



July 2012 Edition

Quote

Be simple and sincere. It is sheer waste of money to burden the pictures and idols in the shrines and altars of your homes with a weight of garlands, and to parade costly utensils and vessels and offerings, to show off your devotion. This is deception; it demeans Divinity, imputing to it the desire for pomp and publicity. I ask only for purity of heart, to shower Grace. Do not post distance between you and Me; do not interpose the formalities of the Guru-sishya (Precept or disciple) relationship, or even the altitudinal distinctions of the God-Devotee relationship, between you and Me. I am neither Guru nor God; I am You; You are I; that is the Truth. There is no distinction. That which appears so is the delusion. You are waves; I am the Ocean. Know this and be free, be Divine.

- Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

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Editorial

Om Sri Sai Ram!

The month of July started off with the Celebration of Gurupoornima at the Sri Venkateswara Temple (Birmingham), the day filled with recitation of the sacred Rudram as our offering of gratitude to our Supreme Master, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The sacred occasion also provided a setting for the second Sadhana meeting in preparation for Sai Jyothi, our National Pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam, the abode of greatest peace and tranquillity.

With our thoughts and words fully absorbed upon Him, the air was truly sparkling with Divine energy. Not unexpectedly, the elements also made their presence felt in awe on the day.

One recalls a narration by Prof. N Kasturi, who provided a vivid account on how even the waters of the oceans paid their reverence and homage to Bhagawan.

It was December 1958 when Baba visited Kanyakumari, the Southernmost tip of India, with a few devotees. In the evening when the sky had turned into a carnival of pink and purple, and the clouds had decorated themselves with golden fringes, Baba proceeded to the seashore and with His devotees around Him, played with the waves of the seas that mingled there. Each succeeding wave seemed more eager than the previous one to touch His Lotus Feet, and to offer Him its own special homage. Suddenly, as if aware of the yearning of the seas, Baba stood facing the waters and said to those beside Him, 'See! The Ocean is welcoming Me, with a Garland.' At that very moment one could discern a stately wave a few yards away, advancing majestically towards the shore and, soon it swept Baba's Feet and receded, leaving behind a fascinating pearl garland that had one hundred and eight translucent pearls strung on a thread of gold!

Upcoming National Events ...not to be missed:

'Divine Light' - National Sai Retreat (17-19 August) - to be held in the tranquil surroundings of the sea side coastal town of Llandudno. Regrettably, all Residential Accommodation is now fully booked. However, you can still join as Day Delegates (suitable accommodation can be booked at nearby hotels). The guest speaker for the Retreat is Prof Anilkumar Kamaraju from Prasanthi Nilayam, well known and much much loved by many as Swami's Translator.

<http://www.srisathyasai.org.uk/national-programmes/nationalretreat2012/>

'Sai Jyothi' - National Sai Pilgrimage (7-12, 13-27 October) - an opportunity to pay our gratitude to Bhagawan at the most holiest of holy places, Prasanthi Nilayam. We intend to have a programme in front of the Maha Samadhi in Sai Kulwant Hall, a (Summer Camp)(Sadhana Camp) where several elders of Prasanthi Nilayam will address, a pilgrimage trip to Bhagawan's delightful abode in Brindavan, participation in Grama Seva and many more.

<http://www.srisathyasai.org.uk/national-programmes/nationalpilgrimage2012/>

Dr. Kiran Patel
National Chairperson

Region 2 - Free walk in Health Awareness Day in Celebration of Queen

Swami Says "Qualities of doctors are Sacrifice, Love and Compassion." This coupled with the love of volunteers, makes a great impact on all the people who attend any medical camp.



On Sunday 20 May 2012, a Free Health Awareness Day was conducted by the Sri Sathya Sai Service Organisation (SSSSO), Region 2, UK in association with Brent Indian Association (BIA), Wembley at BIA premises. BIA kindly offered their whole building for the camp, as they did in the previous years.

Qualified Medical Professionals on behalf of SSSSO(UK) offered their valuable time with love in treating the patients. Dental checks and Eye tests were conducted along with GP advice, Blood Pressure and Blood Sugar level tests. Presentations were made on various Important Health Issues while people were waiting to meet the Doctors. Information desk with leaflets on Diabetes, Heart, Nutrition and anti-smoking were arranged to increase awareness.

The camp was well supported by volunteers, who served with love in the various tasks, such as registration desk, running the kitchen and guiding people throughout the camp.



As a sign of Swami's Grace, Doctors who initially could not commit that day even turned up at the right time to relieve the other doctors in their respective departments. This was something that was not proposed, but only Divinely planned by Swami.

Due to more people coming in, closing time was extended from 3pm to 6pm. Doctors served with the same zeal and love throughout. The kitchen, with all its volunteers, in their dedication also decided to continue to serve all who attended the camp, as food was plenty. This too was clearly seen as a sign of Swami's Will. We later came to know that these people had travelled from distance to take advantage of these Yeoman Services offered to them. Swami had indeed taken care of all their needs.

Feedback received from people was very touching. The people who attended the camp and who are new to Sathya Sai Service Organisation and the standards set by Swami were so amazed at the love, care and guidance they received from the Doctors and Volunteers. Most of those who attended were able to utilise the medical checks, diagnosis and treatment options that were made available and which is difficult to get under one roof, in this country.



We thank Swami from the bottom of our hearts, for giving us this wonderful opportunity to render service to the community.

Region 3 - July 2012 Update

"Hands that serve are holier than lips that Pray"

"Offer service to someone in need, with a full heart and experience the bliss that results. It need not be something big; it can be a small act, unnoticed by others. But it has to be done to please the God within you and the other person"- Baba

For the Sai Organisation, Narayan Seva is an important part of all its activities as it allows individuals to practice and reflect upon Bhagavan's Message of Love.

Narayan Seva at Central London Sai Centre

In line with Bhagwan's teaching that "Service to Mankind is Service to God", Narayan Seva (food distribution) is conducted on the 3rd Sunday of every month at the Central London Sai Centre.

On the Sunday in question, volunteers arrive at the Sai Centre from 10am to set up the hall for a sit-down lunch. The guests, the majority of whom are homeless Londoners start arriving from approximately 11:00 a.m. They are warmly welcomed and served tea/coffee or juice to start with, followed by lunch at 12:00. All of the food is cooked and served by volunteers.

Health Awareness Clinic

On 20/05/2012, the 3rd Sunday of May, a special Health Awareness Clinic for the homeless was organised at the Sai Centre. This was in addition to the regular Narayan Seva, on the 3rd Sunday of every month. Meals, on that day were packed and distributed to the guests in take-away containers as opposed to the usual sit-down lunch, because the hall was being used for medical check-ups and consultations.

The objective of this Medical Camp was to provide free medical check-ups and advice to the homeless.

A total of 13 Healthcare professionals ably supported by 12 general volunteers (doing different roles) participated in the camp.

The services that were provided by the team included:

1. Blood Pressure
2. Blood Sugar
3. Body Mass Index
4. GP
5. Stroke Association
6. Diabetes
7. Ophthalmic examination
8. Dental examination
9. Pharmacy
10. Back Pain Treatment

The clinic was initiated on the day with a prayer to seek the blessings of our beloved Bhagwan and to thank him for giving us this wonderful opportunity to serve.

There was a considerable amount of time spent in planning the camp and it was organised as follows:

A registration desk was created near the entrance of the hall where guests were initially seated and handed forms to fill out which included some personal details such as names, ages and also the services they were interested in.

The healthcare professionals were allocated separate booths for provision of their services. The guests were personally and individually attended to by the volunteers and led to the individual booths ensuring that none of the sections were overcrowded and that no guest was inconvenienced by having to wait too long time.

On their way out, the guests were asked to hand over their forms, the details of which were entered into a computer to maintain records.



The Narayan Seva (food distribution) was conducted in a smaller hall adjoining the one where the medical camp was being conducted.

All the volunteers in that hall had the privilege to witness Swami's miracle first-hand when a part of the ceiling came crashing down during the course of the Narayan Seva.

The crash created an extremely loud clatter as huge planks of wood fell to the floor from a great height. Miraculously, not a single guest or a volunteer was hurt in the process and Swami's picture which was placed on a small stool with an offering of prasadam stayed intact inspite of everything being upturned around it.



The most encouraging part of this was that the volunteers resumed the food distribution outside, undeterred by the incident or the loss of food that resulted from it.

From this incident it reinforces to us all, that Swami is shielding, protecting and looking after us at all times.

With Swami's grace, the healthcare awareness clinic was a huge success and the efforts of all the healthcare professionals and volunteers were fruitful. 51 guests were provided with the best possible medical advice and guidance on their health and well-being.

The success of this will hopefully in the future pave the way for many other events of this type, on an increasingly larger scale!!!

Mother Theresa had what she called a business card which she gave to those who came to her:

"The fruit of faith is prayer.

The fruit of prayer is love.

The fruit of love is service."

Region 4 - Celebration Assembly at SSE in Coventry

Sunday 24th June 2012

The end of the SSE academic year was celebrated by recognising children's achievements in an assembly with parents of SSE children, Office Bearers and devotees from the Sai Centre.

The celebration commenced after the usual SSE lesson with Jyoti Light Meditation, Ganapati Prathna, which the children had learnt confidently in a short period of time, Universal prayers and Aarti.

A spiritual quiz organised by Neelamben Sharma, an SSE parent and helper brought a lot of excitement and enjoyment. She challenged the children with her questions and the parents participated too.

Following this, Saisha Mistry, who is a member of the Youth and a former SSE student, was invited to present certificates, children's reports together with gifts to each child for completing SSE for the year. Saisha had given her

time during her 'A-Level' studies to help out with SSE classes in the year and she also taught the Ganapati Prathna to the children along with another member of the Youth, Mukund Prajapati.

The parents appreciate the time children spend at SSE and the significant impact it has on their children. The feedback is that the children are demonstrating the values they learn at SSE in their daily lives.

Hasu Patel, SSE Co-ordinator thanked all the Gurus and helpers for their commitment and love to the children and presented each of them with a small token of appreciation.

The celebration ended with a delicious shared meal and an aura of happiness.



We thank Swami for the progression, growth and achievement our SSE children have demonstrated this year and for making this occasion very special.

Jai Sai Ram.

Kalpna Patel, Assistant SSE Co-ordinator

Region 4 - Ladies Event in Leicester

The Significance of the Mangala Kalasha

With the blessings of our beloved Lord Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, over 30 ladies from the Leicester Sai Centres gathered to embrace the significance of Mangala Kalasha, also known as Kumbham (assembly of the coconut & pot) on 17 June 2012. The Ladies Wing organised this workshop to understand further an aspect of pooja which is common and important in Hindu culture and spirituality.

The workshop commenced with three Aums and an introduction into the symbolism of the Mangala Kalasha. This led to a discussion into which items can be used to create the Mangala Kalasha and how to decorate it. With this understanding the Ladies were then given a demonstration on the fabulous ways to decorate the Mangala Kalasha and thereby bring out the creativity within themselves! The enthusiasm and sharing of ideas brought a wonderful atmosphere to the workshop.



What is Mangala Kalasha?

This assembly of the coconut and pot plays an important part in many different Hindu ceremonies such as havans (fire sacrifice), child-naming ceremonies and daily worship. The Mangala Kalasha symbolises prosperity, health, wealth and positive energy. The Vedas emphasise that the Mangala Kalasha itself represents life source: the five elements and the seven chakras.

Overall, the workshop was valued and enjoyed by all who attended. The women from the Leicester Sai Centres continue to organise workshops and events such as this to provide an encouraging forum for ladies and, at the same time, try to embrace the importance Swami which has emphasised on the role of women in today's world.

Region 4 - Leicester Guru Purnima Celebrations

3rd July 2012

On the auspicious occasion of Guru Purnima, Leicester devotees gathered to pay homage to our Eternal Guru, Sri Sathya Sai Baba.



The evening program held on Tuesday 3rd July, started with chanting the Gayathri mantras, universal prayers from the major world religions, followed by Vedam chanting. Thereafter, everyone had the opportunity to offer their salutations to the Lord by offering rice grains to an image of His Form whilst the 108 names of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba were chanted in English and Sanskrit. Reciting the names in English first, allowed everyone to reflect on the meaning and significance of each of these sacred names.

This was followed by a series of heartfelt and uplifting bhajans. The highlight of the evening was watching a video of Swami delivering His Guru Purnima message in 2004. Swami concluded His discourse with this message for all of us: "On this auspicious occasion of Guru Purnima, love is the most valuable gift I hand over to you. This is my most precious gift to you. Devoid of love, whatever other gifts I may give, they will be of no use. My love is pure, sacred and most precious. You also cultivate such love." The evening concluded with the offering of aarti.

Region 4 - Sai-lympics Family Fun Day!

Sunday 24th June 2012

All the SSE children, parents and families had a brilliant fun-filled day. Activities for all ages ranged from sports to arts and crafts, and of course scrumptious food.

Swami says 'Love my uncertainty' and He did just that with the weather.

However it all went according to His Divine plan and with everyone's hard work and team work in preparing and setting up the indoor areas it all worked out. The teams of children and adults had a chance to take part in all the fun activities and games. They all really worked up an appetite during the races!

The children spoke after bhajans about the link between the message of the Olympics and Swami's teachings and how the Olympic games took place each year on the full moon on the same day as Guru Purnima each year.

We then watched an inspiring video (Life is a Game-Play It!) on the value of sports compiled by the Radio Sai team which included wonderful clips of Swami interacting with the students in the early days of the 'Sports meet' held in Prashanti, which really set the tone for the day.

Please find the link below:

http://media.radiosai.org/journals/vol_09/01AUG11/11_02sports_video.htm

The children were really excited for the games and activities and all came ready in their sports kit. They were raring to go after finishing their SSE exams the week before. Everyone was registered and divided into 5 teams representing the 5 Human Values and went round in a circuit to all the indoor activities prepared by the SSE, Service and Youth wing with help from the group 3 and 4 students:



1. target throwing/skittles - one true aim
2. team games and challenges - brain train
3. ball-mania/goal shooting
4. arts and crafts/games & quizzes
5. cup cake decorating (which they ate straight away) & samosa making
6. mendhi and face painting too!

After the group activities we commenced our races in the sports hall, the children were split in age groups and competed in small teams or individually with the mums and dads joining in too.



1. ball and spoon race - sure and steady
2. obstacle race - Ganapati course
3. 3 legged race - unity game
4. relay race - pass the love

It was time for lunch and everyone tucked into the yummy food lovingly prepared by the parents and service wing; bhel, pizza, sandwiches, dhokra, cakes and fruit salad. The day then finished with the sun coming out and everyone going home to continue the sports and looking forward to our next family fun day!



Jai Sai Ram
Aarti Mistry
Leicester SSE Co-Ordinator

Region 4 - Shirdi Sai Satcharitra Reading in Gujarati in Leicester

On the 22nd and 23rd of June 2012, Narborough Road Sai Centre held a program in which the Shirdi Sai Satcharitra was read in one day. For the past 8 years we have read the holy book in English at the end of September, because according to Bhagwan Shri Sathya Sai Baba, this is when Shirdi Sai Baba was born. However this program was organised as the Centre Committee wanted to recite the holy book in Gujarati.



On Friday night, Baba was brought to the venue in a small procession similar to the Chawdi procession in Shirdi. He was welcomed with flower petals, cries of "jay jay kar" and aarti. After Baba was seated in the beautifully decorated altar, the youth of the centre filled the hearts of everyone with a musical program including classical songs and qawallis. This was followed by Baba's Shej aarti. Everyone then departed after having darshan of Baba.

On Saturday morning, devotees came to the blessed venue at 5 a.m. At 5:30 am, we performed Baba's Kakad aarti which was followed by Mangal Snan (holy bath) of Baba. Then, after decorating Baba with new vastram (clothes), ornaments and a garland of fresh flowers, we offered breakfast to him whilst divine mantras were being chanted. This was followed by a short Snan Mantra aarti.

At 6:30 a.m., the reading began and continued until 12 noon. This is when lunch was offered to Baba as naivedyam.

Thereafter, we performed the Madhyan aarti to Baba. The reading continued until 7 p.m. All the devotees who wanted to read had the opportunity to do so. After completing the reading, we sang a few bhajans to Baba. The program ended with Baba's Dhoop aarti. Following this, everyone was given a chance to individually come and offer their pranaams and prayers at Baba's Lotus Feet in a disciplined manner.

Many devotees were involved in organising and participating in this entire program. Everyone worked hard with love and devotion in their hearts for our Lord. A small exhibition was also displayed in the foyer area which contained pictures depicting incidents that had happened during the lifetime of Shirdi Sai Baba. Pictures of the articles which were used by Him were also displayed together with His eleven sayings.

We pray to our Beloved Lord to give us many such opportunities in the future where we can listen to His divine story and experience the joy and bliss of actually being in Shirdi.

Jai Sai Ram.

Region 5 - Summer Bhajans at Gita Bhavan Hindu Temple

10th June 2012

Every New Years Day for the past 15 to 20 years, the Gita Bhavan Hindu Temple in Manchester has invited the local Sai Centre to sing Sai bhajans. The temple is usually overflowing for this event, with over 400 people and standing room only. This year the priests at the temple invited us to visit during the summer to sing more bhajans as they felt a year was too long to wait! So on 10th June, members from Greater Manchester Sai Centre and surrounding Centres in Warrington, Bolton, Bradford, and Halifax, gathered for 2 hours of Sai bhajans on a Sunday afternoon in the temple.

There were quite a few local temple-goers who attended to listen to the bhajans, and we followed the bhajans with a short talk about Sai Baba, His life, His teachings, His message, beautifully delivered by Bharat Sisodia. We also prepared leaflets about where the local Sai centre meets in case people were interested to find out more.

Singing bhajans in different venues is not something new for us - but having an opportunity to explain about Sai Baba's life and teachings is something we don't always get a chance to do. Many temples really enjoy and look forward to our Sai bhajans and we hope that as with the Gita Bhavan bhajans, we can use these opportunities to talk about Sai's life and teachings.

Sai's examples of service and love in action always move and inspire people, and for us as devotees, we can see and feel Sai very much alive in our hearts. Let us use these opportunities to continue to be inspired and to make our lives, His message.



Sanjay Vaja
Greater Manchester Sai Centre Spiritual Coordinator

Region 5 - Youth Retreat, Isle of Man "Art of Living...Art of Life"

Let the adventure begin!



It was a blustery Friday morning pouring with torrential rain, but all across Region 5 from Newcastle to Manchester, Leeds and Bradford, cars filled with sleeping bags, wellies and excited Youth made their way to the Liverpool Docks to board the largest vessel on the Irish Sea, carrying us to our destination and the most remote of locations in Region 5... the Isle of Man.



After a very rocky and challenging three hour ferry ride on the turbulent sea, we were relieved when finally welcomed by warm and smiling familiar faces as the ferry pulled into port. A wonderful Sai Family on the Isle of Man were to be our hosts for the weekend at their beautiful family home in the middle of the countryside, surrounded by fields, farms and with a view of the sea in the distance.



Once settled into our new home for the weekend, we gathered in the living room which was transformed into a Mandir. We awakened Swami in our hearts and focussed our minds on the reason for which we had gathered, with a calming Bhajan session. This was followed by a welcome address by the Region 5 Chairperson, Kailashbhai Venkat. Kailashbhai set the scene by introducing the theme for the Retreat: 'Art of Living...Art of Life'. This was to be a journey from understanding how to live our lives as ideal human beings in keeping with Swami's teachings (the Art of Living), to realising that we are Divine beings with a great purpose in Life (the Art of Life). We can live our lives with Divinity if we fill every action with LOVE, and who else to follow as an example of both the perfect human and the perfect manifestation of Divinity than our dearest Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

We were then addressed by our National Youth Coordinator, Shyam Jamnadas, who had travelled from London especially to spend the entire weekend with us. He expressed how excited he was to have the opportunity to be with the Youth in Region 5 and how, nationally, this retreat was an important event - the first Youth Retreat to be held in this region. He emphasised the importance for the Youth to focus and put all of our energy into the retreat, thereby realising the full benefit of the experience.

After a welcome dinner and an evening of fun icebreaker games, the Youth were ready to retire for the night.

Saturday: The Art of Living...

Saturday morning started in true Prashanthi spirit in the early hours of the morning; with 21 Omkars, Suprabhatham and a really inspiring Nagasankirtan, where we sang at the top of our voices around the nearby lanes and fields surrounding the house. This was an experience that many of us had not experienced outside of Prashanthi. After this we had a half hour exercise session outdoors led by our very own Youth and commonwealth Gymnast, Mukunda Measuria, who certainly put us through our paces first thing in the morning! As Youth we should be fit and ready from the moment we wake up, so early morning exercise was an opportunity for us to experience the vigour with which we should start each day.

After breakfast we were ready to start the morning of workshops around the theme of the 'Art of Living'.



Swami says that we have to be Happy at three levels: Physically, Mentally and Intellectually. This will enable us to be ideal human beings on our path to realising our Divinity.

Be Happy Physically

Mukunda Measuria worked with Sanjaybhai Vaja on this topic in detail for the retreat. With Sanjaybhai addressing the

Youth via video link from Manchester, they both explained to us the determination, time & dedication they put in to looking after their bodies, and the importance of the physical body on the spiritual path, enabling them to serve others and serve themselves.

We talked about the importance of taking in Satwic food through all of our senses, and the importance of balance in everything we do. There was a fantastic video which showed Swami relaxing with His students telling them about the importance of the ideal healthy routine. In this video Swami was giving guidance on how often to brush our teeth, how many hours to sleep, when to study etc. He was saying how people get up early for prayers but do not shower or even brush their teeth. They wake up, come for prayers and sleep on their neighbour, and their neighbour does not even show a good example or tell them to wake up because they are also sleepy. This shows that our passion and devotion is not there. Swami said that we should not do things by FORCE, it should come from the SOURCE! We should be active, vibrant and show youthfulness in our physical bodies which will also benefit us mentally and spiritually.



Be Happy Mentally

Reena Jamnadas, a Youth from London who is a professional Consultant Business Psychologist and currently studying for her PhD on the topic of 'Wise Leadership in Organisations', facilitated the session on how to be happy mentally. We first looked at what makes a wise and great leader according to the teachings Swami gave to His MBA students which is recorded in the book 'Man Management'. We explored how we can be ideal leaders of our lives at home, at work, in the Sai Organisation, but also ourselves, according to Swami's guidelines.

"I want you to be leaders to protect the world. Leaders like lions, self-reliant, courageous, majestic and just. Lion is the king of animals and I want you to be king among men."

~ Sathya Sai Baba

We contemplated on the strengths which we have and how it is our duty to use our strengths as a gift from God.

"Consider how much talent the Lord has given to people. With that endowment, move forward on the path to the Lord, adhering strictly to the demands of truth. That is the use to which the talent has to be put; that is the purpose of the gift".

~ Dharma Vahini, Chapter 8.

From there we looked at how we can use our true Self-confidence as Divine Beings, and how we can be ideal leaders with positive thinking and by using all of our talents, skills and strengths. As we go through the different phases the Youth go through, we had some practical scenarios about how we can use our Self-confidence as a student, in the workplace and as a householder.

How to be Happy Mentally:

"To get joy and peace, you must develop a pure mind, unsullied by egoism and its children - lust, greed, envy, anger, hatred and the rest. This will be easy when you seek satsang (good company) and perform good deeds, entertain noble thoughts and read inspiring books. More important than all of these is to put into practise, at least one good thought. If you don't practise, the blemishes in the mirror of your heart will not be wiped off and the Lord cannot be reflected therein. Constant practise with full faith will transmute nara (human) to Narayana (Divinity), for you are in essence Divine."

~ Sri Sathya Sai Baba, Thought for the Day in Prasanthi Nilayam, 14th June 2012

Be Happy Intellectually

We first discussed the difference between the Mind and the Intellect. The mind itself is pure, however when it follows the senses without any control, it becomes tainted and leads us to do the wrong action. When the mind is influenced by the Intellect, we know we are doing the right action. Before we do anything we should use our Intellect and power of discrimination. We can do this by asking simple questions:

- Is this thought or action conducive to my spiritual progress?
- Will this thought, word or action hurt me or others?
- What is my intention?
- What are the consequences of my actions? Are they good or bad?

“The Intellect is our reasoning faculty. Using our Intellect means we are using our ability to think about the consequences of our actions. We can do this through the power of discrimination”.

~ Sathya Sai Baba

The majority of this session was spent practising how to actually use our Intellect by discriminating between what is right and wrong, temporary and permanent, good and bad, and real and unreal in some real-life dilemmas. The dilemmas focussed on choosing the right company which can also extend to how to choose whom to marry, how to manage our finances, the attitude to have in a competitive environment at the workplace or university and our Dharma as team members and employees in the workplace.

“One should not hastily rush into action based on the whimsical dictates of the mind. It is only after considering whether the action is good or bad, right or wrong that a person with a disciplined mind acts.”

~ Sathya Sai Baba

To have a disciplined mind means we should focus the mind away from bad things and towards good. We can do this by keeping good company, sense control, ceiling on desires, reading and listening to spiritual things and taking Satwic things through all of our senses. This will make it easier for us to use our Discrimination and be happy using our Intellect.

Sai Apprentice

We spent the afternoon outdoors in the nearby forest. There were two teams: Team A had to use the five elements from nature to make a Lion which represents the Leader, and Team B had to make a Swan which represents the Intellect.

There were sub-challenges which involved races, blind-folded river walking, simple team challenges which required cooperation, patience and determination, all of which enabled the winner to win additional resources to make their lion or swan. Throughout, each team was being observed on how they worked as a team and how individuals contributed to the task.

It was so much fun and was really great to be outdoors in the forest. We came back and had a final pop quiz with five categories: The Sathya Sai Organisation, Swami’s Childhood, Swami’s teachings Swami’s Life and what we had learnt in the three workshops earlier that day.

Saturday ended in high spirits with a spontaneous three hour Bhajan session into the night with everyone involved, including Sai families from the Isle of Man.

Sunday: ...The Art of Life

The Art of Living on Saturday enabled us to explore how to be ideal human beings. The Art of Life was an exploration of how Swami lived His life as an ideal Human being, but also how He taught us to live as Divine beings with Selfless Love.

My Life is My Message

The session was started with a beautiful video created for the Region 5 Youth by the Region 1 Youth, which showed Swami’s life and all the wonderful service projects Swami has inaugurated, the schools He has established, and the beautiful Darshans He gave each day. This session was an exercise to learn how to not only OBSERVE but to REFLECT on Swami’s life.

We did this by listening and reading stories of experiences Swami’s Students have had in the Divine Presence as well as observations we have made of Swami’s routine and life ourselves. When making these observations we should REFLECT by asking ourselves ‘WHY?’ Why did Swami do certain things, and how can we learn from this and practise it in our lives?

We looked at Swami’s life by the different roles that He had on a human level, just as we do in our lives, for example, how was Swami the ideal leader? How was He the ideal guest? How was He the ideal host, parent and friend? How did He interact with people (the same people we also interact with)? How was He loyal? How did He control His senses? There are many examples of How Swami lived just as we do day to day on a human level, which we can learn from in order to behave perfectly, as He did.

We often look at Swami and say, ‘He was Divine that is why He can do all these amazing things, we can’t do that, we’re only human.’ But Swami says that it is just convenient and lazy for us to think this way, everything He did, we are capable of doing as perfect human beings, but also because we too are DIVINE. We can unlock our DIVINITY when we do things with LOVE. That is the essence of Divinity. How is it that Swami can have an abundance of energy without eating or sleeping at all? It is the same as when a mother can keep going without thinking of her own sleep or hunger or needs when her child needs her. It is unconditional and SELFLESS LOVE. We do it on a human level for our children, so this is how Swami also does it on a human level.

It is only when we reflect like this and ask HOW and WHY Swami said and did things that we can really learn from His Life. First we must OBSERVE, then we must UNDERSTAND, after understanding we must REFLECT and finally we must

really CONTEMPLATE on His Life. This is the meaning of 'My Life is My Message'.

Talk by Sri Lathaben Yemmanur

Sri Lathaben, an Alumna from the Sri Sathya Sai University, Anantapur travelled from London with her family to spend the entire weekend with us. She gave the most incredible talk filled with personal and humorous recollections of her days as a student. Each story was beautiful in narration, and had a profound life lesson. This talk was the exact example of how to reflect on an experience to understand the lesson Swami was teaching, just as we had been doing in the session previously.

She spoke about how Swami was the perfect mother during her days as a student, concerned if she was eating enough and well looked after; how he was a strict father, reminding her of her role as a woman and how to behave accordingly. She recalled a humorous story about how she was a flute player in the band and with all the other grand instruments; she would never be noticed or heard. She couldn't even hear herself play! She would joke that being the flute player was the consolation prize. One day, Swami called her name in front of everyone and gifted her with a beautiful watch. As a parent, He knew her needs without her having to ask...this was a consolation prize. Even after graduating, Swami was there for her like a father and kept His promise of getting her married by sending her a beautiful sari for her wedding.

The stories were rich with love and flowed like a stream from her heart to ours. It was an honour and pleasure to hear them.

Our Life is His Message

We had the blessed opportunity to have not one but two Anantapur Students with us throughout the weekend. Sri Lathaben Yemmanur and her class mate Praveenaben Srikantan from Newcastle.

They conducted a workshop on how we can become His message when we really use the five human values, practise ceiling on desires and have firm faith in God.

"Only when we can imbibe the qualities of Bhagawan and put them into practice and illumine...(basically reflection of inner being)...Only then we become His message".

We should also have gratitude towards our parents, teachers and God. All of these want what is best for us and by following their guidance we can truly be exemplary people, and begin to experience making Our life His message.

This first Region 5 Youth Retreat was an amazing opportunity for the Youth in the region to spend quality time with good company, to unite with each other and learn how to practise Swami's teachings on a practical level.

This weekend was the most fulfilling journey to understand the 'Art of Living...Art of Life'. We learnt how to be perfect human beings on a physical, mental and intellectual level and to live as Swami has taught us through His life and Message.

Thank you to Swami for giving us all this opportunity. We pray we can work towards a common goal such as this and make the most of this crucial stage in our life.



Jai Sai Ram
Nishal Govindji
Region 5 Youth Coordinator

Region 6 - Basingstoke Lakcharchana

The lakcharchana (chanting of the Divine name of Bhagawan Baba 100,000 times) organised by Sathya Sai centre of Basingstoke took place at Carnival hall, Basingstoke on Saturday 30th June 2012.

Approximately 200 members of the local community and beyond gathered around 1pm in an indescribable spirit of brotherhood, peace and unity. On the day of the prayer, devotees had decorated the hall and placed photos and flowers on the Altar beautifully. The program was supposed to start at 2.30pm. There was this miracle that took place at the

very time; Vibhuti materialised on a sister's picture. Swami's omnipresence and omnipotence was experienced by all present so, everyone was very happy and excited to join in the vibrant chanting and singing of the Lord's name.



Everyone felt truly uplifted by the experience and the vibrations created by repeating the Lord's name. After the Laksharchana, we had the opportunity to hear some of the inspiring experiences of Mr. Vadgama, who has been conducting the Laksharchana all over the world. We, the Basingstoke Sai centre would like to extend our gratitude and appreciation for his wonderful job. The Laksharchana gave everyone great peace and happiness and the miracles and vibrations ensured that the day was an enjoyable, memorable and blissful Sai experience.

Om Sai Ram.
Basingstoke Sai Centre, Region 6

Region 6 - Free Walk-In Health Awareness Day: Farnborough

For the second year running, a Free Walk-In Health Awareness Day took place at Elles Hall Community Centre in Farnborough on 1st July 2012. This day was organised by the Farnborough centre devotees.

The aims were to provide free health checks and advice to anyone who needed it, to provide information on common health issues and screening programmes, and to spread awareness about various health conditions and community services being offered by the local NHS Trust and Rushmoor Council which people may not know how to access.

The day was officially opened by the Mayor of Rushmoor, Peter Crerar. He said that the event was very interesting and was particularly impressed with the efforts of the large number of volunteers who had offered their time to make the day a success. He had also taken the time to participate in several health checks.



Although the programme was open to all communities living within the area, it was the Ghurkha/Nepalese community which benefitted the most from our services. Many of the visitors could not speak English, which made it difficult for them to communicate their problems with their GPs and other healthcare agencies operating locally. There were volunteer interpreters on hand throughout the day assigned to each professional and thus they provided a valuable service.

In total we had 198 participants who visited, many of whom were between the ages of 60 and 75. The participants were invited to go through various checks such as blood pressure, blood sugar levels, BMI (Body Mass Index) and the health professionals were then able to give tailored advice on how to lead a healthier lifestyle or, when a potentially serious condition was detected, to refer them onto their GPs, Opticians or Dentists to get follow up checks/treatments. In total 60 referral letters were issued to participants relating to various conditions to be further investigated.

As well as the qualified nurses and healthcare assistants administering the tests, there were two GPs, two cardiologists, a gastroenterologist, three dentists and two optometrists providing consultations in their respective fields. All-in-all 986 consultations were given during the day.

At the same time, we worked closely with the local PCT - Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust so that health issues and services particular to the locality can be highlighted. At this event there were representatives from various services namely:

Rushmoor Healthy Living providing information on Diabetes and their Diabetes Self-Help group;
NHS Bowel Cancer Screening Programme, making people aware that everyone aged between 60 and 75 is offered a bowel cancer test every two years and explaining what to do when they receive a test kit in the post.

Presentations were given to visitors in small groups throughout the day, which were translated in Nepalese; Quit 4 Life sharing information on the services they offer to help people give up smoking; Hampshire County Council Safeguarding Adults and the charity Day Break on support available for those suffering domestic abuse and; Hampshire Trading Standards offering advice on how to avoid being subject to scams.

Everyone agreed that the day was a great success and there was a need to outreach to many people in the local community. There are plans to hold similar events every six months in the Farnborough area.



Here are a few comments from our visitors:

"I am very pleased and happy with check-up today. I like to thank all the workers."

"I am very impressed with the doctors who did my check-up. Thank you to all of you."

"This free health check-up programme is very useful for the old people. It needs to be continued. Thank you."

Rudra Ekadashi Homam



With the Divine Blessings of our Lord Sathya Sai, the much anticipated Rudra Ekaadashini Homam was conducted successfully at the sacred and holy premises of the Shri Venkateswara Temple in Birmingham on the 1st of July 2012. The purpose of the Homam, as enunciated by our dear Bhagawan during the many Yagnas performed in His Presence and under His Guidance over the past 5 decades, was to fulfil our lives by offering collective prayers for peace and welfare of the world: For Loka Kalyana. The Homam had another purpose too: To offer our loving gratitude to our dear Lord, Master, Guide and Satguru Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba on the auspicious occasion of Gurupoornima!

Unsurprisingly then, about 2000 devotees travelled from all corners of the UK to participate in this Homam with great fervour, enthusiasm and love. Also, for all those embarking on the 'Sai Jyothi- Journey to the Divine Light' National Pilgrimage 2012 to Prasanthi Nilayam, this was the second Sadhana Meeting day to be spent in intense prayer and contemplation of the Lord.

In the days preceding the event, it had been raining quite incessantly, causing some anxiety amongst the devotees from Region 3 and Region 4 who were taking the lead in organising this event in the grounds of the Temple! But their fervent prayers were indeed answered, much to the joy and relief of everyone involved. The day dawned in bright and warm sunlight, with clear blue skies, gentle winds, and not a single drop of rain! In fact, although rain was forecast for the day by the meteorologists, the cosmic elements were in perfect balance all day long, as if in acknowledgement of the sincere and sacred motives of the assembled gathering of devotees.



Whilst the devotees were seated in an orderly fashion in the gigantic marquee erected especially for this event, and the priests surveyed for the final time all the arrangements made, as bhajans started and the conches blew at 8.30am, Lord Rudra in the form of the white marble Sayeeswara Lingam was brought in a procession by the group of 25 male chanters specially chosen to lead the chanting of Sri Rudram. They started from the Shirdi Sai Mandir in the Temple precincts dressed in their orange robes and chanting various vedic prayers whilst carrying the Lingam under a colourful, traditional, silk umbrella with great reverence, humility and love. As they entered the marquee and proceeded towards the main altar where the Lingam was to be installed for the day, there was a palpable surge in the energy levels in the ambience. The Lingam was carefully installed by the priests on a beautiful pedestal near the main altar.

The main altar was so grand and tastefully decorated that it attracted everyone's attention immediately. Swami's Image at the centre of the Stage was riveting, transporting everyone instantaneously into His Presence! The Stage was also adorned by images of Shirdi Sai and Lord Venkateshwara (the presiding deity of the Temple), and the multifaith Sarvadharm Emblem. The Sayeeswara Lingam was placed on a raised pedestal, with the sacred vessels (Kalasham) containing waters from the holy rivers placed in front of it, and the sacrificial urn (Homagundam) painted in auspicious colours placed after these. The attention to detail and the precision of all these arrangements reminded many of those assembled of Prasanthi Nilayam during the Athi Rudra Maha Yagna indeed!



The priests started the Homam with an invocation to Lord Ganesha, the remover of all obstacles, followed by an ancient ritual to welcome the Lord and then making sixteen customary offerings. This was followed by a brief talk by Dr. Anand Venkataramanan, a Saistudent and currently the Spiritual Coordinator of the Merton Sai Centre in London. Dr. Anand explained the significance of the Sri Rudram chant and the various rituals that would be sequentially performed during the Homam. Rudra Ekadashini (i.e. chanting the Sri Rudram 121 times) is performed by chanting the entire Namakam 11 times prior to each of the eleven verses of Chamakam . The Namakam portion of Rudram offers prostrations to different forms of the Lord while the Chamakam portion of the Rudram seeks for spiritual, mental, emotional and physical benefits.



The Sri Rudram chanting for the Homam was commenced by the priests and was lead by the team of the 25 male chanters and 11 female chanters. These devotees had been studiously learning the Sri Rudram chant over many months, and had attended in preparation for this event many special sessions to perfect their intonations and pronunciation that are so essential whilst chanting. This group consisted of devotees from all age groups including children, and from those belonging to various linguistic, racial, cultural and religious backgrounds. They were accompanied by an ever-growing number of devotees in the gathering who have been learning to chant the Rudram across various parts of the UK. The entire place and its sorrounds was reverberating with the full-throated chants of such a huge number of devotees, and the atmosphere was filled with immensely powerful and purifying spiritual vibrations.

In addition to witnessing the various offerings made to the sacred fire during the Homam, it was perhaps even more spiritually elevating to see the Abhishekam being performed to the Lord in the form of the Lingam. Various couples and families took turns to participate in the Abhishekam worship, as representatives on behalf of the entire gathering. The Rudra Ekadashini was then followed by a Sai Gayathri Homam which allowed each and everyone to participate in the chanting. The Purnahuti that followed brought the 4-hour chanting to a crescendo and marked the completion of the Homam, after which the priests went around sprinkling the holy water on the devotees as a blessing.

As Prasadam (sacred food) was served, various prayers dedicated to Lord Shiva (Ashtakams and Stotrams) were recited by the Lead bhajan and music team. Then followed an inspiring and insightful talk by Dr. Mahesh Narayan who reminded the gathering of the self-purification that one must be engaged in constantly so as to experience our inherent divinity. He quoted extensively from Bhagawan's divine discourses, Bhagawad Gita and Adi Sankara. Mrs. Manorama Prasad, a renowned vocalist from the tradition of Carnatic music and a devotee of Bhagawan Baba, offered a garland of devotional songs by various composers such as Swami Dayananda Saraswathi, Adi sankara, Muthuswami Dikshithar, Saint Purandhara Dasa, Saint Tulsi Das, and so on. She enthralled the audience with her soulful rendering, humility, and devotion. Her rendering of Prema Muditha Manase Kaho and other Abhangs struck a chord in everyone's heart, drenching everyone in joy and bliss. Dr. Kiran Patel, the National Chairperson of the Sai Organisation in UK, then shared his thoughts and experiences from the day. He congratulated the youth who participated actively in this event, and exhorted one and all to participate actively in the Sai Mission, and be firmly established in each one's 'Journey to the Divine Light'. After Mangala Arathi, everyone including the priests, temple officials, and devotees left carrying with them a sense of great inner peace, contentment and joy.

Such a beautiful event is but possible only due to the Grace of the Almighty Lord! All of us are eternally indebted to the Lord for granting us the sacred opportunity to be a part of such special events in our lifetime. Our special thanks to the authorities of the Sri Venkateswara Temple who have been instrumental too in organising this event and in providing us unstinted help and support all through.

- Spiritual Teams, Regions 3 & 4, SSSSO UK



Service Wing - Medical Camps 2011: India

The UK team was involved in marathon medical camps in India in December 2011. In particular the eye team had a huge challenge in trying to organise various sub teams for four consecutive camps within 3 weeks. Below is a synopsis of the camps held by the SSSSO UK (along with volunteers from USA/Europe/India), in December 2011.



Dwarka Eye Camp (11 to 15 December 2011): The SSSSO UK team was invited by Sanatan Sewa Mandal Trust to carry out an eye camp. The team comprised of 6 medical and 6 general volunteers. During the course of the camp around 1,800 patients were seen and 64 referred for cataract surgery. In total 1,463 pairs of glasses were dispensed.

Dwarka General Camp (23 to 25 December 2011): Following the eye camp, two medical professionals (ENT surgeon and Psychiatrist) along with a medical student spent two days at the Sanatan Sewa Mandal Trust for screening children. Around 150 children were seen, and new school clothes were distributed for all children at the campus.

Dang Medical Camp (17 to 22 December 2011): A group of over 50 medical and general volunteers from UK, Germany, USA and India participated in the Gujarat camp. The group was invited by the Manav Kalyan Trust Navsari. The team consisted of volunteers, GPs, Optometrists, Dentists, Gynaecologists, Paediatricians, Nurses, Pharmacists, and other health care professionals. In addition, there was an Ophthalmologist, ENT and Orthopaedic specialist. The host community provided translators, kitchen and registration teams.



The Dang district is one of the poorest districts in the country. Mythologically, it is related to the Dandakaranya of the Ramayana. It is said that during the exile, Rama passed through this area and the folk songs are replete with events from the Ramayana. Although the district has the highest rainfall in Gujarat, it still faces severe water scarcity. The common diseases of the district are scabies, TB, skin diseases and chronic anaemia, and it has the highest prevalence of leprosy in the state. Major health risks are malnutrition, lack of safe drinking water, and poor hygiene and sanitation.

The campsite was located within the grounds of a school for children with visual impairment. Over the course of six days, the team was able to undertake narayan and gram seva, in addition to the medical camp. Around 4,450 patients were seen (with around 7,500 consultations), 27 cataract operations were conducted, and 1,500 spectacles and 15 hearing aids dispensed. Narayan seva was served to over 9,000 people, Around 220 patients were referred to hospitals for further investigation and surgeries, and 4 children were referred to a special needs school - a sister charity of the host in Navsari



During the gram seva, clothes and new woollen knitted blankets for children, new saris for women and blankets for families were distributed. Rucksacks and stationery for the school children were also distributed.

Alike Eye Camp (26 to 28 December 2011): An eye camp was held at Sri Sathya Sai Loka Seva Institution. The

camp was meticulously organised. The students acted as translators; they showed a lot of enthusiasm, talent and love. The SSSSO UK team with the support of local optometrists and ophthalmologists were we able to provide support to more than 2,000 patients.

Mysore Eye Camp (30 to 31 December 2011): An eye camp was held in conjunction with Saragur Vivekananda Hospital, in Mysore. Around 420 patients were seen.

Summary: It was truly a fantastic experience to watch the camps unfold and develop, and see people “change” in such a small timeframe. We were able to listen, understand, empathise and where possible give direction, advice or medicine to those who were suffering from illness, hardship and poverty. We were constantly reminded of Bhagwan’s immortal messages of “Love all, Serve all” in order to realise the divinity within us. Although logistics were extremely challenging, all this was only possible with the blessings and immense love of Bhagwaan Baba.

Sri Sathya Sai Service Organisation United Kingdom

Youth Wing - Bhajan Book iPhone application developed by one of our UK Youth



On the day of Guru Purnima, July 3rd, a Bhajan Book iPhone application developed by one of our UK Youth was launched.

This application was developed by Ketheeswaran Saiganesh; Youth Co-ordinator for Wimbledon Sai Centre in Reigon 1 and member of the Sai Information Technology and Arts (SITA) team under the Service Wing. He decided to create his first iPhone application for his Final Year Dissertation as part of his Multimedia and Internet Systems degree at City University, London.

Saiganesh created the application as a loving offering to Swami and with Bhagwan's grace, this app is now available for free with worldwide distribution on the Apple App Store, bringing great benefit to devotees who use an iPhone/iPad worldwide.

Not only does this application offer the lyrics of various Bhajans, it also gives us the meanings of the Bhajans as well.

Saiganesh also took his own initiative to contact RadioSai and with the love and support from the brothers at RadioSai, the application was granted permission to link to their website, to offer audio of each Bhajan.

The Bhajan book app can be downloaded on the link below, or simply by typing 'Sai Bhajan Book' in Apple app store. <http://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/sai-bhajan-book/id537301359?mt=8&ls=1>

The Bhajan Book is a working progress, and updates will occur regularly to add more Bhajans. If you would like to see a particular Bhajan added or if you have any suggestions for improvements please email bhajanbook@bonsaientertainments.com

Lovingly,
Shyam Jamnadas
National Youth Co-ordinator

Youth Wing - Sathya Sai Leadership Training Programme [SSLTP] - Module 3

"Only the person who practices Sathya, Dharma, Santhi, Prema and Ahimsa, who experiences joy there from and shares that joy with others, can be called a leader" - (Foreword: Sai Baba's Mahavakya on Leadership, by Gen. M.L. Chibber)

The third module of the 2012/13 Sathya Sai Leadership Training Programme [SSLTP] was an all day event hosted by the

SSLTP committee at Woodford Park in Woodley, Reading, on Saturday 16th June 2012. The day began with the committee and cohort equipping themselves with poised pens and open minds, not forgetting a most important warm cup of tea to hand. We were joined on the day by our National Youth Coordinator, Shyam Jamnadas.

Uncle Sri Kandiah orchestrated the day's events, guiding us first through a summary of the previous two modules to refresh our minds and clarify our thoughts. We were then asked to individually share which of our researched authors we admired most for their literature; or a leader who stood out for us with their teachings which we held closely to our hearts. It is interactive activities such as these, where the group shares their experiences and lessons learned that make the programme unique. Although there is an underlying focus which we are drawn back to, there is also a natural progression in the dialogue through each contribution made, which is miraculous as it is these inputs which answer questions we may have been shy to ask or even alleviate qualms within.

Before lunch, Uncle Dushy Selvaratnam walked us through a review of our assignments which were set following week two of the programme. His discussion centred on presentation and critical analysis, this involves leaders remaining impartial in their judgement by looking at both sides of the coin, regardless of the argument at hand. This personally proved difficult, as our assignments challenged us to write about leaders who we aspire to and what values they portray which in turn inspire us.

Through our working lunch, each student spent time with their mentor to receive individual feedback on their essays and specific areas which we could better in our next assignment. Furthermore they assessed how we contributed in the prior modules not just in terms of context but delivery too and most importantly, both where and how we can improve.

Following a glorious lunch, we returned to group discussion which retained a real business-like tone with models such as the Total Quality Management and case studies including John Lewis and the NHS coming to play. The programmes relevance to everyday life was exemplified when we considered hurdles which most workers come across at some point in their careers including 'managing your boss', staff and peer relations and career progression of yourself and other individuals. The committee supplemented this by focusing on our role in the work place and how we must network to achieve two-way awareness, this is being conscious of things happening within the office and also making your presence and capability known to others. The committee would also provide us with advice in each of these areas which was typically founded by the five human values, Love, Peace, Right Conduct, Truth and Non Violence to show how relevant Swami's teachings are in our daily lives, after all, "Duty is God ; Work is Worship" (Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. V111).

The days learning ended with a group session on the role of managers and leaders but more importantly their distinguishable features. The programme drew to a close in typical fashion with two beautiful Bhajans followed by Aarti.



Punit Ghumra, Region 1
(SSLTP Candidate 2012/13)

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