



Institute of Sathya Sai Education Australia

National Education Conference 2011

Practical Steps towards Future Prosperity

Service and Transformation through Education

Service not only finds its way into all of the activities of the Sathya Sai Organisation, but it is fundamental to the outcomes.

These outcomes can be put simply, into one word 'Transformation'

This Transformation only applies to one person 'Ourselves'

Education is Transformation in the making.

For many of us who work in the Education Wing, Selfless Service is the un-said un-heard word. This is very interesting for me to note, In the Role of the Service Coordinator, the most consistent Service activities that I see Nationwide, are going on in the Education Wing with the SSE classes, the Sathya Sai School and the Institute.

There are over 100 SSE Teachers teaching approximately 450 students in one year, and almost as many preparing and resourcing material.

As much as it is made simple by some, preparing for an SSE class is not trivial; it takes Quality time and Quality resources. Then there is the delivery of the lessons.

Unlike other Service activities, the Education Wing has a structure with established routines that can provide the ideal environment for Selfless Service in an area of great need. So my assumption is; with so much Selfless Service going on, there must be some transformation going on within the SSE Teacher, Education Coordinators, the Institute and the School. I would like to have some brief comments on this after, if it is possible.

But, there is another side I would like to address and that is the motive of the teacher, or the educator.

What were the reasons we took up teaching? Was it because we have children or relatives involved in the program, was it because our Sai friends were involved, was it because we were comfortable in that area professionally, or did we get a command, dream or sign from Sai Baba to do it?

There may be a lot of different reasons why someone takes up that role, but how many of us first view it as a wonderful opportunity to practice Selfless Service.

I would like to define Selfless Service here as 'worship put into action' or 'work as worship' I am reminded of the story of the lecturer who gave blood at the Super Hospital. After giving blood, Sai Baba asked Him "Did You Give Blood" the lecturer said "Yes Swami, I did give blood" then Sai Baba Said "But you did not give Me" The lecturer was puzzled by this and he eventually worked out that he had given blood only to the patient, (now that seems pretty normal). But what Sai Baba was asking was did he give blood to Sai in the Patient

In the same way when taking SSE classes or working with others in Educational activities, how often do we remember that we are working for Sai and we are Serving Him in the student, Him in the devotee, Him in the co-worker.

I have been learning this lesson during this role and it is fantastic.

When we combine this attitude of working for Sai and Serving Sai in the student, then we are released from the responsibility of outcome and the attachment to any result.

This opens up a whole new learning dynamic for the teacher and the student. (Because teaching is not just what is heard or what is seen)

A classic example of this:

Whenever Sai tells us something, He may have come in a dream; He may have talked to us or made a gesture, or just looked at us.

When He does this it has a profound impact on us and we remember it very deeply, with great detail.

Why is this?

This is because He is communicating with the God within us. He knows who we are, even if we do not. It is not a superficial form of communication which is what we usually use. It is genuine 'Heart to Heart', or 'God to God'.

When we strive to serve Sai in our SSE students then the same potential is there. That is the potential to create a learning environment in which His presence is felt and experienced by the students. The message or content of the lesson is then very easily absorbed and maintained by the students.

This isn't something we would teach to Students during the lesson (unless the topic was Selfless Service) because this is Selfless Service in its purest form 'God serving God'.

This enables the process of transformation to occur within the teacher which in turn produces a high end result in the student.

The reason I wanted to bring this up is because the Education Wing gives us so much opportunity to practice Selfless Service in this way.

Practical steps towards Future Prosperity

Practical steps can be seen as practicing Selfless Service which will lead to transformation which will then give us the capacity, as we become more evolved, to be better instruments for this work.

The task of spiritual education in our society can be seen as the way to Future Prosperity. In this work, we are just the instruments.

I would like to give an example here, of how valuable this work is.

A Goldsmith can recognize a high quality gem stone just at a glance

It is a skill that is developed over many years.

Once the gemstone has been verified by the goldsmith it takes on the value assigned to it by them.

Society in general does not have the skill to value the gemstone. But society has the ability, without any formal training, to recognize someone who is a Gem of a person.

When we have these Gems of people in our society; people of outstanding character, people we can look up to, people we are proud to talk about, we will begin to have prosperity.

They are worth far more than the gemstones of the goldsmith.

Spiritual education in our society is not to be taken lightly or confused with religious education. Religious education is generally about the past or the future, spiritual education is about the present, the practicing of human values.

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 community, 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. It is a big issue for the Australian community about 'how to do it'.

When a solution to such a problem is offered on a platter it may be easily taken for granted and ignored. It needs to be discovered by the right people.

My feeling is that there needs to be a 'pool of consciousness' associated with the Sai School and the introduction of values education into the mainstream.

This pool of consciousness can be generated simply through awareness.

We have had a tour this year to most regions promoting the achievements and vision of our Sai School.

This has been very successful in expanding this pool of consciousness, it has sown seeds in the minds and hearts of many devotees which in time will mature.

Although this has also been looked upon by some as fund raising, I would like to address that by saying this.

There are people who give with no attachment or expectation.

There are people who open their pockets and their mouth at the same time.

There are people who only open their mouth.

All of this actually adds to the pool of consciousness, service comes in many different forms.

So as the debate goes on within our government, within our society and even within our Organisation, we watch the Sathya Sai School slowly but surely leading the way.

I would like to acknowledge, how the theme of this conference is about vision. Without vision we have no direction and without direction no inspiration. A theme that can promote so much positive vision should be well commended.

Three points to finish on.....

- How much transformation is going on?
- What are our motives?
- Are we in the bigger picture?

Thank you - Sai Ram

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