

National Education Conference

August 20 and 21st 2011

MURWILLUMBAH



*Sathya Sai Education: Practical Steps
Towards Future Prosperity*

ABSTRACTS



Institute of Sathya Sai Education, Australia

CONTENTS

Vision of Future Prosperity.....	1
<i>(Pal Dhall)</i>	
Peace and Prosperity through SSEHV.....	2
<i>(Neville Fredericks)</i>	
Update on the Institute of Sathya Sai Education.....	3
<i>(Pal Dhall)</i>	
SSEHV and Constant Integrated Awareness.....	4
<i>(Leelah Broughton)</i>	
Building the Nation’s Values Capital: Integrating State Education with W.A.T.C.H.....	6
<i>(Doug Bettens)</i>	
Establishing a New Benchmark for SSE Teaching for the Twenty First Century and Beyond...	8
<i>(Vijay Vengetas)</i>	
Role of ISSEA Hubs and Alumni in creating future prosperity.....	9
<i>(Channa Seneviratne)</i>	
The Value of Health – Integrating Health Education with Values Education.....	10
<i>(Phillip Cottingham)</i>	
Future prosperity of remotely controlled generation.....	11
<i>(Jayanti Gupta)</i>	
A Human Values approach to nurturing ourselves as teachers.....	12
<i>(Margaret Taplin)</i>	
Steering the Future Generation into Acquiring Knowledge and Practice of Human Values:	13
An essential requirement for a peaceful society <i>(Shalinee Kumar)</i>	
“Give Up & Gain” - How to Create A New Social Reality	14
<i>(Padma Ayyagari)</i>	
A Paradigm Shift: Individualism to Collective Altruism.....	15
<i>(Bhavana Kaul & Dharam Pal Sharma)</i>	
The Efficacy of EHV: A School Community's Perspective.....	16
<i>(Jason Peel)</i>	
“B R I D G E” – Program for Sai Teen Youths.....	17
<i>(Anshoo and Pradish Kumar)</i>	
SSEHV in the Community: Individual Transformation for Health Professionals.....	19
<i>(Selvanie Naidoo)</i>	
Toogoolawa Schools: A Real Education Revolution for the Future.....	20
<i>(Ron Farmer)</i>	
Creating Prosperity in Students through Implementation of a Leadership Program.....	21
<i>(Vijay Vengetas)</i>	

Meeting the Needs of a Nation.....	22
	<i>(Maya Prakash)</i>
The Sai Teen Youth Challenge (13-18yrs)	23
	<i>(Michael & Vibha Leathart)</i>
The Role of Sathya Sai Education in the Philippines.....	24
	<i>(Al Macasaet & Rocel Vidanes)</i>
Reclaiming Wayward Adolescents for Future National Prosperity through SSEHV.....	25
	<i>(Arti Vallabh)</i>
Adopting Human Values while Cyber-Surfing.....	26
	<i>(Krish Naidoo)</i>
Contemporary Parenting Issues Underline the need for Human Values in Family Dynamics.....	27
	<i>(Satish Kumar)</i>
Positive Youth Development.....	28
	<i>(Channa Seneviratne)</i>
Systemic Development and the role of Values.....	29
	<i>(Roger Packham)</i>
Strategies for Integrating Sathya Sai Educare into the Everyday Programmes of Mainstream.....	30
Schools	<i>(Margaret Taplin)</i>
Happiness Amidst Adversities.....	31
	<i>(Mohan Bhullar)</i>
A Systematic Approach to Spirituality Practice.....	32
	<i>(Sandy Sandanam)</i>
GFC three years on – Can we Handle the Truth?	33
	<i>(Shaini Sivagnanam)</i>
Electronic Spirituality in the New Civilisation – Help or Hindrance?.....	34
	<i>(Thamo Sritharan)</i>
Ceiling on Desires as the Blueprint for Future Prosperity.....	35
	<i>(Bhahi Anand Bhahirathan)</i>
Ceiling on Desires versus Consumerism.....	36
	<i>(Rama Subramanian)</i>
The Impact of SSEHV on Children, Teachers and Parents.....	37
	<i>(Denise Konia)</i>
How People can Change and Why They Don't: A Mind Model.....	38
	<i>(Robert Molloy)</i>
Environmental Sustainability and Human Values.....	39
	<i>(Sivakumar Muttucumar)</i>
Service and Transformation, through Education.....	40
	<i>(Tom Lahey)</i>

Vision of Future Prosperity

This year is the beginning of a very significant new phase in Sathya Sai Education. The glorious stream of Love, suffused with Philosophy, Metaphysics and Spirituality over 70 years has ceased. On 24th of April Sai Baba sent a clear message that it was time for humanity to move on to a new phase in which we assume the responsibility of implementing His teachings systematically into our personal lives and into all systems and institutions. The onus is on each one of us to create a Prashanti Nilayam in every heart and in every mind and the epicentre of future prosperity is our own heart and mind.

SSEHV is a tool to serve the world through bringing an awareness of Sathya Sai Philosophy that every activity, every moment, every relationship is an opportunity of working on our own mind and heart and elevating human consciousness. Too often we equate SSEHV with the Human Values Education programs in the schools of a secularised version of human values. This is a total misunderstanding. Baba's SSEHV has its origin in the concept of Divinity as the core of our very reality and unless this is a key concept we are not looking at the His authentic message.

Secondly, the concept of prosperity includes prosperity of health, of positive emotions, of good relationships, of good leaders, good community and family life, of sharp intelligence and of discriminating faculty, of inner and outer peace. We are prosperous if we are working to solve crushing problems that are foreseeable and we prepare ourselves to avert catastrophes.

At a global level we are faced with some 17 major challenges including religious intolerance, terrorism, global warming, destruction of biosphere, destruction of oceans, looming shortages of water and food, increasing disparity in the wealth of the nations and an increasing knowledge gap between the rich and the poor. Most of these challenges arise from greed, selfishness, exploitation, hatred and intolerance and pollution, basically from the pollution of the heart and mind. On the other hand we have the possibility of developing a glorious civilisation through the use of spectacular technology of computing a million times more powerful than now, of nanotechnology, genome research, neuroscience, stem cell research, Green and Blue revolutions, developing resources of solar energy, mitigating threats of climate change, of terrorism and food and water insecurity. Our use of knowledge will increase by 2 to the power of 100 to solve our problems. The world economy will grow by a factor of 7. Our capacity to evolve too will increase by a quantum factor.

We want a long lasting era of human flourishing and use all the powerful technology for this purpose. But at present there is a gap in the increase in technology and wisdom to plan and protect our future. SSEHV and Sathya Sai Philosophy are the direct antidotes to all that is destructive in humanity with the crown jewels of five eternal human values sourced in the Athmic Oneness, unity of Faiths, Ceiling on desires and selfless service. All these refine the consciousness. When these teachings become at least as important in our civilisation as speed, competition and economics are at present then we will have at a new era of peace and prosperity, and the dawn of a Golden Age that will last for many centuries into the future. These teachings are for transforming human consciousness. Many of the alumni of the Institute will be presenting their papers on their special interests in SSEHV and it is both very pleasing and eye opening how far we have come in taking the vision of Sai further along the road to a prosperous future in Australia. But this is just the beginning, more is to come!!

Pal Dhall

Peace and Prosperity through SSEHV

Societies cannot prosper if their citizens at large do not practice noble qualities such as right action, truthfulness, and compassion etc.

Peace and prosperity will be elusive or temporary where the prevailing culture is strongly based on self interest, with little regard for the welfare of others.

Sathya Sai Baba has advised that the welfare of the individual is inextricably bound up in the welfare of society as a whole.

The Sathya Sai model of “Education In Human Values”, with its emphasis on character development, self confidence, and the fostering of one’s compassionate nature, provides an exceptional model for the growth of responsible citizenship and the development of caring and considerate societies.

Peace and prosperity cannot be achieved without a citizenry that is motivated towards the higher ideals in life. S.S.E.H.V. is now a proven model for the transformation of students, empowering and equipping them to make quality decisions based on conscience, and through their exemplary conduct, are able to positively influence others in their community.

Examples will be given such as the relationship between successful entrepreneurship and the level of trust which exists in a society.

Neville Fredericks

Update on the Institute of Sathya Sai Education

The Institute in Australia is located in Canberra. The Sathya Sai School in Murwillumbah and the U Turn Training School in Gympie are a part of the ISSE. The ISSE has a hub in the Sai School and the ISSE is in the process of developing hubs in several states. Channa Seneviratne will talk on the activities of the Melbourne hub later in this session. Similar hubs are being developed in Sydney and Perth.

The primary responsibility of the Institute is to oversee the Sai School in all its aspects and to design training programs in Human Values for the teachers and parents in the Sai School and develop material for the Sai School children. In this respect there is a close collaboration between the Principal, the Deputy Director and the staff of the ISSE in Canberra. The ISSE manages the Sai School through its Board of Governors made up of myself, Neville Fredericks and Channa Seneviratne.

ISSE has several functions including the running of various courses e.g. Introductory, Intermediate, Diploma Courses and the Advanced Diploma by research. The Australian ISSE is responsible for the training of the SSE teachers for the Sai Organisation and the facilitators of the STP and the Parenting Program. The National Education Coordinator is an ex officio member of the faculty of the ISSE.

The Institute trains the teachers in the state schools in the pedagogy of Sathya Sai Education and develops human values lessons and other material for the mainstream state schools. Such material has been used over the years in many schools around the country. Shalineer Kumar will describe her experience in a cluster of schools around Sydney.

Several initiatives in SSEHV will be described by faculty members during this Conference in their papers and in workshops e.g. Arti in Melbourne, Selvanie and Krish Naidoo in New Castle, Satish Kumar in Sydney. There is a deep focus on understanding the teachings of Sathya Sai Baba and some of the research will be presented by the faculty members from Canberra and Albury. We have been the recipient of an award from the Queensland Government for providing training in Queensland for 10 students with Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. In Australia we are very fortunate in having more than 200 who have completed their Diploma studies and over 40 have undertaken further formal qualification as qualified Trainers. Another 10 will undertake this training in Perth while, as mentioned, 10 will be trained by us in Queensland.

At present the ISSE is running a pilot Introductory Course in Canberra, and a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment in Brisbane and Perth in collaboration with an RTO. This experience is a preparation for our own application for independent RTO status. It is planned that with the teaching resources developed from the delivery of these courses, the Introductory and the Intermediate courses will be formally launched in the states where we have fully trained trainers in the hubs. The ISSE is planning a second Advanced Trainer workshop in Canberra for all those who have attended the first Advanced Trainer Workshop in Canberra. We feel proud as there is no other ISSE in the world which has so many well qualified trainers. There is a need for good quality trainers as both the ISSE and the Sai Organisation are training Organisations. Inevitably it is the quality of trainers that determines the quality of programs.

Pal Dhall

SSEHV and Constant Integrated Awareness

The Context

Did you know that in Australia, 11% of children and adolescent fulfilled the criteria for ADHD? Did you know that in America the number of children between the ages of 3-17 ever diagnosed with ADHD is 5.3 million?

Do you know that mental illness accounts for over 50% of the total disease burden among young Australians aged between 12 to 25(with depression and anxiety, schizophrenia and problematic substance use being the leading contributors)? Do you know that up to 28.8% of children will develop an anxiety disorder during their lifetime?

If our children are the messengers' of our futurewhat type of future will we experience when one out of four is suffering from some sort of anxiety disorder?

The Solution

The good news is we currently have a solution to this problem – Sathya Sai Education in Human Values and Constant Integrated Awareness.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba has given us the philosophy of Sathya Sai Educare and the pedagogy of Integral Education and this is currently at work in the Sathya Sai Primary School in Murwillumbah.

This system of education is slowly “opening wide the doors of the mind ... cleansing the inner tool of consciousness, the senses, ego and reason”. HOW? Through this integral component of a whole system of education which infuses everything with the five human values of love, peace, truth, right conduct and non-violence.

When a whole school has a culture and ethos of values pervading every aspect of school life through curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities – a heart to heart connection develops. Students experience authentic relationships, good role modeling and slowly see the interconnectedness of life. With this come the understanding, the inner knowing and most importantly the inner feeling/ intuition of, the ONENESS of life.

The first step to this whole project is creating an environment and culture of love which is conducive to the emergence of universal human values starts with the students' ability to attend to their mind.

Dr. Alan Wallace says, “Training one's attention is the key that makes personal change possible.” By attending to their mind, students will begin to notice their thoughts and how thoughts trigger feelings and how in turn feelings can ‘motivate, de-motive, create, destroy, enlighten or confuse.

In my experience training children to focus will bring enormous benefits ~ it will be teaching our children to tap within their "genius" principle. This is because all geniuses (mathematicians, musicians, scientists or philosophers) have one thing in common - the extraordinary capacity to focus their attention with high degree of clarity for long periods of time.

There are a variety of methods to develop a child's attention, one way is through silent sitting. Sathya Sai Baba says “study is for steady” and "It is only in the depths of silence that one can hear the voice of God." While Anil Kumar believes “Human values are possible only if there is

awareness. Human values can be practised if we are integrated personalities, and if this constantly felt experience is preserved and sustained in our lives. So, Constant Integrated Awareness of the Divinity within me will help me to practise the human values."

Just imagine the level of creativity, love, kindness, peace, truth and non-violence that will exist in the world when we train our students' attention and develop that steady, silent genius within each of them - WHAT A FUTURE INDEED!

Leelah Broughton

Building the Nation's Values Capital: Integrating State Education with W.A.T.C.H.

Issues:

Why is there difficulty in introducing the 5 Human Values as an education programme into State Education? As the key negotiator for the W.A.T.C.H. programme experience has shown that principals and teachers have difficulty in understanding the concept of the Five Human Values regardless of explanation. With time constraints for meetings, existing virtues programmes, pressures from parents, government and heavy workloads, principals and teachers are generally unwilling to attend or be part of a new programme. Principals often have student programmes presented to them for inclusion into their school and unless it is exciting, innovative, professionally presented, demonstrates educational benefits or can improve students wellbeing in the playground then they are not interested.

So what is different?

W.A.T.C.H. programmes are presented as a solution to issues that are happening at their school. Programmes can be adjusted to meet the constraints of the target group, are completely flexible in application and presentation, are easy to understand, non-threatening, are fun and exciting. Training of volunteers to reach a high standard of presentation can happen in a very short period, mostly during weekly lessons. Teaching techniques remain the same, lesson plans are simple to write to include school issues. Principals and teachers see positive results, students are keen to learn and by the end of the programme the whole school knows about the programme and is actively practicing values. Parents see the results at home and are keen to see the programme continue.

What can we do?

We need to recognize and encourage people to step forward in the Institute and the Sai Organization. They must be people who live the Human Values and inspire others. Taking a leadership role requires support and this can be achieved if we work together. There is a role for everyone. Programmes can be delivered to local communities; our diversity is our strength. Teachers know their school community and their issues. What is required are Love, faith, inspiration, innovation and intellect.

There is always a need for moral values in a school and there is always a human values solution, how it is initiated into a school programme requires lateral thinking. W.A.T.C.H. can find a pathway to a solution because it is simple. Programmes can expand into other schools by building on successes. Our responsibility is to be ambassadors, teachers, students and motivators and be living examples of the Values. How we progress the W.A.T.C.H. programme into main stream education is up to all of us in the Sai Organization. It can be applied to just about any school situation. We are our biggest stumbling block and we can only move forward when we take the first step. The education system is not stopping values education WE ARE. Education fraternities are asking for programmes that will have a positive result to bullying at school and other social issues.

W.A.T.C.H. programmes are about Thoughts and Heart and in most cases this is a new experience for students. If one state school with 145 students can change their school room and playground behavior with a W.A.T.C.H programme then what can happen if the programme is introduced throughout the nation. History has shown innovative programmes can transform the national values capital in education. Registered teachers in the Sai Organisation must be involved and be supported by volunteers or teachers aids who understand the Values. What we do know is that when school communities are introduced to W.A.T.C.H. and everyone in that community sees the results more requests for the programme arise. Values education cannot expand without YOU taking the first step.

Doug Bettens

Establishing a New Benchmark for SSE Teaching for the Twenty First Century and Beyond

Global events, advances in technology and consumerism have largely affected societies, families, businesses and even educational institutions. Progress is based on materialism and financial status. Science has made great advances in the last decade but the cost is a loss of human morality and virtue.

We consume a variety of resources and products today having moved beyond basic needs to include luxury items and technological innovations to try to improve efficiency. We need to understand the issues that surround consumerism to bring about any changes in our lifestyle. We are creative, thinking human beings who are capable of decision making and yet the media easily influences our choices of consumption. As demand increases, the requirements placed upon the environment and our planet is also affected.

Societies need to be educated to bring about any desired improvement. Parents, teachers and political leaders are all responsible for creating the problems that exist and it is their responsibility to now make changes and find solutions. Both parents and teachers should foster an enquiring spirit in the child so that he/she is allowed to make decisions and act upon them.

If actions are not analysed and spending habits are not curbed, the consequences will go well beyond the 21st century. Children, for generations to come will accept their actions as normal and not question the harmful effects to the planet and the environment.

A new benchmark needs to be established and changes must be made not for convenience, financial reasons or pressure from national and global societies but because they are value based. As a result the current SSE syllabus attempts to connect the chosen sub values to some point(s) of the 9 'Code of Conduct.' In this way awareness is created among students of the importance of natural resources and the impact of all actions on the environment. Personal values and the values encouraged by parents are challenged by the concept of a "ceiling on desires".

Researching information and not merely accepting what they are faced with will bring about a change in the outlook of students. They will be able to make value based decisions, arrive at a conclusion and finally act upon it. Adults, too, will have to keep up with the changing times and be aware of circumstances surrounding what is happening in the world.

Vijay Venetas

Role of ISSEA Hubs and Alumni in creating future prosperity

My focus will be on the Hub in Victoria which was set up in 2007 with the objective to examine Swami's teachings and to create awareness in the community in its application in the daily lives and also sharing of information about Swami's teachings. The hub is managed by a committee comprising of five dedicated and committed Diploma holders. In the past two years, book review sessions have been conducted and presentations and workshops have been organised on topics relating to human values and spirituality. These sessions are open sessions. The presentation includes some of the successful outcomes of the Hub in Victoria in the past two years.

In gratitude and recognition of the training and inspiration received during the Diploma and Advanced Diploma, the alumni of the ISSE decided to dedicate their time and energy to promote the philosophy of human values education to all sectors of our Australian society. We formed an active group in 2009. The alumni have pledged to create an association of active practitioners of Human Values and of Sai's spiritual teachings in our own lives and to make a significant contribution in promoting the philosophy of human values education in all sectors of the society. A tremendous sense of fellowship through active and regular communication between the ISSEA, its teachers and trainers and the Alumni has been generated over the last two years. The Alumni were inspired and formulated an action plan for the next two years was developed based on the suggestions and ideas given by the Alumni members. First was the Newsletter.

Members were of the view that a regular Newsletter would not only include contributions by the Alumni members but also updates from the local hubs as well as recent developments from other countries with regard to Sathya Sai Education. The content will inspire Alumni to update their knowledge on the philosophy of Sathya Sai Education and in some cases transform themselves without them feeling the change as it is gradual. This Newsletter is currently published bi-annually. This is circulated to Alumni as well as to all the Sai Centres in Australia. Another suggestion made by members was to set up an interactive web site for Alumni members. As members are located in different states, the interactive site provides an opportunity to discuss issues, ideas and views with other fellow members regularly. It took time to establish this web site and will be in use shortly. Alumni members have also suggested that we work on a community project to use our skills and knowledge for the benefit of the community. We are in the process of identifying a project. Our view is to select a project on the same lines as a project that will assist 'At-risk youth' or assisting teenagers who are into alcohol or drugs.

All in all it has been a huge learning curve for me in the past two years working with a dynamic group of ISSEA Alumni. With more members of the Alumni group inspired, I am positive we will be able to make our presence felt and also spread the message of Human Values to all segments of our community.

Channa Seneviratne

The Value of Health – Integrating Health Education with Values Education

Over years of discourses, Swami repeatedly emphasised the need for maintenance of health. His discourses on nutrition and his famous saying, “Bend the body, Mend the senses and End the mind”, exemplify His insistence that health, education and spirituality are not separate. This short workshop will explore this integration of health, education and spirituality in practical ways. Participants will be invited to reflect on their own lives and how they put into practice these principles. They will also be exposed to a programme, which is occurring in a South Auckland Sathya Sai preschool, where parents are being educated in healthy nutrition for their families, with the aim of improving the health of the pupils and influencing the families to make better food choices. The integration with values education is being explored and the results will be published.

The workshop will also explore evidence-based sources of health and values education material, as well as discuss the establishment of networks to share information, results of successful programmes and how we can integrate these important facets of values education in practical ways.

*Phillip Cottingham
New Zealand*

Future prosperity of remotely controlled generation

There is enough scientific evidence on TV's power to draw and hold attention. The stylistic cuts, zooms, edit and hi fidelity noises trigger an involuntary response within us and hold our attention to the screen.

TV viewing gets addictive and displaces other activities. It impacts us psychologically, neurologically and metabolically. Just the sheer amount of TV viewing, not its content, is associated with obesity, violence, depression, attentional damage, learning abilities, sleep problems and more. It arrests early brain development, slows down a child's metabolism, damages eye sight, leads to sleep problems. It impairs the ability to think, interferes with the development of inner speech, and erodes inner awareness.

TV could numb the true effects of real life violence, lead to copy cat violence and aggression. In Bhutan, the last country to introduce TV, crime rates have increased due to TV viewing.

What was once a past time has become prime time? When we add TV viewing to the use of internet, computers, DVDs, videos, social media, instant text messaging, interactive mobile telephones etc, we spend an inordinate amount of time each day in front of a screen.

Daily exposure to high technology stimulates brain cell alteration and neurotransmitter release. The stimulation we are exposed to is critical in determining how our brains work. Brain cells are altered, gradually strengthening new neural pathways while weakening old ones. Human brain is evolving as never before, changing the way we live, communicate, feel, think and behave.

This could lead to a 'Brain Gap' between the younger generation, who are technologically savvy, and the older generation who are reluctantly embracing new technology.

As we master new technologies and take advantage of their efficiencies, we need to maintain our people skills. We need to make informed choices about the quantity and quality of our brain's exposure to technology. To progress spiritually we need to turn off the gadgets and tune in.

Jayanti Gupta

A Human Values approach to nurturing ourselves as teachers

We ask a lot of teachers these days – they need to be subject experts, nurturers, record-keepers, administrators, social workers and role models. Many need to cope with challenging pupils, ever-increasing administrative loads, and other pressures that make them feel that they are struggling to keep up all the time. On one hand, most teachers want to make a difference to the lives of their pupils – on the other hand the stresses of teaching today can often lead to burnout, and it is very difficult for a burnt-out teacher to be able to fulfill any of the above roles well and consistently. Even the ones who see teaching as a vocation or a mission need support.

The purpose of this workshop is to explore some ways in which teachers can unlock their own inner strengths and values in such a way that will make it easier for them to interact with their pupils and colleagues and hence make it easier for them to become role models to help their pupils and colleagues to do the same. It is to be hoped that, in doing so, teachers will become happier and more fulfilled in their jobs and in their lives in general. It is anticipated that the strategies discussed in this workshop will be applicable not only for teachers but also for those in other caring professions.

*Margaret Taplin
Hong Kong*

Steering the Future Generation into Acquiring Knowledge and Practice of Human Values: an essential requirement for a peaceful society

This interactive Workshop will focus on an exploration of the secular values in the mainstream school system in Australia and on the desperate need of help from parents to raise their children with awareness about values, what they are, why they are needed and how they can be imparted. It will acknowledge that the parents do not have the extended family support system, religious influence or the time that used to in the past- and this is evident in all cultures. Children too, do not have clear directions and guidance as parents are busy with work commitments, their own social networking and household chores. Children have to learn values from somewhere and school seems the most appropriate place despite many teachers feeling that it is another subject that has to be taught.

The workshop will review the challenges in the introduction of SSEHV programs in the school and focus on steps and procedures that need to be considered to ensure that SSEHV program is sustainable. It will highlight the strategies to ensure that the program does not become insignificant or non-existent after a couple of years after its introduction.

At the end of workshop the participants will feel more confident to take the necessary steps towards the introduction of SSEHV into schools. They will have knowledge of strategies towards the processes required to introduce SSEHV into schools. They will be able to engage in discussions about the need for SSEHV in schools in the awareness of the likely hurdles they could encounter when introducing the program. They will feel confident about the ways of overcoming these hurdles and become actively creative in ways of making the SSEHV program inspiring and vibrant for students and teachers.

Shalinee Kumar

“Give Up & Gain” - How to Create A New Social Reality

Caught between the fear to give up and the desire to gain, increasing number of people largely from developed nations, are getting disconnected from their communities and are unable to meet fundamental human needs of belonging, security, authenticity and autonomy.

However, as sporadic as it may be the inherent helping nature of humans is constantly demonstrated whenever a nation is subjected to natural disasters as witnessed in several recent instances within Australia and worldwide. The feelings of solidarity and gratitude displayed at times like this as a result of philanthropic giving or volunteering personal time and resources, whilst remarkable, can be short lived and generally people revert back to their selfish drives to find meaning and happiness.

Defining ‘Giving up’ within the parameters of ‘Spirit of Sacrifice’ as described by Sai Baba and citing the various projects undertaken by Him in Medicare, Educare and Sociocare as role models, this paper addresses how ‘Giving up’ our evil qualities like jealousy, hatred, malice and wrath as well as material objects, can fundamentally reorient an individual on a spiritual trajectory of personal transformation. The resulting ‘Gains’ are a personal capacity at individual level to sacrifice time, money, resources, expertise, knowledge etc. and establish intimate, ongoing and lasting connections with the community. The selfless contributions made by individuals in this spirit of ‘Brotherhood of Man and Fatherhood of God’ helps usher in a new social reality as prophesied by Sai Baba where national unity and social harmony are both founded upon Spirituality.

Padma Ayyagari

A Paradigm Shift: Individualism to Collective Altruism

Concern for others as expressed by altruism, is inherent in human beings. In spite of this innate quality, individualism defines all interactions and outcomes of human activities and permeates the social fabric of the 21st century. These individualistic activities in the last three decades have resulted in major global issues such as financial crisis, ecological degradation, little or no social conscience, and excessive consumerism.

Scattered round the world are individuals who have become less individualistic and more altruistic by devoting enormous energies and resources in addressing global issues that would benefit mankind. In the current setting the challenge is how to progress on the spectrum from entrenched individualism to collective altruism.

The perfect role model for altruism is Sathya Sai Baba whose various altruistic activities are a benchmark for addressing global issues. Adhering to this bench mark, the ISSEA has the responsibility of developing a Sathya Sai Education package in human values. The challenge is to mainstream the use and uptake of the package by the wider community. It is important to design a roll out strategy for this package that is fully supported by an implementation plan for the next three years. The use of electronic media and social networking resources will become a significant tool to reach the community and disseminate the information efficiently and cost effectively.

The purpose of this workshop is to recognise that individualism and collective altruism can coexist in our society. The challenge is to create a reform agenda that will use the momentum, drive and energy of collective altruism of the members of the organisation and the broader community.

Bhavana Kaul & Dharam Pal Sharma

The Efficacy of EHV: A School Community's Perspective

'This paper outlines some of the findings regarding a school community's perspective on the effectiveness of the SSEHV programme. The research took the form of a case study. The context of the study was an EHV club, located on the site of a public state school in the UK that was run outside of school hours.

The perspectives of the participants range from those both involved in the EHV club and the state school, to those only involved in the school. This paper focuses on the perceived impact that the EHV programme had on students and adults within the school community and the whole school ethos. The paper also alludes to some aspects of implementation of the EHV programme that were perceived as influencing or limiting the programme's effectiveness.'

Jason Peel
New Zealand

“B R I D G E” – Program for Sai Teen Youths

The society today is transitioning at a much faster rate than it ever did. With that comes the influx of powerful social media which brings the vibrations of the earth right into ones homes. This exposes the younger generation to the world without having them step outside the home. As a result, we are seeing young people with social pressures within their own home struggling to focus on studies, dedicate time to family and looking towards the future.

At a time like this, there is a need to provide life skills to the younger generation. They need to be trained on responsibility and on proactively becoming part of a community. Furthermore, to counter the social pressures, their skills of independent judgment need to be developed with the attitude of selflessness. Skills necessary for success in studies and career such as time management, confidence and public speaking are essential. The youngsters also need to be supported in developing a spiritual identity and becoming reflective.

All the above needs to be done in direct competition with mass and social media along with hobbies and interests of the youngsters. There is a clash with their growing beliefs and personalities.

Therefore, considering the needs and interests of present day youngsters, a program termed “BRIDGE” (Being Ready to Inspire and Develop Goodness Everywhere) was started by predominantly the Youths at Rooty Hill Sai Centre about 3 years ago.

While the program aimed at fulfilling the gaps identified by the needs analysis, the program commenced with the objective of offering a dynamic program to the youngsters that:

- Gets them to attend the sessions regularly and become active participants.
- Helps them develop life skills that allow them to become successful in life.
- Encourages them to become an active and useful member of the family/ community.

To meet the objectives, topics such as Decision Making, Time Management, Generation Gap, Career choices, Event Management were covered. The 1 hour weekly sessions consisted of three sections; namely ice breaker (activity to get attention of the fast and busy minds), interactive activity (to get engagement from all) and a reflective activity (thought provoking and developing individual skills). The material was developed through brainstorming sessions carried out by senior youths. Facilitators were mainly youths who were handpicked for the lessons. Being able to communicate effectively to the youngsters was the main criteria used to select facilitators. Facilitators were required to prepare a week earlier by preparing session aids.

Two years on, the centre is reaping benefits from the session. The objectives have been achieved and there are success stories shared by the youngsters and their parents. The youngsters have become proactive and the presentation will share two initiatives of the BRIDGE participants. It should be mentioned that a lot of effort was required initially to ‘sell’ the program to the teens but having one to one conversations after sessions and keeping the group size reasonable were key. It was also noticed that the group was comfortable with one or two facilitators and did not like too many rotations. The sessions challenged pre-assumptions of the group and allowed the facilitation team to experience the future in many positive ways than negative.

The program continues and will be developed further. This is an investment which has the potential to change the society. It not only brings the facilitators in touch with the issues younger generations face, it gives the younger generation an elder in the society, outside the home to look up to for guidance. And yes, this has many times proven that youngsters can beat social pressures and use social networking positively.

Social media is powerful and we can turn to the present young generation to convert it into positive power. As mentioned earlier, with competition from various other facets of amusement, the young population will continue drowning in the negative streams if we don't create the positive ones. Our generation has equipped them with the sophisticated gadgets; they are only the users. It is therefore our duty to go beyond our call of duty and equip the youngsters the right tools. If we don't, someone else will.

The future is more in our hands than theirs. Let's create a BRIDGE for all to stand; the BRIDGE that allows the world to flow like a stream below it without touching it, the BRIDGE that connects two ends as one, and the BRIDGE that society needs to exist with love, peace and harmony standing the test of time.

Anshoo and Pradish Kumar

SSEHV in the Community: Individual Transformation for Health Professionals

Autocratic leadership is destructive of staff morale. In an aged care facility this had caused high levels of stress, anxiety and psycho somatic illnesses unresponsive to counseling in the staff. This was associated with decreased job satisfaction, lowered self confidence and personal value and deep dissatisfaction with the management. There was also an increase in sick leave and poor output from lost time, injuries, compensation claims and stress related psychological illnesses. This adversely affected the quality of care provided to the residents.

In response to a needs analysis an educational program called “Individual Transformation - Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow” was designed using a holistic approach to address mind, body and spirit based on the practice of Human Values. The objective was to nurture and support the staff and create a more positive culture in the facility. A preliminary survey with a questionnaire indicated that the staff wished the inclusion of personal transformation in the program, 85% indicating it as ‘most important’ and 15% as ‘important’.

The objectives of the program were for the participants to identify their need for individual transformation, develop self awareness in thought, word and deed, experience and practice universal human values and implement strategies to aid relaxation of the mind and body.

The participants were mainly nursing staff, senior management, activity officers and administration officers. The program was delivered through a 2 day workshop of theory and practical sessions using brain storming, mind mapping, interactive group discussions, slide shows, quiz, laminated cards and group activities. Breath control and yoga activities were also incorporated in the sessions. The emphasis was on personal responsibility for self transformation and on awareness and management of thoughts and emotions

Evaluation of two workshops held in 2008 and 2009 showed that two months after the workshop 44 % practiced human values at work ‘very often’; 50% practiced them ‘often’.25% practiced one of the relaxation techniques ‘very often’ and 44% ‘often’. The workshop was beneficial to the participants’ personal, family, community and professional growth. The staff had incorporated spiritual practices into their lives daily and had developed skills of emotional self management and self regulation.

Pleased with the workshop and what it achieved, both the Accreditation Agency and Occupational Health and Safety Numerical Profilers have given very positive views on addressing the psychological needs of staff , noting that this is just as important as providing the staff with technical knowledge and skills. Individual Transformation workshop has now become part of the annual needs analysis.

On the recommendations of the participants the “Advanced Care Planning” has now included Silent Sitting/Meditation in enabling patients in formulating their future health care plan. This learning package has also been used in South Africa and Fiji as resource material in the community.

Selvanie Naidoo

Toogoolawa Schools: A Real Education Revolution for the Future

A millionaire named John Fitzgerald enlisted the help of Ron and Suwanti Farmer to set up a charity called 'Toogoolawa' which is an Aboriginal word meaning 'A place in the heart'. Now there are three Toogoolawa Schools in Australia for teenage boys whose behaviour excludes them from mainstream schooling. Our teaching staff are all committed to becoming heroic examples of the five Human Values in action.

Wise sayings adorn the walls in every room, sacred rituals and prayers are part of the everyday routine; moral stories, service to the needy, organic gardening and literacy studies based on good character; are part of the curriculum; and mindfulness meditation is practised at least six times every day.

Every day begins with a student kneeling in front of an altar lighting candles and repeating, "As we light this flame we also light the flame of Love, Truth, Peace, Right Conduct and Non-violence which lie within us all". Then the assembly pronounces "We start the day with love. We fill the day with love. We end the day with love. This is the way we live". A long session of meditation follows .

If a group of wild, angry, authority-hating, hyperactive bullies can do this and reap the extraordinary benefits, just think what could happen if other schools in Australia were to embrace the principles of Educare in a fearless and full-hearted way. And it must come. We must trust in the words of Sathya Sai Baba when He said, "It is not in the nature of Avatars to fail." He said that we are those avatars. Let us dare to take the lead. We have the tools, the ingredients for a radicalisation of education. Let us bring Educare alive so that others are inspired to follow our example.

Ron Farmer

Creating Prosperity in Students through Implementation of a Leadership Program

Sai Baba says that:

“Character is the most precious gift of education”; that

“The end of education is character” and that

“Education should be useful to society. It should make citizens follow the path of morality and righteousness and make their lives happy” (Sanathana Sarathi, December 1994, P333)

Personal social goals are highly important for Groups 3- 4 Students. Young adolescents are in a process of re-evaluation of self and society. As internal, societal, peer and parental pressures confront the young adolescents during this stage of their development; teachers can play a key role in providing an atmosphere of intellectual challenge and support.

Every school has leaders such as School Captains, SRC members, Peer Group Leaders etc. But the question is, “Are they effective leaders?” Only a person whose thoughts, words and deeds are in harmony can become a good and effective leader. Such leaders say what they think and do what they say. There is no insincerity or hypocrisy in their words or actions.

Using this as an incentive to increase the awareness of students when making values and judgments and with the intention to focus on character building, a Leadership Workshop was conducted at a high school in Sydney. It was held in the last week of July, 2011. The majority of students who participated in the workshop were Year 11 /12 students.

The workshop focused on the uniqueness of each individual. Students were encouraged to write a personal mission statement (or philosophy or creed) to reflect that uniqueness. The mission statement emphasised what they wanted to be (character) and do (achievements) and on the values or principles upon which being and doing were based.

Shared thoughts and insights of the group generated a collective understanding of the basic characteristics/traits of a leader and compared this to the Nine Values for Australian Schooling as outlined by the Australian Government Dept. Of Education, Science and Training in the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools. The discussion included the 5 Human Values and the importance of the sub values in enhancing the performance of a leader as well as creating prosperity and enriching the life of the leader and the team members.

The implementation of this values-based leadership workshop is the first of its kind into the public arena and has the potential to be implemented successfully in other schools.

Vijay Vengetas

Meeting the Needs of a Nation

For years I had been asking the question why my husband and I were teaching at Mangakino Area School over 100 kilometres away from my home in Hamilton, New Zealand. It was in 1999, after a conference by Victor Kanu on SSEHV, that I realised the importance of values-based teaching. It was then I began to think about introducing EHV to our school.

First we needed to convince the principal, teachers and our community that this programme was non sectarian and universal in its nature. Keeping in mind that this community was in the grips of gangs, drug and alcohol related problems and a culture of dependency.

The objectives were to promote the five Human Values and how the 5 teaching techniques could be utilised to bring change to the oppressive lives of many of our students, the parents and the broader community. To achieve this all staff had to be trained. Initially, we sought help from the NZ government funded "Virtues Project". We followed this up with material that we had to develop ourselves using the five Cardinal Values.

The school has benefited from the introduction of the SSEHV programme for over a decade now. Some of the benefits of this programme have been greater awareness of values in the school and community such as effective prevention of violence and conflict resolution. The biggest ongoing challenge has been winning the support of parents of troubled youths who themselves are not good role models.

We can only counteract the negative behaviour currently being displayed by our Children is by using the strategies of the SSEHV Program on a National and Global level to see the full positive impact.

***Maya Prakash
New Zealand***

The Sai Teen Youth Challenge (13-18yrs)

Introduction:

This presentation will include our experience of creating the program and working with teen youths in New Zealand for the past nine years.

The Issues:

Youth at this age go through biological and hormonal changes, which cause confusion and may lead towards being influenced by the environment, peers, and unhealthy activities. We will discuss the challenges of retention and sustainability of this age group within the Sathya Sai Organisation of NZ.

Philosophy:

It is about providing teen youth with knowledge and practical life skills which enables them to face their immediate and future life challenges.

Your Objectives:

The broad objective of this teen youth program is to develop self confidence and self esteem, and to expose teen youth to a holistic, fun filled and value based life style.

Materials and Methods:

Programme activities include life stories of inspirational people, drama, music, video clips, and discourses by Swami. Methods vary according to program content.

The Experience:

Participants vary according to exams and family commitments. However, on any given day, there are 20 teens from 5 centres around the region. The length of the program is usually 1.5 hrs every Sunday afternoon.

The Outcomes:

Teen youth is an important bridge between SSE and Youth Group, where it provides strategies and guidance for them to navigate through challenging issues they increasingly face at home or at school. It has created a safe and comfortable 'space' for this age group, where they are encouraged to express and develop themselves in a positive environment.

Wider Implications:

Within the organisation we have had 2 batches graduating into youth group, and we see them taking on responsibilities within their centres and also heading service projects in the community. In their respective schools some now play the role of mentors due to their leadership skills and character.

*Michael & Vibha Leathart
New Zealand*

The Role of Sathya Sai Education in the Philippines

Sathya Sai Education in the Philippines is a starting point of transformation of head, heart and hand toward excellence in life by living human values of Truth, Right Conduct, Love, Peace and Non-Violence.

Given today's global conditions of war, poverty, economic-slow-down if not depression, threatening weather conditions and spiritual decline – our world is expecting changes or solutions that neither policy, legislation nor force of law can provide. Through ages of experience, man has not been able to promulgate morality nor create inner change in man, which would lead to lasting peace, harmony and contentment.

Man cannot change another man but that same man can change himself. In spiritual quarters this is called transformation. This same person can inspire those around him, thus creating a nucleus of inner chrysalis, which given time spreads to each one's immediate circle of influence in an ever-growing circumference to include a society.

It is said that it takes 2 to 3 months for children to form a habit and 20 to 30 years for adults. Thus encouraging human values as part of everyday life for children is the best starting point.

However it is not enough. Parents and those who assume the role of parents are the first teachers. They have to practice what child learns in school in the sanctity of their home, because children pattern their behavior after those around them. Thus a second level of change is introduced to mother, father, guardians and extended relatives.

Thus the role of Sathya Sai Education in the Philippines is to draw out, nurture and reinforce human values in children and foster partnership with parents to live the same values consistently at home. It completes a cycle of learning that goes around children, parents and teachers.

We draw largely on the teachings of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, our inspiration and our guide. We convey his lessons in Philippine cultural context. Because we are creating future role models, we too have to be models by making great effort to live Swami's message.

Behind every successful child is a parent, a teacher or mentor, a hero – or one who serves as inspiration. Our job is to provide that kind of motivating environment for the children – our future leaders.

***Al Macasaet & Rocel Vidanes
Philippines***

Reclaiming Wayward Adolescents for Future National Prosperity through SSEHV

Tandana Place is a residential drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre for young people aged between 13 and 20 in Victoria which has a twelve-week holistic approach to drug rehabilitation. The programs aim to empower young people to manage their lives in health-enhancing manner, which includes their physical, psychological, emotional and social well being.

My journey with Tandana began after I responded to a newspaper headline article, "Monash's Hidden Homeless" in 2006, a request for community support for the young people. I was already involved in a Waverley Centre Service activity to provide food/essential items to the young people without means. It was realised that only His Light could truly heal the deep-seated issues of these young people and it was not a matter of giving goods to them. If only they could tap into their Power Within they will be able to breakthrough their limitations and unleash their true potential and create a vision towards a balanced and fulfilling life.

At the time, even without any formal teaching background, I was allowed to introduce Relaxation/Meditation to the young people for 6 months every fortnight. It was a great learning experience but something was missing. Soon after, Tandana closed down between 2008 and 2009, for one year due to lack of funds. Amazingly, soon after I completed my Diploma in SSEHV at ISSEA in Canberra, another newspaper article about Tandana titled "Youth detox centre saved by \$100,000 donation" appeared in Feb 2010. This prompted me to try again! This time I was fully equipped with the skills, techniques to design develop and present programs based on the needs of the young people. Tandana accepted my application and allowed me weekly 2 hour sessions with young people as from 4th March 2010. Thoughts began to flow immediately, and with His Grace, a 12 week Self Awareness program manifested within 12 weeks! This program is based on the principles of Educare. Experiential learning cycle method has been used and sessions flow on from one to another. W.A.T.C.H. methodology has been incorporated to assist in positive habit formation.

The program has been well-received by the young people and also the workers at Tandana. The impact of this program has been rewarding and fulfilling right from day one. Noticeable changes are taking place in participant's attitude and behavior, in terms of thinking, speaking and acting positively and confidently. They develop sense of calmness and direction towards the end of the program.

This paper highlights that all children are our future prosperity and that every child no matter how wayward is precious. It also presents evidences and an understanding of the tremendous impact of SSEHV in the community and how a simple practical self awareness program is empowering young people at Tandana Place to finding meaning and purpose of life.

I truly believe that this program creates positive awareness in the young people that is never ending, but is contagious. His Light continues to spread after 12 weeks to everyone these young people meet in the wider community. They have reclaimed for themselves a brighter future.

Arti Vallabh

Adopting Human Values while Cyber-Surfing

Modern technology does indeed provide valuable benefits to young people, but at the same time it can also be used for harmful purposes. Email, texting, chat rooms, mobile phones, mobile phone cameras and web sites can and are being used to bully peers. This type of bullying is labeled cyber bullying and can occur anywhere and anytime. Unlike face to face bullying, in cyber bullying the bully is anonymous. Also, the audience is much larger, being millions of views in certain instances. When bullies abuse verbally, the victims may not remember every word, but in the case of cyber bullying, the targeted child can read what the bully has written over and over again. Unfortunately the number of reported teen suicides from cyber bullying is on the increase.

As teachers of children we have a 'duty of care'. It is important that teachers take the necessary precautions and ensure that they do not breach their responsibilities. However it is unclear whether the duty exists beyond the school gate and before and after school hours. Although Common Law has attempted to define the level of responsibility of teachers, research in this area is in its infancy.

Research undertaken by Megan Price and John Dalgeish in 2009 among 548 young Australians found that the most common situations for cyber bullying to occur are in emails, online chat rooms, social network sites and mobile phones. Also, cyber bullying was found to occur most commonly during the ages 10 years to 14 years. A very high percentage of respondents, 86%, reported that cyber bullying had impacted them in some way. The study found a higher proportion of female victims compared to males, but it is unclear if this is truly indicative of the gender split or a reflection of national help-seeking trends and related sampling bias.

The practice of the five human values when surfing the internet would result in creating a safer environment for the participants. One should not spread rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation. Always follow cyber safety rules and do not react when bullied. Also, limit the amount of time spent online.

There are various steps that children may employ if they believe that they are being bullied online. Do not open messages from the cyber bully, report to a trusted adult or your teacher, do not erase the message.

Equally important are steps that teachers/ parents may adopt to determine whether children are online bullies and or victims. Although starting a conversation with a child may be difficult, role play and scenarios may assist as ice breakers. Parents should ensure that the computer is installed in a common room and not in the child's bedroom. Monitor the mood of the child immediately they come off the computer. The problem cannot fix itself nor is going to go away.

The problem of cyber bullying will dramatically escalate with the roll out of the National Broad band network in Australia. It is therefore imperative that teachers, parents and interested adults skill themselves with the techniques necessary to identify both victims and cyber bullies. Failure to do so will unfortunately add to the list of teen suicides, of which Australia is among the highest in the world. The saving grace will be the strengthening of the child's inner world and the practice of the five human values in all aspects the child's life including cyberspace.

Krish Naidoo

Contemporary Parenting Issues Underline the need for Human Values in Family Dynamics

The world we live in has become a much more complex place than it was just a generation ago. Little is known about how Australian parents view their parenting role once their children become adults. We know in general that relationships between parents and their children change considerably over the life span. Underpinning this change is a shift in the way parents and young people view each other.

Whilst the digital world has enhanced our lives, the instant communication and technology have also created more stress, weaker relationships between partners and higher levels of mistrust between generations. The image culture has had a highly significant impact on literacy and numeracy skills, language skills and self-management skills and consequently on children's mind and behaviour. It is evident that technology is making the children cleverer but at the same time full of appropriate and inappropriate information at an earlier age. However, their mental and emotional development is being affected resulting from the mixed signals that the parents and society give them.

We need to bring an awareness of the Human values in young parents and the children. We need to resource the parents with skills and strategies so that they can bring out the values latent in children. We have a moral responsibility to help children integrate values, culture and education through parenting practices in this ever changing world. Ideally parents should be endowed with skills to learn to accept the changing relationship with their son or daughter – from that of a dependent child to an autonomous individual. The young people should be given the knowledge and skills to learn to see their parent as unique beings, with their own life histories, needs and shortcomings. The underlying basis of acceptance and harmonious relationship on both sides are the core teachings of Sathya Sai Baba, of five Human Values of Love, Peace, Truth, Right Conduct and Non violence given through family dynamics.

Satish Kumar

Positive Youth Development

Positive Youth Development (PYD) approach was developed in the mid '90s as a response to the issue prevention programs that have been in practice in the '80s. PYD approach focuses on the adolescents strengths rather than weaknesses. It is not a specific program but rather an approach to structuring systems, services and supports for the adolescents to develop the skills and competencies that are required to face challenges in the adult life. In essence PYD approach advocates helping young people to achieve their full potential to prevent them from engaging in risky behaviours. As PYD is an approach rather than a specific program there is no single definition of the term. However, the most widely used terms are 'developmental assets' or simply 'assets' which highlights the skills, abilities and competencies that adolescents need to make right decisions.

The presentation compares prevention programs with PYD approach and examines the 'developmental assets' framework of PYD introduced by Benson and colleagues in late '90s which are divided into two broad categories, namely external and internal and the framework of PYD referred to as 5 'C's introduced by Lerner in 2000.

Channa Seneviratne

Systemic Development and the role of Values

I am working with a group of colleagues to promote the ideas of Systemic Development as a better way to improve the complex and intractable issues facing governments and society. I outlined some of these ideas at the 2009 Sai Education conference.

Systemic development is a learning approach to change and a part of our workshops enable participants to look at the changes that have occurred in their lives, the drivers of these changes, and from this understanding to project forward potential scenarios of the future, and how these may unfold - what influences particular developments.

Clearly some future scenarios are preferable to others. This enables participants to see the role they, and the values they hold that drive the actions they take, play in enabling better outcomes to emerge. This helps them to plan and enact personally developed strategies to move the issues they are concerned with in more desirable directions.

This paper will develop the reasons why we believe such an approach is needed, and how this reflects many other ideas and issues being discussed in many forums. These include the issues: of "peak oil"; of climate change; of limits to growth; of the emergence of "Transition Towns" and other localisation movements; of the development of Holistic Science and a Science of qualities to enrich reductionist and quantitative science; of the shift from modernity to post-materialism; of the associated emergence of a population grouping known as "cultural creatives" in addition to "modernists" and "traditionalists" who will drive the coming changes; and of the key role spirituality and values play in all of these developments.

Roger Packham

Strategies for Integrating Sathya Sai Educare into the Everyday Programmes of Mainstream Schools

Despite the growing belief that all teachers should be teachers of values education, whether it be directly through teaching about values and morals, or indirectly, by their own appropriate modeling, many teachers are expressing concern that, even though they acknowledge this as being important, it is difficult to 'add on' anything more to their already jam-packed curricula. Therefore, it is necessary to explore ways in which values education can be incorporated into existing curricula without necessitating too many changes or becoming just one more extra thing to do. There are many opportunities to teach its principles through existing subjects and topics. This has the added advantage that the schools do not have to abdicate in any way their responsibility to teach the academic skills but rather that they will be rethinking the ways in which they do this.

The purpose of this paper is to share some ways in which teachers are incorporating values education into existing programmes. Particular emphasis will be placed on the strategies that are being used by primary school teachers in selected provinces in Mainland China to integrate Sathya Sai Educare within very tightly constrained curricula and timeframes.

*Margaret Taplin
Hong Kong*

Happiness Amidst Adversities

Sai: Happiness is one of the major gateways to Divinity. To be unhappy is a serious act of sacrilege. It is a barrier to God Realisation. Human beings have always been searching for ways to live well and happily through peace, wealth, fame, accomplishment. We all wish to be happy without having to undergo too many or too serious difficulties. Is this possible?

WHAT IS HAPPINESS? “ABSENCE OF SORROW IS HAPPINESS” - Baba.
“There is an inverse ratio between Happiness and Desires.” – Baba.

CAUSES OF UNHAPPINESS - Our expectations, attachments, desires and karmas.

The First Noble Truth of Buddhist teachings are “Life is suffering”. The second truth is that suffering is caused by craving and aversion.

BE WORTHY FIRST

Before desiring anything, a person must make them self worthy. Character makes them fit to enjoy happiness. Baba SSS Volume 31 Chapter 2, 14 January 1998. Qualities in a Good Character: truthful, honest, integrity, responsible, reliable, honorable, trustworthy, disciplined, self-controlled.

Swami tells us about the ABC of life: Always Be Cheerful. Remember the Sai alphabet, ABC DEFG: Always Be Cheerful; Don't Ever Forget God.

PRACTICE TOLERANCE, FORGIVENES (KSHAMA)

The secret of happiness is not in doing what one likes but in liking what one has to do. Whatever work you have to do, you should do it with pleasure and liking.

THE BUDDHIST APPROACH

The First Noble Truth of Buddhist teaching is “Life is Suffering”. The second truth is that suffering is caused by craving and aversion.

PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH – PROMOTING “WELL-BEING” MEANS FLOURISHING

Flourishing has 5 elements that build resources which are helpful in adversities :

Positive emotions (joy, hope, enthusiasm, optimism)

Engagement (eg. Flow)

Relationships (other people- kindness, help, love)

Meaning (and purpose of life, spirituality)

Achievement/Accomplishment (success, mastery, competence).

RESILIENCE – Adapting or bouncing back from adversities.

“UNION WITH GOD IS HAPPINESS” – BABA, (in thought, word and deed).

Mohan Bhullar

A Systematic Approach to Spirituality Practice

Most of the spiritual aspirants are constrained in the present culture by many factors such as lack of: a) a firm faith, b) clear and unambiguous spiritual goals, c) knowledge of criteria of self assessment and d) sufficient time for their spiritual practice. Spiritual awakening of a critical number of aspirants on a genuine spiritual path is the necessary prelude to new value-oriented spiritual global culture illustrated in the leap of consciousness embodied in the “hundredth monkey” principle. There is therefore a need for guidance to redefine individual spiritual goals and to develop an individual systematic structure to spiritual practice. The objective of this paper is to stimulate the aspirants with a framework which will enable them refocus on their spiritual goals and pathways and to define and formulate their spiritual milestones vis-a-vis timelines.

This presentation focuses on critical reflection on spirituality and identification of spiritual priorities as preliminary to defining spiritual objectives. In this context the application of “SMARTER principle” will be explored in planning spiritual practice, creating an overall action plan with sub-goals. This principle enables the aspirant to identify their hurdles and develop a practical strategy to manage, evaluate and strategise their spiritual practice and review their progress periodically through self audit.

The impact of this systematic approach to spirituality could be spectacularly enhanced in the new civilisation through the remarkable advances in the communication that enables connection of “communities of practitioners” in a manner that has not been possible in the past.

Sandy Sandanam

GFC three years on – Can we Handle the Truth?

It has been three years since the start of the global financial crisis and despite the supposed recovery its effects are still being felt in the USA, Europe and the rest of the world. One of the Economists, a winner of the Bank of Sweden's Nobel Memorial Prize in the Economic Sciences, has declared that we are now in (or entering) a Third Depression. Much of the blame had been pointed at the subprime mortgage crisis however the real cause of the crisis was much deeper than that. Are we ready to handle the real truth?

In this presentation, I will be looking at the fundamental causes of the financial and the consequent economic crisis and the real challenges faced by humanity in the world if we fail to address them. I will discuss the importance of spiritual values in addressing each of those challenges and the pathways they provide for a stable global economy. And finally I will look at some practical steps that can be taken by individuals as well as corporate, political and global leaders in order to restore peace and prosperity back in the world.

Shaini Sivagnanam

Electronic Spirituality in the New Civilisation – Help or Hindrance?

The human spiritualization process remains unchanged from ancient to the modern man. It is a process of transcending physical and mental limitations to experience oneness with divinity, a personal union with God. It is an inward journey with a right discipline to control mind's diffusing energies from the external world towards inner development. But the modern civilisation is stuck with advent of the electronic spirituality.

The modern electronics and web based information undoubtedly influences the spiritual growth of the current civilisation in a big way. Information is now freely available for spiritual communities to learn and grow. It is inclusive and can reach raising above the cultural barriers and belief systems. Nevertheless, one should question to what extent it is helpful to one's spiritual growth.

The web based electronic spirituality gives information, unless the aspirant takes effort to change such spiritual information into wisdom, it can be a hindrance or it will simply become a data management exercise. Indiscriminate and excessive web browsing for information, an outward journey contrary to an inward mediative process, may diffuse aspirant energies and potentially expose to information that may not be presented compatible to the growth level of the seeker.

In this paper, a common spiritual growth process is examined to see how the electronic spirituality mainly web based information can be helpful or hindrance.

Thamo Sritharan (Sri)

Ceiling on Desires as the Blueprint for Future Prosperity

There is a growing concern about the impact of human habitation on the planet. Many species are vanishing, unable to survive the deteriorating conditions. There are catastrophic climate changes, natural disasters, floods, tsunamis, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions, rapid depletion of non-renewable natural resources and unprecedented pollution of land, seas and atmosphere. We must decide whether we will choose the light of creative altruism or the darkness of selfishness. An urgent question that faces us is what are we doing for sustainable living? How are we applying Sathya Sai Baba's teachings towards meeting this challenge?

The practice and philosophy of ecological living advocated by Sai Baba utilizes altruism, an exclusive human capacity that acknowledges the Oneness principle underlying of all creation. It shuns violence and violation of natural resources and focuses on helping sentient beings and not violating natural resources. This is the definitive pathway to realizing spiritual Oneness. The principle of Oneness is enhanced through selfless action. In this presentation practical steps towards sustainable living will be described as derived from of the philosophy of Sathya Sai teachings on Ceiling on Desires applied to talking, consumption of air, water, food, time, natural resources, use of money, and mental and physical energy in order to enhance the practice of Oneness.

This presentation will also explore challenges to ceiling on desires in caring for the environment, in reducing the impact of collective foot prints on earth and bring out the tension between. NEEDS and WANTS in daily life.

Bhahi Anand Bhahirathan

Ceiling on Desires versus Consumerism

One of the measures of economic growth is consumer spending. It is but natural when there is demand there will be greater employment and the belief that the general well being of the people will be high. With the ever increasing possible means of promotion there is an urge or a hunger called desire being created in the people. As we all are aware that there is no end to desire. When one desire is fulfilled there is yet another bigger desire waiting to take its position.

The urge to consume (eat or buy) is to satisfy our senses. As humans we have the five senses which get triggered and they are in turn controlled by the mind. If one were to control the mind and have the five senses under check that person will become strong and enjoy everlasting happiness.

As human beings while we live in this materialistic world, we need to keep a check on our desires termed as having a Ceiling on Desires. An example that I often like to quote - when we go for a banquet there will be a great variety of food kept on the table. One must be selective to consume only the amount that will be good for their wellbeing which is not to exceed 2/3 of their capacity. The same applies to all other aspects of living. Like a lotus in a dirty water pond yet remains untouched so should we also live unscathed in this world.

Some practical steps that we could adopt are - to apply the concept of opportunity cost for every impulsive action of ours. Not to over do anything - any activity that could ultimately lead to our own destruction. Engaging ourselves in a balanced manner in beneficial activities where we can engage our mind fruitfully to achieve the satisfaction that will lead us to greater and everlasting happiness like useful hobbies, practicing arts, playing games, engaging in spiritual pursuits, etc.

The opportunity cost principle is to determine - if one were not be engaged in certain activity what else they would have done. Compare the two for short term and long term satisfaction, gain and happiness. In majority of the cases one would come to the conclusion that engaging oneself in activities where we can gain synchronisation of the thought word and deed (heart, mind and action) in a balanced manner as explained above would stand out in the longer run. Eg., if I did not go to the bhajan / meditation classes / spiritual activity on the Friday evening what else would I have done? Typical answers would be - watched the footy or gone shopping or watched a movie or gone out with my friends for a dinner etc. Did we gain anything by doing any of the latter activities? If so what would have been the effect of it in the longer run? This principle can be applied to all aspects and where we have a choice to make between activities.

Ramakrishnan Subramanian

The Impact of SSEHV on Children, Teachers and Parents

For the past four years I have been teaching at Sathya Sai Preschool in New Zealand. This has given me a wonderful opportunity of being involved in and providing a quality, value based education to children and our community.

The issues and challenges that we face, is that our Preschool is situated in an area where most of the community has a number of children growing up in families that are termed dysfunctional. That is families who have drug and alcohol problems, family breakdowns, health issues, low academic achievement and high rates of crime is common amongst our community.

To promote the preschool philosophy teachers model behaviours and attitudes that reflect human values when working alongside children and parents. Our objective is through this value based practice, human values will become a meaningful experience within our community.

The five methods teachers use to draw out and develop these valuable human qualities are; story-telling, mottos, silent sitting, music and activities. These methods have played a significant role in guiding and drawing out the highest potential in both teachers and children. All of our six teachers using these methods are influencing up to forty families on an ongoing basics.

Sathya Sai preschool in New Zealand is a human values learning and practicing community, one which is successfully including parents and families. We have noticed an increase in parental awareness, involvement and a big increase in family health in response to the Sathya Sai education programme.

*Denise Konia
New Zealand*

How People can Change and Why They Don't: A Mind Model

Problem Statement:

The focus of the Conference is the role of Sathya Sai Education in solving the problems faced by man kind in the 21st century due to a clash of contrary belief systems which affect all aspects of life. Environmental issues, lifestyle issues, clashes of religions and cultures etc.

Motivation

The theme of the Conference is changing civilization through the promotion of SSE i.e. changing human behaviour. SSE can and does work but in changing human behaviour we meet with resistance. We must be aware of the source of such resistance and how to bypass it. Sai has emphasised the importance of the mind in determining our future/destiny. The mind is the instrument of liberation and understanding it is essential.

Approach

The Thurman Fleet mind model is a powerful comprehensive overview of how the mind resists or accepts new ideas and how the mind can be accessed to induce changes in thinking and hence behaviour. The model follows Swami's statement that thoughts, lead to feelings – actions- habits-character – destiny.

Results

The model is an extremely useful tool for teachers and others as it explains why the SSE teaching techniques are so effective in overcoming the resistance that we all experience when confronted with change.

Robert Molloy

Environmental Sustainability and Human Values

Today the world is facing many major environmental challenges. Population growth, global warming and its impacts, lack of clean water and sanitation due to diminishing water resources and environmental pollution, growing energy requirement to meet industries and communities, toxic chemicals in the environment, unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, depletion of natural and non-renewable resources, extinction of animals and plants and loss of biodiversity to name a few. Environmental sustainability is the ability to meet humanity's current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. However, many indicators of sustainability clearly show that a smaller proportion of the world population are using most of the natural resources and as a world community on average we are living beyond our means. Individual and community values have taken a backward step. Prosperity of a nation must involve a balanced development of Economic, Social and Environmental aspects. These three dimensions of sustainable development have been widely accepted as triple bottom line. Despite its use for over two decades, a recent civil society consultation (March 2011) undertaken by the United Nations concludes that overall assessments for global sustainability are quite dire. Rationalists may argue that there will be new technologies, new economic and social structures to solve world problems. However it is emphasised in this presentation that the missing link for true sustainability would be to incorporate a spiritual approach to all aspects of sustainability. Human values based on spirituality must be infused into all three dimensions of sustainable development without which progress will be slow and inadequate.

For global environmental sustainability and prosperity, Sathya Sai human values are an essential component. Education in human values should not only be taught in schools and universities but efforts must also be made to practice at all sections of the society including in governments and in commerce. There are many practical steps that can be taken to mesh human values in everyday living. At the individual and family level conducting regular ongoing audit of your activities that affect the environment (food, energy, water, waste, transport and other goods and services) and how the individual/family practice of ceiling on desires can assist not only in environmental improvement but also leading to spiritual progress will be highlighted. This must involve taking responsibility for longer term benefit to the environment with personal and family commitment, changes in attitudes and behaviours. Many major industries see their prosperity in green products and innovation based on human values. At the institutional level, how universities across Australia and around the world are actively involved in promoting environmental sustainability and values will also be outlined.

Sivakumar Muttucumaru

Service and Transformation, through Education

In the Sathya Sai Organisation, self-transformation is the ultimate objective.

The Education Wing in particular provides many opportunities for spiritual development and personal growth amongst children and teachers.

As parents, teachers and educators, we are looking for the best ways to achieve genuine outcomes from our programs.

What levels of transformation are occurring amongst teachers and students and how can selfless service play a major role in this? Practicing Selfless Service in its purest form enables the process of transformation to occur within the teacher which in turn produces a high end result in the students.

Spiritual Education in our Society is not to be taken lightly or confused with religious education. While we run our SSE classes within the boundaries of our Organisation, the Sathya Sai School presents itself as a successful model within the broader Australian society, proving that value-based education can be integrated into the standard curriculum with effective results.

Furthermore, the subject of 'Ethics Classes' has been a hot topic with a political agenda and as the debate goes on We watch the Sathya Sai School slowly but surely leading the way to future prosperity.

Tom Lahey