

Sathya Sai Education: Practical Steps Towards Future Prosperity

Concept Paper

Futurologists paint a grim picture of the planet if we continue on the current trajectory of wasteful consumption, pollution, religious fanaticism, exploitation of natural resources and ecological mismanagement. Disunited family, social unrest, inequality between the rich and the poor, climate change, lack of personal accountability of the politicians and corporate leaders are symptomatic of shallow global culture based on materialistic values. It is possible to envisage an alternative and a more positive future if we evolve a norm of spiritual values as the currency of a new global civilization. In this civilization, underpinned by a spiritual revival and supported by an educational reform based on integrating Human Values into education, fundamental reorientation can occur at a personal level and this will impact the functioning of all institutions - the family, general culture, religion, economy, polity, social and environmental ecology, corporate and industrial sector culture and work ethics. Modern technology harnessed to spirituality could herald a positive culture of human and environmental flourishing, leading to a long lasting era of peace and prosperity such as the world has never seen before. This poses a challenge for us to steer events in a manner that is practical, positive and based on Human Values.

National Education Conference in August this year will focus on the role of Sathya Sai Education in this revival. Papers are invited on practical aspects of:

Role of Spirituality

Most people do not have time for spiritual practices because of lack of faith and time-poverty. They are trapped by commitments to work, electronic entertainment and mortgage. The time has come when we need to review our general approach towards ourselves, our family and the world.

Ceiling on Desires versus Consumerism

Global market fuels excessive consumption backed by advances in communication technology and this is at the cost of sustainability. Research into happiness, positive emotions, neuroscience, and health and wellbeing shows that human fulfillment comes from integrating spirituality and non-material values into daily life. This underpins a "ceiling on desires" approach to emotional self management and self regulation. Such a change requires an exploration of practical strategies of mind management with clear understanding of the role of meditation, arts, music, worship, service and spiritual practices in daily life.

Peace not Excitement

Peace in the heart is the recipe for resolving differences so we no longer take recourse in war. Currently the world is racked by lack of peace at personal level as well as a global level. It is time to explore how we may promote peace in our personal lives, in the family, in our workplace and in the wider community and how we may live together without conflicts based on nationality, religion, language etc using the teachings of Bhagavan Sai Baba.

Electronic Communication for Enhancing Everyday life rather than for Entertainment

Spectacular advances in communication have given us less time, not more, for family and personal life and our lives have not been enriched. It is time to reflect how we may use communication to further our human purpose and heart to heart communication.

Individualism versus Altruism

Concern for others and altruism are in our biological and genetic makeup. The current culture of individualism and personal prosperity as the end of all endeavour, have failed to create fulfillment at individual or collective levels. It is time to examine deeply how we may enhance personal fulfillment and community wellbeing through service and other activities based on the principle of Atmic oneness.

Practical Steps

The fundamental challenge is how do we put Sathya Sai Education into our everyday life and what are our experiences with it. This Conference invites papers to understand, discuss and enhance understanding of the critical issues of our time and how Sathya Sai Education is addressing some of these and laying the foundations of a future global civilization. The focus should be on practical steps that are possible and/or are being used towards this end.

This concept paper has been developed by the ISSE. Please address any comments or correspondence to Dr D P Dhall, ISSE, P O Box 697, Queanbeyan, NSW 2620.