

UNITY

What is Unity?

The Basis for Unity All beings are subject to moha or attachment but man is capable of breaking away and attaining moksha or liberation. This capacity for the transition from moha to moksha is once again an expression of the divine force within. Although divine capability finds greater expression in man than in other beings, Divinity is actually latent in all things in the Universe. It is this Omnipresence that provides a powerful undercurrent of unity to the otherwise apparent and bewildering diversity. What the eyes see is superficial; that which is true lies beneath.

See the world with the vision of truth. All are one; all are essentially Divine. The Vedanta declares that the Atmic principle is the underlying unity in diversity. Bulbs are many but the same current flows in all of them. Likewise, the Atmic principle exists in all. Man's inability to understand this principle of unity is the cause of his ignorance. True humanness lies in understanding unity in multiplicity. You have to develop samyak drishti (correct vision) in order to develop unity. This was Buddha's first teaching.

Unity is not Combination, it is a Realisation What does unity mean? It is not the combination of many; it is the realisation of oneness. When you have mirrors all around you, you see your many forms. These are all your different forms. But this is not the truth. The one who asks the question and the one who gives the reply, both are one and the same. All are one. The same person appears in many forms. To consider these forms as different from each other is a mistake.

This vast gathering of people will appear to the spiritual intellect as a garland of multi-coloured flowers strung on the one single thread, God. Develop this vision; see the One behind the many; see the Brahmasutra — the string that runs through each flower.

When I am speaking in the microphone, you are listening to My voice. The speaker is only one but the same voice is heard by many ears. Ekoham sarva bhutanam (I am the only Reality in all beings), Ekam Sat Viprah Bahuda Vadanti

The Vedas declare, Aham Brahmasmi (I am Brahman) and Tat Twam Asi (That Thou Art). Even these two Vedic declarations state two things: I and Brahman,

That and Thou. True wisdom lies in seeing oneness. Advaita darshanam jnanam (experience of nondualism is true wisdom). It is a sign of ignorance to see duality ignoring the underlying unity. Duality is not the truth. In this manner, Buddha enquired deeply and ultimately got the experience of "I am I"

Why Is Unity Important?

To Remove Disorder and Conflict from the World In the world today we see disorder, violence and conflict. The world is like a sick man afflicted with many ailments. What is the cure for these ills? Man must shed his selfishness, greed and other bad qualities and rise above his animal nature. He must cultivate charity (unselfishness) to achieve purity. Through purity of hearts, men will achieve unity, which will lead to Divinity. The mansion of human life should be built on these four bases.

The strife and conflicts between human beings started the moment humanity forgot its fundamental unity. It is time that this trend is reversed and that the fundamental unity among humans is re-established. Along with the unity, there should be purity. Where unity and purity go together, there is Divinity. The combination of unity, purity, and Divinity will result in realisation of the Atma Principle (Atma Tatwa). The Upanishads, especially the Taitiriya Upanishad, dealt at length with this Atma Principle. If only one develops faith in this Atma Principle, one will succeed in all his endeavours.

There is unity in the entire creation of God, but mankind causes many divisions in it. Unity of the entire mankind is the need of the hour. Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.41/Ch.8: 31 May 2008 <http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume41/ss41-08.pdf> To Remove Evil Thoughts from Within Us Through sacrifice you will come to know that your real nature is charity. Charity does not mean that you have given some money to an individual or an organisation. The removal of all of the evil thoughts that are within you is true charity. Charity will, in turn confer purity upon you. Once you have purity, there will be unity. And once you have unity, you can reach Divinity.

To Expand Our Love There is love in every one of you. What is the form of love? What is the nature of love? When we analyse carefully, we will realise that love is not limited to human beings alone but is present in all living beings. Every being is endowed with the quality of supreme divine love. One has to give up enmity and cultivate unity and purity in order to understand this truth.

Everything in this world is bound to change except the principle of love. Love is the only true and eternal path which will lead you to

Divinity. Divinity pervades each and every limb of the human body. It can be visualised only when we understand the principle of oneness.

I always speak about the principle of love. I do not know anything other than love. When Divinity is uniformly present in all, how can you share your love with some and deny it to others?

To Follow True Culture In order to attain Divinity, first of all, man has to cultivate unity. In unity lies the true culture. Unity is the ideal that man should strive to attain. Any mighty task can be accomplished through unity.

To Live Up to Being a Human Being Man is enveloped by five koshas or sheaths. They are: annamaya kosha (food sheath), pranamaya kosha (life sheath), manomaya kosha (mind sheath), vijnanamaya kosha (sheath of wisdom), and anandamaya kosha (sheath of Bliss). Whereas other beings can at best reach out to three koshas, man can easily go to the fourth and even beyond, if he makes the effort. This is what makes man so superior. It is through wisdom that man can perceive the underlying unity between the individual Self and the Universal Self. If this capability is not an expression of the Divinity within, then what else is it?

To Attain Bliss Ego and pomp have become rampant today. Desires have become limitless. Man's heart is filled with selfishness, and compassion has no place in it. That is the reason why he is unable to have the vision of the Atma and experience bliss.

You can never attain bliss if you do not give up the feeling of diversity and cultivate the spirit of unity.

To Transform Our Conscience into Consciousness Man has a name and form, but chaitanya (Awareness) has no form. The chaitanya that is present in the human body is called "conscience". The all-pervasive chaitanya is called "consciousness". When the individual understands the principle of unity in diversity, the "conscience" gets transformed into "consciousness"

To Experience Advaita (Non-Dualism) Shankara knew that non-dualism requires intense spiritual effort of will to remove all trace of ego and all idea of duality from the mind of the human being. So, as a preparatory discipline to the dawn of the awareness of one's real unity with the substance of the

universe, he taught the rules of yoga (the practices which lead to union with God, devotion and karma (selfless action). These, according to him, will brighten the intellect, cleanse the emotions, and purify the heart. Non-dualism is the awareness of the Divine in everything, everywhere, and in full measure.

Fine Tuning Our Spiritual Practices Spiritual practices such as japa (repetition of the name of God) and tapa (austerity) will not yield the desired result unless you recognise the principle of unity. Many people count the beads of the rosary. But what is the use of rotating the rosary if the mind also keeps going round the world? Understand that the mind is most important. You should have a steady mind. Only then will your life be redeemed. What is the use if your mind hovers around on each and every object like flies which hover on dirt as well as laddus? Do not allow your mind to vacillate between good and bad, unity and multiplicity. Focus it on all that is good and realise the principle of unity. That is the royal road which will lead you to the experience of truth. On the other hand, if you allow your mind to follow the crooked path, it will not lead you anywhere.

All of you should imbibe the spirit of unity. Whomsoever you come across, say, "He is my brother, she is my sister." In this way, consider all as your brothers and sisters and conduct yourself with unity. All are children of God. Therefore, if at any time feelings of hatred develop between you and others, remind yourself that you are not separate from them. Consider that all are one, attain unity, and experience its bliss. Seeing unity in diversity is Divinity and true spirituality. Study of scriptures, performing rituals, doing worship, etc. do not signify true spirituality. Recognising the unity of the Atmic principle is true spirituality. When you realise this unity, you will earn divine grace.

Firming Up Our Faith Selfishness will not go as long as man identifies himself with the body and does not realise the Divinity in him. Diversity in creation is an obvious fact. No two human beings, not even twins, are identical. But diversity should not lead to differences and conflicts. We must learn to see the unity that underlies the diversity. This unity is based on the Divinity that is present in everything in the universe. The realisation of this unity can come, only through firm faith in God.

Serving with the True Spirit You can get real urge and inspiration to serve others only when you get rid of the identification with the body. When a man suffers from acute stomach pain, his eyes water. Why? Because, the various organs like eye, stomach, etc. are all of the same body. So too, when one man

suffers, your eyes must shed tears and you must be urged to alleviate it. This will happen if you know that you and he are limbs of the self-same Divine Body. The idea of difference (bheda bhava), arises on account of the ignorance of the Truth. When people get angry, they gnash their teeth, but they take care not to bite the tongue, for the tongue is theirs; if by chance, the tongue is bit, they do not knock the teeth out, for the teeth is theirs. So too, the sick man, the poor man, the suffering man, the illiterate man, the wicked man, are all limbs of the same body, of which we too are parts. The same current activates all. To realise this and to merge in that Unity is the purpose of this life in the human body.

You must feel the pain of others as your own; you must be happy when others are happy. That is the way to realise the unity of all. Above all, be vigilant; for, the fruits of sadhana (spiritual practice) may be destroyed by negligence. When the rains come, the earth is again green, for the seeds of grass are underground, though you thought the land was dry and fallow. Satsang, satkarma, etc. (good company, good deeds) have to be kept up, all through life.

Fostering Expansive Love Let your vision be suffused with love. Vision filled with love is the hallmark of a true human being. All are one, be alike to everyone. You can understand unity in diversity only when you develop sacred vision. Samyak drishti (correct vision — seeing things as they really are) makes you realise the presence of Divinity in all.

Love all beings—that is enough. Love with no expectation of return. Love for the sake of love. Love because your very nature is love. Love because that is the form of worship you know and like. When others are happy, be happy likewise. When others are in misery, try to alleviate their lot to the best of your ability. Practise love through seva (selfless service). By this means, you will realise unity and get rid of the ego that harms

You are always chanting, “Sai Ram, Sai Ram, Sai Ram,” but this alone will not develop devotion in you. You should imbibe the spirit of unity and chant the divine name to develop true devotion. If you have even a trace of true devotion in you, do good to others and live in harmony with them. Do not hate anyone. Love all. If you have love and faith, you will develop nonviolence. Only then can you experience bliss.

You claim that you are a devotee, but what is the use when you have hatred, anger, jealousy, hypocrisy, malice, etc. in you? These evil qualities will ruin your life. Talk smilingly to others and develop the spirit of unity. Always love all. When you love everyone in this manner, all evil qualities like hatred, anger, and greed will leave you. When you become free from these evil qualities, you will attain liberation easily.

Live without hating others, condemning others, and seeking faults in others. Vyasa, who wrote eighteen voluminous Puranas summarised all the Puranas in one single line of a small couplet: "Doing good to others is the only meritorious act; doing evil is the most heinous sin". When you feel you cannot do good, at least desist from doing evil. That itself is meritorious service! Do not try to discover differences; discover unity. Creeds, castes, country of origin may differ but the inner hunger is the same for all men. Understand that the purpose of life is to know the Embodiment of love, namely, God, through love, and demonstrate through your own Love that you have known Him. Another directive I give is: Be more concerned with your own progress, your own correction than with the good and evil of others. There is time enough to worry about the good of others, after you have become good, yourself. But, try as far as you can, to give Ananda (happiness) to others; desist from causing pain to others.

Unity at the Individual Level

Unity of Thought, Word and Deed Heaven and hell are dependent on the conduct of people. The body is a home wherein reside three entities called manas (mind), vak (speech) and limbs (organs of action).

The harmony between thoughts, words and deeds is the first step in spiritual growth. The generation, expression and efflorescence of humanitarianism depends on the proper integration of thought, speech and action. It is the greatest virtue. Lack of correlation between ideas, utterances and actions leads to self-deception, hypocrisy, and spiritual bankruptcy. In other words, the rapport between mental and physical activities is an essential ingredient of spiritual training.\

Unity of thoughts, words, and actions is the hallmark of humanness.

In Vedantic parlance, this unity was described as Trikarana Shuddhi (triple purity). 'Manasyekam, vachasyekam, karmanyekam mahatmanam' (Those

whose mind, words and deeds are in complete accord are noble souls).
'Manasanyat, vachasanyat, karmanyanyat duratmanam' (The wicked are those whose thoughts deviate from their words and actions).

When one's words are in accord with one's thoughts, they become truth. When the spoken word is translated into action, it becomes dharma (right action).

We say, "The proper study of mankind is man." Head, heart and hands should co-operate and function in harmony. This is 3HV. There is no human value greater than this.

Synergising Thinking, Speaking and Acting What you think, you should speak; what you speak, you must put into practice. That is real humanness. It is Trikarana Shuddhi (triple purity).

How are you to decide in any particular case what is dharma and what is not? Make the manas, the vak and the kayam (thought, word and deed) agree in harmony. That is to say, act as you speak, speak as you feel.

The thoughts that emanate from the Indwelling Spirit (conscience) should find expression in speech. If the inner feelings are different from what is spoken, can the words be treated as truth or untruth? Clearly, it is untruth. When one's action is not in accordance with his words, it is adharma (unrighteous action). Truth and right action are expressions of the promptings from the depths of one's conscience.

Do not lay false to your own conscience. Do not cover your thoughts in a cloak of falsehood. Do not suppress your conscience by forcibly enslaving it and embarking on actions not approved by it. That is the dharmic way of life.

Frequently doing right makes it easier and easier, habit grows into conscience. Once you are established in right conduct, you will automatically follow the right. What you do depends on what you are; what you are depends on what you do. The two are interdependent to a great degree.

How can one who is too weak to control himself be able to control others? There must be unity in word and deed. Only then can one achieve great things. Love is very important. There should be love in your thought, word, and deed.

Unity in the Family

The Connection between the Family and the World A family is the most important functional unit in the world. If the family is running on sound lines, the world will also run smoothly. If the unity among family members suffers even to a small extent, the world will face the repercussions. Unity gives strength to the lives of the family members. Therefore, every family should strive for achieving unity and harmonious relationship among its members.

Peace must begin in the family, in the home. When there is understanding and harmony in the family, peace will spread to the community and from there to the nation and the world. Hence unity is the primary need today. Unity confers joy and peace.

Understanding and Adjustment Understanding and adjustment between each other are very essential for the smooth functioning of any family. For example, when there is proper understanding between wife and husband, the wife will not mind even when the husband returns home very late from office. In fact, she will be anxiously waiting for him thinking that he may be busy in the office or is held up in a traffic jam. But if there is no proper understanding between the two, even if there is a delay of just five minutes, there will be a fight between them. Adjusting will become easy only when there is proper understanding. Whether it is among students, teachers or members of a family, understanding is very essential.

Regard yourselves as brothers in a family. But do not stop there. Go beyond kinship to the Atmic unity... Shed completely all selfishness and self-interest and enter into service activities as the highest purpose of life. Service must become your life-breath. You must become ideal sevaks (servants) and set an example to the world.

Unity in the Sathya Sai Organisation

Sai Organisations' Foremost Duty The foremost duty of the Sathya Sai Organisations is to promote unity on the basis that all are sparks of the Divine and constitute one family. Without realising this basic truth, there is no use in rendering any kind of service. There can be no sacredness in service, if good thoughts and good feelings are absent. Service as an act of dharma can be offered only by one who is pure in heart, selfless and equal-minded towards everyone.

The Organisation must help people to realise the Unity behind all this apparent multiplicity which is only a super-imposition by the human mind on the One that is all this.

In the Sai Organisations, the primary requisite is unity and mutual trust. Only with unity can you promote the well-being of the world. If there is discord within the Organisation, how can you serve others? Make forbearance your ornament. Through love, eliminate your bad traits.

The sole object of Sathya Sai Seva Samitis (Sathya Sai centres), the very breath on which they thrive, is the consciousness of unity, of all as One. But the politics of proliferation attacks the Samitis (centres) too and ten men develop into eleven institutions. As in politics, here too, faction, competition, clamour for power and authority, greed for office raise their heads. People are not able to resist the infection of the atmosphere of elections and parties. Such tactics and tendencies will not fit in with associations of aspirants towards the goal of spiritual unity.

The units of the Sai Organisation have to exemplify and promote the Unity in Diversity as taught by Sanatana Dharma. The very purpose with which the Organisation was formed is to stress on this Unity. In this gathering, people from many countries, speaking many languages, belonging to many races, are present. They are all single-mindedly united in love for Sai and in love from Sai, in spite of differences in nationality, race, creed, colour and dress. This is My real task. This is the consummation of the yearnings of the ancient seers and sages of this land. Develop this One

ness, this Unity in love, hold it ever before you as the ideal.

Only when five fingers of the hand come together can any task be accomplished. One may be the President of the Organisation. That does not mean that one can act according to one's whims and fancies. Everyone is a member of the universal family. Similarly, all are great, be it the president, secretary, coordinator, or a member. But, to make the work successful, all should unite. All the wings of the Organisation — samithi (Sai Centres), sevadal (Service Wing), bal vikas (Education Wing), etc.— should work in harmony. Consider different wings as the fingers of the same hand and work unitedly. So, unity is very essential. You feel the stress and strain when you walk or work alone; not so when you are in a group. Let us all grow together, enjoy together,

Let us perform heroic deeds by working together, Let us live without any conflict.

[Selfless Service Service without idea of self is the very first step in the spiritual progress of man. For, it trains you to transcend all the distinctions artificially imposed by history and geography and realise that the human community is one and indivisible. Learn this truth; experience it in action. That is the duty of the Seva Dal Organisation (Service Wing). How can a person be held 'divine' (as every man truly is), unless he has established himself in the sense of this Unity and shaped all his actions thereby? Man has been brought forth so that he may enjoy his heritage, namely, the Bliss that comes of the realisation of the One. Any activity solely intended for the individual is, on that very account, barren.

The Sai Organisations should function on the basis that the indwelling Spirit in everyone is the same Atma.

Spirituality is not a business activity. Spirituality is a divine mansion. It is associated with unity. This unity in diversity alone will bring you happiness. I wish that you cultivate that principle of unity. It is only then that the service undertaken by you will acquire value and sanctity. There is no use polluting the sacred service activity with all sorts of differences.

An act dedicated as an offering to the God resident in all becomes as sacred as the highest seva (selfless service). Devote yourselves to this seva. Avatars (divine incarnations) of God are engaged in seva; that is why Avatars happen. Hence, when you offer seva to mankind, the Avatar will naturally be pleased and you can win grace. This is a great chance you have as members of the Sathya Sai Seva Dal. I hope you will make the best use of this chance. I bless you that you may.

Only those who can pour out compassion to fellowmen can claim a place in the Grace of God. This is also the highest spiritual discipline; it impresses on you the unity of the human community and the glory of God's immanence. May this discipline which the Seva Dal (Service Wing) has taken up with genuine delight spread all over

this country, and may the land be happy and prosperous. May the world have peace and happiness, and loving trust. That is My blessing. I want you to pray for the welfare and prosperity of all mankind.

Not Money, Morality is Important People dodge the main issue of limiting their desires and instead, donate some token amount for the activities taken up by Sathya Sai Organisations. Money was never desired by Sathya Sai Organisations. The main agenda of our Organisation is to ensure that people stand as ideals for others to emulate. We should change our mindset gradually to be able to achieve this. Sathya Sai Organisations should work for this with unity without any discriminations of caste, creed or nationality. Sathya Sai

Following the Example of Sai Lack of unity can lead a country, community, or society to fragmentation. So, we should first and foremost achieve unity. Members of Sai Organisations should consider unity as their very life breath. They should not differentiate between people on the basis of caste, creed and nationality. Follow the example of Sai! When Sai Himself treats everyone equally, why not you? Never give scope for any differences. True independence lies in fostering unity. Therefore, to develop sacred divine human values, you should have unity first. Keep in view the prestige and honour of Sathya Sai Organisations. Whatever you do, be it good or bad, will reflect on Sathya Sai. To keep up the dignity of Sathya Sai, act in a truthful way. There should not be any differences or in fights among the members of the Organisation. Resolve all conflicts through love and understanding. Love is God; live in love.

Three Salient Qualities What should be the characteristics of persons in the Sai Organisation? Their hearts should be cool like the moon. Their minds should be pure like butter. Their speech should be sweet like honey. It is only when you have these qualities, will you be a worthy member of the Organisation. When these three are present, there will be Divinity.

No Politics Do not infect these Associations of Aspirants for My Grace with the virus of rivalry and factions.

Your activities should not be on the lines of political activities. By associating with various types of people, this turns into a political activity. I am not happy with that. Do come together for bhajans wherever you are. But do not allow separatism. All should be united.

Do not import into the Sathya Sai Organisation political faction-mongering, group formation, scandal spreading and vote catching in order to win positions of authority or oust others from them. Do not create splits and parties among

the devotees in order to establish yourselves over others. Even when you are slandered, you should not lose balance. Put up with slander and scandalising talk. Anger is the chief enemy of sadhana (spiritual practice) as Vishwamitra discovered. One attack of anger exhausts three months of health and efficiency.

Acquire Love through Love Acquire love through love. Only through love can unity in diversity be experienced. This kind of unity through love can be witnessed only in Prasanthi Nilayam and nowhere else.

Scatter the seeds of Love in dreary desert hearts; then, sprouts of Love will make the wastes green with joy, blossoms of Love will make the air fragrant, rivers of Love will murmur along the valleys and every bird, beast and child will sing the song of Love. Now, we have Seva Dals (Service Organisations) only in some villages and towns. We must have them in all villages and all towns, so that the service of man by man can lead to the discovery by man of the God that is his reality.

Differences should not divide us. Members of the Sai Organisation should foster such unity. Let there not be any conflicts. Live like children of the same family. Get a good name, so that there is no other organisation comparable to the Sai Organisation in the world. Develop love and work unitedly. Sathya Sai