

SAI DHARMAM

SRI SATHYA SAI BABA CENTRE OF COOKSVILLE



SUSTAINABILITY

Nature is a manifestation of God. Nature nurtures us, sustains us and provides us with food, water, air, and land. Living on Earth surrounded by nature, we might take it for granted. We exploit nature's resources through our greediness, resulting in natural resources to slowly lose existence, lose habitats and eventually lose humanity. Our beloved Sai has said "Any use of the elements over and above legitimate bounds is a sacrilege. So too, each element must be used under some limitations, not as and how you like. Treat the elements as a vesture of the almighty". As individuals on this land, we are required to serve and contribute to our environment by showing gratitude to mother nature, as she provides and teaches us love, patience and sacrifice. Fulfilling our service and protecting nature follows Bhagawan's predominant saying 'love all, serve all; help ever, hurt never', as we are not 'only serving nature, but our dear Lord Bhagawan. The relationship between human life and nature must be balanced to prevent consequences in our ecosystems by promoting sustainability on Earth. Our dear Lord has

taught us ways not to exploit nature, through practicing the five human values. Bhagawan has said "Pollution outside is a reflection of pollution inside our minds", as problems rise from greed and disregard to nature through all of our desires. Implementing the five human values with respect to nature is the key to a sustainable Earth. Manifest love to nature through our thoughts, words and deeds, and manifest non-violence through your actions by serving mother nature by planting trees to increase our air quality, use less chemicals in our homes and conserve energy. Offer your love and gratitude to mother nature through serving all and loving all, as that is the best way to love our beloved Sai.

Reflection Questions:

1. Earth's sustainability is declining. How can you show your love and appreciation to Mother Nature for all that she provides?
2. Reflect upon your actions. Do you think you are doing enough on your part to decline the exploitation of Mother Nature?



CLIMATE ACTIVISM

Increased chance of drought, heat outbreaks and rising sea levels are all linked to climate change. Although these conditions are constantly changing, there is still much to do in order to protect our environment. If our government and society doesn't take more action than the average steps they are taking now, our agriculture, health and water supply may be at risk. With the rise of globalization and new technologies to cope with the "new normal" post-pandemic, we must be aware of our usage of non-renewable energy, aim to reduce any plastic waste and cut down our significant meat consumption. Through climate activism, we can encourage governments around the world to commit to initiatives that can reduce global carbon emissions. We can encourage different industries and corporations to stop investing in technologies that use fossil fuels and rather steer their effort towards sustainable technologies. By spurring such importance of the negative consequences in carbon emission, youth today have used

social media to promote common themes surrounding climate activism. Furthermore, with respect to Swami's teachings on nature and the environment, climate activism encourages people today to break political boundaries and protect our environment. Swami says that the world is losing its ecological balance as man, out of utter selfishness, is robbing mother Earth of her resources like coal, petroleum and iron. As a result, we face earthquakes, floods and other natural calamities due to our foolishness. In order to reduce the extremity of such climate change consequences, we must find balance in human life and balance in nature. We can protect our earth by reducing our deforestation efforts and growing more trees to control atmospheric pollution. In general, it is important that we make use of nature within limits and in order to protect it, we must place a ceiling on desires.

As we discuss the theme of sustainability, we would like to acknowledge the role in which our Indigenous peoples have played in maintaining our environmental sustainability.

We would like to acknowledge the land on which we gather and where we operate is part of the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit. For thousands of years, Indigenous peoples inhabited and cared for this land. In particular we acknowledge the territory of the Anishinabek, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee and Ojibway/Chippewa peoples; the land that is home to the Metis; and most recently, the territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation who are direct descendants of the Mississaugas of the Credit.

We are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land, and by doing so, give our respect to its first inhabitants.



DEVOTEE SPEAKS

Here are some ways that we can be sustainable in our everyday life

Avoid Single-Use Plastic

This includes plastic toppers at Starbucks, cling wrap, and more! Plastic is made from fossil fuels, particularly oil, which releases many greenhouse gas emissions to mine, manufacture, and transport. By using single-use plastic, many greenhouse gas emissions are being released for an item we might only use one time.

This is very harmful to our atmosphere and our oceans.

Grow Your Own Vegetables

Transportation accounts for a lot of the greenhouse gases that are released in the air. Think about where your fruit or vegetable comes from, sometimes it's in Ontario and sometimes it's from Mexico. To limit the impacts of long-haul transportation, growing your own fruits and vegetables (when possible), is a great option. The food will also be fresher and tastier!

Eat In-Season Fruits & Vegetables

When we eat a food item that is not grown in-season, that means it is travelling much farther distances to get to us. This releases a lot of greenhouse gas emissions during transportation. So, to enjoy more fresh food and more sustainable food, enjoy the beautiful fruits and vegetables that are uniquely available for each season. This includes pumpkins in the fall and strawberries in the summer.

Avoid Meat Consumption

Growing animals for meat, especially for beef and pork, are very environmentally intensive. What this means is that it takes a lot of land (deforestation and loss of carbon sinks), a lot of water, and releases a lot of emissions to make the food item. Therefore, eating less meat is extremely beneficial in reducing greenhouse gas emissions into the air.

Purchase less

It is very much part of Western culture to purchase items all the time. However, buying unnecessary or quick trend items, and then throwing these items out is very harmful to our planet. That means mining, manufacturing, transportation, and landfill build-up is happening at an even faster rate. This increases greenhouse gases and exacerbates global warming.

Vote for Politicians that Support Sustainable Policies

In order to see change on a national and global level, we need to have more climate-related policies. It's important to do our research and vote for politicians that support keeping our planet healthy and clean.

Have Shorter Showers

Water and energy work in unison. When we turn on our taps, it takes energy for the water to reach us, and then takes energy to clean the wastewater and return it back into the water system. By using less water, you are using less energy.

Avoid Fast-Fashion

Fast-fashion clothing items are only in-style for one season or one year. This again shortens the life cycle/usefulness of a product, and leads to more mining, manufacturing, transportation, and landfill build-up

Avoid Plastic Water Bottles/Plastic Items

Plastic items are made from fossil fuels, and the water is taken from our freshwater system. Once a plastic water bottle is packaged, it sits on the shelf for long periods of time during different temperatures, and this can allow the plastic materials to leak into the water (this is why the water tastes different in plastic water bottles). Latest scientific research has shown that microplastics can now be found in the human body, even in newborns. To limit this exposure, plastics must be avoided.

Recycle and Compost

Most plastic and recyclable items do not end up in the recycling. In fact, in the Region of Peel, only 50% of recycling items are recycled properly. This means these items are in the landfills or they are littered. Landfills, while they decompose, release a liquid called leachate, and this leachate can seep into our groundwater and impact our very own drinking water. Also, if items are not recycled, instead of reusing materials, we have to go back to the mining phase and release more emissions to get new materials. Composting is very important because organic material in landfills increases leachate, by composting these items are used again (such as for fertilizer) instead of going to a landfill and rotting.

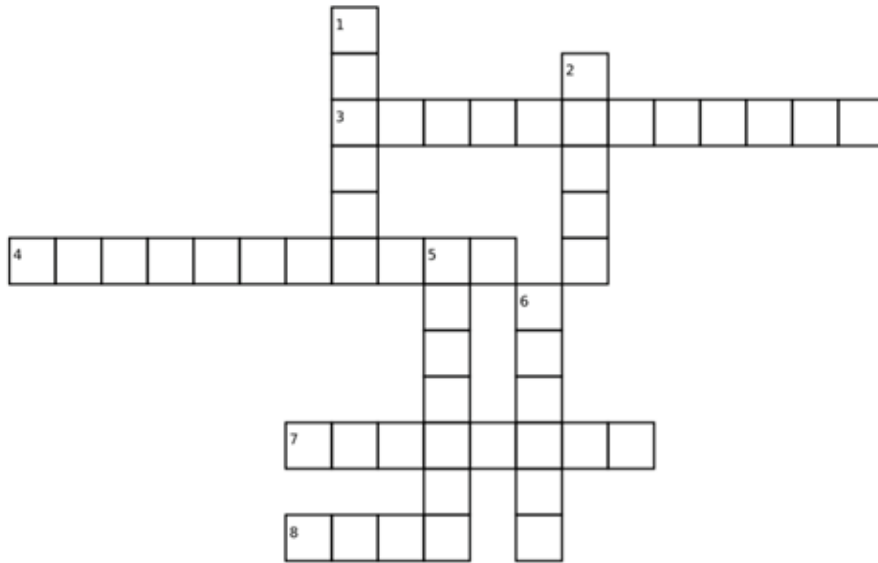
Do Not Flush Chemicals Down the Drain

Toilet cleaners and drain cleaners have many toxic chemicals in them. When we put them down the drain, the wastewater treatment process is much more difficult, expensive, and time-consuming. Remember, out of sight does not mean out of system. Those toxic chemicals must go somewhere, and sometimes it ends up back into our own water system. Using natural cleaning techniques such as baking soda and apple cider vinegar is a great tool to limit toxic chemicals from going down the drain.



GAME

Sustainability



Down:

1. Ceiling on _____
2. "Love all, _____ all."
5. Increased chance of drought, heat outbreaks and rising sea levels are all linked to _____ change.
6. "Unity Is Divinity, _____ is enlightenment."

Across:

3. One that puts others needs before their needs in doing seva.
4. Manifest _____ through your actions by serving Mother Nature.
7. We keep using and exploiting nature's resources through our greediness, resulting in the natural resources in nature to slowly lose existence, lose habitats and eventually lose _____.
8. The purest form of divinity is _____.

BHAJAN

Shankara Nama Bhajo

Shankara Shankara Nama Bhajo (3X)

Shankara Nama Bhajo

Peethambhara Dhara Sai Shankara

Chandra Kala Dhara Gauri Manohara

meaning

Worship Lord Shankara, Who wears the Moon on his Forehead, He is beloved of Gauri - Mother Nature. Chant the Name of Lord Sai Shankara, who wears the golden-yellow garment

Audio Link: http://prasanthi-mandir-bhajan.net/Shankara_Nama_Bhajo.mp3