam

Education must inculcate respect for human values like truth, righteousness, love and peace. Education is for life. Life is for man. Man is for society. The society is there for science. And the science is meant for spirituality. The spirituality is there for the

nation. And the nation is part of the world, and the world is for peace.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 29: August 10, 1998,
Prasanthi Nilyam

“Along with higher education, you should cultivate noble qualities. Education bereft of virtues is useless. The end of education is character.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 35: 2004,
Prasanthi Nilayam

“Education acquired should be translated into action. When you put your knowledge into practise, only then do you become an ideal person.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 29: November 22, 1998
Prasanthi Nilyam

“The thoughts, words and deeds of man should always be sacred. The heart unpoluted by desire and anger, the tongue untainted by untruths and the body unblemished by the acts of violence – these are the true human values.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 29: July 26, 1999
Prasanthi Nilayam

MODULE 9

Young Adults Programme

“It is only the youth who are capable of protecting this world. It is the youth and youth alone who can set this world right. No nation can stand without youth. Sometimes, the elders underestimate the capabilities of the youth, thinking that they are inexperienced and young. But the youth are endowed with immense power. If they take a firm resolve, they are capable of achieving anything. If they realise their power, they can emancipate the nation.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 39 p 11: 2006

“Young men and women! The prosperity and well-being of the world depend on the conduct of the youth. Only when their conduct is good, the world can have an ideal future.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 30 p 14: First World Youth Conference, July 1997

“The world’s prosperity or otherwise is based upon the character of the youth—men and women. Hence, young men and women should be pure hearted and render selfless service to the country. They should keep the company of the good and godly. Losing Paapabheethi (fear of sin) and not cultivating Dhaiva preethi (the love of God), men today have lost the essential quality of humanness. This has resulted in the loss of peace in the world.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 30 p 14: First World Youth Conference, July 1997

“It is the privilege and duty of the young men and women to promote the welfare, progress and peace of the world. Transform all your actions into sacred duties. Experience the love of the Divine. That is the meaning of Swami’s declaration: “My life is my message.” Adhere to the ideals set before you by Swami.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 30 p 14: First World Youth Conference, July 1997

“You must radiate human values and ensure unity in thought, word and deed. At present there is chaos and mutual animosity amongst various people. You have to spread the message of unity, purity and divinity.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 30 p 15: First World Youth Conference, July 1997

“In ancient times the youth maintained good character. If you maintain good character, the future generation will prosper. Individual sacredness and purity ensure sacredness of society and country. When all countries are filled with such noble people the world will be blooming with peace and prosperity.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 30 p 17: First World Youth Conference, July 1997

MODULE 9

Ladies Programme

“Gayatri is the very source of all Vedas. Gayatri is Stree – embodiment of woman Veda is the mother. When we see all these things, we feel that woman has got a very high place, her birth is something great and virtuous. The woman has been praised by the Veda throughout the past and the present. The woman has an exalted place in the various rituals of the ancient times.”

Divine Discourse, November 19, 1995

“Women should take the right path. Then men will also take the right path. Because the women can be a leader, she shares half the body of the man. She can change men today or tomorrow if she has good thoughts. So women should inculcate compassion, love and sacrifice. There is no quality greater than sacrifice... Today the women must take a step forward with determination and go forward courageously and follow the path of truth and bring all prosperity and peace to the nation and the world at large.”

Divine Discourse, November 19, 1995

MODULE 9

God, Nature and Man

“The universe is the body of God.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 7 p 18: 1967

“Love God and you see God in every creature”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 8:17: 1968

“All the limbs (of the body)... are carrying out their respective duties without any concern for their rewards. This is, indeed, the lesson to be learnt from the ways of nature. It has been well said: Nature is the best teacher. Look at the way the heart functions; the impure blood comes through one channel, it is purified. and pumped to all parts of the body through another channel. This is the process by which the body is kept hale and healthy. This is how the divine works.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 29 p 69: 1995

“Nature (Prakrithi) is your school, your laboratory, the gateway to liberation, the panorama of God’s manifold majesty. Seek to know the lessons it is ready to teach: all things are as Brahman as you are.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 10 p 137: 1969

“You enjoy the sight of the mighty mountains, the big rivers, the vast ocean, the dense forests. Who is the creator of all these beautiful manifestations in Nature? God is the basis for all these.”

SSS 28:15, May 1995

“Man must learn to use Nature not for his comfort or entanglement to the utter forgetfulness of the God behind the joy he derives but for the better understanding of the intelligence that guides the Universe. How does a tree or a flower bloom? How does man learn about the stars and space, except by the inspiration of the joy and the intelligence, which He who resides within endows? Approach nature in a humble, prayerful mood: then your future will be safe.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 7 p 12: 1967

