



## October 2012 Edition

### Quote

*Embodiments Of Divine Atma! There is a limit for everything in this world. There is nothing without limit. In fact, the world is a 'limited company'. What will happen to the limited company if it violates its limits? Hence, everyone should conduct himself within his limits. When a doctor prescribes a particular medicine to a patient, he also indicates the dosage. If the patient takes the medicine without regard to the dosage and exceeds the limit, he may contract another disease. Similarly, God has set a limit for every individual. But modern man has limitless desires. It is necessary that he keeps his desires within limits. He will be put to great danger if he exceeds this limit out of his ego. Whether it is the individual or society or the world, all should observe the prescribed limits.*

~ Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

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## Editorial

Jai Sai Ram to You All,

After months of prayers and Sadhana, our dearest brothers and sisters are at the Abode of Supreme Peace, Prashanthi Nilayam for the UK Pilgrimage. As you read this, many of our UK devotees will be embarking on their 'Journey to the Divine Light - Sai Jyothi'.

After the wonderfully uplifting 9 hour Sai Smaran bhajans last week in Watford, we all experienced a small taste of the glory of being in Swami's Presence. The final pilgrimage meeting also took place, affording everyone to meet each other and jointly change their focus on Swami. Many of the pilgrims, some for the first time will have reached Puttaparthi and will be sitting at Bhagawan's Lotus feet. What an opportunity to experience bathing in the grace and divinity of being in His physical presence.

October marks a special date in our Beloved Bhagawan's Mission, Avatar Declaration Day. On 20th October 1940 the young boy Sathyanarayana Raju revealed to the world his Divinity, saying "I am no longer your Sathya. I am Sai." The sister-in-law came from the kitchen, only to be blinded by the splendour of the halo around Baba's head! He addressed her, "I am going; I don't belong to you; Maya (delusion) has gone; My Bhaktas (devotees) are calling Me; I have My Work; I can't stay here any longer."

In the very place where Swami resided for over eight decades, the pilgrims from the UK will be preparing to offer their love and gratitude to Him.

October also marks another period of spiritual activity in the form of Dasara (Navaratri), focusing our minds on our Divine Mother. Bhagawan has explained the festival as the celebration of good over evil. This evil is our 'six demons' lust, anger, attachment, greed, pride and jealousy within us. At the same time, Puttaparthi and its surrounding villages will witness the Divine activity of Grama Seva. At a physical level, Swami used to look over all the preparations to the minute detail. He would personally select the items to be given as Prasad to the villages and enquire on the progress of the project. This year, some of our youth will have the golden opportunity to participate in Grama Seva, and undertake His work under His supervision. An unforgettable experience and an opportunity of a life time, going to surrounding areas and offering Swami's Prasadam (clothes and food) as symbol of Swami's Love to the villagers.

We await the experiences from the UK devotees when they return, and hearing the gems of experiences from them. Be sure to keep an eye on our website for regular updates <http://www.srisathyasai.org.uk/national-programmes/nationalpilgrimage2012/>

Finally, we are coming towards that time of the year when we celebrate the Avatars Birthday. Swami's 87th National Birthday Celebrations will take place on Saturday 24th of November. Details of the venue, speakers and programme will be passed on to all the centre chairs, so be sure to look out for them. Further information will be sent out later this week.

Jai Sai Ram

Ketan Gokani - Region 4 Chairperson



## Final Pilgrimage Meeting

During the Sai Smaran bhajans held in London on the 29th September, the pilgrims embarking on "Sai Jyothi - Journey to the Divine" trip met for the last Sadhana meeting before they left for the Abode of Highest Tranquillity; Prashanti Nilayam. The group had met on three earlier occasions, and came together another time to share their experiences and insights with regards the Sadhana programme that they had been following over the past 5 months.



The afternoon started with an introduction by our National chair and fellow Pilgrim Dr Kiran Patel, who reminded us of the grand opportunity bestowed upon us by our Lord Sai, as without His divine Call, no one is granted access to His Abode. We were reminded of Swami's words that advise us to focus our minds and hearts on contemplating and imbibing the supremely spiritual vibrations of His divine grace whilst in Prashanti Nilayam. Dr Veeru Rao the National Spiritual coordinator then gave us our detailed schedule in Prashanti Nilayam, reminded us of the importance of our individual preparedness to receive the divine, and some tips on how to maintain our focus firmly on Bhagawan. By undertaking the four sadhana activities, we aim to become the "empty pot" facing the right direction, so that we too can be filled by the showers of divine grace. The four activities introduced in our first meeting on the 3rd of June:

1. Likhitha Nama Japam (Om Sai Ram 100,000 times)
2. Study of 5 Vahinis - Sandeha Nivarini, Prema Vahini, Dharma Vahini, Dhyana Vahini, Sathya Sai Vahini
3. Learn Chants - Swami's Ashtotharam, Suprabatham, Niravana Shathakam
4. Ceiling on Desires - to offer for group service activities whilst on the Pilgrimage.

"The first task of a Saadhaka is the cultivation of enthusiasm. Through that enthusiasm, he can derive any variety of Ananda. Never get inflated when you are praised, never get deflated when you are blamed. Be a spiritual Lion, regardless of both. One must oneself analyse and correct one's faults, this is most important."  
- Bhagawan Baba, Prema Vahini p113

Mrs Nadia Eley, the chairperson of Region 6, then took us through some of the musical offerings being prepared for the pilgrimage and one of our youth members, Dr Aran Nagendran, guided us through the group songs.



This meeting brought about a culmination of many months of preparations for this year's National Pilgrimage. For me it created an internal excitement and yearning that you experience when you feel you are returning home after a very long time. Going back to The Source and seeing your Mother can only fill your heart with Love and lasting peace when you get there. There is no doubt that the sadhana has focussed our minds and our very being on the Glory of Bhagawan and prepared us for the upcoming journey to His lotus Feet, an experience which will no doubt be remembered for a lifetime.

Sai Youth

## Happy and Holy Dasara

The victory of good over evil is an essential step for a spiritual aspirant in his or her eternal quest for divinity. It is only our constant efforts to subjugate evil thoughts, words and deeds, and our sincere endeavours to sublimate the inner demonic tendencies of lust, greed, anger, pride, envy and delusion that bring us closer and closer to the divinity inherent within us, and thus to the permanent culmination of this quest.

The celebration of the Dasara or Navarathri (10 day or 9 nights) festival signifies such victory for a spiritual aspirant and encourages one to march ahead with steadfast faith, enthusiasm and love. Our beloved Lord, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba explains that the triune of Goddesses Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswathi- the chief deities are worshipped during these nine nights- are only the physical forms given to the subtle and divine potencies latent within all of us. They symbolise the Will power (Ichchaa Shakti), the power of purposeful action (Kriya Shakti), and the power of discrimination (Jnana Shakti). Thus during this festival, the spiritual aspirant focuses all attention on converting one's will power into a deep yearning for God; on harnessing one's power of purposeful action into a force for engaging in divine actions; on developing the power of discrimination into the Divine Itself.

'Therefore, the Navarathri festival is observed by contemplating on God for ten days, cleansing oneself of all impurities, in order to experience the divinity within. The penultimate day of the festival is dedicated to what is termed "worship of weapons (ayudha puja). The weapons to be worshipped are the divine powers in man. When the divine is worshipped in this way, one is bound to progress spiritual'

-Bhagawan Baba, 14.10.1994

For Sai devotees, Dasara festival is also associated with the great burst of special activities at Prasanthi Nilayam over the years, and the heightened spiritual fervour that one experiences in its precincts. In the early years (1940s and 1950s), Bhagawan would give special and unique Darshans during the enthusiastic procession through the village of Puttaparthi. In 1961, Bhagawan inaugurated the special 7-day Yagna called the 'Veda Purusha Sapthaha Jnana Yagna' that has since been conducted every year during this festival. In later years, Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha (Conference of great vedic scholars, poets, and logicians), All India Conferences, Narayana Seva (feeding the poor) and many other such activities were initiated by Bhagawan.

Also, the final day of Dasara, renowned as the Vijaya Dasami Day (10th day of Victory) is special for all devotees. In Prasanthi Nilayam Bhagawan would preside over the 'Poornahuthi' ( full and final offering) of the Yagna, and later sprinkle the sacred water on the multitudes of devotees assembled there who yearned for this divine benediction. Vijayadasami is also the day when our Lord in His previous Incarnation as Bhagawan Sri Shirdi Sai Baba took Mahasamadhi. This event which has been recorded as Seemollanghan has been referred to by Bhagawan many times in the past. Recently in 2007, commencing His Divine Discourse on Vijayadasami day, Bhagawan revealed an incident, wherein He had called Lakshmi Bai, an ardent devotee, and gave her two coins on which the date of His passing was inscribed!

'Embodiments of Divine Love! All the festivals of Bharatiyas have been designed to promote divine love among the people. It is to confer such love on the people that the Lord incarnates on earth. He Himself demonstrates how love should be expressed. He showers His love and teaches everyone how to love. Hence, experience this love and joy in your life and live in peace'

Bhagawan Baba, 18.10.1991

**Dr. Veeru Mudigonda**  
National Spiritual Coordinator

## Region 1 - Young Adults Programme: Integrating Spirituality Into Business

On Friday 21st September 2012, at the Sai Mandir, the youth of Region 1 were fortunate to an interactive session, with Brother Rishi Patel and Brother Thiru Nagappan, on the topic "Integrating Spirituality into Business." This was a particular topic of interest amongst our young budding Entrepreneurs, and was widely anticipated by those who attended.

Brother Rishi began the session with a brief introduction on themselves, and their role within their business, "Vedanta Trading"- which is a financial trading company launched in June 2010. Aside the financial aspects to the company, Brother Rishi introduced the key elements and practices followed by Vedanta Trading. Drawing on Swami's words on His youth being like Lions, Brother Rishi spoke of the need for youth to be like the Lions that stand majestically upon the veranda in Prashanthi Nilayam, and how one must focus on the present, the moment and the now, to fulfil one's duty.



Brother Thiru then spoke of how within their company's day-to-day running, they integrate spirituality for the body, mind and soul. Beginning with prayers, reading of Holy Scriptures and meditation in the morning to focus the mind, they listen to vedam and prayers throughout the morning. This would be followed by exercise before lunch to maintain

energy, and at the end of each day, a session for reflection and contemplation. It was particularly striking the emphasis placed upon these practices, within their company, despite working in an often high-pressured environment. Brother Thiru also discussed the importance of detachment and surrendering every action to God.

Putting the teachings into practice, we were then asked to act out role plays, based upon differing scenarios from; bullying at school, dealing with a difficult boss and coping with peer pressure. This was followed with a question and answer session. We are grateful to Brother Rishi and Brother Thiru for their thought-provoking and insightful session on "Integrating Spirituality into Business."

**Sai Ram**  
**Aberamy Gnaneswaran**  
**Region 1 Youth Co-ordinator**

### Region 3 - Youth Sathsang: Is Prayer A Myth Or Does Actually Work?

Region 3 youth gathered on Saturday 8th September for a deeply insightful workshop on the subject of prayer, focussing on:

1. Critically examining a deeply important aspect of spiritual practice
2. What is the definition of prayer?
3. If prayer works then what are the timeless spiritual laws that govern its operation and manifestation?
4. The spiritual laws which must be applicable to every human being as they have all been caste in the body of flesh and blood
5. Unless you have tried and tested methods and the spiritual laws and cultivated your own direct personal spiritual experience then how can you be certain that prayer works?
6. This was followed by guided meditation and practice and subsequent private one-to-one tuition upon personal request.

The session was facilitated by brother Gurmail, former Region 3 Chair.

The teachings were built upon parallels drawn upon from various faiths and how techniques, principles and spiritual laws have more recently been underpinned by HIS guidance. For example we managed to even draw upon the simplest of Swami's teachings and establish their importance; Swami's first 9 Point Code Of Conduct is "Daily Meditation and Prayer", but how many of us easily make the mistake of thinking it is Prayer then Meditation...but as Gurmail Uncle empathised that if we can learn how to meditate first (the key message given by the image of Lord Shiva, Buddha, and Guru Nanak) then this will help us immensely in cultivating direct personal spiritual experience.

We also focused on the scientific aspect of prayer, was there any actual scientific research done to help us improve our understanding? We touched on the water studies by Mr. Imoto and looked at the importance of thought and how they have an effect on our everyday lives and how this contributes towards the manifestation of prayers. We also managed to carry out two guided mediation and prayer sessions in the course of the day to enable us to practice techniques.

All in all the day proved to be full of critical enquiry and very lively discussion. Feedback received from those who attended and applied the techniques confirmed that they had benefited from the session, as evidenced by their own direct experiences.

**Mali Almeida**  
**Region 3 Youth Co-ordinator**

### Region 4 - A Journey with Sai: A Divine Awakening

Koti Koti Pranaam to my dear Swami  
Pranaam to the inherent divinity within us all  
I offer myself at your lotus feet Sai Maa. Let my thoughts, words and deeds be of only of your accord.

It is with the utmost humility and love I share with you, my dear Sai family, a journey filled with precious moments. A journey that has cultivated the person I am today; my personal journey with Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. I am sure as my Sai family, you understand me wholly when I say it is now more than ever I am reminded of the cherished moments with Swami, who for me is the air by which I breathe, the light by which I see. And so it is with an open heart, I share with you these precious moments of my life that I know will bring the joy of your own precious moments with Swami to heart and mind.

It is beyond the realms of my knowledge that I can even begin to state where my journey started with my beloved Baba. My journey has no start and has no end. I have known Swami all my life. I was born on Monday July 15th, on which day my mother had a dream where Shirdi Sai Baba appeared to her. She depicted the dream to feel very real, where a serpent was taking me away. Shirdi Baba rescued me by tearing it in half, and handing me to the care of my mother. I have always felt the love and protection of Swami from birth.

I was born in a family of Sai devotees, going back to my great grandfather who was fortunate to be in the presence of Swami in Swami's youth. And so I naturally grew up with the belief of Sathya Sai Baba as God, just as Krishna and Rama. Hearing about Swami all my life, going to Balvikas (SSE) from the age of 3 and having the Sai Organisation as my family, I have known no other way of life. I realise now how much grace Swami has showered upon me. It is almost like an epiphany has dawned upon me within these spiritually testing times; the epiphany that in this Kali Yuga we have had the darshan, sparshan & sambhasham with Bhagawan! The opportunity, to experience the Divine on this humanistic level! As humans it is more comprehensible to experience God on our humanistic level, and how kind our Swami has been to grant us opportunities to liberate ourselves through Bhakti Yoga as described in the Bhagavad Gita.

We can never understand God fully, as the Bhagavad Gita states 'nethi nethi nethi'. God is not this nor that...He is indescribable. And so I am humbled and truly grateful to the good karmas, the grace and love of God, that has not only given me the belief in Swami, but to love and experience God Incarnate. Experiencing that when I need a friend, He is my best friend, that when I need love, He acts as a mother, and when I need strength and protection, He acts like a father.



1991: Swami blessing a plate of sweets from Bijal

With Swami's grace I share with you a few highlights of my journey so far. As I mentioned, Swami has been the guiding force for my family, showing His Omnipresence always. I recall a rather challenging time in our lives when my father was diagnosed with cancer. One particular night he was in agonising pain. I remember my younger sister and I praying to Swami to help; my mother in absolute surrender to Swami. That night in our Mandir room, we were blessed with Swami's Love. A stream of free-flowing vibhuti, with tablets of vibhuti poured out from Satyanarayan Bhagawan's glorious photo. Later that year, 1995, Swami granted the Leicester Centre group with two interviews. Although on trips previously Swami had interacted with me, this was my first opportunity for sambhashanam with Swami. It is in this interview Swami opened my eyes to His Omnipresence. Swami lovingly spoke to my mother about my father and said, "Voh bahut goli khatha hai (he takes too many tablets)". When I try to derive meaning from this, for me, Swami was awakening the spiritual knowledge that God is always with you. It is with Swami's grace my father survived his battle with cancer: cancer cancelled!

Sitting in the inner room of the interview, I recall gazing at Swami and His loving gestures. Suddenly, out of nowhere Swami looked at me and asked me, "How old are you?" I kneeled up quickly folding my hands. I replied, "9 Swami" Swami then asked me, "How do you know this?" I looked at my mother at this point and said, "My mother Swami" Swami replied, "Good". I was just about to sit back down when Swami asked me, "What subjects do you study?" I was in primary school then and so I remember stating all the subjects. Swami then moved his head in the Indian way side to side in rotation as he does and said "Good". I have always asked myself why Swami asked me these questions, was Swami asking my spiritual age? Swami many years before this told my mother to send me to him to study. Oh how I wish I did! We are all Sai's children, let us make him proud and let every atom of our body resound Swami's legacy of Love.

With Swami's grace, Prashanti Nilayam has become my haven, my spiritual battery recharge. For my family and I, Prashanti Nilayam is our annual spiritual pilgrimage. It is our spiritual holiday with Swami. So many memories have enriched my life. Embedded in my heart forever are innumerable pilgrimages, musical performances, choirs, which are but opportunities to interact with Sai Maa, to feel Swami's love. The earning and craving for Swami's love is a never ending journey.

How a father may take his child to a basketball game, Swami too did this for His children like a father in 2007 at the World Youth Conference: 'Ideal Sai Youth: Messengers of Sai Love'. How blessed I felt to be able to watch a basketball game with God! To watch plays and performances with God as if it is normality to go to the theatre with God, only with our Sai!

My dear Sai family, gathered here in satsang, our love for Swami, our experiences with Swami will, and is taking us on a quest of inner inquiry that is transforming us. Let me now share with you my most precious memory. In 2004, I was fortunate to join a pilgrimage to Prashanti, Sai Anugraha. This memory teases my heart forever, as I crave everyday to be like Friday August 13th 2004, the most auspicious day of my life! Coming out for Darshan an hour or so earlier than usual, Swami gave an unexpected interview with his infamous words of "Go!". I wish I could share every detail of this day, and I ask for forgiveness that I have had to omit so many of the special heart touching details of this trip.

Swami walked into the interview room in hand with one of the Sai students, and sat down amongst us in His chair. The atmosphere was heavenly, absolutely relaxed as if friends were meeting for a catch up. I asked Swami, "Swami pillow?" I picked up the pillow placed beside the chair, so that Swami may rest his Lotus Feet on it. Swami replied softly, "No pillow". "Are you sure Swami?" I asked again. "Yes, I am fine, see...", Swami replied, raising and wiggling His Feet (it was during this time Swami had hurt his hip), and we all giggled. This fun-loving atmosphere continued as my dear Sai sisters spoke to Him, and stated how we loved how Swami played with his hair when the wind gracefully blew at it. Swami giggled and laughed with us. Sambhashanam with Swami continued. I found myself sitting at Swami's Lotus Feet. I watched Him intently as He interacted with all asking "Kya samachar? (what's the news)". I asked Swami, "Swami, how do we achieve Your grace?" I will never forget this moment. Swami intently leaned forward, looked into my eyes, and replied softly but affirmatively, "My Grace is always with you". The intense loving look Swami gave directly into my eyes remains embedded within me forever. Swami then leaned back into the chair and spoke more about Grace in an even

softer tone. Many other questions Swami lovingly answered, which in retrospect have given me a lot of clarity in my life.

As the interview came to an end, Swami reminded us all that He is with us always. He stated that He had taken the pain of a devotee, and so the right side of his Divine leg was weakened. Swami repeatedly emphasised He was fine. As Swami rose out of the chair, He blessed me and another sister with the opportunity to touch His Divine hand, to assist Him in standing up. God does not need us; it is we who need God. I held Swami's right hand with mine, while my other hand held onto the back of Swami's arm. As Swami rose, I remember thinking in my deepest of thoughts, "Swami you're a bit heavy...", just as the thought barely crossed my mind, Swami lovingly looked at me and said, "See, I am light". Swami showed me He is within me, aware of my every thought. Whenever you think you are alone, know 'God is within you, above you, around you, beside you, below you, you are never alone'. As I walked beside Swami, He held onto my hand tightly whenever my grip loosened. This reminded me that no matter what, Swami will never let you go. Even when you start to stray in this illusion of life, He will hold onto you, bringing you back to the road of righteousness.

Bless us Swami, Your children, to rise! Rise in the name of Sai, in the name of Love, to embrace and engross in the mission of Sai!

Pranaam,

**Bijal Sisodia**

Leicester Central Sai Centre, Region 4

## Region 4 - Music Workshop

Saturday 22nd September 2012

45 people from across Region 4 attended the Music Workshop held at Soar Valley College in Leicester. The programme began with Yashwant Patel a "Transformational Coach" by profession who spoke on the spiritual significance of taking God's Name, especially through group devotional singing, its power and its importance in counter acting the negativity that exists on Mother Earth today. For music and singing to come from the heart, confidence is vital and this in turn will be possible if we feel worthy and have a feel good factor about ourselves.

Next came Tofail Ahmed an artist with phenomenal talent in classical music, who has trained under Ustad Sabri Khan, Ustad Mussharat Ali Khan and many other music maestros. He has performed at many prestigious events, staging Ghazals, Thumri, bhajans and Sufiyana Kalams. He introduced the morning raga, the romantic raga and the evening raga by singing OM. This was followed by an amusing interactive session of "Vocal Keep Fit" - when we had to repeat several patterns of the 7 notes of Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Na, Ni, Sa. Most of us ran out of puff trying to keep up with him! These vocal exercises would be very useful at the beginning of each bhajan session, to help singers reach scales, intonation and strength in voice.



After Lunch we had Kadie Ann Williams from Emmanu-El Apostolic Gospel Academy who kept us enthralled with her talk about the history of Gospel music- fusion of African Rhythms and Christian teachings. I never knew that some of the Gospel songs were actually coded messages used by the American slaves as communication between themselves. She shared the experiences of members of her choir who had come from very difficult backgrounds and how the power of music and prayer had totally changed their lives. The members of the choir were now one big family, helping and inspiring each another.

The youth had prepared a stimulating interactive PowerPoint presentations based on Swami's Teachings about bhajans. We learnt about an experiment conducted by scientists on the effect of various types of music on plants. Next the audience had to translate the meaning of given bhajans and give a view on the mood of the composer who wrote the bhajan. I learnt something that I never knew before- Swami has suggested that we practise a bhajan 100 times before we sing it at the centre so that the pronunciation, the words, the meaning and the feeling get engraved in our hearts!!

**A very inspiring and enjoyable day!!**

**Nalini Randall**

[Music Workshop Article](#)

This year on 22nd September 2012, we were given a wonderful opportunity to take part in a Musical Workshop. Over 40 devotees from Region 4 gathered to embrace the significance of music and bhajan singing. The day started with uplifting bhajans, followed by an introduction by Jenni Robson - our Region 4 Spiritual Coordinator.

We were then given a talk highlighting the spiritual significance of taking God's Name by Yashwant Uncle from Birmingham. He spoke about the importance of devotion and the impact that music has on the body, mind and spirit. It was an inspiring talk that left us all with a wonderful message to take home! We were then introduced to another guest speaker, Tofail Ahmed who is an independent music professional. He explained about the octaves on a harmonium and compared the way the symbol "Aum" is written to the way the "Aum" is actually pronounced and recited.

In the afternoon, we had interactive sessions which were led by brothers Bhavin Solanki and Mukund Prajapati. They took us through a presentation about the importance of Bhajan singing. We discussed why we sing Bhajans, how many times we should practise Bhajans, knowing the meaning of the Bhajans and most of all why we should sing from the heart. They showed us a video of Swami to make the meaning of the messages clearer. They emphasised that it is always important to sing from our hearts to Swami and not just sing for the sake of singing.



Our final guest speaker for the day was Kadie Ann, who was from the Gospel Choir in Leicester. She was brilliant and showed us how the choir has transformed their group and how we should remove the bad by sing good. She then finished off with a lovely song from the choir named, "Swing Low Sweet Chariot". The song was about ways in which the slaves communicated without their Masters knowing.

From this music workshop, we have learnt many different things. One being what effect music can have on each and every one of us and also how it has a miraculous effect on everything around us including nature. Overall, it was a very inspirational day for everyone and we all had a spiritual and wonderful day. We definitely look forward to the next music workshop.

"Where ever My glory is sung, I installed Myself there." - Baba

Karishma Tanna & Trisha Patel

## Region 4 - Salcey Forest Service

On the morning of Sunday September 23rd 2012, having previously checked the weather forecast I was well prepared, wearing warm clothes and suitable footwear. A group of youth and adults met outside Soar Valley College prepared for a day of outdoor service. We went on to the minibus and sang lovely bhajans which were relaxing and spiritually uplifting, therefore giving us the best start to the day's activities. We arrived at Salcey Forest where we were served 'garam garam chai' (hot hot tea) to boost our energy levels. Jo Roberts from the Forest welcomed us all and assigned us the task of cleaning up a secluded area of the forest where trees had previously been cut down. The area had lots of branches and other debris which we cleared up to allow for new plants to grow. We started on the work by getting into teams and making chains to allow us to pass the branches along quickly. Jo started a fire and as the flame grew as the day progressed. The entire team worked for the hole day and it was great to see everyone getting together and working well in the name of God, just as the Swami would want us to.



We had a fantastic dinner served by the local devotees which included 'channa' (chickpea curry), rice and pasta. One of the uncles from Birmingham enlightened us with teachings of Mother Nature and how we can apply these lessons to our daily lives. For example, we were surrounded by many tall trees which were standing tall and straight and reaching for

the sunlight despite all the obstacles they faced. They had not let anything stop them from growing taller and reaching higher. As we were throwing the branches into the fire, we did not hold back and threw them in as quickly as possible. We can apply the same attitude to sadhana; just dive in and not hold back or be scared about what may happen, just throw those negative qualities in and move on.



All in all it was an uplifting and spiritual day and as Baba says, "Hands that help are holier than lips that pray".

**Bijal Desai**  
Region 4

## Region 5 - Young Adults Program: Active Service

This month Region 5 had an 'active service' Young Adults Program (YAP). A few youth from Manchester and Bradford arranged to visit an elderly care home in Manchester; to simply enjoy the company of the elderly in the care home and assist the staff with lunchtime duties. This was done in unity with Greater Manchester Sai Centre elders who were happy to join the YAP.

During the YAP we had the opportunity to hear the life stories of some of the residents. This is always an eye opening experience and feedback from the youth was that it can be quite an emotional experience. It is an opportunity for us to show patience, love, compassion and understanding towards the elderly in our community who have made the place where we live, what it is today. We left with a sense of gratitude to our elders and admiration for what they have experienced in life.

We pray that Swami continues to open our hearts and minds to new experiences. With these experiences we can strengthen our heart-to-heart connection with new people. We can come to realise how our lives are entwined in so many ways, and feel the sense of unity. With this unity we pray our love grows.

**With Sai Love,**  
**Nishal Govindji**  
Region 5 Youth Co-ordinator

## Region 7 - Cheltenham Bhajan Workshop

On Sunday 9th September, the Cheltenham Group hosted a Bhajan Workshop facilitated by the Region 7 music team. The music team has been visiting groups around the region, to inspire and support efforts to increase participation in group devotional singing, which remains a much loved activity.

During the training workshop, Brother Mahendra Patel, our Regional Spiritual Coordinator very beautifully reminded us of the disciplines and guidelines given by Bhagawan to bhajan singers. Brother Nishith Patel shared personal experiences to illustrate the importance of maintaining focus on Bhagawan whenever engaged in group devotional singing. He also encouraged singers to regularly practice songs so as to maintain the rhythm, melody and feeling at all times, thereby enhancing the bhajan experience for all who attend.

Our lead bhajan singers, derived great benefit from the session, in particular the opportunity to practice bhajans under the guidance of the team. We were most grateful to Zita and Richard who travelled from Wales; they taught the group two new English songs, which were thoroughly enjoyed.

We were drawn closer to our Lord by the Divine ambience created through the singing of His Name and look forward to practicing all that we learnt during the workshop. I would certainly recommend that all Groups participate in this most useful and soul stirring workshop.

As always we offer our gratitude at the Divine Lotus feet of our Lord, for this opportunity.

Jai Sai Ram.

**Yashoda Karadiad,**  
Chair Cheltenham Sai Group.

## Sai Smaran Bhajans

On an early morning of Saturday 29th September, the scene had been set! In the spirit of unity devotees from across the UK, united in adoration and love for our Beloved Bhagawan, in Watford, London for a second instalment of 'Sai Smaran' - a loving offering of Bhajans, expressing our gratitude at the divine lotus feet of our Beloved Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

The Bhajans also formed part of the sadhana for the UK Pilgrims about to embark on a wonderful spiritual journey to Prashanti the following week. The final Pilgrimage meeting also took place at the venue 2-430pm.



The programme initially commenced with a short talk by bro. Karthik (Region 3 Spiritual Co-ordinator), in which he spoke of how Bhagawan Baba had begun His mission with a Bhajan itself - Manasa Bhajare Guru Charanam - and how one must conduct themselves whilst performing this sacred act of Naamasmaran; the equal importance of all three aspects of Raagam (Melody), Taalam (Rhythm) and Bhaavan (Devotion) being present in the singer. He reflected on how devotees coming together on this day in humble and sincere prayer in itself is a miracle, and how fortunate we all are for being a part of the divine legacy of our Bhagawan.

As the sacred vibrations of Namakam (Rudram) chanting permeated the hall, we were all reminded of the sacred ambience of Prashanti Nilayam, and more importantly, of what we were next in store for. The Bhajans commenced with a Carnatic (South Indian Classical) Musical offering, in which both flute and tabla combined in stilling ones mind, in preparation for the divine task ahead, in which one would be focussed and prepared to receive the Divine Master in our hearts. With a wonderful collection of videos depicting Swami's Darshan, Life & Legacy being projected on screen, the next 9 hours were filled with wondrous and splendid bhajan singing!



The sincerity and devotion which exuded through the Bhajans filled the room with divine vibrations. Devotees sang in unison, offering their gratitude to our Lord. This love and unity also was evident as the youth and service wings worked together in serving devotees refreshments throughout the day. As the Bhajans came to a close, there was a stillness and profound silence. All that could be felt was Swami's divine presence through the divine vibrations created throughout the nine hours of loving and devoted singing.



The night itself would be remembered for being a 'full moon night' (Poornima) - the beauty of the moon, captivating the mind, and installing a sense of calmness and peace... the very same effect displayed by the wonderful bhajan singing throughout those 9 divine hours, in constant contemplation of our beloved Bhagawan.

With all our hearts, we offer our deepest gratitude to Bhagawan for His Love and Blessings, and pray to Him to enable us to continue serve as worthy instruments in His Divine Mission.

Kapil Dev Prasher  
Region 3

## Service Wing - Sai Ideal Healthcare Seminar 2012

With the Grace of our Lord, the second annual Sai Ideal Healthcare Seminar was held in Hatfield, London on the 16th September 2012. The seminar attracted health care professionals from across the UK, all of whom were eager to share experiences and expertise on advancing the Sai Global Healthcare Mission.

The theme for this year's Seminar was "Sai Ideal Healthcare through sustained Partnerships" and during the course of the day, a wide variety of projects, being conducted both locally and internationally, were presented, illustrating the impact of healthcare projects delivered with love and compassion. Delegates had the opportunity to ask questions and make suggestions for further development of these service programmes.



Throughout the day, we were reminded of the Ideal presented to us by our dearest Bhagawan, through His selfless work and this produced great inspiration and gave focus to all ensuing discussions.

Presentations included, reports on current practice in Sathya Sai Health Awareness Days and the unveiling of revised guidelines and proposals forms to assist and encourage all centres to take up this activity, whilst ensuring that high standards are maintained. We also heard about the re-launch of two other activities, Blood Donation Clinics and First Aid Training; each in its own right, a life-saving service. The Sai Organisation will undertake both these activities with increased fervour in a coordinated effort to maximise participation across the UK.

The session on international medical activities was rich with the experiences of health care professionals who participated in medical camps, taking much needed medical expertise to the remotest parts of the world. Inspiring reports about activities in Sri Lanka, a country ravaged by Tsunami and Civil war were shared. We heard about the efforts of the Sai Organisation both in Sri Lanka and the UK to soothe the suffering and bring much needed medical treatment to thousands who are affected, reflecting the Love of our Lord through this international collaboration.

Miss Jenni Robson, gave a touching account of her experiences, as a general volunteer, during a recent medical camp to Dang, North India and the impact that this work has had on her. Miss Robson's experiences were echoed by Dr Nadisha, a paediatrician from the UK who presented a report on the recent Medical Camp to Russia. She spoke of the immense love for Swami, which was expressed by Russian devotees who worked harmoniously in partnership with UK doctors and volunteers, truly epitomising that "There is only one language, the language of the heart".

One of the highlights of the programme was Dr Jyothi Parekh's presentation on her collaboration with the Sathya Sai Super speciality Hospitals in Bangalore and Puttaparthi. Dr Parekh is a Consultant Radiologist from the UK and has worked closely with the hospitals for many years now. With Bhagawan's grace, Dr Parekh has helped set up an accredited training programme for Radiology Registrars. The training programme is free and trainees have achieved an excellent pass rate. This groundbreaking project, utilises web based teaching with talks and tutorials being delivered from London to trainees in India. Dr. Parekh presented a blueprint for other specialists who wish to setup similar programmes in their respective specialist fields.

Dr Nishith Patel, a Cardiothoracic surgeon from UK, then presented a model for the sustained provision of specialist input to the Super Speciality Hospitals in India. He identified National Clinical leads and welcomed the involvement of all healthcare professionals in developing programmes to offer service at the Sathya Sai Hospitals.



To work in Swami's hospital is a blessing. Dr Maudgal, a Gastroenterologist from UK who now works permanently in Puttaparthi shared some of his intimate moments in the Divine Presence and told of how Bhagawan steered his medical career, culminating in the opportunity to serve our Lord at the Super Speciality Hospital.

Finally, delegates had the opportunity to openly discuss their views and contribute to current and future projects during workshop sessions. The seminar concluded with closing remarks from Dr Kiran Patel, UKCC Chairperson and "The next steps" by Dr Veeru Mudigonda.

### Outcomes:

1. The Sai Healthcare National Coordinating Committee (SHNCC) UK is committed to facilitating healthcare service projects both domestically and abroad. These projects will be conducted under the Service Wing of the Sri Sathya Sai Service Organisation UK, the aim being to maximise participation and involvement of medical professionals and general volunteers.
2. The SHNCC will continue to forge partnerships with the National Health Service, other non government organisations, and Sai Organisations in other countries to create opportunities to put into practice the principles of Sai Ideal Healthcare both domestically and abroad.
3. The revised guidelines and protocols for conducting a Sathya Sai Health Awareness Day (SSHAD) shall be followed for all future SSHAD programmes and will be readily accessible through the Regional Service Coordinators.
4. Our work will comply with the latest evidence based practice, with appropriate audit to ensure the highest standards are achieved whilst maintaining effectiveness and efficiency in terms of costs and time, with regular review and update of guidelines and protocols.
5. The SHNCC now has a designated central point of contact: [saihealthcare@srisathyasai.org.uk](mailto:saihealthcare@srisathyasai.org.uk)  
All volunteers can direct their queries, suggestions and personal details to the SHNCC using this e mail address.

### Next Steps?

1. Database  
It is essential to update our current database of healthcare professional in the UK. This task will be undertaken by the Service Wing in the next 3 months.
2. Regional Medical Leads  
  
Each Regional committee will identify a Regional Medical Lead. The medical lead will form part of the Regional Service Team and support the Regional Service Coordinator.
3. Sathya Sai Health Awareness Days (SSHAD)  
In the next year, every region across the UK will endeavour to conduct at least one SSHAD. This project will be coordinated in close partnership with the local Primary Care Trust and be led by the Service Wing.
4. Blood Donation Clinics  
Every region shall conduct at least one Blood Donation Clinic in partnership with the National Blood Service.
5. First Aid Training  
The SHNCC will be coordinating annual first aid training for volunteers in the organisations and maintain a database of these individuals.
6. International Hospital Rotas and Training  
UK support of the International hospital rotas will continue with the added support of Clinical leads to increase participation and develop new programmes and training projects in close partnership with the Sathya Sai Hospitals.
7. International Medical Camps  
UK will continue to coordinate International Camps. Details of forthcoming camps will be advertised via the National website and Newsletters. By utilising our database we will endeavour to increase participation and support.
8. Annual Healthcare Conference/Seminar  
The dates for the Sai Ideal Healthcare Seminar 2013 will be announced in January 2013.

## Service Wing - Sathya Sai Healthcare Seminar 2012: A New Devotee's Experience

The Sathya Sai Healthcare Seminar was one of the first Sai Activities that I had been to, and I was glad that my friend took me along. As a pharmacy student, I found the seminar very inspiring and motivational. I was impressed by the approach and the dedication that all the healthcare professionals demonstrated; which encouraged me, as a young clinician.



I particularly benefitted from the simple, yet deeply meaningful and compassionate teachings of Sai Baba which was at the heart of the healthcare activities that were presented. I was honestly very thankful to Baba for teaching us to help others with a pure heart. Baba's selfless work is our greatest inspiration; demonstrating how words should be put into practice, as evidenced by him building hospitals in India which provide totally free specialist care.

Unlike other health related conferences that I had been to, the Sathya Sai healthcare seminar provided me with a new approach to delivering the best care, whilst incorporating a spiritual approach to healthcare. It became apparent that every patient should be treated as our own kith and kin.



The overview of the medical camp in Dang by Miss Jennie Robson brought tears to my eyes, especially when she showed us how little children showed love for her by drawing hearts with her name in them.

The seminar was a new experience for me, and it was uplifting to observe the impact of Sai Ideals put into practice. The seminar has certainly had an influence on me as a pharmacy student, and has altered my understanding of how healthcare should be delivered, in a way that we are not taught during the course of our studies.

Miss. Baguiasri Mandane  
Pharmacy student

## Youth Wing - Sathya Sai Leadership Training Programme Outward Bound Weekend

On Friday 14 September, after work, we made our way to Upminster in Essex, where we were to have our latest SSLTP weekend session, but this time it was to incorporate outdoor activities in addition to the normal modular lessons.



The time spent in the classroom on both days was led by brother Sri Kandiah, ably assisted by the SSLTP Committee, led by Deviesh Tankaria. The highlight of the classroom sessions was an interesting scenario where we each assumed the role of someone wanting to start a business or other new community venture and we were being interviewed by a bank manager for a financial loan required to progress the venture. The bank manager role was enacted by Dushyanthan Selvaratnam, lovingly called Dushy. It was very imaginative, challenging, and interesting. This was followed by a revision session led by Sri where we went through all the salient features of what we had previously learnt, really helping us to polish-up lessons from earlier sessions.

But the usual weekend's events were virtually overtaken by some breathtaking outdoor activities on both beautiful and sunny days. Though we knew there were going to be some outdoor activities, lips were being sealed and none knew the details until the last moment as to what those activities were. Being the youngest (!) within the cohort, I was happily

dreaming of playing some ball games, running around or playing a little with the river like I did when as a child...but what we went through was completely different and was one of the most challenging but exciting, excellent events I had ever experienced since 1971 (when I went for similar training to get my first job)!

On the Saturday, we were asked to gather in front of our lodge in loose and comfortable outdoor clothing and eventually formed three teams: male candidates; female candidates and Committee members. After being shown a heap of plastic barrels, piles of short wooden planks and bundles of strong nylon ropes, it became clear: our task was to plan and build a raft using the above mentioned materials and then paddle around the lake. We were given roughly an hour to complete the entire task.

At this point, members of our team looked at each other wondering where and how to start, when one candidate, Yatin Mistry, began to unravel the perceived mystery by suggesting how we could build the raft. Motivated by this, many useful suggestions from all the others then started pouring forth. Without dispute, we accepted Yatin's suggestions along with others and began building the raft. I sincerely believed Swami was responding to our prayers and working through Yatin and the rest of the team to accomplish the given task: at this point all of us became leaders as well as team members, leading and learning from each other as well as managing and guiding each other. We successfully completed the raft, ready and fit for floating.



Our team was now at the edge of the lake and was ready to float the raft having carried it to that point. We also assigned each member according to weight and height, to be equally distributed on the raft. Then the tricky part was to sit tight and not move as the plastic barrels were rolling around on their own when we moved our hips. Some of us, including me, fell head first straight in the water and got completely soaked! Regardless, this strengthened my resolve to complete the task. We slowly moved forward, paddling to the tune and timing of chanting our beloved Lord's name: "Aum Sri Sai Ram." The paddling was excellent as all were very well coordinated and we managed to manoeuvre the raft around a pole in the water and successfully returned to the lake's edge within the allocated time.

Whilst we were dismantling our raft, we noticed that the other teams were still struggling either to build their rafts or paddle their rafts on the water; however the most important aspect was they were all trying hard and giving their best shot.

We returned to a lively dinner served for us by the Committee during which time we also shared the happy moments of a young couple who were marking their first wedding anniversary on the Saturday, Laavanya and Ruthra Nagendran. Well, it was a good excuse to eat some delicious vegetarian cake!

The Sunday saw us gathered around at another end of the lake, where we saw a strong rope running across the lake of around 30 to 40m in length. We were shown a pile of thick and strong ropes with hooks and pulleys, a plastic and cloth chair with a top pulley-hook and more ropes and two strong ten feet long wooden pillars. Divided this time into two teams (male and female), our task this time was to plan and prepare a way of crossing the lake with each one seated on the chair, until all team members were on the other side. Once again, two team members, Yatin and Punit Ghumra, along with Ajay Pankhania and others, came up with the correct plan. From Saturday's experience, we unanimously selected Yatin as our team leader, assisted by Punit.



The plan was to hook the chair onto the main rope that ran across the lake and connections were made so that the chair could be pulled back for the next one to cross the river. The first one to cross, however, also had an arduous task because as he reached the other side, there would be none to pull him to the shores and support him to get onto the wooden landing platform. Also he had to pull the rope across on his own to cross the river. Ajay Pankhania from the

SSLTP Committee volunteered to be first and cross the river unsupported at the other end, which he did with great gusto, in spite of being dropped low and getting a good dip in the water! After this challenging aspect of the task, everyone crossed one by one. The one to cross last had a similarly arduous task as there were none to pull him through and he had to pull himself. Yatin took up this challenge: I felt this was an example of the leader ensuring his team was safe and sound before taking the plunge. The other teams too completed this adventure with lots of joy and happiness.

In my humble opinion, this was living proof of what I had so far learnt out from the course: (a) manage or lead yourself well before you can manage or lead others; (b) trusting God without doubt is like trusting yourself; (c) be positive and courageous, else you can never realise your own courage, capabilities and levels of endurance; (d) energy becomes synergy when everyone in the team thinks and acts together towards the same goal and what you can achieve is really unbelievable and beyond imagination; (e) believe in yourself, else others will not believe in you; (f) be strong, physically and mentally, but be humble; and (g) take failures as your steps towards success: never give-up.

Thank you SSLTP for the opportunity and thank You Swami for Your guidance and guardianship.

With humble, loving pranams  
Raj Selvakumar, SSLTP Cohort 2012

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