

Character

SAI DHARMAM

Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Cooksville



Swami's Message on Character

Swami is the loving embodiment of his messages, and He is always keen on spreading the message of the importance of building good character. You may ask "What is Character?" In Swami's perspective, good behaviour, good manners, good discipline and good actions together, constitute character. The following are a few of Swami's messages on character and how we can learn to build good character:

- Forget the harm that anyone has done to you, and forget the good that you have done to others. If wealth is lost, nothing is lost. If health is lost, something is lost. If character is lost, all is lost
- The body will shine if the character is fine
- If there is righteousness in the heart, there will be beauty in the character. If there is beauty in the character, there will be harmony in the home. When there is harmony in the home, there will be order in the nation. When there is order in the nation, there will be peace in the world.

In conclusion, it can be said that it is not merely enough to learn Swami's teachings. We must put them into practise in our daily lives and apply them regularly, in order to maintain good character.

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Learn about how to build character!
- Recap on Mindfulness Meditation session from July 21st!
- A Message written by the Ladies Wing!



Education and Character

As youths living in Canada, it is undeniable that education is an important aspect of our early lives – education enables us to obtain and develop the skills required to gain employment. Often, this entails putting our heads down and getting through stressful, sleepless nights just to eventually find a job that can allow us to provide for our families and ourselves. For many, education is a simply one phase in life that opens opportunities to other phases. However, it is important to ask ourselves: What is the true aim of education? How can education be useful to us throughout life?

Our dear Swami Sathya Baba says: *“The end of education is character. Education is meant for life, not only for a living.”* (Sept 26, 2006). According to Swami, true education has no limits – there is opportunity to learn at all points of life and during all situations. True education also moulds character and this is reflected in our daily words, behaviours and conduct. As such, it is important to

integrate spiritual education into our secular education. Secular education only provides us with finite facts; spiritual education guides us to live with a full heart and a passion to serve others. Understanding Swami’s teachings allows to venture into the journey of life with love and kindness.

Thus, when seeking education opportunities, find an avenue that is nourishing for both the mind and the heart. In addition to reading textbooks and journal articles, read books that will further your spirituality. When finding internship and volunteering opportunities that strengthen your resume, search also for occasions to serve others and further your spiritual development. Living and learning go hand in hand. Do not limit yourself to the confines of traditional education, be on the constant pursuit of enlightenment, and build character through real life lessons and Swami’s teachings.



Mindfulness Meditation Session



Swami blessed us with the opportunity to have a Meditation Morning session held on July 21st, 2018, lead by Brother Prasaanthan! Here are the key take home points discussed and practiced at the session. It was a beautiful day with perfect weather – Swami must have known we’d be coming. The day began with a mini-

host of proven positive effects such as increased concentration and empathy towards oneself and others around you. Moreover, meditation, particularly mindfulness meditation, stalls the mind from rushing around like a mad monkey and instead focus the attention on the present moment. Of course, this does not even begin to

study circle about the benefits (spiritual and material), techniques, and process of meditation. Body, mind and soul; meditation allows one to maintain a healthy link between these three. Interestingly enough, REGULAR practice of meditation has been scientifically proven to decrease blood pressure, anxiety, depression, and have a

scratch the spiritual benefits that Swami outlines in the Dhyana Vahini and in many of his discourses. After that, a technique called noting was practised. In this technique, we direct our attention to an object of focus, in this case our breath, and become aware of the subtleties. Is the breath long or short? Does my belly rise or my chest? The moment we realize the mind has wandered, we gently note the nature of distraction. Was I distracted by a physical sensation or a thought? Then we gently bring our attention back to the object of focus. This was part and parcel of a larger mindfulness practice that was performed that day. For avid beginners, there is an app called Headspace® which serves as a beautiful guide to mindfulness meditation! It is encouraged to download and practice with the app! The next session will be held in the month of August! Come and be Zen!

Devotee Speaks

My first days of SSE were some of the worst days of my life. I still have a vivid memory of the first day my mother enrolled me in the Bal Vikas program in Colombo, Sri Lanka. As a child who used to spend her weekends playing with friends, I was not exactly thrilled when my mother brought up the idea of sacrificing my play time to go to classes, in addition to the five day long school week. In fact, I was devastated. When the first day of class rolled around, I remember gripping tightly on to the ends of my mother's shalwar, refusing to let go and join my peers. From the boys and girls dressed in white sitting in an orderly manner in front of Swami's altar, to the pin-drop silence that filled the air as they patiently waited for morning prayers to begin, everything was so foreign to me. When the silence was broken by the recital of 3 Aum's, a Guru gently took my hand and led me to the back of the row where we sat throughout the duration of morning prayers. From that day onwards, my days were spent with the centre singing in bhajans, rehearsing for plays, and attending SSE. When

my family immigrated to Canada, I began attending SSE classes at the Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Cooksville. As I became older, my interest in Swami's teachings also grew. The things that I learnt in SSE served as an inspiration for me to become a better version of myself. For me personally, one of the lessons that continued to stick with me as I went through my day to day life is the importance of service. Swami says, *"Divine guidance is always at the side of the giver. Yes, I will give to those who give of themselves, untold Joy and Bliss; and what is more, I will lead them by the hand along those petal strewn paths of Eternal Joy."* My dormant passion to serve others was only awakened when I became more involved in seva projects such as food drives, sandwich projects and tree planting initiatives. I realized that by bringing joy into the lives of others, I in turn, brought joy to myself. I carried this source of inspiration to start my own seva project outside of SSE called the backpack project, where I, alongside two of my classmates, raised funds to purchase

school supplies for youth in marginalized Aboriginal communities. Attending SSE also provided me with numerous opportunities to step outside my comfort zone. An example of this is when I was given the opportunity to participate in Amazing Grace as a station leader. Being the shy and reserved person I am, this role proved to be a challenge as it required me to speak in front of groups of people, explain the instructions of the game with enthusiasm and execute the game in an entertaining manner. By assuming such a role, I gained transferable skills such as leadership skills which went on to help me in many areas of my life (especially in my first job as a camp counselor later that summer!). While reflecting on my overall experience attending SSE, I realize that SSE has given me the opportunity to experience some of the best days of my life. From attending the CYAF festival with fellow students and youth in Montreal, to engaging in interesting discussion topics in class, I am forever grateful for these experiences as they have shaped me into the person I am today.



Message from the Ladies Wing

The gifts that God has given to women in SSSIO are majestic. They are given a place of nobility in the House of the Lord. This is an honor far beyond any material accomplishments or possessions.

Ladies Day is a special annual celebration inaugurated by Sathya Sai Baba in 1995. The day is dedicated to women, acknowledging with gratitude the qualities of self-sacrifice, compassion, patience, forbearance and selfless love they display in their families, in their contributions to society, to the nation, and to the world.

Swami blesses Mahilas (women) to observe 19th November as Mahila Day, to spend their valuable time in a sacred manner. Swami also lovingly blessed Mahilas with

many challenging opportunities and responsibilities in Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organizations at national and international levels, who are powerful and sometimes silent torch bearers of Bhagawan's mission of **"Love All Serve All."**

Every 19th of the month, Cooksville Sai Centre's sisters come together and dedicate the day by conducting various spiritual satsang, education and social service activities, so as to deepen Swami's teachings through service. Our sisters are embodiments of selfless love, kindness, and especially, self-sacrifice, selflessly serving their family as well as the three main wings, spiritual, educational, and service. Their hidden powers have the capacity to transform not only their homes, but their work environments and the wider

community. They are silent torch bearers of Sai Maa's mission of **"Love All Serve All."**

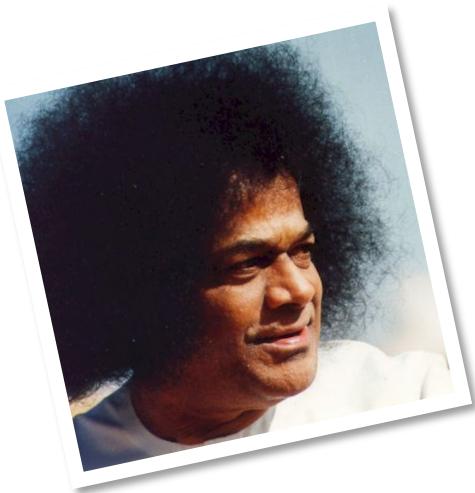


Game

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| N | C | F | L | P | F | H | C | A | R | T | G | To have good character you need a pure _____. |
| L | F | E | H | D | K | E | F | S | E | O | G | If your heart is a car, then the driver is _____. |
| Y | Y | A | G | U | J | A | G | D | D | F | R | Do your _____, leave the results to Sai. |
| O | T | R | J | T | H | R | J | F | H | Z | C | Why _____ when I am here. |
| U | H | H | G | Y | U | T | U | G | Q | X | H | _____ is the end of education. |
| R | S | D | F | B | L | E | O | H | W | C | A | For good character, thoughts, _____ and deeds are needed to be in complete harmo |
| S | S | R | E | J | V | D | F | J | E | V | R | If you think you are _____, you are god. |
| E | C | Z | J | G | S | C | F | K | R | B | A | You can not believe in god until you believe in _____. |
| L | C | V | O | R | O | D | U | S | F | N | C | Don't give-up until the _____ is achieved. |
| F | F | A | W | C | X | J | W | D | S | M | T | If you master a scripture or text and boast, you have too much _____. |
| R | L | L | S | D | Z | U | O | F | P | K | E | |
| T | O | G | H | M | O | H | R | G | O | I | R | |
| U | I | N | M | M | H | T | D | Y | U | H | R | |
| S | D | F | G | H | J | T | S | W | A | M | I | |
| A | S | G | O | Y | F | H | F | Q | W | E | R | |



Bhajan



JAYA GURU OMKARA JAYA JAYA SADGURU
OMKARA (2)

BRAHMA VISHNU SADAASHIVA (2)

HARA HARA HARA HARA MAHADEVA (2)

Meaning:

HAIL THE GURU, THE EMBODIMENT OF
AUM

HE IS THE BRAHMA, VISHNU AND SHIVA !

HE IS THE SUPREME GOD !