

Sai Blossoms

Sai Spiritual Education Quarterly e-Magazine
North Central Region, USA



First Quarter, 2017

Editorial

We offer the new blossom of SAI BLOSSOMS at the Lotus Feet of dearest Bhagavan.



Within, you will find some exciting stories, poems, articles, digital artwork, videos, humor, and a puzzle.

Sai Blossoms staff is requesting you to take time to drop a comment on any piece of your choice. Feedback is not only necessary for contributors to hear back from readers, but also to allow Sai Blossoms editorial staff to develop a good understanding of what the readers like and what improvements are needed, if any. Unfortunately, Sai Blossoms has been receiving little feedback; sporadically we hear, “The magazine and all articles are outstanding”. While that’s great feedback for the staff and all contributors collectively, it’s not what a specific contributor seeks.

An exciting and creative scheme to give feedback is as follows. Please take the first letter of your first name and give a comment on what appears on the page number corresponding to the alphabet position of that letter. And, if that first letter is U-Z, then please comment on Page 1-6, respectively. For example, if your first name is “Indra”, please comment on what’s on Page 9 of this issue, since “I” is the 9th letter of the alphabet. You may very well choose another article to comment. Thanks for taking time for that!

Additionally, please note that we have a new non-permanent feature called [Mind and Spirit](#). “Non-permanent” here simply means that it may not appear in every issue. The life as a Sai devotee is (or, ought to be) about transformation. And, we know that transformation begins from mind and spirit. In this feature, you can expect associated practical matters and relevant and interesting facts.

Thanks for your feedback as requested above! Jai Sai Ram.



RAJ PRAKASH (Editor)

SHAILY FOZDAR (Student Editor)

SARANYA NISTALA (Student Editor)





WHO IS SAI

*Many attributes and descriptions
of our Beloved Bhagavan*

Indweller of all hearts @ Spiritual Master Love in action Aum
 Pure Love Selfless Bhagawan Divine Sathya Omnipresent The Protector Embodiment of purity An inspiration A
 Forgiving Spiritual Master An embodiment of dharma Divine Mother Love in action Pure Love Selfless Compassionate Divine Gentle Omniscient
 Gracious Your best friend Sachchidananda An inspiration @ Spiritual Master An embodiment of dharma Divine Mother Prema
 Omnipresent in action Pure Love Selfless Compassionate Divine Forgiving Omnipresent Your best friend The Supreme Lord Omnipotent
 Kaliyuga Avatar An inspiration A Spiritual Master An embodiment of dharma All-knowing Love in action Pure Love Selfless Compassionate Forgiving
 God Incarnate Son of Easwaramma Forgiving Compassionate be friend The Supreme Lord An inspiration A Spiritual Master Heavenly Father
 Bhagawan An embodiment of dharma Divine Mother Love in action Pure Love Selfless Compassionate Divine Forgiving Omnipresent Divine
 Sachchidananda Pure Love Selfless Compassionate Divine Forgiving Omnipotent Embodiment of dharma The Supreme Lord Compassionate
 An inspiration Love personified An embodiment of dharma Divine Mother Love in action Pure Love Selfless Compassionate
 Pranav Divine Forgiving Omnipresent Your best friend The Supreme Lord An inspiration A Spiritual Master An embodiment of truth Selfless
 Divine Mother Love in action Pure Love Holy Compassionate Sadguru Lord of all worlds Generous Your best friend Peaceful
 Creator The Supreme Lord An inspiration A Spiritual Master Beyond the limits of time Divine Mother Love in action Creator The Eternal Truth
 The Supreme Lord Protector your best friend

SARANYA NISTALA

Student Editor

Detroit Metro Sai Center

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Sai Experiences

BABA'S DIVINE INTERVENTION TO SAVE THE LIFE OF MY HUSBAND

My late husband, Al Drucker (1928-2016), was an ardent devotee of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. He made over 30 trips to Sai Baba's ashrams in India before living in Prasanthi Nilayam from 1981 to 1989 upon Sai Baba's invitation to teach classes on astrophysics and aerospace subjects as a visiting professor at the Sri Satya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. At the ashram, he also gave talks on spiritual topics to hundreds of overseas visitors and published a number of books, including "Sai Baba Gita" and "Self Realization – The Knowledge of the Absolute". However, had it not been for an aircraft incident and a subsequent miracle by Swami, all of this may not have been possible.

The story goes back to sometime in the early 1970s. **Al wanted to go flying with a friend on a rented recreational plane.** It was supposed to be an easy and casual trip to the Sierra Mountains in California and they were just planning to be gone for a few hours, so he had taken the aircraft out without filing a flight plan. He did check the weather over the mountains which indicated severe turbulence (and a major storm expected the next day) but they decided that they would turn back if it got rough. He hadn't flown much on instruments, but his friend assured him that she had ample experience and was prepared to back him, so off they flew.

Soon, dark clouds, thunder, and lightning began to threaten their flight plans but when they decided to turn back, they discovered that it was too late. **They were stuck in the storm. Unfortunately, the storm had already closed in behind them; for the next three hours, they were struggling for their lives.** Al would put the plane into a nose-dive only to be carried upward. Al would set the controls to gain elevation only to be plunged downward. It seemed like all his efforts to fix the situation were futile. His situation could only be likened to a toy boat adrift in a raging storm at sea, doomed to sink. Huge hailstones had knocked out the plane's back windows, producing a deafening noise. The control surfaces on the wings were tearing, making it increasingly more difficult to maintain control. The fuel gauge started bouncing on empty. In utter exhaustion, Al turned to his co-pilot to take over, only to find her slumped in her seat, probably due to oxygen deprivation. He didn't know whether she was dead or alive since there was no response to his shakings and shoutings. Out of desperation, he called on the radio for help, hoping against hope that someone would hear the distress call and somehow rescue him. It was a futile hope and there was no reply. His energy and life power were nearly gone as well. Finally, he had to face the inevitable and realized his chances of survival were next to none.

In that moment, he turned to God for the first time in over 30 years. He had grown up a young Jewish boy in Nazi Germany. While his family had escaped the horrors of the war, he had seen enough to tell himself that





there was no God. **Now, in desperation, practically at the last possible moment, with the fuel running out, his passenger either unconscious or dead, and the aircraft beginning to come apart, when both his energy and his hope had drained away to nothingness, he tried to reach God.** He called out in anguish, [“Oh God, please help me. Please come and save me. I don’t want to die.”](#) And just as he did, a deep peace pervaded his being and he added, “Do with me as You will; I am Yours”.

Suddenly, he heard a sweet male voice over the loud speakers loud and clear, “Aircraft in distress, can you hear me?” That voice startled him as he had been entirely unsuccessful in making contact up to that point. Eager to respond, Al reached for his microphone, but, it had gotten wrapped around the rudder pedal in the turbulence and when he tried to retrieve it, his plane went into a spin. He was unable to respond to the voice that revived his hope of rescue from an utterly impossible situation.

That voice came again, so calm and soothing, seemingly totally aware of the critical nature of the situation, “You need not respond. If you can hear me, turn 60 degrees to the right and then come back to your present course.” Al did as he was directed. When he was back on course, the voice assured him, [“I have you in sight. Don’t worry; I will guide you down safely.”](#) Al assumed that some ground controller was picking up his signal by radar.

The voice seemed to know all and spoke in a way that Al could respond to without much effort. He would give basic instructions such as, “Fly where the red meets the yellow.” Even an inexperienced pilot could follow those directions without much computation. Then the voice told Al that he would be coming to a clearing and would see a small airport straight ahead. He ended with, “I’m signing off with this transmission. Good luck.” Almost immediately, as foretold, the bedraggled plane broke out of the storm and came into a clearing. Al saw the landing strip in the snow-covered field, declared an emergency landing and got immediate permission to land in. The plane touched down safely. Just before the wheels touched down, his flying mate came back into consciousness. And just as Al vectored the plane to safety, it ran out of fuel. [Arriving safely was a miracle beyond imagination.](#) He thanked God and blessed his good fortune that he came out alive.

When they reached the control tower, the controller knew nothing of the voice that had guided Al to safety. He told Al there was no other airport or flight service station with radar around. Also, Al was told that a sudden clearing of the storm had permitted the airport to be open for only a short time before they arrived. “Who was that mysterious voice that saved our lives?” Al wondered.

Al's friend knew of a yoga academy just south of the Mexican border. They got the plane patched up enough to make the short flight over to the academy. When they arrived, they found a group of people singing devotional songs seemingly to a picture in the front of the room. Other than the eyes, the picture was completely covered with some strange dust. Al took one look at those eyes and found himself moved to





tears. Inwardly he knew, unmistakably, that there was some powerful connection between the voice that came on the radio in that storm over the Nevada desert and the holy man whose picture this was. After the ceremony, they found out that the dust was sacred ash that had manifested on the picture during the singing and that the picture was of Sai Baba. When he told his story to the group of devotees, they all agreed that his savior had to be Sai Baba.

About a year later, Al made his first trip to Baba's ashram fully expecting Baba to reveal the truth behind that benevolent voice, so patient and kind, that was the savior of his life. But Baba gave him no attention whatsoever.

Only on a subsequent visit, a teacher approached him and asked if he would write up his story for a publication. He went on to say that he was in the room with Swami while the incident was happening. At another time, when Al went to Parthi, a student approached him and said that Swami wanted him to write about his experience in the college magazine. Then the student revealed that **Swami was describing to his students in Brindavan, the entire incident as it was happening, 12,000 miles away in the air.**

When Al became professor in Baba's university, one day, out of the blue, Baba asked him to tell his airplane story to the students. When he finished, Baba commented, "He was flying for his own pleasure and yet I had to save him. It was My duty."



Swami and Al Drucker during a Darshan

"The Divine alone knows when and whom to bless, for what reason and where and in what form."

- Baba

(Reference: Sanathana Sarathi, June 1995, P 148)

Reflecting on his experience, Al realized, "I prayed fervently to Him to save me... and most dramatically, He did." What he discovered was that when he finally let go, when he finally made room for God, God tenderly looked after him with the love of a thousand mothers. In that moment, he discovered that **with God all things are possible.**



YAANI DRUCKER

Former SSE & EHV Teacher

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DIVINE HEALING DURING MY CHILDHOOD

Bhagavan Baba used miracles at times, as His means of sowing seeds of devotion in the hearts of people. A few of these “visiting cards” came to our family during my early childhood; the first one being recounted here.

I am now 53 and by His grace, fit as a fiddle. But, this amazing miraculous story dates back to my childhood. Owing to my mother’s health issues during pregnancy, I had health problems from the first day of my life. I suffered from innumerable diseases as a child, such as diphtheria, small pox, chicken pox, etc. Also, I had aneurism of two heart valves resulting in a very bad heart murmur. I was simply a very sick child.

In 1969, [when I was five years old, I had a bout of high fever, 103 -105 degrees Fahrenheit](#). Even the best doctors in my town, Kolar Gold Fields (K.G.F.), in Kolar District, Karnataka, could not bring down the fever. Besides allopathy, homeopathy and natural medicine were administered. No one actually understood what the cause of the high fever was. **All the experts had simply failed.** Due to the high fever, I would not sleep or rest during the nights, if I got off my parents’ shoulders. Hence, my parents took turns carrying me on their shoulders, alternately, almost throughout the night. Most nights, one parent would carry me on their shoulders, while the other would catch some sleep. When my father would work in the night shift (midnight - 8 AM), my mother would carry me all night, by herself, sacrificing her sleep. **My sickness with extremely high fever continued for weeks.**

My parents had heard about Sri Sathya Sai Baba and His miraculous curative powers. Under these circumstances, **they took a bold decision to take me to Parthi, hoping for a healing.** They had decided that they will remain in Parthi, and if my health deteriorated leading to the end of my life, they would do my last rights at holy Puttaparthi, and then return. And if Swami cured me, a seed of intense faith would be sown in their hearts.

Along with two other families, they headed off to Parthi by train with me and my elder sister. The train had hardly traveled about 10 miles from KGF, when [my body temperature suddenly and totally subsided](#), to everyone’s surprise. I went from extremely sick to completely normal. I happily started going from one person to the next in the group, while on the train, playing like any other normal child. The fever had disappeared and did not return.



Swami and me during my student days at Brindavan Campus (1979 -1981)

The trip to Parthi was then for *darshan* and doing *seva* at the *ashram*. The nature of recovery was such that it became clear to my parents and everyone in our group that the healing happened only by the divine grace of Swami. They poured their hearts in gratitude to Bhagavan.

[This was the first of the Sai “blossoms” in the heart of each one of my family members.](#) My divine healing laid a strong foundation of faith not only in my family, but also in the other eight paternal siblings and five maternal siblings and their respective families. **Not only did the high fever suddenly disappear, but all my health problems had also seemingly vanished.** I don’t recall ever being sick after that, other than some normal, minor issues.

SREEDHAR REDDY

Phoenix, AZ Sai Center

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A SONG FOR MY MOM



TITLE LINES

Being cradled in your arm
Beholding your divine charm
Just feeling your holy touch
Is that asking for too much

Like the sky above
So high is your love
I can't express how much your love is true
Because mother I love you.

VERSE 1

Mother, you make me feel strong
You inspire me to grow
 with your music and song
You always see the good in everything
That is the only reason why I sing
Your love is like no other
Because you are my mother
We always love one another

[TITLE LINES] Being Cradled ... love you.

RAP LINES

You are my mom, you are where I come from
The reason I exist, learning music in your midst
I made these songs, to own up for all my wrongs
You gave me life, you take my strife
You bring me joy, cause I'm your boy
You take my pain, you keep me sane
Without you I would never be the same
You're like the pane

 If my life were a window frame
Mother you are my beating heart
We can never ever be apart
You are the one who fills my shopping cart
You have made me your own sweetheart
Life without you is unbearable
You and me are inseparable
I made this song
 because you are my parent
As Swami would say, I need to pay rent



[TITLE LINES]

Being Cradled ... love you

CLOSING LINES (VERSE 2)

Thank you, Lord, for my mother as a gift
Who is a constant source of joy and lift
I can do anything with my mom at my side
With her eternal love as a guide

For listening to a rendition of this song and rap, please click on the picture below.



“More fragrant than the sweet-smelling flowers
Like the Jasmine and the *Champak*,
Softer than the cheese and the butter,
More beautiful than eye of the peacock,
More pleasant than the moonlight,
Is the love of the mother.”

-Baba

Reference: Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 32, Part 2 Chapter 13

ANURAG KOMARAGIRI

SSE Group 2 Student

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ACCEPTANCE – A PREREQUISITE FOR UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

*This article may be considered **very timely**. It is applicable wherever there may be discord due to personalities: in the country, society, workplace, even family. - Editors*

We all want to follow Swami’s teaching of “Love All, Serve All” at all times. However, we find it difficult to practice this EVERY MOMENT, especially when we see or hear other people doing something “wrong”, whether it is in the news or in real life. We may send them love during our meditation; however, when we actually see them doing something “wrong”, often we are unable to send love to them AT THAT MOMENT.

When we create thoughts of hurt, anger, or resentment, our love gets blocked at that moment. Developing “Acceptance” will allow us to serve as clear channels for Swami’s unconditional love to flow through us, irrespective of the other person’s actions. Let us first understand clearly what “Acceptance” means.

Acceptance MEANS:

- ✦ I do not create any negative or critical thoughts for the other person.
- ✦ I have understanding for the other person’s behavior.
- ✦ **I evaluate the other person’s ACTION while maintaining my love and respect for the PERSON.**
- ✦ I focus on what my options are and what I should do in response to the situation.
- ✦ I shift ALL my energy from the problem to the solution (and that means shifting my thoughts).

Acceptance DOES NOT MEAN:

- ✦ Agreeing with everything the other person is doing.
- ✦ Ignoring the problem.
- ✦ Having disregard for those who are affected by the problem.
- ✦ Refraining from giving any advice, if my role allows giving advice.
- ✦ Refraining from taking any action to correct or improve the situation.
- ✦ Allowing the other person to exploit me.

Our thoughts are energy, and travel to the person they are created for. **Loving thoughts and blessings can empower the other person and help them to improve.** By the same token, thoughts of disappointment, resentment, anger, frustration, or hatred can disempower the other person and make them behave even worse.

Below are some of Swami’s teachings about thoughts, and the influence they have on the sender and the receiver (from the book: “A Compendium of the Teachings of Sathya Sai Baba”):

- ❖ “Thought waves emanating from the mind have got also the properties of radio waves.” (P 584)
- ❖ “The thoughts are so powerful that they can successfully be used to bring relief to the afflicted minds.” (P 585)





- ❖ “You have to understand the power of good thoughts. Thoughts travel from one person to another. If you are thinking ill of others, that can harm the other person, but ten times more harm will come to you.” (P 586)
- ❖ “A bad thought hurts both the sender and his target.” (P 588)
- ❖ “Immediately transform any bad thoughts into good ones.” (P 588)
- ❖ “... when you send a wave of spontaneous love to a person, it is bound to strike some chord in him or her. When you go on showering love, it will slowly begin to cleanse and purify and soon the undesirable traits will be weeded out and goodness will shine through.” (P 309)
- ❖ “... to see in other people that essential quality which is God, and to love that quality and **not be bothered by all other actions, qualities, misbehavior, characteristics of the person.**” (P 308)

Let us remember that we are all divine souls (“*divyatma Svarupulara*” as Swami lovingly calls us) going through the cycle of birth and death, and let us apply this knowledge in our daily lives. The impressions and karmic accounts we have carried forward from past births influence our thoughts, behavior, and relationships. So, it is not fair to judge another person based on what we see them do at this moment, or even just during this present life time.

[Below are some thoughts that we can consciously create frequently](#) (in general or specific to a person), to shift from resistance to acceptance:

1. Every person is originally a pure and divine soul and has been on a long journey through many, many lives.
2. I do not know all the experiences they have gone through or the karmic accounts they have with the people around them. There is an underlying reason why they are behaving this way.
3. **Everybody is doing the best they can at this moment, based on their strengths and weaknesses, habits and personality.**
4. I see the original divinity within them. If they are doing something wrong, it is only because they are disconnected from their true nature at this time. I accept them as they are.
5. I appreciate their good qualities and send them my blessings to empower them so they can work on improving themselves.

[Let us remember that there is a greater purpose for everything that happens in our country and the world. Our unconditional love can help others to transform themselves.](#) Let us remember that LOVE is the most powerful energy in the whole world, and when radiated by a large number of people, can achieve miracles!

Gowri Rajendran

Former SSE Teacher

Detroit Metro Sai Center

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WITH GOD, THERE IS NO TIME

“Sai-incidence” with a divine message

When I was studying in Swami’s Anantapur Women’s University and living in the hostel there, one morning I wanted to have shower so I hung my watch to the bolt of the bathroom door. After my shower, I forgot about the watch and opened the door and the watch fell down and the glass broke. I felt bad about the incident and asked Swami in my heart as to what lesson He wanted me to learn. I thought a lot but couldn’t get to any conclusion other than telling myself to be careful with things, which was nothing special.

I have a longstanding habit of pondering on any undesirable incident that happens in my life, be it big or small. Unable to understand the true message of the incident on my own, I prayed to Swami for His message and randomly opened one of the devotees’ books on Swami in my hostel room and the page I saw, read as follows, to my great surprise:

A few days before leaving Puttaparthi, I had hung my watch on a nail of the bathroom door. I took my bath and came out of the bathroom. The watch fell without warning from the nail onto the stone floor. Of course, it stopped working. I shook it and started working again but gained so much time that it was useless to wear it. I tugged it away and did without a watch for the last few days. I understood this as a sign from Swami telling me that I should not live so much in time. Time is man made. With God, there is no time.

How wonderfully and directly Swami made me learn the lesson! It proved His omniscience.



Author with Swami

Dear Swami, I owe all my experiences to You. Without You, I cannot gain the enlightenment from any experience or incident. Without the lessons learned from experiences, I will not grow spiritually. I bow to You, as You alone give meaning to the empty world of mine.

“God is as a ‘divine wish-fulfilling tree’ that gives you whatever you ask for. But, you have to go near the tree and wish for the thing you want.”

- Baba

(Reference: Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, P87)

SHARMILA SANKA

Previous Devotional Coordinator
Indianapolis Sai Center

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“ADOPT-A-GRANDPARENT” Service Project

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba emphasized that selfless service and unconditional love are two of the most important tools to receive God’s grace. When our yearning is strong, Swami answers immediately. I would like to narrate an incident in this regard which led to creation of a wonderful service project for our SSE students.

As our center’s Educational Coordinator, I worked on several service activities for the SSE students. One Sunday on my way to Sai center, I was earnestly praying to our dearest Swami to help me find a unique project for His children to bring out their compassion. Suddenly, my eyes caught on to a sign board which read “Courtyard Manor Assisted Living”. Even though I had driven on the same route for eight years, I had never noticed this sign before. I immediately knew that Swami had answered my selfless prayers.

The very next day, I drove to this facility (Courtyard Manor) to meet with the Activities Director about possible service projects for our center. When I asked her if she had any one-on-one activities for our Group 3 & 4 students, she got very excited, and asked me if our children would be interested in “adopting” any seniors as “grandparents”. Since it would give our students an opportunity to interact with the seniors on a regular basis, I instantly agreed. I was very thrilled! Four students that took part in this project are:

Sai Charan Vemuri (Group 3)

Ricky Pennepalli (Group 4)

Lasya Mantha (Group 3)

Krishangi Kaushik (Group 4)

I humbly request that you [watch the following video](#) about these students’ experiences in this amazing service project which allowed them to render their selfless love to their adopted grandparents.



VARALAKSHMI KANDURU

Previous SSE Coordinator

Detroit Metro Sai Center

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SLOW AND STEADY

A Grandfather's Advice to Children



Slow and steady, why this hurry?
I am your grandpa, so don't you worry.
Success is not in beating others,
But learning from their errors.

The way it's made to churn and burn,
The world will never stop to turn.
It's so easy to be a self-invited victim,
Not if we all WATCH, is my dictum.

Choose goals with caution, my dear;
Work on them with focus and care.
Move ahead in a slow, steady pace
Towards your goal to win the race.

Remain and maintain your calm,
And it'll act like a soothing balm.
So let the world go past like crazy,
And get bogged down in its own frenzy.

Soak in the glory of every moment
That passes you like a lovely torrent.
It's so easy to falter and fall
Despite the feeling of standing tall.

The trick is not to rush like mad;
So you save from feeling sad.
With LOVE for ALL and spite for none
March and reach before everyone!

GOPAL WARRIER

Chicago Metro Sai Center

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[Mind & Spirit](#)

HANDLING BAD THOUGHTS

Being invited to contribute an article to Sai Blossoms is a special treat and the suggestion of editorial staff on "Handling Bad Thoughts" as a possible topic is also welcomed.

The expression "bad thoughts" covers a wide range of things. In a clinical context, it refers to a disturbing psychological condition leading one to seek professional help. However, what devotees usually mean is something along the following: "I am on a spiritual path and try to follow the teachings. Yet, there are times when an un-righteous thought pops into my mind, and that fact is discouraging and disturbing."

Actually, such is the invariable experience of the vast majority of persons who take to the Godward path. The wonderful instrument we call the MIND exerts a strong tendency to reverse roles with us, in that it is constantly seeking to direct us as opposed to being directed by us. Hence, the need for us to become clear and continually aware that we are different from our mind, that our mind is meant to serve us.

In addition to firmly coming to grips with this elusive fact, there are certain habits to acquire. For example, consuming pure and *satvic* food, prepared under *satvic* conditions, will minimize the frequency and intensity of bad thoughts. Similarly, avoiding bad company (people or activities that distract us from our goal) is helpful. Yet, so long as we are under the spell of duality, we will not succeed completely in eliminating bad thoughts. However, though we cannot stop their coming, we do not have to entertain them. We are able to exercise a choice. Our choice is whether to focus upon the disquieting thought, or to turn our attention away from it.

We can do that by immediately bringing to mind something else, [something beautiful, something POSITIVE](#). It can be a favorite scene from nature, a song, children at play, or a memory of an interaction with Lord Sai. **Rather than attempting to push the thought out of awareness -- which tends to strengthen it -- we can cease attending to it.** Remember, we cannot drive darkness from a room, but when we turn on the light, the darkness disappears of its own accord.

Thus, for any and all of us, it will be found that with patience and practice, our mind can be progressively trained. Recall that Sathya Sai Baba declares that there is nothing in this world that will not succumb to practice.

*I am with you now
and I know your every thought.
Not all your thoughts are good,
so watch your thoughts
and concentrate on bringing
love into your lives.
I love you all
in spite of your many failings. – Baba*

DR. WILLIAM HARVEY
Member, Prasanthi Council
Retired Psychologist
Blue Springs, Missouri
[Email us your Feedback](#)

[Reference:](#) Sai Messages for you and me, Vol. I, by Lucas Ralli





Precious Health

“ABSOLUTE NO!” TO BAD HABITS

It looks just as silly when you do it



When I was a young SSE student, my good friends and I had a clear, strong opinion against bad habits. “I will never drink!”, we would say, “Smoking is so yucky! Obviously, people who do drugs aren’t that smart.”

The unfortunate truth is that smart people can, indeed, get swayed to make the choice of a wrong habit. When I joined college, I had to stress over grades, arrange student loans, find a part-time job, and do all this in a new surrounding where I didn’t have any friends yet. Soon I did meet first few friends. They encouraged me to go to a party and try some alcohol, and

somehow I felt tempted. As I stood there holding the glass of beer deciding whether to drink it, I couldn’t find a reason why I should. Not only that I was under age, I was holding a drink that has no positive effect whatsoever. **I did NOT try the drink.**

It is likely that many of you will also be put into similar situation. You are going to need to decide whether to give in to the peer pressure or refuse to try. Really, it should not be a hard decision to make. I ask that you remind yourself of the consequences of the bad action – drinking, doing drugs, smoking, or whatever it is – when you find yourself in such a surrounding. It might not seem like a big deal at the time, but the repercussions might affect the rest of your life. Although I did say “no” that day, some of my friends didn’t. And the consequences worsen for them every time they say “yes”. **I decided to be a good example to others and refrain completely. So, should you.**

Remember that any substance (alcohol, tobacco, drug) is not only bad for your health but can cause addiction. If you say “yes” once, then the chances of saying “yes” again (and again) increases for the rest of your life. Thus, don’t let temptations control you. **Don’t ever start at all, no matter what the age.**

(Sketch and story by)

Shreya Shankar

YA, De Moines Sai Center

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You don’t need to try poison even once. You don’t.

“More than all, set right your habits, purify your conduct, cleanse your behavior. One bad habit that has taken deep root in this area is the smoking of tobacco, an evil that is fast becoming universal. It destroys health, happiness, energy, and even charm. Smoke will not quench your thirst or fill the hungry stomach. It disfigures your face and denigrates your lungs. It debilitates you and makes you diseased. Control yourself and do not yield to the snares of friends or society or, what is miscalled social convention, and become a prey to this and other bad habits.”

– Baba (Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol I, Chap 14, P84)





Sai Trivia

PRANAV IS LOVE

Pranav represents God and God is Love; therefore, Pranav is Love. The purpose of this puzzle is for you to create OM (the Sanskrit symbol ॐ) with certain words. Here are the rules for solving the puzzle:

1. There are four words you will need to find in the matrix given below. Besides the word **LOVE**, there are three other words, each one a sub-value of Love (**Service, Sharing, Compassion**).
2. The letters of the words will be found in the direction of the stroke of the pen, if you were actually writing the ॐ symbol.
3. Each of the four words starts with a letter that is located next to a heart symbol in the matrix, in the "correct" direction (the direction of the stroke of the pen).
4. Mark each cell with a heart symbol that contains each letter making the words. It will be nice, if you use red pencil or pen for the work, but you don't have to.
5. The end result will be ॐ symbol consisting of many heart symbols and a diamond symbol already given.

Z	R	A	Z	L	R	S	H	A	R	F	W	I	Y
G	P	E	S	S	E	R	N	L	D	O	◆	A	O
S	T	C	♥	W	Q	Z	V	E	U	M	N	J	V
R	G	K	I	P	B	O	I	C	♥	I	A	F	E
V	M	P	S	F	M	X	C	Q	B	L	O	V	L
D	W	Y	L	C	R	E	L	G	K	S	R	Y	X
L	P	M	S	Y	♥	S	H	A	T	U	Q	O	E
A	H	V	X	D	♥	C	O	T	R	P	C	G	R
W	N	A	I	A	S	I	O	R	K	I	N	F	U
F	E	O	F	H	U	G	M	B	Y	W	Q	E	Y
I	S	E	I	A	X	M	P	G	H	J	O	N	G
E	B	D	L	S	S	A	H	L	E	I	D	U	O
A	B	N	E	U	Y	F	D	E	V	R	A	R	L

Once you have created OM symbol on this matrix, please scan or take a photo of it and send to Sai Blossoms email address. SSE students, YAs, and adults -- all are requested to take part.

Names of participants with the correct solution will be published in the next issue. **Deadline for receiving the solution is Sunday, April 23.**

SURESH C. RAMA (SSE Group 2 Teacher)
PRANAV SAI RAMA (SSE Group 2 Student)
Detroit Metro Sai Center
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SAI TRIVIA RESPONDENTS

(Puzzle from the previous issue)

1. Manasa Bhajare **Guru** Charanam
2. God's **love** is so wonderful
3. Jaya Guru **Om**kara
4. Beautiful **God** Alleluia
5. **Satyam** Gnaanam Anantham Brahma
6. **Sai** Naamame Brahmaanandamu
7. **Amba** Parameshvari Akhilandeshvari
8. I bow down at the Feet of **Ganesh**a
9. Anand se bolo **jai** Baba jai
10. Dance **Shiva** dance in our hearts

G	P	X	D	S	H	I	V	A
V	A	W	I	Y	T	B	S	M
F	U	N	E	C	R	N	A	B
T	S	V	E	Z	U	C	I	A
G	O	D	U	S	T	H	K	M
L	M	R	G	V	H	D	F	G
T	K	S	A	T	Y	A	M	P
B	A	C	E	F	P	N	O	L
O	R	H	A	Q	I	J	A	I
S	A	G	U	R	U	Q	K	R

Word Search Matrix
(Color coded)

Names of the Respondents Who Provided Correct Solution

Name	Category	Sai Center
Shivani Anandasenthil	Group 3 Student	Detroit Metro
Nihar Atri	Group 3 Student	Minneapolis South, MN
Saketh Boddapati	Group 3 Student	Detroit Metro
Architha Bommena	Group 3 Student	Des Moines, IA
Prabath Inturi	Group 2 Student	Detroit Metro
Susmitha Kristam	SSE Parent	Detroit Metro
Lasya Mantha	Group 3 Student	Detroit Metro
Sridevi Nistala	Group 1 Teacher	Detroit Metro
Jayashree Sundaram	Group 3 Student	Detroit Metro

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[Spiritual Humor](#)

SUBRAHMANYAM BHAJAN DURING AN OVERNIGHT SESSION

This incident will make you laugh, at the expense of yours truly, Editor.

Though I came to the USA in 1985, I was not part of any Sai Center until January 1993, when I joined Southfield Sai Center (now called, Detroit Metro Sai Center) with family.

The center always holds overnight Bhajan on the occasion of *Maha Shivarathri*. It starts sometime in the evening and ends around 6 AM next day. I was excited to celebrate the auspicious festival, keeping the vigil and singing bhajans all night long.

I sang several bhajans. Then, around 2 AM, the card came to me (again) for leading the next bhajan. I started singing the following bhajan:

[Subrahmanyam Subrahmanyam Shanmukh Natha Subrahmanyam](#)

I sang this first line clear and confident. However, there was complete silence after me; no one followed me. Bewildered, I looked around and found that people looked confused or embarrassed. Fortunately, a Sai brother sitting next to me quickly understood the problem and whispered to me, "This bhajan is sung at the end."

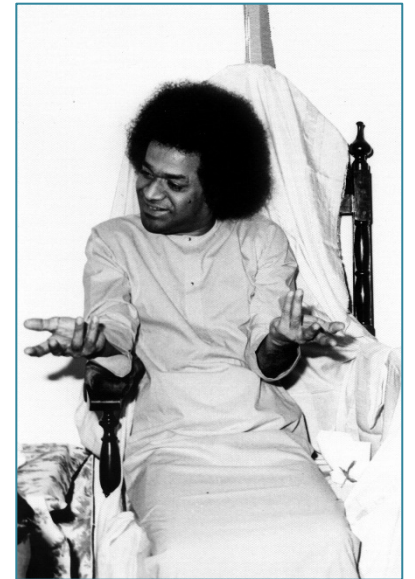
Someone else took over and sang another bhajan in my place while I dusted myself off after the emotional fall.

All were amused and perhaps our Omnipresent and invisible Swami too was.

When the time did come for the last bhajan at the closing time, the coordinator suddenly passed the card to me to sing the Subrahmanyam bhajan. I did sing and felt better; yes, everyone did follow me this time around.

After the *arati* and *vibhuti*, during the breakfast-*prasad* time, there was hearty laugh at my cost. I had to apologize that I did not know that Subrahmanyam bhajan was sung only at the end.

"In my Sai Samiti in India, they used to sing this bhajan at any point of time," I pleaded apparently to no one's acceptance as a valid reason. I think, they just needed an opportunity to laugh, without giving me any room for consolation.



RAJ PRAKASH

Editor

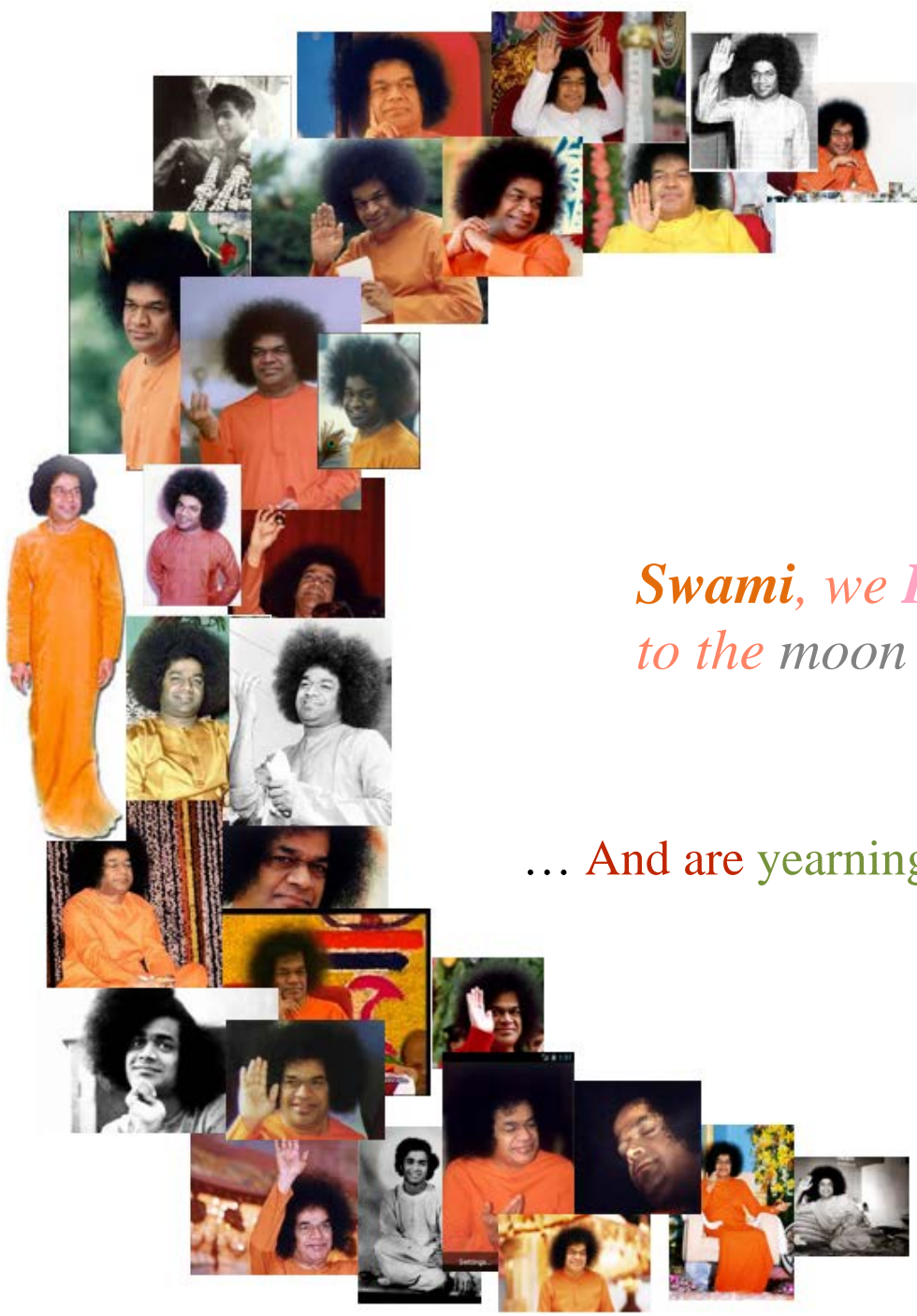
Detroit Metro Sai Center

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Buds Corner



*Swami, we LOVE You
to the moon and back ...*

... And are yearning for Your Return.

KRISHANGI KAUSHIK
Group 4 SSE Student
Detroit Metro Sai Center
[Email us your Feedback](#)



