

SAI DHARMAM

SRI SATHYA SAI BABA CENTRE OF COOKSVILLE



MENTAL HEALTH DURING THE PANDEMIC

Maintaining good mental health during these unprecedented times is significant for attaining peace and self-righteousness. Dr. Jyosthana Bhat, a clinical psychologist and Swami's devotee, emphasizes the prevalence of depression worldwide that affects all races and religions. This is the "Golden Age of Mental Health", where the stigma behind mental health is rather decreasing, making everyone aware of the consequences if mental stability is not cared for. We the youth, should be advocates in our communities for reaching out and helping one another during this pandemic. he elderly particularly should be spoken to often, looked after nicely,

and not be neglected. Furthermore, as parents it is easy to become stressed; caring for children when daycares and schools are closed, work tension, job insecurity for those who have or may lose their jobs etc. At this time, it is important to cultivate good spiritual practices and perform good deeds. We should take this as a learning opportunity to foster knowledge by reading Sai literature, learning new skills, volunteering etc. We can volunteer to benefit the community during this pandemic by making masks. Lastly, it is crucial we understand the importance of working together and fight this pandemic as "one!"

WHAT IS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE?

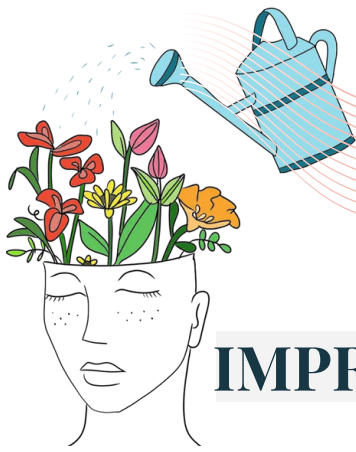
To obtain and manifest emotional intelligence in a positive manner is by relieving stress, having effective/understanding conversations, possessing empathy and most importantly facing challenges without defeating your own self nor letting conflicts empower you. Having emotional intelligence is key in establishing healthy relationships, succeeding in work or/and school and prospering in all your personal goals. Having a successful emotional intelligence ensures you to make confident and informed decisions and assists with understanding your own feelings. There are four attributes that define emotional intelligence as a whole:

- **Self-management:** when you are able to positively manage your own feelings, behaviours and adapt to change.
- **Self-awareness:** when you are able to manage your own feelings by recognizing your own emotions and their impact on your thoughts. Being aware brings self-confidence upon yourself.
- **Social awareness:** when you can understand the emotions and needs of others as you are confident with yourself and in social environments.
- **Relationship management:** surrounding yourself with people that inspire you and manage conflicts successfully without it negatively impacting your intelligence.

Emotional intelligence is key in managing mental health, as uncontrolled emotions, behaviour and stress can develop into anxiety and depression. Moreover, if the four attributes are not developed within one, one cannot develop healthy relationships, nor be comfortable with themselves or around others. They will feel lonely, isolated and can progress further mental health problems. Overall, managing emotions, alleviating stress and having effective conversations with people that understand allows one to have a life

filled with happiness and self-confidence as they have a strong emotional intelligence. Bhagawan had said “You should not give way to fits of anger or grief or elation or despair. The confusion you exhibited now was the result of Thamasik (dark and dull) and Rajasik (emotional) qualities. Be Saathwik, calm and unruffled and collected. The more you develop charity for all beings, contrition at your own faults, fear of wrong and fear of God - the more firmly established you are in Shaanthi (peace)”.

References: <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/mental-health/emotional-intelligence-eq.htm> <http://saibaba.ws/discourses/1961/61Feb27.htm> and <http://saibaba.ws/discourses/1961/61Feb27.htm>



IMPROVING YOUR MENTAL WELLNESS

Mental health is a word used to explain a person's emotional, psychological and social well-being. It affects how a person thinks, feels, and acts. It also determines how he/she handles stress, relates to others, and makes decisions. Having problems with mental health can affect your thinking, mood, and behaviour. Biological factors such as genes or brain chemistry, traumatic life experiences or family history are all factors that contribute to one's mental health.

A holistic approach to healthcare encompasses treatment of the body, mind and spirit. Within mental health it is deemed that at the lower levels if one can become aware of their emotions it may allow recognition of issues much earlier. In other words, prevention is better than cure. This stigma around mental illness needs to stop, People need to become more open minded and supportive of one another. The ability to build relationships can be the cornerstone of developing opportunities to support mental health.

Our dear Swami says eloquently, "Man suffers from two types of ills, physical and mental. Physical health is a prerequisite for mental health, and mental health ensures physical health." If mental and physical health are co-dependent, should there not be an equal focus placed on mental health? In Canada, every year, 1 in 5 people will experience first-hand a mental health problem or illness. And Swami says, "It is not only unbridled passion that damages the health of man.

Living on ill-gotten money also causes ill health to some extent. Living on earnings obtained by unjust means causes many unknown diseases to take root in us."



There are so many ways that meditation can increase our emotional intelligence (EQ), and this will improve our mental wellness. Meditation helps you become aware of and detach from negative thoughts: One thing a meditator learns is to simply witness and observe their own thoughts, without letting them create a whirlpool of anxiety. For example, the memory of a troubled past might enter your consciousness, but instead of letting it take you on an emotional rollercoaster, you simply let the thought go, while staying in the present moment. This mindset helps you stay calm and balanced, and is integral to a high EQ. Meditation helps you read the emotions of other people: As meditation helps to increase self-understanding, your awareness of other people's vibes, energy, facial expressions, and body language becomes much more tuned. Once meditation renews your thought processes, you will have super-high levels of self-discipline, an overall broader perspective, an immunity to stress, higher reasoning skills, and well-tuned problem-solving capabilities.

REFLECT: It is important to gauge our current Emotional Intelligence (EQ):

- Do we keep our cool and stay calm in stressful situations?
- Are we caring, compassionate, and considerate?
- Are we a good listener?
- Is our intuition well developed?
- Are we flexible and adaptable in most situations?
- Can we read the emotions of other people easily?
- Can we positively influence people?
- Are we generally optimistic and happy?



“THE CASTE OF HUMANITY”

In light of the events that have given rise to the Black Lives Matters movement, we must reflect on how we can apply Bhagavan’s teachings and become leaders by example during unjust times. Bhagavan says, “Dharma and Jnana (right conduct and spiritual wisdom) are two eyes given to you to discover your uniqueness and your innate Divinity. Dharma indicates the right path which every individual, group or society should follow. Dharma destroys the one who violates it and protects the one who protects it. The edifice of Dharma is erected on the foundation of Truth. Nyaya (justice) is an essential attribute of Dharma. A society, nation or an individual shines with glory only when they adhere to justice” Divine Discourse Jan 19, 1984).

Reflect: What does this quote mean to you?

In order to practice Dharma, it is important to educate ourselves and acknowledge what is happening around us and within us. We must acknowledge and counteract any racial biases that we carry. We must acknowledge and work to correct the systematic forces that provide unjust circumstances to anyone based on their race. This is how we can adhere to Dharma through Nyaya and adhere to Bhagavan’s will. Let us remember that there is only one caste, the caste of humanity!



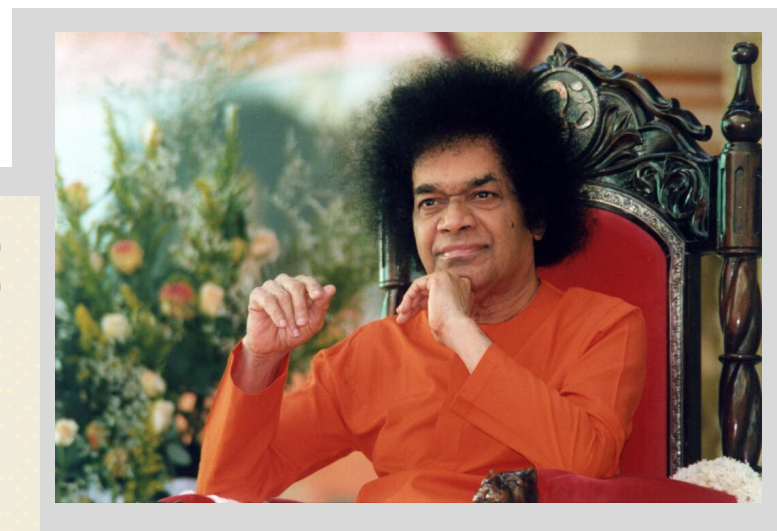
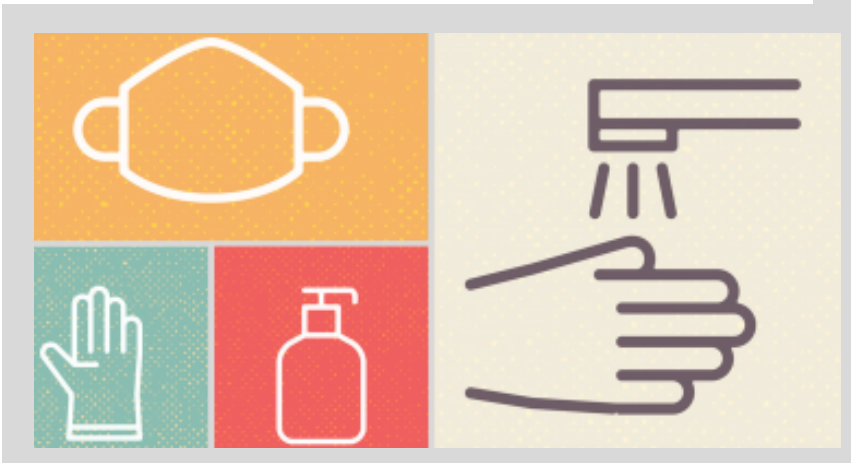
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In difficult times, like now with the COVID-19 pandemic, when fear, uncertainty, stress, insecurity, helplessness, anger, and frustration etc. may seem overwhelming emotions. Uncontrolled emotions and stress can also impact your mental health, making you vulnerable to anxiety and depression. There are many people in the world currently suffering from mental disorders, placing this among the leading causes of ill-health and disability worldwide. A few research studies suggest that higher emotional intelligence is linked to improved psychological and physical health. Self-awareness is a core component of emotional intelligence. Within mental health it is believed that at the initial stage if one can become aware of their emotions it may allow recognition of issues much earlier. Therefore, the implementation of self-awareness becomes integral for one's own mind and balance. The ability to regulate emotions could be vital for dealing with mental health. Common strategies to regulate emotions include setting goals, mindfulness, deep breathing, meditation, positive self-talk, listening to music and reflective practice.

Swami has explained the same message in various ways. He has also proclaimed, "Mental weakness is the biggest cause of disease. Disease is a want of ease; the contented mind is the best drug." He also warned us that, "As your food (Anna), so is your mind (Mann)".

"Physical health is a prerequisite for mental health and mental health ensures physical health. An attitude of generosity, of fortitude in the presence of sorrow and loss, a spirit of enthusiasm to do good, to be part of service to the best of one's capacity; those build up the mind as well as the body. The very joy derived from service reacts on the body and makes you free from disease. (taken from 'Sadhana the inward path')

How relevant these suggestions Swami has laid down for us, especially in times like now! He said, "dangerous and harmful impulses and emotions will vanish automatically in the presence of God." Let us continue to think of Him constantly and pray for the welfare of all beings.



GAME

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

ANXIETY
CONFIDENCE
DEPRESSION
GOAL
HAPPINESS
LOVE
MENTALHEALTH
PEACE
RAAJASIK
SAATHWIK
SELF AWARENESS
SPIRITUAL
STIGMA
STRESS
THAAMASIK

Aanandha Maya Bhagavaan Hey Prema Maya Bhagavaan

O Bhagavaan Sai Bhagavaan

Aanandha Maya Bhagavaan Hey Prema Maya Bhagavaan

Hey Karuna Nidhey Prabhu Sai Ram

Kripa Nidhey Deeno Key Pran

Aavo Prabhu Mujhey Charan Lagalo

Daya Karo Bhagavaan

(Mujhey) Kripa Karo Bhagavaan

BHAJAN

Meaning:

O Blissful and loving Lord Sathya Sai! O Bestower of Mercy and Grace on afflicted and poor ones! Kindly accept me at Thy Lotus Feet. O Lord! Kindly shower mercy and grace on me.

Audio link: http://prasanthi-mandir-bhajan.net/Aanandha_Maya_Bhagavaan_Hey.mp3

Bhajan tutor: https://media.radiosai.org/journals/Vol_04/o1SEPo6/bhajans.htm#ananda