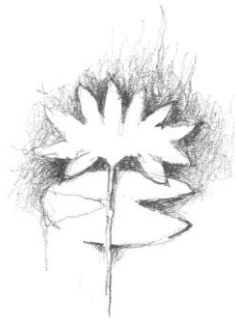


Children of Immortality

An exploration of the teachings of Sathya Sai Baba
on loss and grief.

*Since a person is limited by a body and entangled in the
senses, he is bound by ignorance and led to believe that he is a
mere man.*

He is a child of immortality. SSS XV p 252 1/9/82



*Dedicated to the Divine in us all and to our inspiration
and teacher, Sri Sathya Sai Baba*

In loving memory of Anthony and Dirk

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(Apart from the sections in italics, all of the words in these chapters are the words of Sathya Sai.)

Foreword

We get a sense of the depth and beauty of this valuable book in the title itself: 'Children of Immortality'. We are all immortals, children from a bliss-filled source, dispassionately yet compassionately observing the ripples, undercurrents and tidal waves of loss and grief which assail these human forms in which we reside.

When grief comes our first reaction is like that of a fish out of water – we struggle and strain, exhausting ourselves in a desperate search for some diminishing of our pain. Throughout the unfolding pathos, the immeasurable and timeless Witness within us all waits silently and patiently for the culmination of our fervent endeavours. Somehow, by God's grace or mysterious design, we are relieved of some of our aching emptiness, and we taste once more a drop of the liquid gold of our inherent peace, love and joy.

When great loss arrives like a giant shadow over the mind and heart many people seem destined to wander interminably in the harsh, barren landscape of their grief. Such was the sad fate of the children's-book author and theologian, C.S.Lewis, who recorded his struggles in 'A Grief Observed'. Others, like Viktor Frankl – who composed his signal treatise on psychotherapy, 'Man's Search for Meaning', while surviving hour-by-hour in a Nazi concentration camp – somehow find their way much sooner and rise above and beyond their terrible suffering.

Naturally we all want to know the 'secret' of those more successful travellers. Is there a universal philosophy or approach which can give us a boat to sit in and a compass to follow as we cross the troubled water of our suffering heart?

The present work goes a long way towards providing this much sought-after resource. It is a valuable selection of wisdom sayings on loss and grief, each one taking us a step further towards that treasured goal: how to acknowledge, understand and transmute those life-changing emotions triggered by the loss of someone dear.

The compilers, Jenny Monson and Margaret van Hennekeler, are both long-term students of Sanathana Vidya or Vedantha as presented and explained over the past seven decades by their spiritual mentor, Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Both Jenny and Margaret lost an adult son in tragic circumstances. Although they live on opposite sides of Australia, the ego-shattering grief of these two earnest seekers pulled them together and propelled them into a deep exploration of this seldom-understood emotion. Irresistibly they found themselves wading ever-deeper and then swimming in the vast ocean of esoteric teachings from Sathya Sai Baba, someone whose every word can be safely regarded as absolute truth, relevant for all times and cultures.

As we can see from the succinct commentaries offered by the compilers at the end of each special grouping of sayings, their three-year immersion into these sacred waters of the Perennial Philosophy (as Aldous Huxley referred to it) has cleansed and clarified their vision of the hidden perfection underlying all calamities in life. And this will be the harvest for all of us whom Grace selects to plunge into this vast, limitless ocean of timeless wisdom – of this we can be sure, for we are being led by our Self to merge in our Self.

Those of us who have begun these explorations – and there are many throughout the globe – have come to understand that there is nothing out of place in this Divine Matrix in which we all live, love, suffer and play. It might seem that pain and sorrow are a capricious imposition laid upon us by a cruel and uncompromising fate. Yet we can see from Nature all around us that every collapse and decay provides the rich compost and potential for new growth. We are Nature too. As Henry Thoreau once wrote: “We are Nature’s way of looking at itself.” So there is purpose and meaning in each one of our misfortunes. Our losses and suffering, although seemingly unbearable at times, are, by their very nature, impulses towards union with our Higher Self, which is God, the Infinite, the All.

The great Lebanese poet, Kahlil Gibran, wrote in his pivotal book, ‘The Prophet’: “Your pain is the breaking of the shell which encloses your understanding.” Realising this, Jenny and Margaret are providing a timely service during this period of accelerating change in all of our lives. Pain will come, wave after wave of it, for that is an inevitable part of the unique evolution designed for each one of us. With this compendium of teachings at hand, we are well-prepared to not only ride the turbulent waves of our grief and suffering, but also engage in that time-honoured alchemical process of ‘transmuting base metal into gold’ so that we are enlarged, rather than diminished, by our ordeals.

Truly, this is a book which will change lives, many lives, bringing relief, comfort and revelation to every seeker on the Path who is privileged to read it.

Dr Ron Farmer
Australia, February 2010

Introduction

This piece of work is a representation of Sathya Sai Baba's teachings on grief and loss, which we hope will assist and support spiritual seekers through any time of loss.

We are two mothers who have lost our sons and through this experience have been prompted to seek out these teachings to guide and inspire us on this journey.

We would like to share these words of wisdom and comfort from this spiritual teacher, who brings to us the ancient truths of Vedanta.

We are aware that there are many souls who are confronted with losses of various kinds and we offer these words to the Divine who resides in the heart of each one of us.

The kinds of losses to which we refer are losses of health, marriage, relationship, employment, finances, identity, faith, belief system, culture and many more.

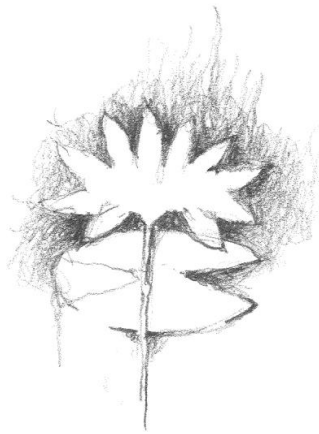
When we explored Sai's teachings on grief, we found that there was a direct link with several related spiritual issues, so we have grouped the teachings under certain headings. We hope that readers will find this useful. All words in italics are ours.

To increase our understanding of the profound emotions we were experiencing, we also found assistance through reading material made available by those who deal professionally with grief and loss. We found this helpful, in so far as it dealt with grief as a healing to the wound of loss. It was of assistance in dealing with the loss of the physical form and in understanding the nature of attachment. It explained the range of physical and emotional experiences which went along with healing from a major loss, which in turn permitted greater acceptance of the experience – a more loving and understanding attitude towards ourselves.

However, the teachings of Sai lift us beyond the realm of body consciousness. His words encourage us to soar above the limited concept that we are the body, to understand the reason, the purpose for grief and suffering and to use it for our self realization.

Although there are many experiences which we find common to those who grieve, it is important to understand also that the experience of each individual on this journey is unique. We are all shaped by our life experience, our culture, our spiritual understanding and awareness. Each of us must grieve in integrity with this – hence the differences between individuals.

Our suggestion is that this booklet is read over a period of time, allowing for the deepest meaning of the quotes to be absorbed. It could also be useful as a basis for discussion with others.



WHAT IS GRIEF?

People complain of grief, sorrow, distress. What exactly is grief? It is a reaction to the loss of something gained or the failure to gain something desired. Therefore, the only way to escape grief, sorrow etc is to conquer the desire for the illusory. See the world as God. That vision will scotch desire. When the desire is limited to God, success is assured and each step contributes to bliss.

Discourse 26 Feb '87

Happiness and misery are inseparable twins which are inextricably linked to each other. One is the beginning and the other is the culmination. Beginning and end go together. Only the Divine is free from a beginning, a middle or an end; but in worldly affairs, everything that has a beginning, has an end. Grief is not something which someone thrusts on you from outside. Troubles and difficulties are not thrust on you from outside. Grief and trouble arise in the natural course of things.

Discourse 1 June '91

What exactly is the cause of all grief? It is the attachment to the body that produces grief as well as its immediate precursors: affection and hate. These two are the results of the intellect considering some things and conditions as beneficial, and some other things and conditions as not. This is a delusion, this idea of beneficence and malevolence. Still you get attached to objects that are considered beneficial, and you start hating the others. But, from the highest point of view, there is neither. The distinction is just meaningless. There is no two at all. How can there be good and bad then? To see two where there is only one, that is delusion or ignorance. The ignorance which plunged Arjuna into grief was of this nature – seeing many, when there is only One.

SS 92,158.

So, in a nutshell, Sai Baba explains that we experience grief as a natural part of attachment to the body and all that goes with it. Grief follows when we lose something or someone we desire. If we see all as God, all as One, there is no grief.

WHY GRIEF, SORROW, DIFFICULTIES?

Just as sugarcane does not yield sugar juice unless it is crushed, as sandalwood does not give the fragrant paste until it is rubbed on the stone, so the goodness of people does not come out unless they go through difficulties.

Discourse 24 Aug '91

One has to welcome both summer and winter, for they are both essential for the process of living. The alternation of seasons toughens and sweetens us. Birth and death are both natural events. We cannot discover the reason for either birth or death. They simply happen. We try to blame some person or some incident for injury or loss we suffer but the real reason is our own karma or action. When the background to the event is known, the impact can be lessened or even negated.

Facets of the Divine Diamond.

Whatever you see, hear or experience, it is all for the welfare of humanity. Some people complain that God gave them troubles and sorrows. But God does not observe any difference between what you call sorrow and happiness. I have been repeatedly emphasizing, man should always think that everything is for his own good, be it sorrow or happiness. Man undergoes all sorts of suffering because he is unable to realize this truth. One has to strive to recognize the truth underlying God's creation.

SS Nov 2004, P314

Man may fancy that he is capable of achieving anything. But his achievements are solely related to the nature of his actions. The Creator sends each one at birth with a garland made of the results of his good and bad deeds in his previous birth. The scriptures exhort men to adhere to good thoughts and good deeds as the only way of realizing a good life. Only you and none else will reap the fruits of your actions. You alone are responsible for your joys and sorrows. God is in no way responsible. He is only a witness. But if you pray to Him with all your heart and soul, the effects of all karmas will disappear like mist. Devotion will free man from the consequences of his deeds. If man devotes a small fraction of the enormous time he devotes to his wealth, family and position, to thoughts of God, he need have no fear about the Lord of Death. If one does not think of God even for a moment, how can he hope for peace of mind.

Discourse 27 May '91

Here, we are told that we are responsible for our joys and sorrows. We are given the reason for sorrows and difficulties – to toughen and sweeten us – to make us strong, to bring out our inherent goodness.

HOW SHOULD WE VIEW GRIEF?

The gift of joy comes packed in the rind of grief. Do not pray God to give you only joy; that will be foolish. Pray for the fortitude to realize that grief and joy are but the obverse and reverse of the same coin.

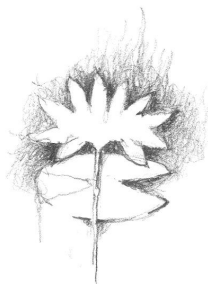
Discourse 27 Mar '71

The body is given to you to bear difficulties. Welcome sorrows and difficulties. You cannot realize the value of happiness without experiencing sorrows and difficulties. Pleasure is an interval between two pains. In fact, we derive happiness out of pain only. Even difficulties are for a short period; they do not last long. You must experience a little difficulty if you want to have more happiness.

All work should be worship. Whatever the reward, it is the gift of God. It is for our lasting good. If this attitude is developed, suffering and pain can toughen us and help us to progress towards Divinity.

SS Vol XV P116

With these words, Sai encourages us to see grief as inseparable from joy. Our prayer needs to be for the understanding that they are opposite sides of the same coin.



WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF GRIEF ON OUR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY?

You have to become toughened by the hammer strokes of joy and sorrow until you are unaffected by the vicissitudes of fortune.

Sandalwood gives more and more fragrance when it is subjected to more and more grinding: so does sugarcane yield more and more juice when it is chewed more and more. Gold gets refined when it is burnt and melted in fire. So also a true devotee will never falter in his love for God even when he faces troubles and obstacles in his life. God tests His devotees only to lift them up to a higher level in the spiritual ladder. A true devotee leads a sacred life which is sanctified when he faces the obstacles and troubles with full faith in the Divine. The body is only for leading a sacred life.

Discourse 14 Apr '93

Look with an equal mind on good fortune and misfortune, on happiness and sorrow, loss and gain. These are products of nature like heat and cold, summer and winter. They have their purposes to serve. Similarly, the ups and downs of life have lessons to teach us. In fact, without reverses in life, we shall not be able to experience Divinity. Without darkness, we cannot value light. Without experiencing difficulties, we will not enjoy benefits. It is the lack of peace of mind which compels us to seek the means to realize enduring peace.

SSS Vol XV1 P 45.

Take the troubles that come to you as tests and opportunities to learn non-attachment. It is the hot summer that sends you to air-conditioning. Grief sends you to God. When a child dies, ask yourself the question "Is it for my sake that he was born? He has his own destiny to fulfill, his own history to work out."

BTBOS P 281.

Now we are shown the highest purpose of grief. Grief sends us to God.

GRIEF AS GRACE

Grief and joy are the inseparable companions. Grief or joy: welcome it as God's grace.

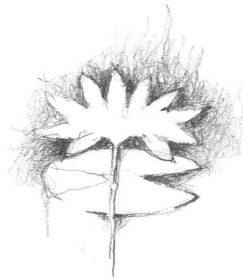
You should have firm faith that everything is God's gift and it is God who does everything.

Discourse 25/12/09 Sai Kulwant Hall, Prashanti Nilayam PP 47, 8

Mind is responsible for all suffering and rebirth. So mind has to be diverted towards God in order to escape from the cycle of birth and rebirth. One can overcome the evil effects of one's actions by focusing his mind on God. Mountains of sin will vanish like the mist. God's Grace can eliminate your suffering. For every action there is bound to be a reaction. But with the help of Divine Grace one can escape from the consequences of one's karma.¹

DD 13/9/1999 Prashanti Nilayam as quoted in "Ocean of Love" P26

Here Sai is taking us further, stretching our faith - we need to see all this grief (and joy!) as grace.



¹ Karma- action, work duty ,deeds, debt

SUFFERING AS PART OF THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

When you say 'Idi Na Dehamu'² it actually conveys that you are not the body. Similarly you are not the mind or the intellect. When you realize this truth, then you will be able to say with conviction, "This is not my sorrow or difficulty. In fact I am beyond all suffering". When you say that you are not the body then where is the question of your suffering? But today people are unable to bear even a little physical suffering. They are unable to give up body attachment. That is why they continue to remain at the level of mortals. So long as you have body attachment, you cannot escape from sorrows and sufferings. All your sorrows and sufferings are, in fact, the result of your own imagination. Sometimes you have anger. Wherefrom has this anger come and who has sent it? It has come from within you. Similarly jealousy also comes from within you. In fact everything comes from your thoughts. One who is able to control his thoughts can achieve anything.

Discourse 1/1/09 Sai Kulwant Hall, Prashanti Nilayam

You will be free from sorrow once you understand the 'Bhagavathathwa' [nature of Divinity].

If you are undergoing difficulties, do not get disheartened.

Have faith that God is making you go through the ordeal for your own good.

Happiness and sorrow co-exist.

You cannot attain happiness without undergoing difficulties.

SSS 39 P 43

When you understand and contemplate on the principle of the Atma³, you will be free from all suffering and bondage. It is the perversion of the mind that is the cause of all your sufferings and bondages.

DD 23/11/2006 Sathya Sai Speaks 39 P 269

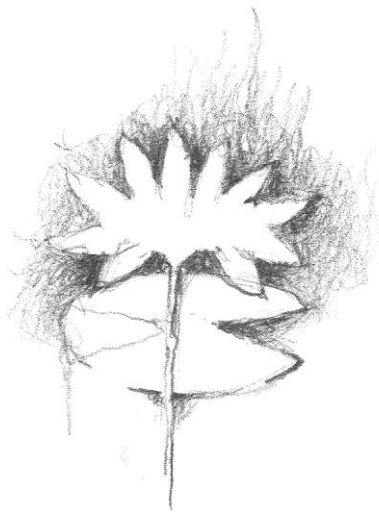
Regarding sincere devotees who undergo suffering and misfortunes: If those persons are also sometimes sincere devotees, then sometimes God sends them troubles to test the strength of their devotion. If the devotees realise that the main objective of man is not to be re-born again and again, and if they are striving towards this objective, they will be beset with untold miseries and sufferings as a means of burning away all the karmas of past births. This is all according to the Judgement and Grace of God.

SSAV P47

² Idi Na Dehamu – I am not the body

³ Atma – Supreme being, Soul, the real Self, one's Divinity

Sai makes it clear that when we have body attachment, sorrow and suffering is inescapable. It is essential to trust that all ordeals are for our good. It can also be to burn away the karmas of past births



ATTACHMENT

The key to grief is attachment. In the previous chapters we learned that we grieve for that to which we are attached. We have therefore included a range of quotations on attachment.

The attachments to this world are short-lived. People have been born many times before and have lived out their lives; loving and getting immersed in love and attaching themselves to others. But does anyone now have a trace of all that? Does he know where all that has gone? Does he worry about any one of those he loved then? No. The same type of love and attachment were there then also; but with the passage of time, it has been forgotten. So too, when one departs from this world, the love one had for others and the joy, pain and happiness one had through that love, will be forgotten.

BTBOS P 102

There is no use of our getting attached to this transient body which is like dust. You should get attached to God. God is like our own life breath. We have been given life only to reach such an omnipresent God...One must give shape to one's life in such a way as one earns the grace of God.

BTBOS P 107

Man grieves because he has developed attachment towards the unreal.

SSS Vol 1 P 102

As a result of our attachment to the body and its organs, we go on praising the beauty of the world. One gets attached to the sensory organs if one has attachment to his body. As long as man is attracted by outer Nature, he cannot escape the blows of joy and grief, of profit and loss, of happiness and misery. But, if he is attracted by the glory of God within him as well as within Nature, he can be above and beyond these dualities and in perfect peace. In order to escape being tossed about on the waves of joy and grief, one should cultivate unconcern, an attitude of welcoming either, as a sign of grace. Sri Ramakrishna said that to avoid the sticky fluid in the jackfruit from contacting your fingers when you peel it, you must apply a few drops of oil on them. So, too, said he – 'if you do not want the world and its reactions to stick to you, have a few drops of 'unconcern' applied on your mind. This unconcern leads to the deepest yearning for God.

BTBOS P 279

As long as man is attached to the body he cannot realize God. Only when he sheds his attachment, he can realize the Divine.

SS March 1994 P 60

As many loving attachments the embodied soul develops in mind, so many spears of sorrow pierce the heart.

GP P 45

Even a man of great prowess like Arjuna⁴ became subject to the feeling of attachment – ‘my relatives’, ‘my teachers’ etc. He was a prisoner of the feeling of ‘mine’. ‘My people’ ‘My kinsmen’ – this sense of attachment made him throw away his Gandiva (bow) on the battlefield, overcome by grief. This kind of attachment may plunge anyone in feeble-minded grief at any place, at any time and in any situation. Hence it is essential to keep all attachments under control.

Prema⁵ should be shown not only towards God but towards all beings in creation. Love is a powerful force. No other power excels it.

Misunderstanding the nature of love, men are falling a prey to suffering. This is the result of misguided expressions of what is called love.

Men today worship God for the fulfillment of desires relating to this world and the other. This is not true love. People pretend to love their kith and kin and friends out of purely selfish considerations. This is only attachment and not love. Only that can be described as love which offers itself without any expectation of recompense. In the Gita⁶, Bhagavan⁷ has been described as ‘Suhrid’, a true friend. Without expecting any return, accompanying you like a shadow, God fulfills your desires. Even a mother in loving her son, may have expectations that he would take care of her in her old age. God has no such expectations. ‘Suhrid’ describes the utterly selfless love of the Lord.

SS May 1995 P 123.)

Sai is explaining to us that we grieve because we are attached to the unreal. We can rise above this if we become attached to God. He urges us to move beyond dualities and welcome both joy and grief.

⁴ Arjuna – pure, unsullied, white; one of the Pandava brothers

⁵ Prema - love

⁶ Gita – Bhagavad Gita, the Song of God – the holy book of the Hindus containing Krishna’s teachings to Arjuna

⁷ Bhagavan – God, Lord

BIRTH/DEATH/DESTINY

We should never be shaken by or feel sorry on account of the sorrows and difficulties or the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. Birth and death are only for the body, not for you. In fact, you are not the body.

Bhagavad Gita DD of Sathya Sai Baba Part 2 P 54

Body is not you. Body has relatives, but soul has no relatives. There is only one Soul, and that is God.

MBAI P20

Life is a dress rehearsal for death. Birth and death exist only for the body. For the soul there is no birth, no death. You are the embodiment of the soul.

Discourse, August 21, 1984

Man has taken birth in order to suffer and purify himself in the crucible of life.

SSS Vol XV P218

One meaning of karma that is popularly accepted is that it is one's destiny or fate, the inescapable 'writing' on the brow, which has to work itself out. There is no escaping it. But people forget that it is not written by some other hand. It is all written by one's own hand. And the hand that wrote it can also write it off.

SSS Vol VIII P 86.



It is all written by one's own hand.
And the hand that wrote it
can also write it off.

You have been born because you did not pass in certain subjects; there is some balance of experience which you must acquire to complete the course. If you become convinced through Self-realisation, that your true nature is Supreme Consciousness, then you have finished the course, you have 'passed.'

Sai Baba, Teachings of Sai Baba P 109.

Whatever happens to us, we should consider it as good for us. It is only when we consider that others are responsible for our suffering, we will develop hatred towards them. Contemplate on the Self and God with peace and perseverance. When you do contemplation on the Self, worldly worries will not at all perturb you. Birth and death are natural to the human body.

DD 25/12/08 Sai Kulwant Hall SS February 2009 P 46

Just as when you awake from sleep, you know that the dream which you had was a matter of minutes, though the chain of events dreamed spanned many years, this life will appear a transient affair when you wake into wisdom after this brief 'dream of life'. Be always full of joy so that when death calls, you can quit with a light touch and not whimper in grief. I bless that you may so shape your lives and activities that supreme joy will be your lasting possession.

Discourse July 7, 1968 Kampala Uganda E Africa [in "Ocean of Love" P126]

Our body is transient like a water bubble, but life is a long journey. In this long journey, we change our bodies many a time, as we change our dress. In fact, death is nothing but a change of dress – 'Death is a dress of life.' We change our dresses but can we change the journey of our life?

SSIB 1993 P 63

The entire universe is encased in you. Never give room to the thoughts that you are the body. You are neither the body nor the mind. The body is transitory like a bubble, and the mind is crazy like a mad monkey. Hence, never set faith on the mind and the body, but pin your faith on the conscience within you. The human body, though decked with the finest ornaments and dressed elegantly, carries no value once the breath of life ceases. For man, faith is his life breath. Viswaasa (faith) is his "Swaasa" (breath). All the attainments achieved by the body carry no value if he lacks faith. The key is the life of the lock; similarly the self is the key of your life. It is the Atmic consciousness which promotes the functions of the body.

Discourse 22 May '93



The entire universe is encased in
you.

“Death is but a passage from this life to the next; it is the change from old clothes to new, as the Gita says. But some cynics laugh at this comparison and ask, what about the death of newborn infants, children, youths and middle-aged persons? Their bodies cannot by any stretch of meaning be classified as worn out! Well the clothes might not be old, but the cloth out of which they were made must have been from very old stock, so that though new clothes were prepared out of it, they had to be discarded soon.

SSS Vol III Chap 20 P 103.



Death is but a passage from this life to the
next; it is the change from old clothes to new

Death is not a deplorable event; it is the journey's end, the owner getting out of the car when the time is out and the goal is reached. It is a consummation,

a happy conclusion, if only all are wise enough to treat it as such and be prepared for it.

SSS Vol V, P 241.

Death, however, is born together with birth. And death must come in the way it is bound to come. The Lord, however, is a witness to all happenings. In some instances He gives prior indications and warnings. When these are heeded, the person concerned gets sanctified. When one disregards them, he forfeits his sanctity.

SS August 1993 P 201

“We have brought on ourselves this separation from the Person dearest to us. Why are we not bringing upon ourselves Death, which will end sorrow?” they moaned. But soon they felt that since the Atma (Self) in them is Rama, the act of Atma-Hathya (Self-destruction) was unthinkable. It was also not a meritorious act. And, suicide can succeed only when one’s destiny is to die by one’s own hand!

Ramakatha Rasavahinii Pt 1

Destiny is invincible.

DD 1/10/2006 Sathya Sai Speaks 39 P 236

No one is competent to determine where a certain thing should take place. Life may end in a town, in water, or in a forest. Each one’s life will end in the place, the manner and the time prescribed for him. This is inescapable. This is according to the operation of Nature’s law based on the pairs of opposites in life. There is a continual conflict between these opposites (pleasure and pain, birth and death etc.)

SS August 1993 P 200.

It is not possible for anyone to hold on to the physical body forever. It remains so long as it is destined to be. It will perish at its predestined time. Nobody has any control over death. It is decided at the time of birth itself. The date of departure is imperceptibly written on the body when it comes into the world.

SS August 2005 P 230.

These words from Sai on birth, death and destiny remind us that birth and death are only for the body – that we take birth in order to suffer and purify ourselves. He makes it clear that on this long journey of evolution, we change our bodies many times. He explains that the time and the way in which our bodily life ends is inescapable. These are important words for us to absorb, particularly those of us coming to terms with the loss of loved ones who end their life in trauma or suicide.

LIFE AFTER DEATH OF THE BODY

Several persons put the question “Swami, please tell us where the self goes after the decay of the body?” The sky is reflected in the water in a vessel. When the vessel breaks, the image of the sky merges with the limitless sky. So also, with the disintegration of the physical body, the Self merges with the Overself.”

BTBOS P 87

In response to a question regarding prayers and mantras said by priests for the soul so that it will not suffer: “No! The soul does not need any of your prayers. After death, it is the soul (he⁸ gesticulates grandly in the air), it is immortal...It does not suffer. However your mother has these ceremonies for her own peace of mind. It is not necessary. You have a remembrance day and pray, that is sufficient.”

JTG P54

You are not the body which perishes. You are not the mind which changes. You are the Soul, the other name for God.

TOAR P 12

Man has death but the mind has no death. Whatever man does during his lifetime is imprinted on his mind and gets carried over to the next birth. None can estimate the power of the mind. Do not think that the mind dies with the death of the body. The mind is imperishable. Unable to bear their suffering many people commit suicide. They think since their mind is the cause of their suffering they should put an end to it but it is the worst of sins. The mind cannot be killed so easily. One should never entertain such low ideas of suicide. One should be prepared to face any difficulties with fortitude and strive hard to sanctify one's life with strong faith in God.

SS August 2002 P 230

With your limited understanding, you have no right to pass judgement on anything. True wisdom lies in accepting everything as good and following the path of truth.

SS July 2004, P 195

If you are asked, what happens to man after death, you can point to yourselves and declare: ‘This is what happens’; they are born again.

BTBOS P 143

⁸ He=Sai

Even after 30 years of her passing away Mother Easwamma continues to express her love for Swami in a number of ways. Even to this day she moves around in her physical body. The boys who sleep in my room too have witnessed this.

D 6/5/01 SS June 2001 P 166

I have been seeing both Easwamma and Pedda Venkama Raju⁹ for the last one month. They also appeared before me when I was coming to Sai Kulwant Hall. Even Satyajit who sleeps in my room has seen them. Both of them were wearing yellow dress. Yellow represents the principle of Brahman¹⁰.

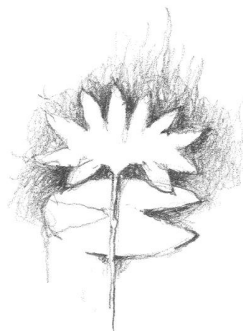
DD 6/3/08 SS April 2008 P 104

Recently also I told that both my mother and father appear before Me. I keep seeing them. They smile on seeing me; I also smile on seeing them.

DD 6/5/08 SS June 08 P 170

Sai is teaching us that after death of the body, the immortal soul (God) does not suffer. The mind continues, changes and is carried over to the next birth. He gives examples of family members appearing after their physical death and taking an interest in the well-being of those here on earth.

It is clear that some deaths are difficult to understand. Sai urges us to accept our limited understanding, see all as good and not pass judgement at all.



⁹ Easwamma and Pedda Venkama Raju – mother and father of Sathya Sai

¹⁰ Brahman – Brahman is not possible to explain in words. Whatever is unchanging, eternally true and whatever is knowledge is Brahman

THE THREE STAGES ON THE SPIRITUAL PATH

In order to understand better the different teachings on grief and sorrow, we have set some quotes into the context of Sai's explanation of the three stages on the spiritual path. This framework helped us to understand better some apparent contradictions in these teachings.

Stage 1. Duality – Body Consciousness, The World of Opposites, God and I are Separate, I am the devotee of God.

It is the sense of attachment which causes pain and sorrow, agony and agitation. You are so much attached to things that you lodge a complaint in the court of law against the man who has pasted a poster on your house. It is your attachment to your house which makes you go to that extent, but once you sell away your house, you remain unconcerned even when a bomb is dropped on it. It is the feeling of attachment which is the cause for your concern and indifference. Once you develop faith in the Atma within you, you are freed of hatred and attachment. The secret of greatness is man's faith in himself.

SSIB 1993 P 5

Many people think of God only when grief overtakes them; of course, it is good to do so; it is better than seeking the help of those equally liable to grief. But it is infinitely better to think of God in grief and in joy, in peace and strife, in all weathers.

Those who are caught in the coils of time and space become the victims of grief.

SSS Vol XV P143

You are subjected to unrest and suffering because of your dualistic feeling.

SSS 39 P 47

Good and bad arise from your thoughts only. If something bad happens, it is not something that others have done for you. Nor has God a role to play in this.

You are bad to yourself!

Your thoughts have done harm to you.

Supposing you are happy, even that is not caused by God. That too is on account of your own thoughts.

Hence one has to purify one's own thoughts first and foremost. When you develop pure thoughts your life will be happy and peaceful.

DD 25/12/08 P4 loose sheet

It is clear that our suffering is connected to the belief that we are the body – separate from others, separate from God, caught in the world of duality. We grieve when we live in body consciousness.

Stage 2. Modified Non-Duality – God is in Me.

Believe firmly that the body is the residence of God, that the food you eat is the offering you make to your Deity; that bathing is the ceremonial bathing of the Divine Spirit in you; the ground you walk upon is His domain; the joy you derive is His gift; the grief you experience is His lesson that you tread the path more carefully. Remember Him even in sun and shade, day and night, awake or asleep.

SSS Vol VX P 60

You identify yourself with the body out of delusion...

You are not the body...- give up attachment to the body.

Human body is only an instrument...to perform all karmas [actions] in this world.

Karma is instrumental in the conduct of this cosmic drama.

I am the Director of this drama.

SS Feb 06 P46 Discourse 7/10/05

All these bodily relationships are only illusory and not real. These are like passing clouds. Only the Atma is eternal. Whatever may happen to the physical body the Atma does not undergo any change.

DD 2/5/2006 Sathya Sai Speaks 39 P114

Develop the attitude that everything is God's gift and whatever happens is for your own good. Happiness and sorrow, losses and gains are all like passing clouds.

DD 29/9/2006 Sathya Sai Speaks 39 P 221

Have firm faith and never leave it till your last breath. However, our faith is steady when we are happy. But it becomes unsteady when we are in difficulties. Our faith should not waver like this. It should remain changeless. Love, love, love...love is changeless. We should develop love that is changeless. Have firm faith that God is the only doer and everything happens as per His Will. Nothing happens according to your will. To think that you are the doer is a sign of your ego.

Whatever is destined to happen will happen.

You should have firm faith that everything is God's gift and it is God who does everything.

Discourse 25/12/09 Sai Kulwant Hall, Prashanti Nilayam P 47,48

It is most essential you understand that everything happens as per His will
Whatever happens is for your own good.

With such firm conviction, you should accept pleasure and pain, good and bad with equanimity.

It may be difficult for you to bear misfortune.

You should pray to God to grant you the necessary strength to bear them.

You may have difficulties today but tomorrow it will be different. Difficulties are like passing clouds. They will certainly give way to happiness. Man always strives for happiness. How can he attain it? True happiness lies in union with God.

DD 26/2/2006 Sathya Sai Speaks 39 P 43

When we are in the stage of believing that God lives in us, we can live in the faith that all is God's will – that everything happens according to his will. We can then accept good and bad, pleasure and pain, equally. No matter how painful – all is His gift.

Stage 3. Non-Duality, Unity, Bliss, You and I are One

The consciousness “I am the body” must go if the spirit “I am one with the Self” must emerge. So long as you are one with the Universal Consciousness, no pain or grief or egoism can tarnish you. Take the seawater. Small quantity of seawater enclosed in a small bottle will get foul in a few days. But if it remains in the sea nothing can foul it. Be in the sea as part of it. Do not separate yourself. Do not feel that you are the body, separate from the indweller.

SSS Vol 1 Ch 3 29/1/1965

Everything in this universe is God.

The entire creation is an embodiment of Divinity.

In fact, he dons all the characters in the Cosmic Drama.

All dialogues and songs are His only. Yet the characters he dons appear to be different.

Hence, whatever we say- everything is God.

One has to realize this truth and conduct himself accordingly.

DD 23/2/2009 Sathya Sai Speaks 39 P 19

The yearning for Bliss is the best proof of our holy nature. Man is Bliss, he seeks Bliss; Bliss is Blessedness for him. Since God is Bliss, happiness is union with God. Nothing else can award that joy which is unaffected by whatever happens or does not happen.

SSS Vol XV P 335 25/1/82

I have come to illumine the human heart with the Light Divine and to rid man of the delusion that drags him away from the path of peace, the perfect equanimity of realisation. I am yours – you are mine. I do not await even an

invitation. Our relationship is not external, it goes deeper into the realms of the spirit. I am with you and in you, so I need no welcome or special request.

TOSSSB P 57

Man should maintain equanimity in pleasure and pain, loss or gain. Sorrow is verily the royal road to joy. Sufferings are the stepping-stones that lead man towards virtuous conduct. One should neither be elated by pleasure nor dejected by pain.

SS May 1994 P 113

My Dears,

The time will come when the whole of this dream will vanish. To every one of us there must come a time when the whole universe will be found to have been a mere dream, when we shall find that the soul is infinitely better than its surroundings. In this struggle through what we call environments, there shall come a time when we shall find that these environments were almost zero in comparison with the power of the soul. It is only a question of time, and time is nothing in the infinite. It is a drop in the ocean. We can afford to wait and be calm.

With blessings, Baba.

Quoted in "Ocean of Love" P237

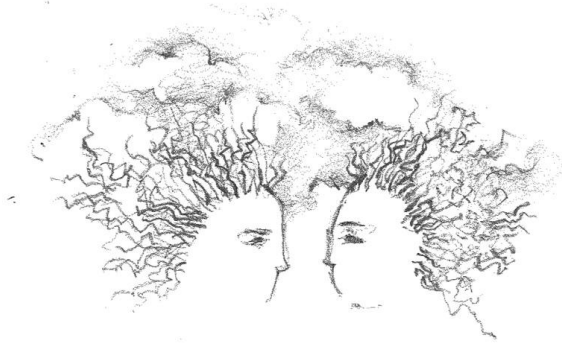
Life is a dream. In the dream, you experience joy and grief; but when you realize that both joy and grief are unreal, when you awake into the consciousness of the Self, you will no more have the thrill of joy or the despondency of pain. You will not have any longer fear or anxiety, fear of death or anxiety about the future.

Discourse 3 Dec '72

Do not count your tears of pain; do not pour over your grief; let them pass through your mind as birds fly through the sky, leaving no trail behind, or as flames and floods appear on the screen in a picture house without singeing or dampening the screen.

Discourse 22 Nov '67

let them pass through your mind
as birds fly through the sky



In this third stage, we experience no thrill or despondency as Sai encourages us to take wings and rise up into the awareness that who we really are is beyond all of the joy and grief. We are Him and He is us. Our grief is the stepping-stone to this state of consciousness.

IMPERMANENCE OF RELATIONSHIPS

It is out of your illusion that you say “She is my wife, she is my mother-in-law, she is my daughter-in-law, he is my son, he is my grandson” etc. All of these relationships are of your own making. They are not given by God. They are created by your own imagination due to your body attachment. All your suffering is only due to your body attachment. God neither gives happiness or sorrow. All these are the result of your body attachment and not the Atmic consciousness. So far as the body is there, you experience both happiness and sorrow. Once the body perishes, nothing goes with you. Call it Atma, call it Self, call it ‘I’ all these are different names of the same Atma. When you cut your little ‘I’, you become God yourself. The cross in Christianity signifies the cutting of the little ‘I’.

SS March 2009 P 74

The earth is a place where men come and stay for the night and when dawn breaks, one by one, they tramp their different ways. Kith and kin are the words we use for the travelers cultivated ... during the short term of acquaintance. If you think you will know that the wife, the children, the possessions, the relatives, are not yours for long; they are yours for a short time only. So, why waste away, worrying over these impermanent things.

BTBOS P 102

There are no permanent relationships in this world. So long as the body lasts, the relationships exist. When the body is lost, the relationships are also lost. There is one thing that is permanent in this life and that is what you have to aspire for. Human life is given to man to know himself and to realize God.

SS July 2006 P 202.

You should have body consciousness only to discharge your duties. You have to do your duty. Duty is God. You should not develop undue worldly relations.

SS July 2006 P 203.

All these bodily relationships are illusory and not real. They are like passing clouds. Only the Atma is eternal. Whatever may happen to the physical body, the Atma does not undergo any change.

Once you depart from this world, who is related to whom? Who are your friends and relations? No relationships at all! Hence the physical body should not be given too much importance.

DD 27/9/2006 Sathya Sai Speaks 39 P 193

Death is certain for the body, even after 100 years of life. Everybody knows this truth. That is why it is said that a living person cries for the sake of a dead

person. The reason for this is 'moha' [delusion]. In spite of his knowing that death is certain for every living being, if he cries for the dead person, it is because the body of this person developed 'moha'¹¹ for the body of that person, who died. Thus, the reason for this sorrow is only 'moha' [delusion] and not 'prema' [love].

Bhagavad Gita DD of Sathya Sai Baba part 2 p 73

You say:

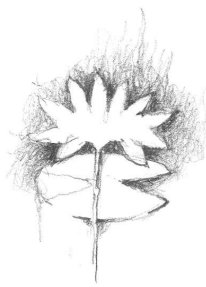
"She is my wife, he is my son, he is my son-in-law, she is my daughter." All these worldly relationships are merely your illusion. They do not really belong to you. They belong to God. Everything is God's property. Nobody has any right over anything.

DD 6th July 2009 Prashanti Nilayam. SS August 09 p 240

It is only for our convenience, for our pleasure and for our own selfish purposes that we develop worldly relationships. Hence, give up selfishness and strive for self-realisation. You must enquire into yourself. "Who am I? Body, mind, intellect, chitha¹² or ahamkara?¹³" "I am I" Recognise this truth.

DD 27/9/2006 Sathya Sai Speaks 39 P 195

Sai is teaching us that the perception of 'me and mine' is due to our body consciousness. It is not real. All worldly relationships do not belong to us, but to God. For this reason, relationships last as long as the body lasts.



¹¹ Moha – Attachment to the world, the material and the sensual

¹² Chitha – Agitations of the mind

¹³ Ahamkara – Egoism, pride, selfishness

THE POWER OF THE MIND

Buddha did penance for six long years. One day he opened his eyes and said he had caught hold of the thief. Who is the thief? It is the mind. He realized that the mind is the root cause of all suffering. If you control your mind, you will never suffer.

SS Nov 1998, P 287

It is important to know that as long as the mind is there, desires will not leave you. As long as you have desires, the false notion of 'I' and 'mine' will not leave you. As long as the feeling of 'I' and 'mine' is there, Ahamkara- your wrong identification with the body- will not leave you. As long as Ahamkara does not leave you, Ajnana, ignorance, too will not leave you. In effect, it means that there is no way other than annihilation of the mind to obtain Atma-jnana, knowledge of the Self, or Atma-darshan, vision of the Self, or Atmananda, Bliss of the Self, whatever you may choose to call it.

Summer Showers 1990, P 116.

In this world, we see and hear about the dualities of good and evil, merit and sin. What is the origin of all these? They originate from man's Sankalpas and Vikalpas (good and bad thoughts). Good and evil are present in the mind of man, not in the world. When man cultivates sacred thoughts, he will find sacredness all around.

SS April 2003, P 119.

The sensory world is the cloud that hides the soul which ever shines in the firmament of your heart. The same mind that gathers clouds can disperse them in an instant.

TOSSB P 132

From the identification of 'I' with the body, all troubles and complications arise. Since it is the mind that has woven this web of identification with the body, it is now the mind that must now turn and seek one's true nature through discrimination, renunciation and enquiry. Both ego and intelligence may be included in the word 'mind.'

CWSSB P 136

This is Swami's message for you today. Develop love. Through love alone can you get cured of any disease. Only love can eradicate the evil qualities in you. So, love all. Love the Hridaya¹⁴, not the physical body. Love the Divinity that is installed in your heart.

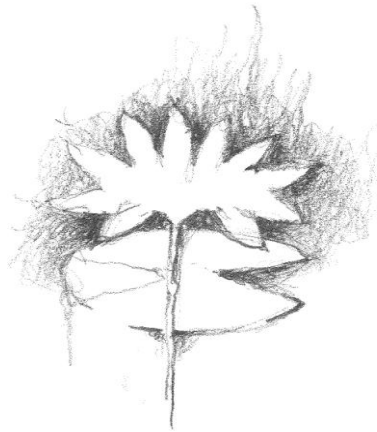
¹⁴ Hridaya - heart

SS Aug 2000, P 233.

You may chant the names of Rama, Krishna, Govinda, Buddha and Sai to steady your mind. Once the mind becomes steady, you don't need to chant. Observe total silence. That is why it is said, silence is golden. Once words become less, the activities and vagaries of the mind also become less...Man may die but the mind will not die. The mind vanishes when words vanish from it. Observing silence is one of the ways of silencing the mind.

SS July 2002, p 198

Sai is demonstrating that the mind is responsible for both disease and for healing. We must annihilate the mind and develop love to obtain bliss. This can be achieved through focusing on the names of God.



EGO (I AM SEPARATE FROM GOD AND ALL BEINGS)

Considering oneself as different from others is called “ego.”

TOAR P 47

First of all we have to eliminate the feeling of ego (ahamkara.) Ahamkara is misinterpreted as arrogance, pride or carelessness. This is not the correct meaning. Aham means I, akaram means the form or the body – I am this body. Considering the body as the self is real ego. You have to destroy this feeling. When people behave in a careless or arrogant way, it shows their animal nature but does not mean ego.

SSN Summer 1995 P 28

Immortality, not death, is the genuine ‘dharma’ or nature of the human being. This is the reason why humans are the crown of created beings. But man has lost hold of this precious quality and he lives in bondage to selfishness. When man attaches himself to the ego he loses access to the higher level of consciousness. This downfall results in his losing the grip of the Reality. And when the Reality eludes him, he is confronted by a crowd of contradictory conclusions. This calamity in the thought process results in mental confusion.

SSS Vol XV P 65

Ego and attachment stand as obstacles in our path. Only when you give up ego and attachment will you have purity of heart, which in turn will lead you to the experience of Supreme Wisdom.

SS Nov 1998 P 283

The man who is wrapped up in his ego cannot recognise God. When ego goes, God appears.

SSS Vol XXI, P 177.

Everything in this universe is god. Only one who forgets his real nature will have fear. One who keeps solely the objective world in view will have fear. One who seeks only sensory pleasures will have fear. One who is deluded by ‘padartha’ [matter] will have fear. One who is engrossed in ‘parartha’ [spirit] is fearless. Such an individual is ‘abhayaseela’.¹⁵

Bhagavad Gita DD by Sathya Sai Baba Part 2 P 237

Like the tadpole’s tail, the ego will fall away when one grows in wisdom. It must fall away; if it is cut, the poor tadpole will die. So don’t worry about the

¹⁵ Fearless

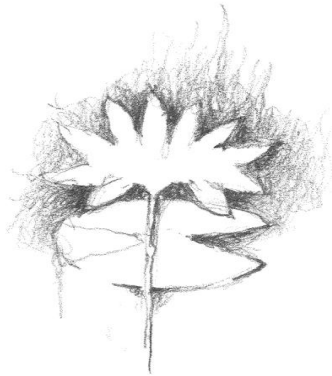
ego; develop wisdom, discriminate, know the ephemeral nature of all objective things – then the tail will no longer be evident.

SSS Vol IV Chap 39 P 245.

You are God verily, if only you get rid of "I" the ego and "mine" the attachment. Then you are really yourself [your real SELF].

DD 25/12/08 p7 loose sheet

Believing we are the body, separate from others, is ego and leads us to lose our way – to become confused. Our true nature is immortal. As we learn the temporary nature of the objective world, the ego drops away.



BODY CONSCIOUSNESS

Sai teaches us here that we need body consciousness to carry out our duties, however we should not become attached to the physical form, to our friends and relations. Our pain comes from the illusion that we are the body, and that they are, too.

You should have body consciousness only to discharge your duties. You have to do your duty. Duty is God. You should not develop undue worldly relations.

SS July 2006 P 203.

Having attained human birth, you should be able to withstand pain and suffering with courage and fortitude. Be convinced that they are good for you. All that God has created is good. All in God's creation is good and sacred. There is nothing which will cause sorrow and misery. In fact, misery arises out of man's delusion. The delusion is because of his identification with form.

Sathya Sai Speaks 39 P 44

Once you depart from this world, who is related to whom? Who are your friends and relations? No relationships at all! Hence the physical body should not be given too much importance.

Discourse 27/9/2006 Sathya Sai Speaks 39 P 193

As long as one has attachment to the physical body one has to experience sorrows and difficulties, sin and merit.

DD 27/9/2006 Sathya Sai Speaks 39 P 190

EQUANIMITY

You have to become toughened by the hammer strokes of joy and sorrow until you are unaffected by the vicissitudes of fortune.

SSS Vol IV P 54

The stage of equanimity so essential for spiritual progress can be gained only when the intellect is cleansed of the blot of deluding attachments and involvements. Devoid of that serenity, the intellect or Buddhi cannot proceed on the trail of Brahman.

Sutra Vahini 6-17.

Suppose you are digging a pit, the soil that is taken out and stacked becomes a mound. You need not feel anxious that the pit is becoming deeper and deeper. The soil that is dug out of the pit and the soil that is piled up next to the pit are the same. Similarly, along with the difficulties you undergo, you will experience happiness in abundant measure. When you fill in the soil that is piled up [namely happiness] in the pit of sorrows and difficulties, you will attain a state of equanimity. That is what you have to realize today. You need not feel sorry: "Oh I have fallen into this pit of sorrows and difficulties. How can I come out of this? How am I to bear this?" "The soil of happiness stacked next to the pit of suffering may be filled into the pit. You will attain a state of equanimity. You have to do this sadhana.

SSS Vol 37 P 169 2004



The soil that is dug out of the pit and the soil that is piled up next to the pit are the same.

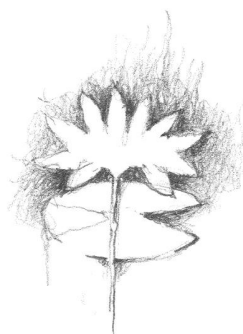
What you have to do is to place all your burdens on God; that makes you carefree and grief-free. Then, when you take everything as the divine play of the Lord you love, you clap your hands in bliss whatever may happen, for it is all His play and you are as happy as He is when His plans are being carried out.

SSS Col. III P 156

Nishkama Karma is “action without desire for the fruit of the reward.” You will undertake every act only for its own sake and not for the sake of reward. The end result does not bother you. In this way, you become one who renounces the fruits of action. You will become a jeevan-mukta, that is one who is liberated from the bondage of birth-death-rebirth while still living. There will be no more births for you. You will attain a state of equanimity and tranquillity. You will be in a constant state of peace which will not be shaken by either prosperity or by adversity. This is the perfect blissful state for which everyone should strive.

SSAV P 41

Equanimity – a constant state of peace, not shaken by prosperity or adversity. This is the state for which we are striving, liberated from the bondage of birth-death-rebirth whilst still living. Until we achieve this state, we are being toughened by the strokes of joy and sorrow. Sai hereby teaches us the reason for sorrow and the process of our liberation.



HOW DO WE MOVE OUT OF PAIN AND HEAL FROM LOSS?

Your duty is to believe He is the impeller of your activities, and draw strength from that belief.

Until the wound heals and the new skin hardens, the bandage must protect the place. So too, until reality is realized, the balm of faith, of holy company, and holy thoughts must be applied to the ego-affected mind.

SSS Vol XV P 5

Life is one long series of worries from birth to death. But all worries can be overcome by the love of God. Cultivate this love at least from now onwards. Man has to journey over the road that lies over pleasure and pain, grief and joy. The journey can be smooth only when he resorts to wisdom, devotion and detachment.

When the night grows chill, you draw the rug tighter around you, is it not? So too, when grief assails you, draw the warmth of the name of the Lord closer around your mind.

Discourse 6 Feb '63

There is one common quality in all living beings: Moha or attachment. This quality is present equally in human beings. But man alone has the competence to overcome this attachment and attain liberation. The Maya (illusion) which envelops man drives him to take the wrong courses. Maya has three qualities: Sathva, Rajas and Thamas (Purity, Passion and Inertia). Through these qualities man tends to forget his divinity and humanness and behave like an animal. The three qualities of Maya¹⁶ and the three forms of Moha combine to make man a demon. The three forms of Moha¹⁷ are desire for wealth, attachment to the wife and attachment to the children. These three can make man a slave to attachment. The man who conquers these three desires can transcend moha. When moha declines, moksha¹⁸ becomes attainable. Liberation is the elimination of attachment. Everyone should strive to bring under control these three desires.

SS May 1995 P 135

If you have attachment towards wife and children, land and buildings, bank accounts and balances, when these decline, you will come to grief. Develop attachment towards the Universal and you too will grow in love and splendor.

SSS Vol V P 183

Mind is responsible for all suffering and rebirth. So mind has to be diverted to God in order to escape the cycle of birth and rebirth. One can overcome the

¹⁶ Maya – Illusion, unreal, delusion; a mixture of fact and fiction

¹⁷ Moha – Attachment to the world, the material and the sensual

¹⁸ Moksha – Liberation from birth and death

evil effects of one's actions by focusing his mind on God. Mountains of sin will vanish like the mist. God's grace can eliminate all your sufferings. For every action there is bound to be a reaction. But, with the help of Divine grace, one can escape from the consequences of one's karma.

Discourse September 13 1999- Ganesh Chaturthi, Prashanti Nilayam [in "Ocean of Love" P26]

First, one has to cultivate purity of thought and mental equanimity. This mental equanimity is not something which one can purchase or obtain from outside. One has to generate it from within. When one has gained equal mindedness amidst pleasure and pain, he will be free from sorrow and will enjoy peace.

SSS Vol VX P 39

Recognise that God is the person at the wheel. He will take you happily to the destination. Have faith in Him and be free from fear, anxiety and agitation. Surrender to Him. His grace can save you. His power can overcome all your obstacles. Faith and surrender are the manifestations of 'bhakti' [devotion]. They can ensure peace and joy for you and for all mankind.

SSS Vol XV P131

Man has the unique capacity to know his destiny and destination. He should not fall into the whirlpool of desires and be carried down into the depths of grief.

SSS Vol XV P209

We should have faith in God and face the challenges of life with courage and valour. Only then do we deserve to be called a human being. The mind is meant to contemplate on God.

DD 14/1/2006 Sathya Sai Speaks 39 P 8

Therefore we should understand the truth that everything is the gift of God. If difficulties come, consider that they are the gift of God. Similarly when you get happiness consider that also as the gift of God.

DD 25/12/08 Sai Kulwant Hall SS February 2009 P 48

Let us always remain calm and quiet. Whatever happens to us, we should consider it as good for us. It is only when we think that others are responsible for our suffering, we will develop hatred towards them. Contemplate on the Self and God with peace and perseverance. When you do contemplation on the Self, worldly worries will not perturb you. Birth and death are natural to the human body.

Discourse 25/12/08 Sai Kulwant Hall, Prashanti Nilayam [SS P46]

You will be free from sorrow once you understand the 'Bhagavathathwa' [nature of Divinity].

If you are undergoing difficulties, do not get disheartened.

Have faith that God is making you go through the ordeal for your own good.

Happiness and sorrow co-exist.

You cannot attain happiness without undergoing difficulties.

Sathya Sai Speaks 39 P 43

When there is luggage you cannot escape from trouble. Here luggage refers to worldly relationships and desires. Only when you are rid of worldly bondage can you be happy.

DD 14/4/2006 Sathya Sai Speaks P 94

Once you get rid of worldly attachment you will develop purity, steadiness and selflessness. You will be free from suffering, worries and anxiety. Ultimately you will attain moksha [liberation].

DD 26/2/2006 SSS 39 P 51

If you constantly contemplate on God, no other thoughts will trouble you. Sorrows and difficulties will not affect you.

DD 28/9/2006 SSS 39 P 208

Whatever you do, do it as an offering to God. God is the doer of everything, not you. You can accomplish any task only with the Will of God. Therefore be your own witness. Engage yourself in good deeds. Speak only that which is good. Only truth should come out from your tongue. Everything that you do should be for the good of others. When you engage yourself in the service of others, you will always be happy. Never give room to ego or jealousy.

DD 14th January 2009 Sai Kulwant Hall SS February 2009 P 39

Patience and forbearance are the noblest and most important qualities of a devotee. It is not possible to acquire this by the study of the scriptures. It does not come by the teachings of the guru. It cannot be purchased from the market. It has to be acquired by systematically following certain 'abhyaya' [practice] and 'sadhana'¹⁹. To keep up patience in times of difficulties, sorrows, losses, scandals and abuse, is like a test. It is only in such times we have to develop our patience and fortitude.

Bhagavad Gita DD by Sathya Sai Baba Part 2 P 149

Face all difficulties with forbearance. Accept all trials and tribulations with love. Accept both pleasure and pain with love. Fill your heart with love and not

¹⁹ Sadhana – Spiritual practice and austerity, self effort, spiritual discipline

with the poison of evil qualities. Even poison becomes prasadam [sacred food] if it is offered to God.

DD 27/5/06 SSS 39 P 171

Even the sorrows and difficulties we experience are for our own good. They are preludes to happiness and bliss.

If you cultivate such positive outlook you will always be blissful. Share your happiness with all. Contrary to this man today is keeping happiness to himself and distributing sorrow to others This is not what we should do. Overcome your sorrow and manifest inner joy- this is the spiritual sadhana one has to undertake. What is true spiritual practice? True spiritual practice is to rise above our sorrows and difficulties. When you constantly think that you are endowed with peace and bliss, no difficulties will bother you.

DD 14/1/05 SS Feb 2005 P 39

When the wound is fresh and we are still affected by the illusion of body consciousness, Sai encourages us to apply the balm of faith, holy company, holy thoughts. With a commitment to focussing thoughts on God, trust that all is His will, that He is the person at the wheel. Accept all with love, do everything as an offering to God. Have patience, courage and offer all difficulties to God.

PRAYER OF SURRENDER

Why get agitated? Let me take care of your business. I shall be the One who shall think about them. I am waiting for nothing else than your surrender to Me. I intervene only when you know to completely surrender to Me, then you do not have to worry any more about anything. Say farewell to all fears and discouragement. You demonstrate that you do not trust Me. On the contrary, you must rely blindly on Me.

To surrender means: to turn your thoughts away from all your problems. Leave everything into my hands, saying: Lord! thy will be done. Thou think of it. That is to say: Lord, I thank you for you have taken everything in your hands and you will resolve everything for my highest good.

Remember that thinking of the consequences of a thing is the contrary to surrender; that is to say that you worry that a situation has not had the desired outcome. You thus demonstrate that you don't believe in My love for you. You will prove that you don't consider your life comes under My control and that nothing escapes Me.

Never think: How is this going to end? What is going to happen? If you give into this temptation you demonstrate that you don't trust Me. Do you want Me to deal with it, yes or no? Then you must stop feeling anxious about it. I shall guide you only if you completely surrender to Me and when I must lead you into a different path than the one you expect, I carry you in My arms.

What seriously upsets you is your reasoning, your worrying, your obsession and your will to provide for yourself at any price. I can do so many things when the being, as much in his material necessities as his spiritual ones, turns to Me, saying: You think of it, and rests quietly, closing his eyes. You will receive a lot, but only when your prayer will fully rely on Me. You pray to Me when in pain, so that I will intervene, but in the way you desire it. You do not rely on Me, but you want me to adjust to your requests.

Don't believe like sick ones who ask the doctor to treat, all the time suggesting the treatment to him. Do not do that, but rather, even in sad circumstances, say: Lord, I praise and thank you for this problem, for this necessity. I pray to arrange things as You please for this terrestrial and temporal life. You know very well what is best for me.

Sometimes you feel that disasters increase instead of diminishing! Don't get agitated. Close your eyes and tell Me with faith: Thy will be done. Thou think of it. And when you thus speak, I even accomplish a miracle when necessary. I only think of it when you trust Me totally. I always think of you, but I can only help you completely when you rely fully on Me.Baba.

Sai Unity Egroup (Internet)

DETACHMENT

Man has to become divine, the divine from which he has come. So, he has to lessen his attachment to the world, not by cutting himself off, but by being in it as an instrument in His hands; by subduing all tendencies towards egoism that raise their heads in him; by single-minded attention to the dictates of God called righteousness.

BTBOS P 231

In fact suffering and troubles have no real existence. Then why are you worrying? Develop the attitude of detachment. Then you will have no suffering and no worry.

DD 14/4/2006 Sathya Sai Speaks 39P106

You are going on adding to your objects of attachment from the moment you are born in the world. First, you have your mother and father, then brothers, sisters, relatives and friends. After marriage, another set of relatives and friends are added through your spouse. Thus attachment goes on multiplying. On the other hand, if you go on detaching yourself from various relationships one after the other, your attachments get reduced and you develop detachment or Vairagya²⁰, leading to liberation. Attachment and detachment relate to external objects. Divinity is in closest proximity to you, but it takes time to understand divinity.

SS July 1994 P 174

There is grief when a person dies in a family. Is death the cause of grief? No. It is the attachment to the dead person which is the cause of grief. The process of getting rid of attachment has been described in Vedantic parlance as Vairagya. Gradually attachments should be eliminated. In the journey of life, the less luggage you carry, the greater comfort you will experience. It may be asked: How is it possible to reduce attachments and desires in worldly life? The answer is: Carry on your business or other activities in a spirit of dedication to the Divine. All actions should be done with the conviction that they are dedicated to the Lord. This is an easy path to follow. Consider all actions as actions performed by the power of the Divine, whether it be seeing, or hearing or speaking or doing. Without the power of the Divine, can the eyes see or the ears hear?

SS February 1995 P 31

Nothing in the world is yours and you are just a trustee for the wealth which belongs to the Divine. Developing the feeling of 'mine' and 'thine' people get attached to the unreal and the transient and forget the eternal.

SS July 1995 P 185

²⁰ Vairagya – Renunciation, detachment, loss of appetite that satisfies the senses

What people have to learn today is to give up attachments to the things of the world and seek the love of God. When one cultivates the love of God, renouncing worldly things becomes as simple as leaving hold of a handkerchief. Clinging to property is difficult. Giving it up is easy, when people have understood the meaning of God's love.

SS Feb 1995 P 36.

Attachment presents never-ending attraction towards objects. But it is very easy to renounce! Simply think: "Everything belongs to God. Nothing is mine!" This is the way to transcend attachment. You can say "My home, home, my land, my wife, my child, my wealth, my car and so on, but bear in mind this: These are for your use only, not for ownership. They are God's property. You must part with everything at death. So, gradually, decrease the idea of "mine." Experience the world with your power of discrimination. Use the world to engage in constructive actions, to walk the path of truth."

Divine Discourse 1995.

Life is a long journey, so less luggage creates more comfort and makes travel a pleasure. Detachment does not mean to leave home and family. The control of desires is detachment. Only then, can you attain purity in order to attain divinity.

SSN Spring 1995 P 17.

What is the real meaning of Moksha? Moha Kshaya (removal of attachment) is Moksha (liberation). So long as one has attachment, one cannot think of liberation.

SS July 2005, P 189.

You are all Amrutaputras [sons of immortality] not Anrutaputras [sons of falsehood]. One who is Amrutaputra is not affected by change or death. You are verily the embodiments of the changeless, eternal principle of divinity.

Sivarathri Discourse Sai Kulwant Hall Prashanti Nilayam 8/3/2005 SS April 2005 P 104

These words on detachment help us to discover the means through which we become divine. We need to dedicate all to the Lord – see all our relationships and belongings as His, with us as the trustee. We must give up the feeling of 'I' and 'mine'. This is how we detach from relationships and attach to God's love. Sai tells us that this is easy when we have understood the meaning of God's love.

From the moment we are born, we begin attaching to people and relationships. Through viewing all as embodiments of changeless, eternal Divinity, we gradually learn detachment. We see all as His. We are all children of immortality. Detachment leads to liberation.

It is our belief that loss is a gift which aids us on our spiritual path. Through opening to and grieving our losses, trusting that all is good, moving beyond body consciousness into the experience of our Reality of being One with All, we can experience who we really are. We all take human birth for this reason alone.

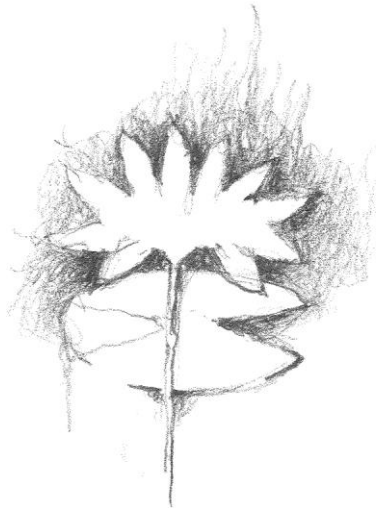
As two mothers, we are still on this journey of moving beyond body consciousness to a state of constant integrated awareness – being able to function in the world and at the same time in constant awareness of our true nature, divinity itself. It is our belief that the guidance and support of these words of wisdom will carry us onwards and bring us to Universal Consciousness. Sai Baba teaches us that all of creation will one day arrive at this point.

It is our prayer that these timeless teachings will support, comfort and guide others who are healing from loss.

With love,

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Quotations in this text have been taken from the following books and publications:

BTBOS	Baba the Breath of Sai
CWSSB	Conversations with Sathya Sai Baba
D	Discourse of Sathya Sai Baba
DD	Discourse of Sathya Sai Baba Nov 19-24 1987 and Sankirtanam Discourse during Navaratri festival
GP	Garuda Purana of Sathya Sai Baba
JTG	Journey to God, Pts I,,II,III,IV J.Jagadeesan
MBAI	My Baba and I, John Hislop
SS	Sanathana Sarathi
SSAV	Sathya Sai's Amrita Varshini
SSIB	Summer Showers in Brindavan
SSS	Sathya Sai Speaks
Sutra Vahini	Sutra Vahini
TOAR	Temple of All religions
TOSSSB	Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba

All translations of Sanskrit words contained in the footnotes are taken from the Glossary in "A Compendium of the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba" compiled by Charlene Leslie-Chaden, fifth revised edition, 2004.