



वसुधैवकुतुम्बकम्
vasudhaiva
kutumbakam



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Message from Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai

Kodaikanal – A Retreat and Refuge

Henry ford said, coming together is beginning, keeping together is progress, and working together is success. The Kodai retreat completed 10 full years since the first one in May 2014. Families of devotees, staff and well wishers gathered once again atop the blue hills of Kodai to celebrate this occasion. We came together 10 years ago as one family, we kept together through ups and downs of the decade without losing our hold, and we have learnt to work together sinking all our differences as one team of God—definitely our efforts have found success in this mission of self-transformation and welfare of all - *ātmano mokṣārtham jagat hitāya ca*.

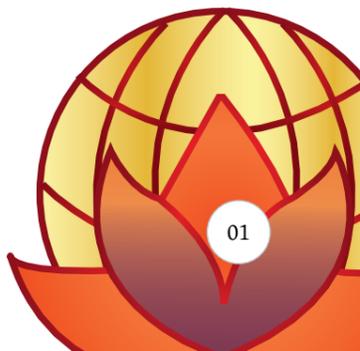
The Kodai retreat was a reminder of the blessings that we have received in this life time. Viveka Chudamani says that one must consider oneself thrice blessed to have received the boon of a human birth, desire for liberation and the guidance of a *guru*. We are blessed once more as we have received

the guidance of God as our *guru* even after we apparently lost Him to time, in the summer of 2011.

Kodai retreat in May 2014 was historical as it was when Mr Tigrett recorded all the lectures and published them on internet, introducing the subtle mission to the world. And today after 10 full years, so much water has flown under the bridge that it almost seems unreal. However, the good that has happened to all and the transformation that each one of us has undergone is the testimony to this truth.

The month of May is special not only because it is the month of Kodai retreats, but because it is a reminder of our fortunes beyond our deservedness.

May the coolness of His grace like the climate of Kodai be our refuge in the scorching summers of hard times, to our heat stricken souls. May we ever be worthy of our blessings and count them again and again beyond years and decades.



The Kodai Gems of Wisdom

A summary from the discourses of Sri Madhusudan Sai

Surrender

Surrender puts asunder all sorrows

Lord Sri Rama declares:

सकृदेव प्रपन्नाय तवास्मीति च याचते ।

अभयं सर्वभूतेभ्यो ददाम्येतद्गतं मम ॥ २० ॥

sakṛdeva prapannāya tavāsmīti ca yācate |

abhayaṃ sarvabhūtebhyo dadāmyetadvataṃ mama || 20 ||

Explanation: Anyone who comes to me and says – “I belong to you and I take refuge in you, whoever it might be, I grant him *abhaya* or fearlessness. I give him protection and care, so that he shall not have any fear whatsoever.”

Vibhishana, though being the brother of Ravana, did not play to the tunes of Ravana, since Ravana

was *adharmic*. He took refuge in Rama’s feet who followed the path of *dharma*, and Lord Rama accepted him wholeheartedly.

Any person who surrenders to the feet of the Divine with all their heart and soul, becomes the responsibility of the Divine.

Lord Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita:

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।

तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥ 22॥

ananyāś cintayanto mām ye janāḥ paryupāsate

teṣāṃ nityābhiyuktānām yoga-kṣemaṃ vahāmyaham

Explanation: Whoever thinks of me all the time, worships me, and follows me, shall be taken care of by me, and all their responsibilities shall be shouldered by me.



Sri Sathya Sai Baba goes a step ahead and says:

sri puttaparthe nilayudu

kapadunu ninnunepudu karunaakarudai

chepatti ninnu brochunu

ye pattuna viduvakunda elunu ninnun

Explanation: The Lord of Puttaparthi, who is the all-compassionate one, will always protect you. By holding your hand, He will take care; He will not let go of you ever. His grip never loosens, and He Himself would take care of that.

To surrender and to stay surrendered is a rare feat. To say you are surrendered to God during difficult times is only helplessness. Surrender is when you are truly surrendered irrespective of good or bad times.

The steadiness of surrender is the sign of the highest state of devotion.

The one who keeps his ego, ideas and individualities aside, and submits himself in total surrender is a true follower. Once you surrender and follow, you will become His responsibility and He shall take care of everything else for you.

At the Forefront

Devotion

seva, sneha, sāyujya

The nine forms of devotion are:

- *śravaṇam* – hearing about the Lord
- *kīrtanam* – talking and singing the praises of the Lord
- *smaraṇam* – remembering the Lord all the time
- *arcanam* – worshipping the Lord by offering everything to the Lord
- *vandanam* – prayers to be of service to the Lord
- *pāda sevnam* – serving the Lord by serving others
- *dāsyam* – dedicating everything you do for the Divine only, no matter the place from where you serve, the names and forms you serve
- *sakhyam* – By serving the Lord constantly, the relationship with the Lord deepens and ripens to friendship with the Lord, where the Lord now remembers the devotee constantly and looks out for His devotee to give him opportunities to serve more. By being His closest servant, the devotee is always in the proximity of the Lord.

Servitude leads to friendship with the Lord.

sakhyam with the Lord is a beautiful relationship. The friendship between Krishna and Arjuna was so dear that whatever Krishna said, Arjuna did; and whatever Arjuna said, Krishna did.

ātmanivedanam means absolute surrender to the Lord, where there is no more difference between the Lord and you. There is only oneness.

Friendship can be between two people. But at this stage of *ātmanivedanam*, there may be two bodies, but there is only one mind. There are no two different ways of thinking, speaking or acting. Everything is inspired by the Divine only.

It is only through the path of servitude that one comes close to the Divine; the Divine gives Himself to such a person, and they become one in their hearts. This kind of *bhakti* is the ultimate achievement. Everything else like name, fame, rewards and awards, job and bungalow are lower when compared to this.

The ability to reach the stage of becoming one with the Divine, while aligning with the Divine in every thought, word and deed is very rare to achieve.

Through servitude, when one achieves proximity with the Divine, it leads to feeling the love and compassion of the Lord all the time; it leads to feeling one with the Lord in every thought, word and action.

Our mission is just not about serving the needy; through service we must elevate ourselves to experiencing Divinity within and without.

At the Forefront

नवविध भक्ति *navavidha bhakti* (Nine forms of devotion)



श्रवण *śravaṇa*
Listening to the
glories of God



कीर्तन *kīrtana*
Singing the glory
of God



विष्णोः स्मरण
viṣṇoḥ smaraṇa
Remembrance of the
name of God



वन्दन *vandana*
Praying to God



अर्चन
arcana
Worshipping God



पादसेवन
pādasevana
Serving the feet of
God



दास्य
dāsya
Serving God



साख्य
sākhyā
Considering God as
one's closest friend



आत्मनिवेदन
ātmanivedana
Complete surrender
of oneself to God

At the Forefront

Inspiration from Dr Ida Scudder

Dr Ida Scudder is the Founder of India's First Medical College, The Christian Medical College (CMC) at Vellore in Tamil Nadu. She and her father, Dr Scudder lived in Kodaikanal to serve the needy through their Christian Missionary, having come all the way from Long Island, New York.

The turning point in the life of Ida Scudder happened when three pregnant women had to face sad deaths, because of unavailability of a female specialist to deliver their babies. This had a very profound impact in the heart of little Ida.

Realising the attention needed for women healthcare in this region, and the importance of women treating women especially during pregnancies, etc. the little girl, Ida, in her 13 years decided to fly back to US to study medicine.

After completion of her studies, she came back to India and served women and children in the villages by training girls in the field of nursing.

A bullock cart served as her mobile clinic and she went village to village, home to home to serve people, especially women and children. During the plague in 1940s, her work was recognised by the Government of India.

Towards the end of her life, she had the vision of Lord Jesus at this very bungalow (referring to the Hill Top bungalow of Kodai where the retreat was held by Sri Madhusudan Sai).

By doing good, one can find God. Unconditional love is all about doing good to others.



Today, Christian Medical College is one of the premier institutions serving the poor in the name of Jesus Christ.

Dr Ida Scudder is an inspiration for all of us. She offered her life for the service of people, in the name of the Divine. This bungalow stands as an inspiration for living a life of service in the name of your Master. Remember to carry the inspiration of Ida Scudder, even as we enjoy the nature of Kodai.

You and I may pass away with time, but what we did with our lives, how we helped others, and the kind of inspiration we leave behind will stay forever. When we surrender to the Divine and do good to people, it shall remain as an inspiration for ever. This is what makes us immortal.

At the Forefront

Nature

Nature is a great healer. Nature can spiritualise and divinise us, because we can see God's hand in everything in nature. In every flower and every leaf, one can see God's creativity, intelligence and power.

Flowers, sunset, sunrise, plants and animals can have a profound calming effect and can absorb your mind unto itself. The beauty, symmetry, colour, richness and shape of a flower reflects the perfection of Divinity.

Animals are also so pure and innocent. It is their instinct to kill another animal and eat as they are made that way. But even a lion doesn't kill out of greed. One hunt lasts for a week for a lion, and it doesn't kill other animals until it is really hungry.

Nature is the purest reflection of Divinity.

Next to nature, the purity and innocence of children without any malice is a reflection of Divinity.

Destination

The Right Train vs The Wrong Train

If you have boarded a wrong train and you realise it on the way, it is better to enquire, get down at the next station, and find the right train to your destination. Instead, if you attach yourself too much with people you have been travelling with in the wrong train, or you are being lazy to take the corrective action, you live in denial and fool yourself, you lose the opportunity to make amends to take the right train.

God is your destination; spirituality is your path. Anything or anybody who comes on your way to God should be kept aside or given up.

Everyone has an opportunity to choose God

God gives everybody an opportunity to board the right train to redeem themselves by doing good. If we listen to the voice of God within us, we would always prosper. Even the worst of sinners are essentially divine, and at their deep core their conscience keeps telling them what is right and wrong. The one who listens to the conscience will never dare to do anything wrong. The ones who continued to journey in the wrong train despite all the right understanding and information, always faced a terrible ending.



At the Forefront



When God calls, drop everything else

Kahlil Gibran in his poem, The Prophet says – ‘when love beckons to you, follow him.’ When God calls, one should drop everything else and board His train. And it is for you to make that decision at that moment, because in truth, the opportunity of choosing God has come to you because of the prayers you made or somebody else made for you.

Path or Destination – which of these two is important?

Even though the spiritual path may seem tough, we must still pursue as this is the path that takes us to the right destination. Just because a path is smooth and attractive, but doesn’t take us home and leads us elsewhere, would we still take it? Hence, it is important that we always keep our focus right.

guru

What does the *guru* do for you?

A *guru* out of his immense compassion on you, never abandons you. Catching you by the hand, ears or nose, He will still take you to the right train. Even if you lose track, a *guru* makes the effort, takes the extra pain to put you back on the right path.

Our destination is Divinity, and this mission is the train that shall take you to the destination. The engine which drives the mission is Service and Spirituality. I have created an opportunity for you to get into the train. I keep watching over you, so that you don’t get down at the wrong station, and if necessary, I secure all the doors for your safety.

What can you do for the *guru*?

To such a *guru*, what you can do is to simply be obedient, surrendered, and keep faith in Him that He will guide you even though the path may have several obstacles and difficulties.

At the Forefront



Mind

The leech-like mind – Beware!

The mind is a tool of distraction. Like the leech that first numbs the area of your body, and then starts sucking your blood which you realise only after a while; similarly, the mind creates duality and attachments and numbs you into thinking that you are right, others are wrong. You start living in denial and are not ready to take anybody’s advice. This kind of a mind sucks all your energy, time, and opportunities, and allows the ego to get stronger and stronger.

The salt of *satsaṅga*

Just like how applying salt can make the leech lose its grip and fall off your skin, similarly applying the salt of *satsaṅga* or good company will help you get rid of the leech-like grip of negative thoughts and emotions.

Controlling the mind is difficult than controlling the wind. Hence, the only way is through the practice of being in good company and detaching yourself from any other distractions.

Keep repeating to yourself – “I am here to be divine and to live in a divine way. I shall discard anything that doesn’t fit this role.”

Mind the Mind

The mind by itself is neither positive nor negative. It is just an instrument. It is only by its association with something that it acquires positive or negative traits.

Anything that brings joy, rejuvenation and peace to the mind is a good association.

Anything that causes confusion and agitation to the mind is a bad association.

Being obedient and convenient to the *guru* is the greatest offering you can give to the *guru*.

- Being obedient is to follow the rules and discipline, and working hard with sincerity by discharging your duties and responsibilities well
- Being convenient is to be kind with other people, letting go of your silly and petty ego and attachments, and thinking of the higher goal which will lead to the welfare of all.

Never forget the bigger vision. Do not get off the train for petty issues while quarrelling with your passenger. Learn to live together joyfully and work together happily.

God is definitely all-merciful and forgiving. But we must never take Him for granted. When He is trying to help you, but we are not willing to follow and obey, He will simply withdraw and wait and watch. Hence, to be obedient and convenient to your Master or God is very important.

At the Forefront

jīva prajñā and *daiva prajñā*

Mind has a *jīva prajñā* which in reality came from *daiva prajñā* or *paramātma* only. But it assumes separateness like how a bucket of water is considered different from the well from which the water was drawn.

The bucket is the body and mind is the water. This water or the mind has come from God only. Hence it is pure and still in its original state. But it acquires qualities based on its association. Hence, it is so important that the mind is associated only with good thoughts and good company all the time.

jīva prajñā with its attributes and characteristics is also part of the Divine plan, and hence *jīva prajñā* is required to function in this world. But, we must ensure that this *jīva prajñā* is always maintained clean without too many desires, ambitions, and impressions. Only then, can it perform its role perfectly to express the divine through it.



Right Path vs Wrong Path

Peace, happiness, joy and contentment are the experiences on the right path. Anxiety fear, anger, frustration, jealousy and greed are the experiences on the wrong path. Keep watching your own experiences and you will know whether you are on the right or wrong path.

Minding inward

The best way to turn the mind inwards is not to let it go outwards. The senses have been created by the Lord to see outside and to enjoy all kinds of pleasures and attractions. But, just like how a water channel is created for water to flow, we must also create channels and direct our minds inwards.

At the Forefront



Goodness and Happiness

Happiness is to do it right, no matter how difficult

Your internal joy is the most important. If you are happy within, you will be happy with the people around you. If you are unhappy within, you will not be happy outside. Happiness comes to you, only when you follow the right path. Do it right, even though it may seem difficult.

Goodness is your nature

Keep doing good so much so that you become God. What does it mean to become God? – Compassion, kindness, joy, and satisfaction are the nature of God. *ātma tṛupti* is the nature of Godhood.

Goodness is the only way to save the world. Our strategy, vision and mission are simply to do good.

Why should you do good? – You are born good. Goodness is your nature. So, you are born to do good to all. There is no other way you can be happy.

God is in all. If you want to find God, do good to all.

Believe in God. Believe in Goodness. The best expression of God is goodness.

Do good when you are still good

We should offer to God the best of ourselves – our youth, energy, abilities skills, and time, while we still have all of these with us, and must do good work. By doing this, God will look after us till the end of our lives, by giving us as much as what we need, neither more, nor less. Faith and surrender to God are the two most important qualities needed for the youth.

At the Forefront

dharma

Forewarnings with Assurances

When you are on the path of *dharma*, *dharma* itself will protect you. This is my confidence, and when I see the medical college students speak with conviction about the mission and their work, the sincerity and the honesty with which they speak, gives me confidence and reassurance that we are doing the right things only, despite how challenging our tasks may seem.

When you decide to do the right things, the path reveals itself to you.

To face challenges for the betterment of the world, and remembering God through this process, is still good. This is how your spiritual journey has been designed on our path.

Despite being on the path of *dharma*, there may be moments of darkness and disillusionment, of self-doubt and apprehensions, but one must go through the process. One cannot expect that miracles will manifest at every step on the path of *dharma*. Even Lord Rama and Lord Krishna had to go through the battle to finally emerge victorious on the path of *dharma*. But, always remember – **truth shall always triumph and dharma will always protect the virtuous and righteous ones.**

Our only strength is the strength of goodness. We must continue to march on believing that goodness will protect us.

We are trailblazers

This is the first time that a work of our kind is being undertaken. So, we are the first ones to tread this path. We are the trail blazers. We do not have the luxury to walk on a path already laid. Light the lamp of faith and keep walking with the courage that you are doing only good. Only a few take to this path of dedicating their life for doing good to others.

The Founder's joy is same as a Farmer's joy

Like a farmer's joy to harvest his crops after having tilled the soil, removed the weeds, stones and pebbles, waited for the rain, and looked with excitement at the seeds sprouting, and shoots coming out—same is my joy when I see my students shaping well. Just like every plant carries its seeds, these students will carry the seeds of goodness as they grow, and they shall propagate this idea through their selfless actions.

Creation

Love is the reason for creation

The *upaniṣads* say that in the beginning the Divine alone existed. It wanted to express itself and love itself, just like how a mother sees her own reflection in her child and loves the child.

Creation is God's own beautiful painting which He admires as an artist.

Waves in an ocean, We in creation

Philosophically speaking, creation always existed just like how waves always exist in an ocean.

The waves in an ocean may look like different waves coming and going, but they are all the same. Similarly, in creation we may all look different; but, in essence, we are all the same.

The process of creation, sustenance and dissolution exists always. It happens simply by the will of God where energy turns into matter, and matter dissolves back to energy.

Space from Consciousness

The ingoing and outgoing breath of God are considered as *nāda* and *veda*. *nāda* or sound emanated from the Divine. It is closest to the Divine and is considered as the fundamental property of consciousness.

At the Forefront

Sound is the property of space. Space is the first element that came from consciousness. If we go deeper into science, we may know that if a thing is broken down into molecules, atoms, and sub-atomic particles, and then further broken down, it is only space that remains.

Space is all there is, and yet everything in creation like the sun, moon and stars stay in its place without collapsing because of certain forces such as the electromagnetic, gravitational, and strong and weak nuclear forces which hold the universe together. Sound and light travels in space.

Everything is governed by the law of space and in space exists everything.

Air from Space

From space came air introducing to us the feel of touch.

Fire from Air

From air came fire, wherein the oxygen and other gases combined to create heat which turned into fire.

Water from Fire

When the heat cooled down, the atmosphere was formed, clouds were formed and then rain came. Thus, the hydrogen and oxygen in the atmosphere combined in certain proportions to form water. Thus, water comes from heat or fire.

Earth from Water

From water came earth. The first creature started thriving in the sea. Thus, it is from water that all that the earth possesses came from.

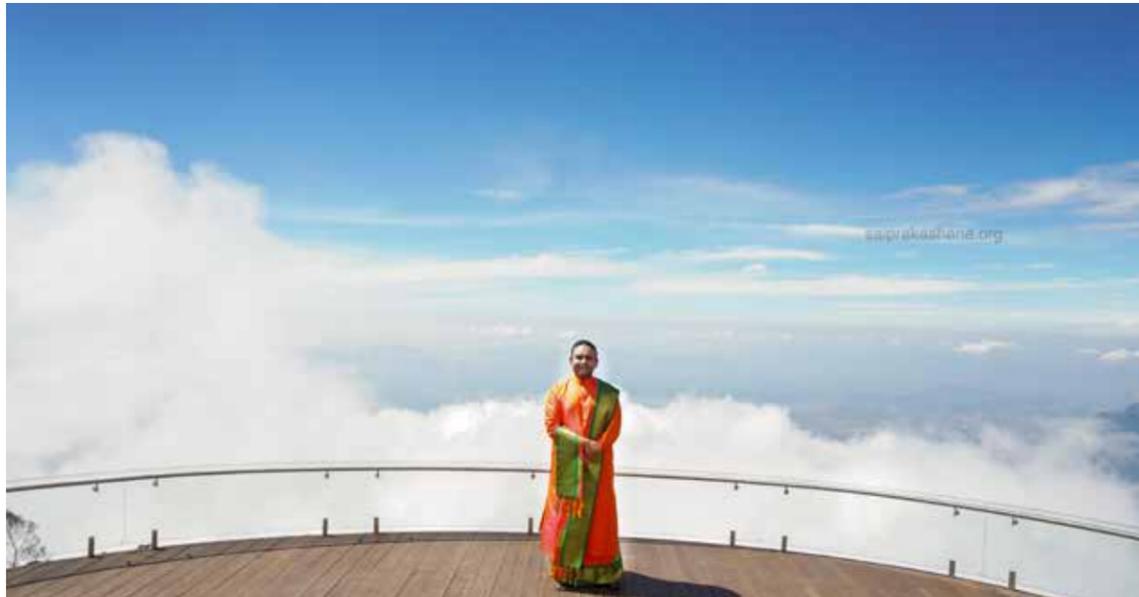
Five elements and their properties

- Space – *śabda* (sound)
- Air – *sparśa* (touch)
- Fire – *rūpa* (form)
- Water – *rasa* (taste)
- Earth – *gandha* (smell)

	SUBTLE		GROSS		
	<i>ākāśa</i> space	<i>vāyu</i> air	<i>agni</i> fire	<i>jala</i> water	<i>prthvī</i> earth
QUALITIES OF THE SENSES					
<i>śabda</i> sound	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>sparśa</i> touch		✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>rūpa</i> vision			✓	✓	✓
<i>rasa</i> taste				✓	✓
<i>gandha</i> smell					✓

THE FIVE ELEMENTS

At the Forefront



Consciousness

All elements in every element, and all floating on consciousness

Another interesting aspect is that every element in creation has a dominant quality, along with all the other qualities in certain proportions. For example, the Earth's dominant quality may be smell, but it also has the qualities of water, fire, air, and space in it.

Thus, it follows that every element in creation is animated by the same consciousness or God or *brahmam*, which is the source of everything.

What is the nature of consciousness?

satyam jñānam anantam is the definition given by our scriptures for consciousness.

satyam – truth that never changes. It is not just a fact that could change with time, but the truth that never changes. God was, God is, and God will be. There is neither a beginning nor an end to consciousness. Hence God is the truth.

jñānam – it is that which is always aware or all-knowing by simply being everything.

anantam – it is that which is infinite. So, there is not a thing in which it is not present. This is what is being discovered by mathematicians today when they say that 'it tends to infinity', which means it cannot be defined.

This is the nature of *brahmam*.

A Sufi saint or a *ṛṣi* in the Indian sub-continent found the same truth that only the Divine is real, and all else is an illusion or an appearance. The same truth was conveyed by many wise men in different languages.

How does it help to know that everything is permeated by divinity?

The Indian spirituality or *sanātana dharma* believes that everything is Divine. Everybody is divine deep down, and hence there is no way that we can harm anybody, do wrong or injustice to anybody. We seem to deviate from our original nature of Divinity because of our mind, ego, attachment and other desires. Even to believe theoretically that everybody is Divine will prevent us from harming anyone and finding only unity in all.

At the Forefront

Science and Spirituality

ṛṣis vs Scientists

ṛṣis went within

The discoveries of science were already known and told by our ancient *ṛṣis* long back. The *ṛṣis* of yore could understand about God or consciousness by connecting their mind to that reality. Through sincere seeking, they could decipher the fundamental truth that everything is only *brahmam* and nothing else. This could happen because they went within, instead of searching outside for answers.

ṛṣis went deeper

India has contributed so much to the wisdom of the world. The uniqueness of India is its spirituality which understood things deeper than what science could elucidate. India became a spiritual society more than a scientific society, because we did not end with knowing how seasons change, stars, sun and moon function; but we went a step deeper to know what is it that makes all this function seamlessly. Upon this investigation, the ancient *ṛṣis* found that the same Divine consciousness operates everything.

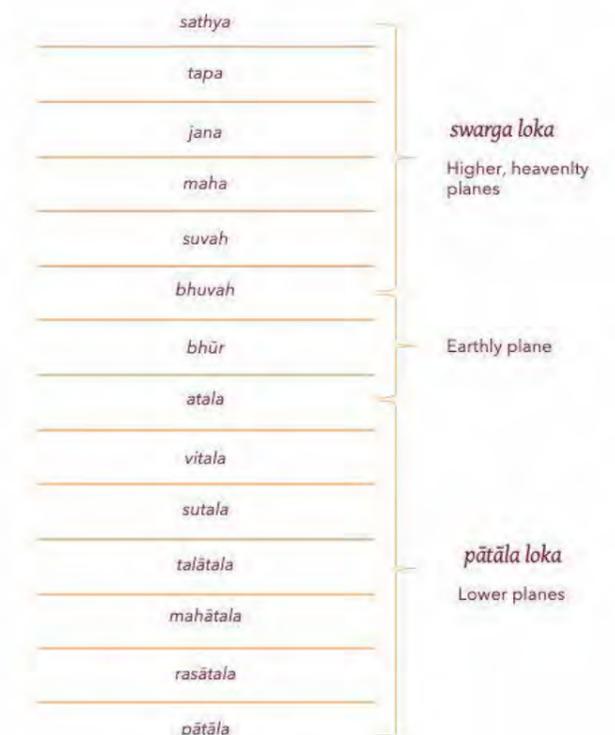
ṛṣis pronounced the ultimate truth

The Divine Consciousness is the law maker, the law giver and the law protector. There is no greater spirituality than to know that the existence of Divine consciousness is the ultimate truth and that we are all Divine only.

ṛṣis explained Quantum Mechanics and Multiple Universes

Science is talking about several universes. This is what was explained to us as 14 *lokās*, divided as 7 *lokās* below (*atala, vitala, sutala, talātala, mahātala, rasātala* and *pātāla*), and 7 *lokās* above (*bhu, bhuva, svar, mahas, janas, tapas, and satya*).

In all these 14 dimensions, beings or things exist. These beings may not have a physical body, but they exist as energy bodies.



At the Forefront

ānandamayakośa

The pure Divine joy that is independent of the lower joys.

vijñānamayakośa

The buddhi or intelligence which allows one to create or invent.

manoōmayakośa

The mind, which allows one to experience good knowledge and understanding. The ability to think and discriminate.

prāṇamayakośa

Represents one's *cetanā* or sentience where one can experience good health, digestion and sleep.

annamayakośa

The body and the senses. Allows one to enjoy the food that one consumes.

The joys that can be experienced

The *ānanda* of *brahman* is independent of these lower joys that one can experience through the different sheaths of the body.



At the Forefront

The Schrödinger's cat theory talks about a hypothetical cat which is put inside a box. We infer that there are infinite possibilities to what the cat can do inside the box. Hence, just one possibility is not the real possibility. Similarly, our existence in this plane is not the only possibility. We could be simultaneously existing in different planes of the universe.

The same idea is elucidated through spirituality through our existence in the five *kośas* – *annamaya kośa* (the body), *prāṇamaya kośa* (the life force or breath), *manomaya kośa* (the mind), *vijñānamaya kośa* (the intellect) and *ānandamaya kośa* (the state of supreme happiness).

We are simultaneously present in all the layers or *kośas*, and depending on our focus on a particular layer, we shall experience that.

Thus, the *upaniṣads* and ancient Indian texts have pronounced the highest wisdom in a very simple form, and mostly in a coded form.

Sound

nādabrahmam – Sound is Divine

The idea is that sound which emanates from space is the closest way to reach God, and hence we are involved in *nāmasmarana*, chanting *mantras*, singing *bhajans*, etc. Any sacred sound that we dwell upon for a long time, helps us merge into that sound.

Sound is closest to the Divine and hence we call it *nādabrahmam*. Thus, when we worship sound and offer it to the Divine with humility and devotion, it cleanses us and rejuvenates us. Spiritual and devotional sounds are very powerful as it effects the space inside us and improves the quality of our existence. Through sounds, we can cause an effect to the space inside us and outside us. Hence, it is important to expose ourselves to good music dipped in devotion.

The importance that is given to *veda* and *nāda* is because of the sacred sound it can create to bring about positive effects in space, which will have a ripple effect.



At the Forefront

Words are also sound. Let's produce good sounds

The sound emanating from good and kind words can also bring about positive effects in the lives of people. A blessing emanating from the heart of a person has the power to impact positively the other person on whom it is bestowed. Any word spoken with purity of intent, with integrity of thought and word shall definitely find fulfillment.

Earn blessings by doing good

In the ancient days, the kings always had *ṛsis* in their court who were venerated and regarded with high esteem, and were served with love, so that the *ṛsis* would bless the kings from their heart. It was believed that being a recipient of blessings from the *ṛsis* can help them achieve anything. If there was a famine in the kingdom, the *ṛsis* were called for to do *yāgās*, *yajñās* and *pūjās* to bring rain, and unfailingly rain would happen, because of the purity with which they chanted the *mantras*.

Hence, it is important that we keep doing good, so that we will attract the attention of good people.

This is why in the Indian culture, we seek blessings from elders by bending down and touching their feet, so that they shall pronounce words of good will for us.

Remember to do good for the sake of doing good only, and not to attract anybody's attention. Keep doing good and when God wills, your goodness shall bring grace and blessings unto you.

The good work that we do touches the hearts of others. A parent whose child has been saved at our hospital sends out a word of gratitude from their heart and this word carries so much power.

Love, kindness, compassion and goodness give light to the world. Whoever exhibits these qualities is the light of the world. Compassion is the fuel for this mission. As long as we have unconditional compassion, nothing can stop this.



At the Forefront



Destiny vs Free Will

Destiny is Divine will, the path chosen is Free Will

Life is a drama. Your role, costume, dialogues, stage setting, co-actors and script are decided. But, the manner in which you deliver your role depends completely on you. The efforts you put to be a good actor and to deliver your role well, is up to you. Even a villain is appreciated in a drama when he plays his role perfectly.

Free will must be used in alignment with the Divine will and it should help further the Divine will.

If you play your role perfectly with complete awareness that it is only a role played by you as per the Divine will, then there is no *punya* (merit) or *pāpa* (demerit) associated with it. Such a person is free of all *karma*.

A *jñāni* remembers he is only acting and plays his role well, and so he has no *karma*. An *ajñāni* doesn't remember this, and gets too attached thereby accruing *karma*.

Nobody has the right to change the story of Ramayana. But they can depict it in their own

ways through different dance forms. But the story by itself is Divine destiny.

Our divine destiny is to realise God. But the path – *karma mārga*, *bhakti mārga* or *jñāna mārga* that we would want to follow to realise God is totally up to us.

seva or *karma mārga* is the easiest path to God

When you serve others by seeing Divinity in all, you become a servant of God. For a servant who is simply executing God's will, there is no *karma*.

While doing *seva* for alleviating the suffering of others, our sense of ego automatically disappears, as we see that there are so many who are in a situation worse than ours, and hence we develop kindness and compassion towards them.

A good actor is one who delivers the role ordained by God to perfection by doing whatever needs to be done as the servant of God. The problem starts only when the actor tries to change the script and dialogues. That is when the *guru* or God intervenes to teach his actor some lessons for taking corrective action.

At the Forefront

Relationship with God

An old relationship which is always new

Sri Krishna said to Arjuna that they have spent many lives together before. Their relationship with each other is not new, but very old.

Each one of you being here in this mission doing the work that you are doing is completely divinely ordained. It is an opportunity that you had prayed for. Even in a passing moment if you had prayed to God – “let me offer myself to you and serve you; let me be close to you and enjoy your love and divinity; let me attain Self-realisation” – these prayers are remembered by the Divine, even if we forget it.

Now that your prayer has manifested, it is up to you to utilise the opportunity well.

Win God’s heart with unconditional love

God should want to spend time with us and be with us. He should come looking for us. The difference between *gopikas* and *yādavas* in their relationship with Krishna was that the *yādavas* said – “Krishna, you belong to us. You have to do what we ask of you.” The *gopikas* said – “Krishna, we belong to you. We expect nothing from you. Please tell us what you want us to do for you.”

Want only God

Four kinds of people come to God – *ārtis* (for their personal problems), *arthārthīs* (to fulfill their desires), *jijñāsu* (to find answers to curious questions about God and existence), and *jñānī* (to love God for God’s sake and enjoy the company of God without any other desires).

The best out of these four categories are the *jñānīs*, because they are dearest to God. They want only God and are happy being with God.

Take the Divine Anaesthesia

jñānīs have taken the divine anaesthesia which keeps them immersed in the Divine and unmindful of all the other problems at home, office, health or finances. They are immune to all the other petty concerns of the world, so much so that they don’t even realise there is pain, out of intoxication that is caused by Divine love and bliss.

In our institutions, people may come in as *ārtis*, *arthārthīs*, or *jijñāsu*, but they eventually grow to become *jñānīs*.

The real transformation happens when you switch from asking what can God do for me to asking what can I do for God.

Practice just one quality of a bhakta

The *bhakti yoga* of Bhagavad Gita talks about 40 qualities of a *bhakta*. Pick up just one quality and practice it. For example – to not hate anyone. Despite people troubling us or causing us problems, if we can still love them and not hate them, we would be redeemed. Practicing one quality will lead us to practicing the remaining 39 qualities too.

The magic of bhakti

bhakti is the ultimate emotion that one can experience. Unconditional and selfless devotion to the Divine is a very pure feeling. In this experience, we become Divine and we can attain Self-realisation. That is the magic of *bhakti*.

The dearest devotee

The ones who live to execute God’s will is the dearest to God. *karīṣye vacanam tava* said Arjuna to Lord Krishna towards the end, and such devotees are dearest to the Lord.

To be able to become a dear devotee of the Lord, one must give up all attachment and delusion, and be ready to follow the Divine without any doubts, worries or fears. By becoming such a pure instrument of the Divine, one becomes Divine itself.

At the Forefront

Instrument

Being a flute

Being a hollow instrument like the flute is the most important thing. Divine joy, grace, and love flows through such an instrument. A flute will not decide the *rāga* it has to play or complain about why a particular *rāga* only is being played through it again and again. It will simply submit itself to the flautist.

Similarly, you must become a flute in God’s hand to express Divinity without any obstruction, pollution, dilution and contamination of your individuality. Only this kind of flute would be picked up by God.

The process of becoming a perfect instrument could be a painful one, for it involves a lot of cutting and cleansing. The experience could be that of losing a lot of things and not gaining anything. The very process of making a flute involves removing everything that is obstructing, so it becomes hollow.

Allow yourself and submit yourself to God to become His instrument. There cannot be a greater fortune than this. A surrendered instrument will not have any worry, anxiety or fear.

Being a missionary

In our mission, we should not contemplate about our problems, or become ambitious about achieving something for selfish reasons. What you need and deserve, will always come to you. You will not get more than what you deserve, nor less than that.

You must grow continuously to become pure expressions of Divinity, where your thoughts, words and deeds will be Divine.

Exist only for the sake of God. Exist only with one idea of what I can do for God. Exist to experience and enjoy divine love and spreading divine love to all. If you can live like this, none of your problems and difficulties would weigh you down. Though problems would still exist, they will be on the sidelines only.

Cut out the ego

An instrument of God will not claim to be the doer or the enjoyer. Ego will be completely absent in such an instrument. So, whenever negative qualities like attachment, anger, frustration, dejection, disappointment, fear, anxiety and judgment stir our mind, we know that it is born out of ego. By cutting out ego and throwing it away, you will be able to progress steadily on the spiritual path.

Being an instrument of God, and being available to do what He ordains keeps life so simple. All we need is surrender, sincerity and faith.



At the Forefront

Music

Music from the Divine

Music is a direct gift from the Divine. The grace of Maa Saraswati comes upon those who are sincere and surrendered. Once the Divine is pleased with you, magic happens through you, miracles manifest through you. Pure music filled with devotion for God is again an expression of Divinity.

nāda for *bhakti* and not *bhukti*

A composer like Tyagaraja who had composed many Carnatic *kritis* was inspired by the Divine Himself. His compositions were spontaneous expressions of Divine feelings. Hence, if we render the composition by understanding the *bhāva* of the composer and sing it with devotion, only then would we be doing justice to it.

Our efforts are to preserve the devotion and spirituality quotient of Indian classical music, so that we don't use it for entertainment, but use it for enlightenment and also pass it to our next generation. Any music that inspires devotion in the hearts of others should be practiced.



Music in Indian culture

Prayers and songs are an integral part of Indian culture. Every single event in an Indian household is combined with a song or prayer, from the time a child is born, the child is named, fed food, taught the first alphabet or sent to school. Music is a fundamental part of life be it for a farmer who works in his field or a pandit who sings in the temple. Indian classical music is so deep, spiritual and holistic that it helps to elevate our soul to feel oneness with the Divine.

Music for all

Music is universal. Everybody needs to learn basic classical music, understand *rāgās*, and practice some *bhajans* in the *rāga*. Our institution is unique because of these aspects only. A child from some village in North Karnataka comes here to seek education, and ends up learning classical music and vedas, gets exposed to good music through *bhajans*...etc. This aspect that we give the child, may not be possible even from a high-end institution.

At the Forefront



Music in Medicine

Even our medical college students learn *vedas*, *bhagavad-gītā*, *upaniṣads*, and music. These will come in use for them while handling practical situations in their profession in future. This is called holistic education. We need to preserve our country's cultural and spiritual heritage in this way.

Music for generations

It is very important that we protect and promote classical and folk music, and other forms of ancient Indian traditional knowledge systems through the *guru-siśya parampara*. The perpetuity of this *parampara* where the *guru* teaches and the *siśya* learns should never be broken.

It is also the responsibility of music students to teach basic music to all other students and teachers of our institutions.

Music as an audience

Being a good audience is also an integral part of art forms. It is not enough if an artist enjoys his singing or dancing, but does not help his audience to appreciate it. Hence, imparting basic

music education to all through workshops and lectures cannot be ignored.

Music for patronising

In the olden days, the kings patronised the artists and took care of their material well-being so that the artists could dedicate all their life to the art. We must take care of art and artists in today's times as well.

The students of *veda* and *nāda* only need to dedicate all their time and life to their art, and not worry about anything else like fee, food, accommodation, employment...etc. All of these will be taken care of by the institution. They only have to think about growing in their art and teaching it to others.

Music to imbibe

It is important that music students should be with good artists to listen and learn from them. Sound gets into our system on its own, and for music students, just being with great musicians and observing them, will really help them to improve themselves.

At the Forefront



Music and other art forms should be encouraged

We must make opportunities for students who are interested in art forms. If we fail to do that for them, and push them to pursue a straight-jacket approach to education, we would be losing good artists and creating bad economists and engineers. The inclination and interest in students towards art forms should be recognised and encouraged. By doing so, we would be creating bright messengers of Indian classical and traditional art forms who would start teaching and training more people in future. However big the storm may be, this candle in the wind has to be protected and the flame has to be kept alive. Only then, can it light other flames.

Music as *sādhana*

For musicians, the greatest opportunity is that they don't have to go in search of God anywhere. Simply by perfecting their music and offering it to the Divine, they will attain Divinity. *sādhana*

or practice is the only way to perfect music or other art forms. If you take one step forward and practice sincerely, God will bless you with more than what you may actually deserve.

A musician's *sādhana* is to become one with music. When the knower, knowledge and the process of knowing becomes one, one reaches the *brahmasthiti*. The singer, the process of singing, and the song becoming one is the ultimate experience.

This is the state where the mind is merged in the Divine consciousness, and hence there is no feeling of separateness between the body, mind and *ātma*. Everything becomes the *ātma*.

Great musicians became great because they embraced the art of music with a lot of sincerity, sacrifice and devotion. Every music student should respect the art of music in this manner.

Music as an intuition

Intense *sādhana* will bring your originality in music. When you bring yourself into what you are singing, you will bring out your unique touch. Insights on how you can sing will come to you as an intuition from within. Music should become the very breath for music students.

Music transcends all barriers

Music transcends all barriers of language and nation. Any kind of music from any part of the world is sacred as long as the intentions and feelings behind the music are pure.

Music for the soul

bhāva or feeling is the soul of music, while *rāga* and *tāla* could be considered as the bones and blood. A mother's lullaby puts the baby to sleep, even though the baby doesn't understand the words, the *rāga* or rhythm. The feeling of love and melody in the mother's singing, calms down the baby and puts it to sleep. This is the importance of *bhāva* or feeling in music.

At the Forefront

Music makes you humble

Saint Tyagaraja praised an assembly of great musicians by composing extempore the song, '*endaro mahanubhavulu andariki vandanamu*' and expressed his joy about so many great musicians who live in this world, and that he offers his obeisances to all of them. Saint Tyagaraja, being a great musician himself, was so humble that he could appreciate the great talent of music in others.

Music makes you grateful

So many great people have sacrificed so much and left behind a wonderful legacy of music for us, from which we are learning and singing. Hence, we must always remain grateful to such great luminaries of Indian classical music, who have created a path on which we are walking while enjoying the beautiful scenery towards our destination of realising Divinity.

Music makes you realise God

nadam tanumanisham shankaram – Tyagaraja extols the Lord by saying – "*Oh Lord! You are the very embodiment of music.*" Hence, when we learn music, we learn about God; when we enjoy good music, we enjoy the presence of God; when we realise music, we realise God.

Music is boundless

Music is an endless journey; it has no beginning and no end. It is like a circle and as you go through this journey, you discover new things every time you go through it. God blesses you with that kind of intuition in music. This leads to new discoveries and interpretations in music.

Music needs patience and perseverance

Music, especially, needs a lot of practice and perseverance. As you learn, you grow; but there will be a period of lull where you may feel that you are not growing, but all of a sudden there will be a new intuition and realisation. As you persevere and practice, you will definitely grow and jump to the next level. Growth in music is not a linear curve; it takes jumps. Hence, you must be patient and keep practicing.

The streams of *veda* and *nāda* in our institutions are the most important, as they represent the soul of India. My interest is towards protecting these art forms by helping our students pursue these fields without any doubt or fear about their future prospects.

Music happens by grace

Unlike science, art happens by grace. You know that grace has happened to you, when you jump from one level to the next. By enjoying your music, you will be enjoying the divinity within.

Music for revival

Indian classical music is very tempered, soft and steady. But today's modern music has ruined the very purpose and philosophy behind music. Hence, we must work hard to revive the depth and beauty of music in its truest sense.

About *nāda gurukulam*

The *nāda gurukulam* that is soon coming up will promote all kinds of traditional art forms like Carnatic and Hindustani classical music, folk art forms like *yakshagāna* that are getting extinct for want of audience, painting, sculpting, weaving, block printing...etc. It is the responsibility of the students to protect these art forms and their purity.

At the Forefront

Divine Grace

Always be prepared and ready to receive the Divine grace. Like the Chataka bird that waits for the first drop of rain, and does not drink from pools and puddles no matter how thirsty it is, wait sincerely for the Divine to bless you. He will do the best for you.

Kalidasa, once known to be a dull-headed person, was blessed by Mother Kali, and then he turned to be a poet who contributed to the field of literature in a great way.

Once we become a *dāsā*, a servant of the Divine in whatever way possible, the Divine will bless us with the best abilities in everything that we do. Once the power of the Divine touches a person, it can transform them forever.

The grace of the Divine is like the philosopher's stone that can turn a piece of iron into gold.



True Devotees

Follow the Divine

A nun of the Franciscan order of Assisi responded to our invite to Muddenahalli by saying – “*I don't go anywhere. I follow.*” This is such a profound statement made by her. To follow the Divine will is the greatest spiritual virtue.

To say, ‘God is in my heart’ is a given. But to say, ‘I am in the heart of God’ needs confidence. Only a true devotee will have the confidence to say, ‘I am in the heart of God.’

At Kodai, this mission started with a handful of trusted devotees of the Lord, who were ready to abide by his will with faith. They believed what they felt deeply in their hearts and followed the Divine.

At the Forefront



Keep faith in the Divine

One may use all his mind, intelligence, wealth, connections and networking to solve a problem. But the best way is to depend on the Divine. The Divine might take His time, but He will do it at the right time. The Divine will not do anything in a hurry. He will do everything at the right time in the right way. We must have that faith.

Be steady in surrender

Do not fluctuate during those times when you don't receive what you wanted. Stay steady knowing that God is watching over you and whatever He does for you will be the best. Do not have any complaints, regrets, questions, asks, and demands. Just wait in sincere surrender.

Learn from *nandi* who waits for Shiva in complete surrender. He does not disturb the state of *samādhi* of Shiva, but simply waits for Shiva to respond at the right time. Have the patience to wait for your turn – that is *bhakti*.

Get a good name for your Master

A true follower would get a good name for the Master by his actions.

At the Forefront

The University Lessons

Soft Sciences to Soften Hearts

Aristotle said that everybody should learn three things – science, philosophy and music. Learning sciences without understanding the philosophy behind it makes us like machines. Humanness doesn't blossom without understanding philosophy and without tasting music. Philosophy is nothing but the love for wisdom.

In our institutions, we teach students all the subjects without excluding philosophy and music. Thus, alongside imparting knowledge of the sciences, we also tend to their hearts, and this is what will make them holistic personalities.

At our institutions, we want our professors and teachers to be philosophers and music lovers.

The most important investment we need to make as a society and nation, is to be made on education. Good education cannot be restricted to just the science; it must include philosophy and music as well.

Wisdom from the Watermelon – Sow the best seeds

A farmer grew watermelons in his field and fed the best ones, without seeking any payment, to young children and teenagers by conducting a competition, where the one who eats the greatest number of water melons is the winner. The only rule of the competition was that the competitors have to save the seeds of their watermelon in a bowl. The children relished the melons and stored the seeds. This is what he did with his best melons. And what did the farmer do with the not-so-good melons? – he sold them in the market for a cheap price.

The farmer's son was quite annoyed with his father's approach to the business where he was giving the best quality water melons freely to all to eat instead of selling them for a good price. After the father passed on, the son took over the father's business and resolved to change the strategy. He sold the best ones for a good price, and gave away freely the not-so-good ones at the harvest festival for children to eat. The children gave back the seeds, which were re-sowed as per his father's practice, and naturally the harvest started dwindling year on year, because the seeds were the products of the not-so-good melons.



At the Forefront



The son then realised that it is important to nurture and perpetuate good quality seeds, so that the harvest would always produce good fruits.

Similarly, an education system has to produce best students who will be encouraged to become good teachers. By sending all the best brains to industries and compromising on the quality of teachers in schools, the resultant quality of education imparted to students has been deteriorating.

It is important that we invest in education, and make best teachers out of the best students. The best brains, with best character and best abilities should go into the education system to produce the next generation of good students. There has to be a calculated choice made towards how we can distribute our best students amongst the fields of academics, industry, politics, and other social causes.

Note for Teachers

- Teachers and their profession and contribution has to be respected. Teachers should be motivated in every way, financially and otherwise, so that the profession of teaching is not looked down upon
- Teachers should be able to inspire in students a sense of pride and satisfaction in the profession of teaching. Teachers should feel motivated at the first place to be able to motivate the students by demonstrating that teachers do not only impart knowledge and skills, but also build character and mould a person into a good human being
- Teachers own 8 hours multiplied by 300 days of every child. This is the most important time that they need to use to inspire the child. The most important inspiration that a teacher can bring in the child is the want to become a teacher
- Teachers should instill the taste for God and godly things in children

Our University's mission is to create as many educators and academicians as possible from our best students, so that we perpetuate the production of good teachers, generation after generation.

At the Forefront

Preserve the Indian Way of Education

The Indian education system offered quality education free of cost to all children, irrespective of whether the child comes from a rich or poor background. The *gurukula* of ancient India nurtured children with good values alongside imparting knowledge and skills.

Vashista praised the children of Dasaratha when they completed their education at his *gurukulam* by saying:

- *babhūva bhūyo bhūtānām svayam bhūh iva sammataḥ* – Like Lord Brahma, your children have become God-like, because of their kindness and friendliness towards all beings
- *sarve veda vidah śūrāḥ* – The children are adept at all the vedas and its wisdom, and also good at the skills of war and weaponry
- *sarve jñānopasampannāḥ* – They have acquired knowledge on all the other necessary fields of social relevance also
- *sarve lokahite ratāḥ* – Using all the knowledge and skills acquired, they are eager to contribute towards the welfare of society

- *sarve samuditā guṇaiḥ* – Good qualities and virtues emanate from them spontaneously
- *teṣām api mahātejā rāmaḥ satya parākramaḥ* – Out of the four children, Rama is the best, due to his qualities of truth coupled with the courage to stand by truth

Every house/ family should give at least one of their children to become a teacher. If we can take this as a commitment, societies would improve.

Good teachers + Good students + Good parents = Good Nation

Producing the critical mass

Once we create a majority that subscribes to good ideas and philosophies, that shall become the new norm, the new truth. This is what can help revamp our education system. We must have the right vision and philosophy at the first place; and then, we must have the right kind of teachers, professors and administrators to execute the vision. Our effort is to produce the critical mass of educators and academicians through our



At the Forefront

institutions, so that they can become the future leaders.

A unique medical college

Our medical college follows a certain discipline where students get up at 4:30 am in the morning, they do their sports and yoga, attend classes, evening prayers, and also *parāvidya* classes three days a week. The fact is that this schedule only helps them to dedicate time for their studies in a better way, in an efficient way.

Offering free medical education in a disciplined set-up, keeps our vision intact, and keeps the system true to itself.

Indian Culture

There will be a strange and sudden shift in people's mindset towards Indian culture, spirituality and art forms. Hence, it is important that we develop true understanding of *sanātana dharma* and our culture, and demonstrate it practically through compassion, love and service. Only then we shall be able to send out the right message to people who will wait to learn from India.

For a tree to grow upwards, it also has to grow deep downwards simultaneously. The roots have to go as deep as the branches and shoots grow tall. Even as India grows in modern education, it should not forget its spiritual roots.

Our Mission

Our mission is happening because of the dedication, devotion and sacrifice of so many people.

Our journey in this mission is from *jīva prajñā* to *daiva prajñā*, from individuality to instrumentation. This mission is all about your transformation from being an ordinary human being, to a true devotee of the Divine, to being Divine itself.



In Focus

23 May 2024 – Inauguration of Sai Swasthya Wellness Centre at Sri Sathya Sai Meenakshiniketanam, Dindigul, Tamil Nadu

Sri Madhusudan Sai inaugurated a new Sai Swasthya Wellness Centre at Sri Sathya Sai Meenakshiniketanam campus. This centre is a very unique one, as it has been arranged in a renovated shipping container, allowing for easy relocation, as the healthcare facilities are expected to expand in future.



Service and Spiritual Activities



“Service is the ultimate expression of Love”, says Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The Centres for Human Development of the Sai Global Federation of Foundations are the beacons of hope for the world with the twin goals of spreading the light of love and the joy of service.

Sai Global Federation of Foundations (SGFF) brings together an international community of organisations which share the common goal of alleviating human suffering, promoting environmental responsibility and creating new opportunities for those in need. It is a

non-religious, non-denominational, non-political group promoting harmony by serving humanity, transcending the barriers of gender, caste, creed, ethnicity, nationality and colour. All Foundations and Trusts under SGFF work independently, collectively and in collaboration by exerting efforts in a focussed and purposeful manner, creating significant impact, throughout the world.

Service activities conducted by volunteers of the different global foundations during the month of April 2024 have been covered under this section.

“Service is the ultimate expression of Love”

Region 1

Australia



Heart of Love Foundation, Australia



Nutrition

- Melbourne: About **200 meals** worth grocery items were provided to **160 families**
- Perth: **200 meals** were cooked and served to the homeless and refugees
- Murwillumbah: **80 grocery hampers** amounting to approximately **350 meals** were distributed to families



Educare

Restoring Health through Health Education

100 students coming from refugee and migrant backgrounds were imparted Health Education at the Intensive English Learning Centre at North Lake Senior Campus. **Healthy Lifestyle** and **Mental Health** were the topics covered.

Art to Heal

Art classes were conducted at a Women's Refuge Centre and this activity enlivened their spirits and brought smiles to their faces.



Region 1

Hong Kong



Feed Hong Kong



Nutrition

In the month of April 2024, **700 to 800 boxes** of meals were distributed on a weekly basis at several places in Hong Kong.



Indonesia



Yayasan Prema Sai Pooja (Prema Sai Pooja Foundation)



Nutrition

In the month of April 2024, **400 meals** were served to students at SDN 3 school in Sidan, Gianyar, Bali.

Region 1

Malaysia



Sai Ananda Foundation, Kuala Lumpur



Healthcare

On 27 April 2024, Sai Ananda Foundation along with the Rotary Club of Taman Melawati inaugurated an 'Isolation Room' equipped with two additional machines at the Sai Ananda Dialysis Centre.

Renal patients with severe infection may require an isolation room post their dialysis. This will help prevent the spread of infectious diseases amongst other patients.

It took about three months for the construction of the Isolation room which can accommodate about **36 patients** who can undergo dialysis treatment simultaneously.

Sai Ananda Dialysis Centre started with six machines and has now expanded to **12 machines**.



Region 1

Singapore

Nutrition

Youths of 1Youth Singapore supports Hao Ren Hao Shi in the distribution of provision items to needy families, by collaborating with Feng Shan Primary School. The staff and students of the school are involved in the activity of packing and distributing grocery items to needy families, every first Saturday of the month.

On the occasion of **Hari Raya (Eid Mubarak)**, close to **30 students and their school leaders** at Feng Shan Primary School participated in the activity of packing and distributing **1,000 goodie bags** to beneficiaries across the lower socio-economic regions of Singapore.



Specially, about 10 girls from Marymount Children's Home, where Value Formation Classes are conducted, participated in the Hao Ren Hao Shi grocery distribution in the month of April.

Educare

Value Formation Class at the Children's Home

Weekly values-based classes were conducted for the girls in Marymount Children's Home. The topic for the month of April was - 'Self-love and Emotions.' Discussions based on videos, case scenarios, and games facilitated active participation from children.



Region 2

India

23 May 2024 – Sri Madhusudan Sai visited Sri Sathya Sai Meenakshiniketanam at Dindigul, Tamil Nadu

Sri Madhusudan Sai welcomed the new batch of sixth graders at Sri Sathya Sai Meenakshiniketanam by being present with the little girls at their school in Tamil Nadu.

The students in turn welcomed their Founder by getting dressed in traditional folk-art costumes and carrying the mulaipari saplings. Students also performed the Tevaram songs, which are songs composed in praise of Lord Shiva in the language of Tamil, by the renowned Nayanmar, Thiru Jnana Sambandar.



Region 2

Middle East



Nutrition

In the month of April 2024, close to **8,928 meals** were served to the needy.

Sai Love Kits

480 Sai Love Kits containing items like wheat flour, rice, pulses, masala powders and other cleaning supplies were distributed to jobless families, meagre salaried workers, car washing boys and blue-collar workers.

The provision items in the kits were equivalent to preparing about **540 meals**.



Flood Relief

During the unprecedented rains in UAE in April 2024, which led to floods in many areas, families were incapacitated since they could not leave their homes, and several downtrodden people and their habitats were affected.

Indian People's Forum (IPF), which works to build peaceful, just and prosperous Indian community in UAE, and Sai Hrudayam came together to provide **300 kits of flood relief**, which contained provision items equivalent to preparing **900 meals** to several needy.

OMAD Seva

OMAD Seva served about 488 meals to the needy, most of whom were blue-collar workers. This included cooked meals, bananas, fruit juice and *laban* (packaged buttermilk).



Region 2

Middle East



Iftar Seva – March and April 2024

During the Ramadan season, **7,000 meals** were distributed to labourers and blue-collar workers during the months of March and April. Volunteers of Sai Hrudayam, along with members of All Kerala College Alumni Foundation (AKCAF) and the boys of Sri Sathya Sai University for Human Excellence participated in the service activity.

Medicare

Taking turns to help

A man who underwent a heart surgery at a Government hospital, but could not afford to pay for his monthly medicines, as he wasn't covered by an insurance, was helped by the volunteers.

The volunteers would provide for his medicines every month by taking turns.



Region 2

Nigeria

Spiritan Self Awareness Initiative

Joy Village Enugu, Nigeria



Healthcare

Aruike Speciality Hospitals at Enugu and Imo offered its free healthcare services to several needy individuals.



Healthcare Reach for April 2024

- Children: 631
- Adults: 1,159

Healthcare Services in April 2024

- New Admissions: 89
- Deliveries (SVD): 21
- Ophthalmology: 350
- Immunisation: 17

- Ultrasound Imaging: 21
- Family Planning: 3
- Surgeries (Appendectomy, Catheterisation, Circumcision, Cesarean, Herniorrhaphy, Oophorectomy, Lumpectomy, Myomectomy, Hydrocelectomy): 40
- Lab investigations: 2,779
- Antenatal Care: 198

Overview of Healthcare Services since inception

Out-patient Consultations: 133,313

Deliveries: 533



Region 2

Nigeria

Educare

The new school term commenced after holidays in April 2024.

EHV (Education in Human Values) workshop was conducted for TELA teachers

Students appeared for a kick-off test. As the term suggests, it is simply a way to kick start the new term by setting clear expectations, addressing the challenges of the previous term, and building the morale of students



Nutrition

Biarenu Breakfast programme serves children of two government schools at Ezeagu, which is a local government area of Enugu State.

Breakfast meals served in April 2024: 5,000

Total breakfast meals served until April 2024: 452,420

Sociocare

TELA Skills Acquisition Centre imparted some basic skills like sewing, computer repairs, application and servicing to students of TELA and other needy youth in the area to make them self-sufficient and feel self-worthy.



Region 2

Sri Lanka



Sri Sathya Sai Karuna
Nilayam Foundation



Healthcare

Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospital at Batticaloa, Sri Lanka celebrated a significant milestone with the completion of **1,000 free cardiac interventions** in May 2024.

1,000 interventions - in just 11 months - completely free of all costs

Since the inauguration of the Cath Lab on 01 June 2023, it has enabled the Cardiology Team of the Teaching Hospital Batticaloa to treat patients in their clinic with angiograms, including PCI – a procedure to open blocked coronary arteries, usually by fitting stents.



With the tireless support and dedicated staffing from Teaching Hospital Batticaloa, Faculty of Health Care Sciences, Eastern University, and Base Hospital Kalmunai North, among other stakeholders who have volunteered their workforce, resources, knowledge, and skills totally free of cost, the 1,000 cath interventions could be successfully provided to the beneficiaries by the Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospital.



Region 2

Sri Lanka



The joyous moment of having served 1,000 children was catalysed to heavenly delight when the second batch of three children with Congenital Heart Disease returned from the Sanjeevani Hospital of Mumbai on 10 May after successful paediatric cardiac surgeries that were performed on them during the month of April.

The three blessed children of Sri Lanka treated by the Sanjeevani Hospital Mumbai were:

- 1 year 10 months old Aharneesh Jasotharan
- 10-year-old Fathima Simfa
- 15-year-old Lishaniya Elayathamby

Overview of Healthcare Services since inception:

Out-patient Consultations: 40,867

Cath Lab Procedures: 944

Cardiac Surgeries: 14

Nutrition

Overview of meals provided since inception:

Meals Provided: 74,464



Region 3

Croatia



Zaklada Ananda (Ananda Trust Croatia)



Educare

- A workshop on the course ‘**Dynamic Parenting**’ offered by the ‘Institute of Human Values’ was attended by **five parents** (visit – iohv.org)
- A workshop on the course ‘**Mindful Teaching**’ offered by the Institute of Human Values’ was attended by **20 school teachers** (visit – iohv.org)
- A workshop on the theme ‘**Situational Leadership**’ was attended by **15 primary school teachers** at Samobor for the second time in a row
- A **teacher training workshop** on human values with focus on the **value of ‘Peace’** was conducted for **10 librarians**
- A **human values workshop** for general public on the topic of ‘Peace’ was conducted. A 2.5 hours session, which was conducted at Zagreb was attended by about **12 individuals**. A six hours session was conducted at Rijeka and it was attended by **13 individuals**



Region 3

Greece



‘**Ιδρυμα Μοιράζομαι**’
(*Foundation of Sharing*)

Nutrition

Orthodox Christian Easter was celebrated during the month of April by bringing joy and love in the hearts of many people.

Food items were packed into **320 boxes**, worth preparing **27,520 meals** and were distributed to the following seven institutions:

- 40 boxes at Tsougkraneion Soup Kitchen
- 50 boxes at Support Center for Children and Family
- 50 boxes at St. Panteleimon Church, Alimos
- 60 boxes at Zoodohos Pigi Church, Alimos
- 50 boxes at St Theodori Church, Anavyssos
- 20 boxes at St Demetrios Church, Psyrri
- 50 boxes at the Municipality of Karditsa

680 Easter brioches, which is a kind of traditional Greek sweet bread was distributed to the following institutions:

- 250 to the Municipality of Ellinikon
- 100 to the Tsougkraneion Soup Kitchen
- 150 to St Theodori Church, Palea Fokea Nursing Home and local families
- 30 to the St Alexander Girls’ Home
- 30 to the Association for the Protection of Minors of Piraeus
- 60 to the Support Center for Children and Family
- 60 to the St Panteleimon Church, Alimos



At ‘Elpida’ Children’s Oncology Unit, the Foundation offered **100 Easter candles** together with other decorative materials for children to decorate their candles

Like every month, the Greek devotees gathered together every Saturday to cook delicious vegetarian meals like spinach pies, green peas, au gratin potatoes, penne with cheese, sandwiches and salads, and distributed it to the following institutions:

- **214 meals** to St Alexander Girls Home
- **249 meals** to Association for the Protection of Minors of Piraeus
- **1,597 meals** to ‘Tsougkraneion’ soup kitchen

80 boxes of dry ration packages consisting of food items such as legumes, pasta, rice, milk, oil, cereals, snacks and other necessities like soap, washing powder were delivered to **80 needy families** at Anavyssos area in the South of Athens. These items can prepare approximately **1,840 meals**

1,200 portions of yogurt, 720 litres of milk and **40 kgs of feta cheese** were donated to the Old People’s Homes of Athens and Palea Fokea

70 pizzas were offered to the people with disabilities at EGNVA Foundation

35 pizzas were delivered to the children of St Andrew Children’s Home

Region 3

Poland

Misja Prema Association

In the month of April 2024, two families comprising of about eight members in total, were given grocery items for that month's usage.



Turkey

Karşılıksız Hizmet Vakfı (Selfless Seva Trust)



Nutrition

1,640 meals cooked with grains or pasta with legume, milk or yoghurt and bread were distributed door to door at Sisli, Pendik, Ömerli and other districts of Istanbul on a weekly basis during the month of April 2024.

Sociocare

- **330 animals** in need throughout several districts in Istanbul were provided with food, water and in some cases, with the necessary medical care
- **Two home rentals and 11 utility bills** were paid for needy families
- **Two medical students** were assisted with scholarship every month

Region 4

Argentina

Fundación Sai Prema de Salud, Educación y Valores Humanos (Sai Prema Foundation for Health, Education and Human Values)

Nutrition

In the month of April 2024:

A total of **1,720 meals** and **3,083 breakfasts** were provided to the needy in the following cities:

- Escobar City, Buenos Aires Province: **246 meals** and **496 breakfasts** were distributed in the following soup kitchens - La Amistad, Urbino, Encendiendo Lucecitas, Copa De Leche and Cazadores de Escobar. Food assistance was also provided to **three families**
- Buenos Aires City and Burzaco, Buenos Aires Province: Refugio Uguet Mondaca and three families were provided **209 meals** and **287 breakfasts**
- La Plata City, Buenos Aires Province: **1,025 meals** and **1,920 breakfasts** were distributed in the following soup kitchens - Somos su Esperanza, Los Gurises, Alma Corazón Crecer and Los Angelitos. Food assistance was provided to **three families**
- San Luis City, San Luis Province: **60 meals** were provided at the soup kitchen, Corazones Solidarios
- Oran, Salta Province: **180 meals** and **380 breakfasts** were distributed

Sociocare

- At Buenos Aires Province, volunteers distributed clothes to **20 people** and gave away school supplies and a cooking gas cylinder
- At La Plata City, Buenos Aires Province, volunteers distributed clothes to more than **100 people**, gave away **12 pairs of shoes** to needy children and adults. **Five homemade woolen blankets** and **school supplies** were distributed too
- At Orán, the Cóndores School of Football and Human Values educates **87 children** and **24 teenagers**



Region 4

Argentina

Spiritual Care

At Amor y Paz Centre for Human Development, the following activities were carried out in April 2024.

A tribute service was held in honour of Natty Petrosino, an Argentine woman regarded by Pope Francis as the Mother Teresa of Argentina. Natty, who was nominated for the Nobel Prize twice, passed away at the age of 83 three years ago. She had a profound impact on her community and beyond.

Natty's remarkable journey began when she experienced a clinical death during a medical procedure, during which time she claimed to have had a vision of Jesus Christ.



This experience led her to dedicate her life to serving others. She provided 7,500 daily meals to those in need in and around her city, and later extended her philanthropic efforts to the indigenous communities in the impoverished Argentine provinces.

Known as the 'Mother Teresa of Argentina', Natty, along with her family and close associates, continued to carry out the mission of compassion and service. Even after her passing, they have remained steadfast in their commitment to helping the less fortunate, serving as a beacon of hope and inspiration to many.

The other activities conducted during the month of April were:

- Yoga classes twice a week
- Meditation practice twice a week
- Monthly family constellation (a group therapy which helps to identify, understand and reconcile issues that led to breakdowns within the family)
- TaKeTiNa workshop (it connects music, education, entertainment, meditation and inner evolution to form a coherent and powerful experience with rhythm)
- Pranic healing workshop
- Enneagram workshop
- Mantra chanting by the Latin American Mantra Group on Wednesdays and Thursdays, and attended by participants from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Bolivia, Mexico and Spain
- Translation of the messages of Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai into Spanish



Region 4

Brazil

Amar e Servir Association (Love and Serve Association)

Nutrition

In the month of April 2024, **555 meals** were served to homeless individuals on the streets of Rio de Janeiro City.

Educare

'Meditation on Peace' sessions were conducted online twice during the month, wherein **14 members** participated

'Master the Mind' sessions were conducted with **35 members**

Sociocare

Meditation sessions for universal peace were conducted twice during the month of April 2024, in which **47 members** participated



Region 4

Canada

*Sai Global Service
Foundation of Canada*

Nutrition

Sai Global Service Foundation of Canada served **50 snack packets** to the needy living in the street tents of Edmonton. The snack packets contained bananas, oatmeal cookies and mango packet juices.



Region 4

United States of America

*Divine Will Foundation
Clarksdale, Mississippi*



Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Medical Centre
(Inaugurated in June 2019)

Healthcare



My Inner Journey

Mr Minay Lodhiya

Reflections on Work and Wisdom –
A journey with God towards God



Mr Minay Lodhiya is the Director of Strategic Financial Initiatives at the University of Melbourne where he provides leadership in business transformation, strategy and delivery of key initiatives. A father to a daughter, Mr Lodhiya is the Secretary and Director of Health in Kind Australia from its inception back in 2015 under Sri Madhusudan Sai's guidance, in which he contributes to a lot of service activities along with his wife and daughter. He is also the Director of Heart of Love Foundation Australia. He has been an active member of Sathya Sai Organisations since the year 2000.

My journey with Sathya Sai Baba began from my childhood days while I started attending Bal Vikas classes in Fiji. I am reflecting here on a few key moments of my life, which I would say stood out than the rest, and redirected the trajectory of my journey with Sai.

Our family moved to New Zealand in my later childhood years. As a teenager, my involvement in Sai activities had dwindled, limited to occasionally attending the youth meet or bhajans. However, as I was finishing University, I involved myself in Sai Youth activities full-fledged. It was during my initial years of professional life when I had my first experience of going to Puttaparthi, along with a realised Soul by name, Mata Betty. Mata Betty, through her wisdom, opened my eyes and heart to the reality, and guided me towards the truth, which is beyond what we see and feel in this world. That was when I started thinking and believing that we are much more than what we have been taught we are and what we grow up with.

Swami, in an interview, also reaffirmed this truth, pounding on His chest while reminding us to keep asking the question 'Who am I?' This was my first real redirection, my first motivation to strive to know the truth.

After this trip to Puttaparthi, my life continued at Melbourne, Australia and I was an active member of Sai youth and service activities. However, I was flowing with the mundane stream of life. I had a good professional life and everything was good and rosy.

The second redirection in my life came in December 2014, when Sadguru Sri Madhusudhan Sai came to Australia on His first trip. I, along with my wife and my 4-year-old daughter at that time, somehow found our way to His *satsang* for the three days that He was there. I recall saying to my wife, "I am not sure if there is anything to this trip, but let's go and find out. The worst-case scenario will be a nice trip with great souls, but if we do this together and if this turns out to be something big, then it will be good for the three of us to be on this journey together."

In an unexpected way, this short trip to Murwillumbah, where Sadguru came for the first time, turned out to be a life changing experience for us. For three days, we were soaked in Divine wisdom and pure love. What was even more profound is not what happened during the trip, but afterwards. On returning from the *satsang*, I could not let go off a strange craving to serve. It was not something I was even consciously thinking about, but I could not shake this feeling off from my heart. I didn't recall experiencing this kind of an inner calling ever before, though we were involved in service activities for a long time. This one was an entirely different feeling and I knew this feeling was not driven by me. I

realised that the experience we had for those three days with Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai was about to redirect our life.

Very soon after this trip, I was part of the core team of Australia, who got the ball rolling on setting up a health foundation which came to be known as 'Health in Kind Australia.' Following the setting up of 'Health in Kind', many other initiatives were started under the 'Heart of Love Foundation Australia', which our family took an active part in. These included free medical camps, free dental camps, and health education camps, food distribution, breakfast services and various other volunteer services in Melbourne and other parts of Australia.

When I look back, I realise that the destiny to come in touch with Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai was predetermined. I was reintroduced to my Sai brothers, whom I knew as a 13-year-old teenager in New Zealand. Not only that, the inspiration to attend a *satsang*, for the subtle phenomenon of Baba, through the instrumentation of Sri Madhusudan Sai, came naturally to us, because of Mata Betty's teachings about finding Divinity beyond physical forms.

This new direction in our lives helped me personally to reduce my desires and prioritise the needs of others. While the state of being completely desireless is still a bit far-fetched, I am sure this path of service and spirituality will slowly take us there by transforming us from within.

We continued to participate actively in the service projects and were part of the trips that were undertaken to the Ashram in Muddenahalli and also never missed to organise Sadguru's visits to Australia. My wife had an opportunity to travel to Kodai in 2018 as part of the health team. This was an experience she often talks about as redefining her understanding and experience of service, love, and devotion.

The next big chapter opened when we were involved in organising Sadguru's trip to various

States of Australia during the month of May 2019. We were going through this exercise for the first time, and we had to plan every single detail of the tour by holding discussions almost every night for several months. Our team members were spread across the country, yet we worked as a single unit to look after the different aspects of the trip like food, transport, accommodation, public events and invitations. This experience brought us together in brotherhood and friendship, and more than anything in keeping together and journeying together towards the common goal of God.

The most unforgettable part of the trip was the opportunity we had to host Sadguru at our home in Melbourne for two nights. I couldn't believe myself that it was really happening. Since my first trip to Puttaparthi, I had always wished that Swami should visit our home and stay with us, but was sweetly surprised to know that it was really actualising. We renovated our home for Sadguru's comfortable stay and when He entered the home, He remarked that it has been made new for His sake. I replied to Swami – "this is your house, Swami!", and He replied back sweetly – "this is our house."

Sadguru graced us with an interview, and lovingly provided guidance on parenting. Since we were three families with young children, good parenting was the topic Swami chose for us. He gave guidance to start 'Growing to be God' programme for children, which we did soon after, and ensured we conducted these classes over zoom during the pandemic as well.

From here on, our lives found a new meaning – spending it judiciously in God's work selflessly and fearlessly; and all the ambiguity we had about life's purpose and its journey was dispelled.

During the pandemic, the gems of wisdom that came through the 'Master the Mind' series and the '*kathopanishad*' talks not only helped us pass through the difficult times of the lockdown, but



My Inner Journey



also helped us get ready for our upcoming work in the future, in the spirit of 'One World One Family.'

Throughout the lockdown and afterwards, my work with Health in Kind and the Heart of Love Foundation continued without a break. I have been assisting in various key projects in Australia and abroad including the Fiji hospital. Playing a very small part in the Fiji Sanjeevani Hospital project, has opened my eyes to what can be possible.

What was amazing to see was the impact it was having on Aanavi, my daughter. She was inspired to raise awareness about the good work that was being carried out at the Fiji Hospital in saving the lives of little children completely free of all costs. For this sake, she started making keychains and selling them to give the proceeds towards the Hospital project. So many other kids were also inspired and they involved themselves in the making of keychains.

In October 2023, I had the opportunity to travel to Clarksdale, USA for the opening of the Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Medical centre. Once again, I saw what was possible by a determined team who diligently carried out the vision set by Sadguru, and what was possible when pure love combines with able hands, creating a ripple effect of good work.

The biggest learning for me is about how I surrender myself to keep serving consistently, knowing very well that I am not the doer, but Sadguru is. While my personal desires or habits may still distract me, I understand what Sadguru has been teaching us about who we really are. To realise ourselves is our journey and destination, but I just feel assured that it is possible to realise it.

What keeps inspiring me is how my fellow pilgrims are also always working towards this goal and have completely surrendered themselves for the greater good of the world, by constantly aligning themselves to achieve the goal of 'One World One Family.' Their love and dedication encourage me to keep doing more. I am also grateful to my family (both my parents and Alpa's parents, our brothers and their families) for their support and being together on this journey.

When I reflect on my interactions with Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai and what He has said to me or to us in an interview or in passing, for me it is often what is not said that has inspired me. It is often the feeling or the experience I am left with, either in the moment or a little later that has often guided me on my journey. Often His words have guided us in our work for welfare of humanity, but His presence has guided my heart. The experience is often of oneness, and this is the most treasurable experience.

Lessons for Life

What is the difference between 'grace' and 'blessing'?

Grace is there for everyone equally. Like the sun that shines for all, grace is available for all without any differentiation. The one who uses this grace is the one who is blessed. For those who sleep when the sun has risen, it is still night, and they will not benefit from the sun's light. Blessed are those who utilise grace to grow and develop their Divine nature. If it is not utilised, it is like rain that falls on a rock and gets wasted.

Only when rain falls on fertile soil that has been tilled, weeded, and sown with seeds, will it bring forth a good harvest. Similarly, man must tune himself to the abundance of grace that is available and strive towards self-improvement, so that he can experience the treasure of his own innate eternal bliss.



