

NATURE, A PATH TO ENLIGHTENMENT

PRAYER

3 Aums

REFLECTION

The purpose of life is to experience the sacredness of nature as a projection of the Divine.
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol.22/Ch.35, 28 October 1989

MAIN OBJECTIVES:

To explore the following questions:

1. What is Nature?
2. What is Enlightenment and how does Nature help us to achieve it?
3. What is our current relationship with Nature?
4. With Nature in a triple crisis, how do we, as Sai devotees help?

WHAT IS NATURE?

Discussion: What is nature? How did Nature originate?

The cosmos is the magnificent manifestation of the Divine. When you direct your vision on this vast creation you are filled with awe and wonder. True education consists in understanding the inner meaning of this creation. At first sight what we see are inert objects like mountains and hills. We cannot see any sign of chaitanya (consciousness) in these objects. The second category of objects are trees. There is consciousness in them, but they cannot move from place to place. They are stationary. The third category are living beings. Besides consciousness, these have the capacity of motion. Man belongs to the fourth category. He has not only fully developed consciousness, but has another extraordinary, marvellous quality. That is the supreme gift of Sambhashan (speech). Starting with the inert, we have the conscient, the mobile beings and the human species with the power of speech. If this progression in the creative process is tightly understood we can realise how important is the advent of man.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 21, Ch. 19, 12 July 1988

We have to endeavour to get at the truth about Nature. The Upanishads declared: "Isavasyam idham sarvam" (All this is permeated by the Divine). That means, there is only one thing that is immanent in the entire universe. If the truths declared by the Upanishads are to be understood, we have to seek the truth of everything in our daily lives. For instance, why has Nature come into being? Nature's role is to help man, the crowning achievement of the evolutionary process, to realise the Divinity immanent in creation. Mountains help man to build houses by using stone slabs, quarried from them. Trees provide the timber for constructing houses and also firewood for domestic use. Among animate beings, every creature, from an ant to an elephant, is of assistance to man in one way or another. Cows provide nourishing milk to man. Bullocks are useful for ploughing the fields and helping to grow food crops. All other creatures like birds, fish, sheep and others are serving man in different ways. Seen in this light it will be clear that all things in creation are helpful to man in leading his life. Even the sun and the moon

are serving man. The sages regarded the Sun as an important deity and worshipped him through the Gayatri mantra.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 21, Ch. 19, 12 July 1988

You should understand that Divinity pervades the entire nature. Lord Krishna declared in the Gita. Mamaivamsho Jeevaloke Jeevabhuta Sanathana (the eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being). I and you are not separate. We are one and the same. Once you understand this truth, you will not go in search of God here and there. All that you find in the external world is nothing but Viswa Virat Swarup (cosmic Divine form). All forms are His. Form is associated with Pravritti. It is the root cause of delusion. What is Maya? That which leads to mistaken identity is Maya. When you mistake a rope for a snake in the darkness, you are scared. But when you flash torchlight on it, you realise that it is a rope and not a snake. It is the mistaken identity that has given rise to fear in you. Once you know the reality, you become fearless. Due to the influence (Prabhava) of worldly objects, you have forgotten your Swabhava (true nature). Once you recognise your Swabhava and strictly adhere to it, there will be no scope for delusion or fear. Where is the question of fear when you are everything and there is nobody other than you?

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 21, Ch. 19, 12 July 1988

Nature is God's vesture. The Universe is the "university" for man. Man should treat nature with reverence. He has no right to talk of conquering nature or exploiting the forces of nature. He must proceed to visualise in nature its God.

Sathyam Sivam Sundaram, Vol. 4, p.55

To God all objects in the universe are alike because they are manifestations of the Divine. The scriptures declared about this Divine manifestation — Sarvam khalvidam Brahma (All this verily is Brahman). Hence, whosoever worships the Supreme Lord should also worship Nature (Prakriti). He should love and adore Nature because Nature is not different from the Supreme Self. Nature is the effect and God is the Cause.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 28, Ch. 8, 9 April 1995

What is Enlightenment and how does Nature help us achieve it?

Discuss: How do you feel when you're surrounded by nature versus when you're not in nature? Consider your interactions with the earth, the air, the sky, water, plants and animals.

The way to reach the ultimate and supreme goal of human life – namely, to realise our innate divinity and the divinity inherent in all creation. In His love for us, He has given us two key aphorisms: Unity is Divinity and Purity is Enlightenment. To attain unity and purity, He has also given four practical divine commandments – Love All; Serve All; and Help Ever; Hurt Never.

Cultivate the divine qualities of love, compassion, humility and reverence for all living beings, reverence towards the Earth and all the other elements. You can thus draw upon yourself the Grace of God and render your life beneficial and fruitful.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol.14/Ch.13, 22 November 1978

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Understand the principle of oneness and install God in your heart. Without the principle of unity, there can be no multiplicity. If you do not understand unity, you cannot understand the multiplicity of Nature. Nature is the best preacher. Follow the ideals demonstrated by this preacher with preeti (love). The more you develop love, the sooner you can see God. Body attachment is the cause of all differences. You will understand and experience unity in diversity only when you give up body attachment. Once you are free from body attachment, you can experience God in a moment. Whatever you see is the manifestation of God. The principle of unity in diversity is Divinity. But you are unable to understand and appreciate this truth. In order to understand this truth, there should be total transformation in your feelings. As is the colour of the glass, so is the colour of the scene outside. Remove the colour glasses of body attachment and see the reality.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 37/Ch. 20, 22 November 2004

Realisation that the entire universe is nothing but Brahman (God), which is the only Reality. When there is this realisation of Brahman, the one without a second—even the mind ceases to exist. It is only the operations of the mind that result in the perception of diversity in the universe. When oneness is experienced, there is no mind at all. All is Brahman in that state of consciousness. There is room only for prema (love) in this state. That love is truth.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 29/Ch. 31, 31 July 1996

Purity is Enlightenment

One, having conquered the senses and completely purified, realizes his Self as the Self in all beings.

Bhagavad Gita chapter 5:7

That by which one sees the one indestructible reality in all beings, undivided in the divided, know that knowledge as SATTVIC (Pure).

Bhagavad Gita chapter 18:20

Where there is unity, there shall be purity. Where there is purity, there is Divinity. You all have to lead your lives keeping in view these three aspects of unity, purity and Divinity. You should not remain unconcerned with others' difficulties and suffering. Treat their suffering as your own. The one God dwells in the hearts of all people. 'Iswarah sarvabhutanam.' God is immanent even in ants and mosquitoes. There should be compassion in your heart.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol.41/Ch.11, 20 July 2008

The most important quality is purity. Today everything is polluted. Water, air and all the five elements are polluted. As a result, the mind of man is also polluted. How is purity to be achieved? Fill your minds with thoughts of God, dedicate all your actions to God and consider God as the inner motivator.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol.26/Ch.36, 23 Nov 1993

Divinity is manifest in every living being. The same Atmic Principle (Atma Tatwa) is present not only in human beings but in every living being in the universe. But one has to have a pure and selfless heart to realise this truth. In order to realise this truth, you have to constantly contemplate on God. By doing so, your heart will become pure and peaceful. The moment you attain that stage, God will surely perceptibly manifest in you.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.38/Ch.24, 9 Oct 2005

What Spiritual Lessons do we learn from Nature?

Discussion:

What qualities do we observe in Nature that might assist us in our spiritual journey?

Does Nature teach us Quietude, Faith, Trust, Selflessness, Persistence, Perseverance, Sacrifice, Courage, Resilience, Adaptability, Right Action (Dharma), Resourcefulness?

You must cultivate a wide appreciation of Nature. You must shed your narrow outlook. Realise for instance, how small is the eye. But it is able to see the whole universe. Even your eye is teaching you a lesson. "What a fool are you? In spite of my minuscule smallness, I am able to see the whole universe with my wide vision. But your mind has a very narrow outlook." You must try to broaden your heart and enlarge your mind. You must dedicate your chittha (will) to the Divine.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 21, Ch. 19, 12 July 1988

All the resources of Nature like air are available to all irrespective of nationality or creed or race. This is the unity in diversity that has to be realised. Out of unity comes purity. All should seek to live as brothers and sisters. No one should criticise any nation, faith or culture. When you cultivate this broad outlook, your culture will be respected by others. It is this spirit of unity that the world needs today.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 28, Ch. 19, 11 July 1995

Nature is your school, your laboratory, the gateway to liberation, and the panorama of God's manifold majesty. Seek to know the lessons it is ready to teach; all things in Nature are as Brahman (Divine) as you are. So, any act is Divine, and any work is Divine worship; build the mansion of your life on the strong foundation of the faith that all this is Brahman (Divine).

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 10, Ch 23, 4 October 1970

You have to realise that Nature is a manifestation of God. Hence, Nature should not be ignored. Nature is the effect and God is the cause. You should recognise the immanence of the Divine in the entire cosmos.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol29, Ch 22, 20 June 1996

I shall tell you of one form of worship which will endow you with divine strength. Godhead expresses itself initially as the five elements — the sky, the wind, the fire, the water, and the earth. All creation is but a combination of two or more of these in varying proportions... Now, since these are saturated with the divine, one has to use them reverentially and with humility and gratefulness. So, efficient use of these is itself a form of worship. The body is equipped with mechanisms which ensure a steady degree of warmth, beyond which or beneath which man cannot be healthy and active. Nature is in essence Divinity itself, Ishavasyam idam sarvam: All this is divine. Vasudevassarvamidam: All this is Vasudeva, God. So, tread softly, move reverentially, utilise gratefully.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 6, Ch 28, 15 October 1966

Spiritual Role of Trees

Source: [Unity, Purity and Divinity in the Trees Around Us | Sri Sathya Sai International Organization](#)

Historically, trees played an important role in the spiritual beliefs of cultures around the world. In modern times, this spiritual view has largely been replaced by a more materialistic one. But this is

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changing as scientists show evidence of broader forest values and human awareness of Nature's spiritual dimension rises once again.

Consider Sri Sathya Sai Baba's sacred banyan tree at Prashanthi Nilayam, which He planted in 1959 to provide a special place for devotees to meditate. Similar to the banyan is the sacred Bodhi Tree under which the Buddha attained Enlightenment. In the Bhagavad Gita (15:1), Lord Krishna speaks of the banyan tree as representing the entire Cosmos. The tree has its roots above in God and its branches below in the quivering leaves, representing entanglement in the transient, material world. This tree reminds us to shift our attention from the world to God.

A similar analogy speaks of the Tree of Life as a lesson on how to live. The roots represent our foundation, which is strongest if we connect to the Divine as the source of happiness. The stronger this connection, the more stable we are. The trunk represents the physical/emotional body, which, when resting on a firm foundation, is not easily shaken by turmoil in the world. The crown represents our spirit of selfless giving to others, just as the tree provides its shade and fruits to all³.

Africans believe the baobab tree represents the Tree of Life. The ancient Druids of Ireland worshiped the oak tree and held spiritual ceremonies in sacred oak groves. In traditional Taoism, trees, especially peach trees, were not to be hurt, burned, or felled without essential reason. The Japanese practice *shinrin-yoku*, or 'forest bathing,' to receive the cleansing benefits of spending time in a forest. Their Shinto religion gives special reverence to pine trees in which the souls of gods are said to descend.

The Haudenosaunee of North America told leaders of the Western world in the 1970s that the ancient teachings are true – we are all connected and what we do to the Earth will come back to us. They explained in their "Basic Call to Consciousness" that our life exists with the tree life and our well-being depends on the well-being of the vegetable life⁴. Their call is especially relevant today as environmental impacts from human activities mount across the globe.

What is our current relationship with Nature?

Discuss:

How is Nature affected by our current behaviour?

What is motivating my behaviour?

Today, we are told that Nature is in crisis, carbon emissions are higher than ever recorded in history and we are in the throes of a 6th extinction with entire species of plants and animals disappearing at an alarming rate. Human life is also at risk as the planet's temperature continues to rise. We are told that the cause is human activity and that we must take urgent action to keep the planet from warming more than 1.5 degrees, by year 2030. The United Nations has declared this period, from 2021-2030, the Decade of Restoration. The steps we take now may help to prevent the calamitous events that Scientists predict – rising sea levels and changing weather patterns, disruption to our food supplies, drought and extreme weather events. These types of events are already happening in many parts of the world.

Today the world is losing its ecological balance, as man, out of utter selfishness, is robbing the mother Earth of her resources like coal, petroleum, iron, etc. As a result, we find earthquakes, floods and such other devastating natural calamities. Human life will find fulfilment only when ecological balance is maintained. Balance in human life and balance in nature, both are equally important.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.33/Ch.15, 25 September 2000

Unfortunately, today, as a consequence of scientific and technological progress, humanness has declined and man considers the world as only intended for his enjoyment. As a result, the powers of Nature are being used in a manner which poses a great threat to the world.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol.25/Ch.37, 22 November 1992

Love is your nature. Just as balance is very much essential for Nature, so also love is very much needed for man. Know that whatever God has created is for your own welfare. You should enjoy Nature according to your need. You should not rob Nature of its resources to satisfy your greed. Here is an example. Once a greedy person owned a duck, which used to lay a golden egg every day. One day, he ripped open the stomach of the duck thinking that he would get many golden eggs at a time. Today man also is indulging in such foolish and greedy acts. Instead of being satisfied with what Nature is giving him, he aspires for more and more, and in the process, creating imbalance in Nature.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 34, Chapter 3, 21 February 2001

Because of the advancement of technology and provision of excessive comforts, life has become mechanical, and spirituality has declined. Science fragments everything to pieces, whereas spirituality builds up unity in diversity. Today man is not making efforts to cultivate the feeling of oneness among humanity.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 26, Chapter 3, 21 January 1993

For example, the ozone layer in the atmosphere protects the people on Earth from the evil effects of solar radiation. Because of the advance of technology, several factories have sprung up, causing emission of harmful gases in the atmosphere. As a result, the ozone layer has become thinner, and if this goes on unchecked, it may have disastrous consequences... The actual cause for this situation is that more carbon dioxide is released into the atmosphere. Normally carbon dioxide is absorbed by plants and trees, which can assimilate the gas and supply oxygen by the natural process of photosynthesis. But, because there is deforestation to an alarming extent, the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has considerably increased. Therefore the remedy for this situation is intensive afforestation, growing more trees everywhere and protecting the existing trees without destroying them for other purposes. Thus the relationship of man, Nature, and God is very intimate, which scientists may not be able to realise.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 26, Chapter 3, 21 January 1993

WITH NATURE IN CRISIS, WHAT CAN WE, AS SAI DEVOTEES DO?

Discuss: What aspects of Swami's teachings can we apply to reduce our impact on Nature?

Swami gave us tools that can help turn the tide of this environmental crisis. The Five Human Values, the Principle of Ceiling on Desires, Namsmaran and Jyothi Meditation.

1. The 5 Human Values (Excerpts from Human Values for Mother Earth)

When our use of Nature is done with Truth, Right Conduct, Peace, Love, and Non-Violence Swami says, we can achieve harmony and balance of the five elements in Nature (Air, Water, Earth, Fire, and Space).

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Truth - The value of Truth is based on the omnipresence of God in the entire Universe as well as within us.

Understanding and practicing Truth helps us better care for each other and Mother Earth. When we live in Truth:

- We know that God exists as the unseen dynamic force or consciousness that sustains all of Nature and all beings.
- We sense the presence of God in Nature.
- We live our lives in such a way that we witness and experience the divine in all Creation, including within ourselves and all others as well as all matter.
- Knowing the omnipresence of God, we cannot cause harm to the Earth and its beings, nor to the waters, atmosphere, or soil.
- We spend time in Nature, not simply to enjoy the sights and sounds or to exercise, but as communion with its essence or Truth.
- We revere Mother Earth, pray to know Her better, and ask forgiveness for the harm we may have caused even unknowingly. This helps us realise the Truth of Nature, that we are all one and there is only Oneness in God.
- We bring our thoughts, words, and deeds into harmony. We walk our talk in an honest way.
- We not only think and speak about the importance of protecting the planet, we do so, even when others are not aware.
- We understand that Truth tells us it is within our power to transform ourselves—to realise the spiritual beings that we truly are—such that we focus less on material goods and more on spiritual goodness.

Right Action - All aspects of Nature have their own prescribed role, but human beings sometimes choose not to follow their prescribed duties. What does it mean to follow the moral path of Right Action for Mother Earth?

- We acknowledge and serve God by lovingly and selflessly serving others and Nature.
- We seek to know Nature as a manifestation of the Will of God by spending quiet, meditative time in natural places. We know that anything we do for Mother Earth we are doing for God.
- We live with a sense of justice, knowing that all beings, including animals and plants and our future generations, depend on Nature. We become aware of our duty and responsibilities as custodians of the Earth's goodness.
- We are careful in our use of resources so that others have enough, and we support charities that provide for those less fortunate, including humans and all beings.
- We listen to the voice of God within our heart (our conscience) and act with love, reverence, gratitude, and the strength to do good always.
- We work at doing the right thing at the right time. Given the trauma we have inflicted on Mother Earth, there is no better time to act on Her behalf than now.
- We place a ceiling on our desires, such that we limit our use of natural resources, we don't waste food, and we use the money and time we saved to help others.
- We remain aware of the impact our actions may have far from our sight and avoid harming the Earth's atmosphere and climate by reducing energy use and our carbon footprint. When

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we follow Right Action, we experience the joy of knowing we are helping, not harming, Mother Earth.

Peace - When we put Peace into action, we experience greater friendship, tranquility, harmony, equanimity and serenity. We keep greed, anger, and desire for possessions and material things in check and experience the peace and joy of pure consciousness. In such a state, we are in unity with Nature, the very embodiment of Peace. To cultivate the value of Peace in our interactions with Mother Earth,

- We foster peaceful qualities by spending time in Nature and learning the lessons of Peace that Nature teaches.
- We seek the peace and happiness that does not come from material wealth, comfort and excessive consumption.
- We serve as a model for living in Peace. In doing so, we help others to see the importance of seeking happiness within, rather than in worldly things. Such inner Peace helps us preserve Nature's bounty for essential needs.
- We recognise our unity with Nature and practice equanimity in the face of disturbances in the outside world.
- We show gratitude for all the gifts we receive from Nature. We demonstrate this through prayers that honour God and Nature as givers, and we as grateful recipients. We cleanse the atmosphere with good thoughts, prayer, devotional singing, mantras and meditation, which also promotes our inner balance in tune with Nature.
- We place a ceiling on our desires such that we do not waste Nature's gifts in the form of food, time, money, or energy.
- We are true to our duty to promote peace within the community of humanity and thereby in harmonious relationship with Mother Earth and all beings... and better able to serve them.
- We endure triumphs and tragedies with equanimity. In so doing, we are better prepared to help others in distress—especially those harmed by disasters arising from human actions that disrupt Nature's balance. Most of all, Peace teaches us to be happy with what we have and to calmly accept whatever difficulties come our way.

Love - The experience of Love fosters our understanding that all are One, meaning we are one with Nature, all beings, and Mother Earth. Love in action is experienced through unity, compassion, empathy, reverence and respect. When we act through Love for Mother Earth:

- We behave with full awareness of our oneness with all beings and Mother Earth. • We reflect God's love in our life through our love for Nature.
- We spend time in Nature to reconnect and acknowledge the interdependence and interconnectedness of everything.
- We feel Nature's abundant beauty and bounty and show our greatest respect and reverence.
- We are prompted to serve selflessly, not looking for the fruits of our action. We give to Mother Earth in gratitude for all She provides, unceasingly. This may be through dedicated prayers, offerings, and heartfelt appreciation for Her material gifts that are filled with divinity. We practice selflessness as the full expression of the Love we feel, ever ready to

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help, not hurt, and willing to sacrifice as needed. This includes prayers for the wellbeing of all those we cannot directly serve.

- We demonstrate our compassion for the suffering of others and, thus, do our best to avoid polluting or wasting resources, while embracing opportunities to relieve suffering (like improving habitat, picking up trash, or helping to rebuild after disasters).
- We connect easily with other beings and Nature because divine sweetness, Love, and peace flows from us in a way that we feel one with them. We establish heart-to-heart relationships.
- We trust that our needs will be met and avoid striving for and using more resources than we need.
- We allow the wisdom that wells up from our heart to inform our actions, such that we are ready to do what is most needed at any moment.

Non-Violence - Practicing Nonviolence, we inflict the least harm possible at all times, in all ways, and in all circumstances, and are selflessly drawn to relieving the suffering of all beings. Nonviolence is an essential virtue for those wanting to live in harmony with Mother Earth. We express Nonviolence best when,

- We live in awareness of our oneness and know that any harm we do to others is also harm to ourselves.
- We are aware of the suffering we may cause by using too much energy or water, or by polluting the soil, water, and air. We try our best to avoid such harm.
- We consume vegetarian foods that are grown organically.
- We make sure any animal products we use are from animals treated humanely.
- We live a simple, eco-friendly life as spiritual practice.
- We use household products that are produced from environmentally-friendly ingredients and are not polluting.
- We manage our landscape so that it provides opportunities for birds and other species to gain food, water, and shelter and avoids harming them.
- We demonstrate our inner strength by nonviolently opposing harm being done to others and supporting actions that help protect the environment.
- We listen for the call to relieve the suffering of any being and respond as best we can. This may take the form of direct help or it may be in the form of prayers such as “May all the beings in all the worlds be happy.”
- We are ready and able to work cooperatively with others in selfless service to improve the environment. This may include litter pickups, planting trees, growing organic gardens, creating natural respite places in the midst of urban areas, writing and disseminating information about environmental protection, and helping to ensure waste is recycled to the fullest extent possible.

Nonviolence really means that you should not cause harm to anyone through your vision, hearing, or talking. Buddha also said, ‘Nonviolence is the Supreme Right Action.’ ...We should interpret Nonviolence as not causing any harm to any individual by any means. (Summer Showers 1978)

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2. Ceiling on Desires

Do Not Waste Food

Do Not Waste Money

Do Not Waste Time

Do Not Waste Energy

Do Not Exploit Nature

Discuss: How does limiting the use of the Food, Money, Time, Energy and Nature's resources help the planet?

When man tampers with Nature recklessly, it reacts adversely and trouble arises. In order to protect Nature, man has to practise ceiling on desires. He should not trigger the negative aspect of Nature. Excerpts from Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 26, Chapter 3: The Predicament of Man Today.

God's creation is very sacred. Do not pollute it. How sacred are the five elements given by God!

But, today, the air we breathe, the food we eat, the water we drink, the sound we hear - everything is polluted. All these sacred elements have been made unsacred by humanity. That is why the world today is afflicted with so many diseases. That one is a true human being who makes sacred use of the five elements. Never waste natural resources.

A small incident happened some time ago. While conversing with Me in the interview room, Siva Sankar Sai, the warden of our senior boys hostel, said, "Swami, Your eyes have become red." I replied, "That is due to My own mistake. I do not waste water like you people. When you wash your face, you leave the tap open continuously. While you apply soap to your face, you waste a lot of water by leaving the tap open. But I do not do like that. I open the tap only when it is necessary and close it immediately. After applying soap to My face, I opened My eyes to open the tap. In the process, a small amount of soap entered My eyes and hence My eyes became red." I do not waste even a drop of water because water is God. Air is also a form of God. That is why I switch off the fan immediately when it is not required. Some people keep the light on throughout the night even if it is not required. But I switch on the light when it is necessary and at once switch it off when it is not needed.

This is not miserliness. I am not a miser. I am the embodiment of sacrifice. But I don't like to waste anything. Use everything as much as it is necessary. But people today are misusing the five elements.

Never Waste Money

There is another point I want to tell our students. Students today waste a lot of money. They should realise that their parents undergo a lot of hardship to earn money. They toil hard and sometimes even forego their food to save some money in order to send it to you. There may be some parents who are well-to-do; I am not talking about them. But parents who are not so well-to-do struggle hard to keep you happy and comfortable. So, consider each paisa that you receive from your parents like a drop of their blood.

Never waste money. If you waste money, it amounts to wasting the blood of your parents. Take as much money as is necessary. Do not be a spendthrift. But how much money students spend today! You should give some thought to the financial condition of your parents and your own future. Do not spend money as you please, just because parents have sent it to you.

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That is why I always emphasise the practice of ceiling on desires. Don't waste time. Time waste is life waste. Don't waste food. Food is God. Don't waste money. Misuse of money is evil. Don't waste energy. Energy is God. You see, hear, speak, smell, and perform all actions only due to the divine energy of God. Do not waste your divine energy by misusing your senses. If you put this divine energy to sacred use, you can attain the sacredness of Divinity. But if you waste this energy, you will be a victim of many diseases.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 29, Ch. 69, 18 July 1996

When you reduce your desires, you advance towards the state of renunciation. You have many desires. What do you get out of them? You are bound to face the consequences when you claim something as yours. When you claim a piece of land as yours, then you will have to reap the harvest. This instinct of ego and attachment will put you to suffering. You will be blissful the moment you give up ego and attachment.

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 32, Part 1, Chapter 6: Put a Ceiling on Your Desires.

3. Namsmaran

"Recognising the five elements as God's gifts, their sanctity must be preserved. They must be made use of in a proper and befitting manner. Why do you sing bhajans (devotional songs)? Enquire deeply into the meaning of this practice. Bhajan singing provides an opportunity to chant the Lord's name in a sweet and pleasant manner. The vibrations associated with the divine Name then suffuse into the atmosphere and cleanse it; the pollution present is wiped out." - Summer Showers 2000, Ch.2, 15 May 2000

4. Jyoti Meditation

Meditation is meant to acquire purity of the spiritual heart, for, without attaining purity of the heart, the seat of awareness, God cannot be realised. The moment you attain purity of the heart, the omnipresent God will manifest right in front of you.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.38/Ch.24: 9 Oct 2005

God is the Creator. He created everything in the Cosmos. But He did not retain within His hands the responsibilities relating to the Creation. He gave to human beings all capacities. But He laid down a condition relating to the use of these capacities. Men are free to live as they like. They can utilise all the material objects in creation. There can be no objection to this from anyone, not even from God. But, the Divine has declared that there is no escape from the consequences of one's action. This has to be properly understood.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol.25/Ch.14, 22 May 1992

Swami says, The cultivation of social consciousness is very important. Man cannot live in isolation like a drop of oil in water. He is a product of society. He has to live in it, grow with it and work for it. One must join others in common tasks and contribute one's strength and skill to the common pool. A single thin string cannot bind even an ant, but hundreds of them twisted into a rope can hold back an elephant. This is the effect of united effort. It is a desirable trait to work for a common cause with others in cooperation.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. 9/Ch.34

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Let us come together collectively and intensify our prayer and love for the well-being of Mother Nature and the whole universe. Samastha Sukhina Sukhino Bhavantu (May all the Beings in all the Worlds be Happy!) You go millions of miles into space, but you don't go half-an-inch within, where lies your strength, the Atma Shakti (force or power of the Universal Soul)

CLOSE WITH MEDITATION

[GGC-Study-Circle-Guide.pdf \(sathyasai.org\)](#)

A visualisation: Start with complete silence, sit comfortably and relax, breathing naturally.

Close your eyes and visualise the divine presence within you. Feel the energy from the Divine course through you with every beat of your heart. Feel the rhythm of this energy, let it infuse through your veins to every cell.

Expand your inner vision to the people around, visualise that within each of them is this same Divine Principle. Focus on this for a moment. Continue to expand your visualisation to include plants, trees, tiny insects, birds, reptiles, mammals etc. Imagine all of these beings continuing with their daily duties-collecting nectar, building nests, producing oxygen...within each of these beings resides the very same Divinity. Take a few moments to look around in your visualisation and see the divinity in each being, feel God's presence everywhere.

Now imagine a gentle breeze blowing across your skin, rays of sunshine on your face, fresh cool air entering your body. Realise that these too are the manifestations of the Divine.

Imagine that every plant, rock and animal is made up of billions of atoms. Each atom is filled with the very same Divinity.

Take a few minutes to visualise divinity permeating the entire universe, from the biggest to the tiniest level.

Maintain the silence for a further minute. When you are ready, slowly open your eyes.

SARVE VAI SUKHINO SANTU X 3