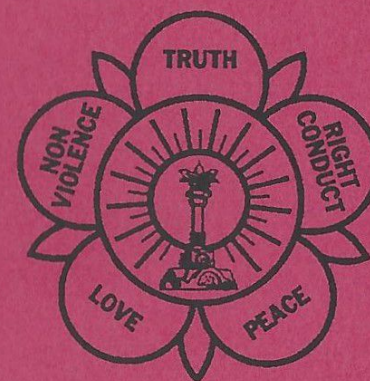




*“If there is righteousness in the heart,
There will be beauty in character.
If there is beauty in character,
There will be harmony in the home.
When there is harmony in the home,
There will be order in the Nation.
When there is order in the Nation,
There will be peace in the world.”*

Sathya Sai Baba

THE HANDY PRASANTHI POCKET BOOK



Directives given by
Bhagavan Sathya Sai Baba

THE MESSAGE I BRING

I have come to light the lamp of love in your hearts, to see that it shines day by day with added lustre; I have not come on any mission of publicity for any sect or creed or cause; nor have I come to collect followers for any doctrine. I have no plan to attract disciples or devotees into my fold, or any fold. I have come to tell you of the Universal Unitary Faith, this Path of Love, this Duty of Love, this obligation to Love; believe that all hearts are motivated by the One and Only God, that all faiths glorify the One and Only God, that all Names in all languages and all Forms man can conceive, denote the One and Only God. His adoration is best done by means of Love. Cultivate that attitude of Oneness between people of all creeds, all countries and all continents. That is the Message I bring.

Sathya Sai Baba

POINTS ON WHICH TO PONDER

To have the opportunity of sitting at the feet of the Lord is an immense privilege. Over the last two thousand years, countless people have yearned to be able to go to the Holy Land and walk where Jesus once walked. This land, too, is holy and is blessed by the feet of that same Lord.

Jesus told His followers, "*If you love me, keep my commandments*", and this is what Sathya Sai Baba asks of us too. This small booklet puts in a convenient form those few elementary rules to which Baba asks us to adhere while we are in our "Mother's House", as guests of the Lord.

We are not only guests of the Lord, but also ambassadors for our country. According to our behaviour here, so will our country be judged. If we have come with a group, we are also members of that group, and the way in which we behave will reflect on all the others in the group. We therefore have a responsibility towards them too.

We are asked to think on these things. The golden rule for right conduct is still, "*Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.*" Selfishness has no place in a spiritual pilgrimage.

**GUIDELINES AND CODE OF CONDUCT FOR
FOREIGNERS
AT
PRASHANTHI NILAYAM AND BRINDAVAN**

- 1 There is room in these Ashrams only for those who are willing to accept the discipline and code of conduct stipulated by Sathya Sai Baba.
- 2 Humility, thoughtfulness and respect for elders should determine every aspect of your behaviour. Only in this way will you, yourselves gain respect.
- 3 All conversations should be limited to the essentials of politeness and communication. There should no running about the Ashram, or laughing and talking loudly. Nor are ostentatious shows of devotion acceptable. Devotion is between you and God, heart to heart.
- 4 Develop your **own** spirituality and do your **own** spiritual practices (Sadhana). Do not seek the help of others, or publicize the powers and achievements of others. Look at yourself, not others.
- 5 You are expected to present a clean, modest appearance at all times. Sarees, punjabi suits

and long dresses are acceptable for ladies. Neat, pressed Indian or Western clothes for gents are in order. Both inner and outer cleanliness are part of the spiritual path.

- 6 Anyone wishing to stay for an extended period must have Swami's **specific** permission to do so. You are personally responsible for seeing that all visa and registration requirements are strictly observed.
- 7 All visitors must bring enough money to adequately take care of their needs while in India. Those who live off money collected from other persons will not be permitted to remain at the Ashram. All are warned against those who solicit money from visitors here. Some claim that they have Swami's permission to do so, but this is not so. If you encounter any financial difficulty, or if someone requests help from you, act only after receiving specific advice from Swami, or from the volunteer responsible for foreigners.
- 8 Because of the serious weakening of the individual's physical, mental and spiritual capabilities, Swami definitely does **not** approve, and will **not tolerate** drug taking of **any** kind, including marijuana, ganja, alcohol, hallucinogens

etc. Offenders will be excluded from the Ashram and all its activities.

9 It is Swami's explicit wish that single ladies and gents do not mix socially, either at Prasanthi Nilayam or Brindavan. Social mixing goes completely contrary to the spiritual path as it is understood in India. Remember that you are here solely for spiritual reasons, and spend your time accordingly.

10 Whatever Swami wishes to say to you, He will say directly. Do not pay attention to those who claim to have "inner" messages, advice, special contacts or favours from Swami, especially when they conflict with Swami's teachings or code of conduct. This also applies to anyone who claims to have been given special powers by Swami. Swami's powers are such that they are not given to anyone, or taken by anyone.

11 Only those who are personally invited by Swami may follow His car when he is traveling or on tour.

12 Help those in need as best you can, but do not promote attachment and egoism in the name of service, either with those within the Ashram or those outside.

13 Have no connection of any kind with people outside the Ashram. Devote your time to the spiritual activities within the Ashram.

14 Accept and follow one path, one teacher and one teaching, pursuing it with steadiness and concentration. Otherwise there will be confusion and distraction which will hinder your spiritual progress.

15 If you hope for good and quick results in your spiritual quest, then you must be willing to correct your own faults and behaviour.

16 Be fully aware of the proper behaviour of the environment in which you are living, and respect the limits that this imposes. If your behaviour, however innocently, causes bad thoughts in another, the responsibility is **yours**.

17 For reliable information about Sai Baba and His teachings, read the books available from the Ashram. Do not rely on rumours, stories and the personal impressions of other people. See for yourself.

18 Any attempt to touch Swami's person is strictly prohibited. Exercise discrimination and self-control in Swami's presence, and be an example

to those around you. Do not walk or rush after Swami when He moves about the Ashram.

19 Whether you are inside the Ashram or without, all the Ashram rules and regulations should be observed and respected.

20 It is Swami's wish that these guidelines be published and distributed to all foreigners who come here, so that they should be fully aware of what is expected of them. If you are in any doubt about Swami's views on these or any other related issues, please ask a member of the Ashram committee for further information. Alternatively, ask the volunteer responsible for foreigners.

"You have come long distances, given up many comforts and are experiencing many difficulties. You have come with great hopes and ambitions, but to realize these you must understand the code of conduct prescribed for Prasanthi Nilayam and submit yourselves to it. Swami is ready to give you all opportunities for spiritual progress and for your own Sadhana and practice."

(From Swami's talk to foreigners 28-3-1975)

THE 9 POINT CODE OF CONDUCT

as prescribed by Sathya Sai Baba

- 1 Daily Meditation and Prayer (in conformity with your own religious beliefs)
- 2 Singing or listening to devotional songs with members of your family.
- 3 Seeing that your children participate in the Spiritual and Value orientated programmes organized by the Centre.
- 4 To participate in community work and other programmes of the Organization.
- 5 To attend Devotional Singing organized by the Centre at least once a month.
- 6 The regular study of Sai literature and other Scriptures.
- 7 To speak softly and lovingly to everyone.
- 8 Not to indulge in talking ill of others, especially in their absence.
- 9 To put into practice a "Ceiling on Desires" and to utilise the savings generated to serve mankind.

Anyone who sincerely attempts to put this Code of Conduct into practice, can be considered to be a true follower of Sathya Sai Baba.

THE TEN PRINCIPLES

Try also to live up to these univers Principles.

- 1 Treat as sacred the land in which you were born. Have patriotism to your Nation but do not criticize other Nations or put others down.
- 2 Respect all Religions — equally
- 3 Recognize the Brotherhood of Man. Treat all as brothers and sisters. Love all.
- 4 Keep your house and surroundings clean, for this will help you keep healthy.
- 5 Practise charity to those in need, but do not encourage laziness)
- 6 Never give a bribe or take a bribe (Never give in to corruption)
- 7 Curb envy and jealousy, expand your vision and outlook, treat all equally regardless of caste or creed.
- 8 Try and do as much as possible yourself. Do not continually depend on others. Be self-reliant.
- 9 Have Love for God and fear of sin.
- 10 Never go against the laws of the land; follow these diligently, both in the word and in the spirit. Be an exemplary citizen.

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR TIME AT PRASANTHI

Here in Prasanthi Nilayam there are people from many different countries, yet they consider themselves as all belonging to one family – the Sai family. The concept of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man should inspire your life.

You have come here at great expense and trouble. Having come all this way, avoid strolling outside the Ashram. If the body wanders, the mind also wanders. I am speaking out of concern for your own good and well-being. Remember that you have come here to experience sacred thoughts, and to sanctify your lives. You should therefore observe the discipline of this place, behave with decency, and show respect to everyone.

When you go back to your respective countries, your conduct must be such that your countrymen have a high regard for you. They should recognize the transformation brought about in you by your visit to Prasanthi Nilayam and seek to follow your example.

From Sathya Sai Baba's Discourse to Westerners
on 17 February 1989

MEN AND WOMEN MUST ABIDE BY THE CODES OF CONDUCT

Do not seek relationships with people who are not connected with your family. In Western countries, the codes of behaviour are different but, if you want to stay at Prasanthi Nilayam, you must accept the codes of conduct prescribed here.

In your own countries, it is usual to see men and women talking together in public, but this is something which will not be accepted at Prasanthi Nilayam. It may be that there is nothing wrong with what is being spoken of between them, but how is the onlooker to take it? The mind of the onlooker can become disturbed because of how he interprets what he sees. In such case, it is we, ourselves, who are responsible for the bad thoughts of the third person.

We should be careful to conduct ourselves in such a way that we are not going to be the source of bad thoughts in others. If there is a need for a man and a woman to carry on a conversation about something, do so, but in the privacy of your room.

From Baba's discourse to Westerners of
28 March 1975

EARN RESPECT FOR YOUR COUNTRY BY YOUR BEHAVIOUR

You are living and moving in this world as individuals in society. You should therefore be careful not to behave in a manner that is offensive to the society in which you find yourself. Back in your own country, you behave according to the laws and customs of your country, and no one is offended. But when in India, be careful about your conduct.

The first requirement is to dress in a manner which conforms to the standards of the country. Some people come here dressed in what is regarded as unbecoming. Their clothes are seen as skimpy, loud, short, and even dirty and undignified. If the clothes are such, how can the mind be clean.

Your dress should not distract the attention of others. Be demure, simple and silent. People will judge you and your country on your appearance and your conduct. When you come to Prasanthi Nilayam, you must have good manners, modest dress and proper behaviour. The mansion of spirituality is built on good manners, discipline, proper behaviour, decent dress and restraint in talk.

From Baba's discourse to Westerners of
20 August 1984

BE RESPONSIBLE WITH MONEY

Value and use the nearness and grace of God that is available here to advance spiritually. Do not seek to acquire more desires which can only hinder your spiritual progress.

There are other things that shouldn't be happening. I shall give you an example: you have plenty of money. For something that is worth only one rupee, sometimes you give ten rupees. Ten rupees may not mean much to you, but for the local people it is a big amount. You are staying just temporarily. After you leave, having paid these large amounts for things, you are making life difficult for the permanent residents. So, when you pay too much for things, do not imagine that you are doing some service. You are really doing harm. Don't waste money. Misuse of money is evil.

A lot of money is also being wasted on unnecessary tours and on various gadgets. Good money is also given to beggars, who then use it for drugs and drink. When they are hungry, you can give them food, but do not give them money. Be careful not to waste money in any way.

From Baba's discourse to Westerners of
20 August 1984

DO NOT WASTE TIME, MONEY, FOOD OR ENERGY

You have come after spending a lot of money, yet you are wasting your time strolling about and engaging in unnecessary and useless talk. Realize that time is most important. Many people, even here, waste their time. Time wasted is life wasted. By wasting time, one is developing laziness. Laziness is rust and dust. Therefore, under no circumstances should you waste time. Having come to such a sacred place, you must try to get rid of at least some of your bad habits.

Neither time, money, food or energy should be wasted. Western people waste all four of these things – they waste money; they waste time; they waste food; they waste energy. Because of the waste of these, life is wasted.

Life is a valuable thing. It should not be spent concentrating all of your time on the external world. Turn your sights inwards. Avoid strolling outside the Ashram. If the body wanders, the mind also wanders. So don't wander around aimlessly.

From Baba's discourse to Westerners of
20 August 1984

DEVOTION IS GRATITUDE

What is devotion? Contrary to general belief, devotion does not consist in singing bhajans, saying the rosary, meditating, etc. Basically, devotion is gratitude. In everyday life, we say 'thanks' if someone hands us a handkerchief or something, but we forget to be grateful to God who provides us with air for our very existence.

No amount of fans can match one refreshing gust of breeze. No amount of electric light bulbs can equal the illumination of the sun. No amount of pumps can provide the amount of water given by even one shower of rain. Light, air, water, food, thoughts – all these have been given to us by God. All the essentials of life are available to us because of the loving grace of God. Should we not express our gratitude to such a loving God?

The secret of true devotion is an intense sense of gratitude towards God. Prayers, bhajans, even doing meditation – these are essentially acts for the expression of gratitude to God. All the forms of service that we do, are also essentially an expression of our gratitude to God.

From Baba's discourse to Westerners
on 17 February 1989

TRUE FREEDOM IS BORN OF DISCIPLINE

Self-realization can be obtained only through sacrifice, yet some are not even prepared to give up smoking or non-vegetarian food. If you cannot give up even these, how are you going to develop the spirit of sacrifice?

You have come here really to experience a state of perfect purity and discipline. When you come here you must respect how others feel, conduct yourselves accordingly, and earn the respect of others. In the name of freedom, people are losing their human qualities. Real freedom has to come from within. Today, people have become the slave of their senses – how can this be called freedom?

I know the depth of your devotion, but you need to conduct yourselves in such a way that it will please Swami; only thereby can you earn His love and grace. Remember that your goal is nothing less than realizing your inherent Divinity. Make the best use of your supreme good fortune, transform yourselves into godly persons and thereby help transform others.

From Baba's Discourse to Westerners
of 17-2-1989

REGULATIONS CONCERNING STAY AT PARASANTHI NILAYAM.

People are no longer allowed to spend an indefinite amount of time at Prasanthi. The regulations applying at present are as follows:

Length of stay for all devotees is one month in each year.

In addition to this, foreign devotees may also spend the Christmas/New Year period in Prasanthi.

Donors and allottees may spend two months in each year, as well as Christmas/New year.

Young people under the age of 25:

It is requested that all young people under the age of 25 be either accompanied by their parents, or else come with a group and be in the care of its recognized group leader.

NOTE: If you have been allocated a room, please do not swap with someone else, nor invite others to share your room without informing the Accommodation Office. There may be an urgent need for them to know where people are (a telegram, for instance). Also, when you leave, do not forget to **return the key.**

YOU ARE MY TREASURE

“You are My treasure, even if you deny Me. I am your treasure, even if you say No. I shall be affectionate to you and attach Myself to you; I shall take all the trouble to keep My property safe in My custody — that is to say, in the custody of the Lord, by whichever Name you may be calling upon Him. All the powers I have are for you: I am just the sore, keeping them ready to be given to you whenever you ask for them. My Prema (Love) shall be given even if you do not ask, for it is your right to share in it. Some complain that I did not give them this or that, but that is because their vision is limited to the immediate future or the present; whereas I know what is in store, and so I have to safeguard them from greater grief.”

Sathya Sai Baba