

Newsletter

ZONE 7

ISSUE 8
SEPT 2013

8



The click of the camera

What Kuppā Bairagi Shastri told you now about desire of getting knowledge of the Supreme Soul and soul (*atma*) was very learned and very useful, especially for spiritual seekers who have reached a certain stage of discipline and study, but I know that most of it was beyond you. My task is to give you the stuff that you need now, in a form that is both sweet and digestible. It is difficult to grasp the idea of the *atma*, about which Kuppā Bairagi Shastri spoke, in spite of all the quotations he gave from all the commentaries on the Upanishads.

It is just the gold in all the jewels, the base and the substance, however many forms and whatever shapes the jewels may have. To become a particular jewel is to lose the Universal nature or rather to limit it. To lose the name and form of gold and become a jewel is to feel separate, to forget the One. The *atma* does not change, no one can transform it. Its nature is hidden by various veils of ignorance, such as those, which Thyagaraja prayed Lord Venkatesha to pull apart, in the famous song "Thera theyaga radha."

The veils are known as mind, intellect, etc. The jewel must know it

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is not, it was not, it will not be oval or square or fiat or round, or anklet or necklace or ring or bangle. It must yearn to know its real nature and become aware of the basic truth, apart from the unreal appearance. When it becomes gold again or rather when it ceases to think of itself as anything but gold, it can be said to have attained Bliss.

Love has to begin with a great yearning for Light

Because you have taken residence in this body, you cannot call the body, 'I'. When you sit here in this Hall, you do not call the Hall "I"; you know you are separate and that you are here only temporarily. When you move about in a horse-cart, you do not say that the horse-cart is you, do you? You do not take the horse-cart inside when you step down from it on reaching home. So also, you have to drop this body when you reach "home".

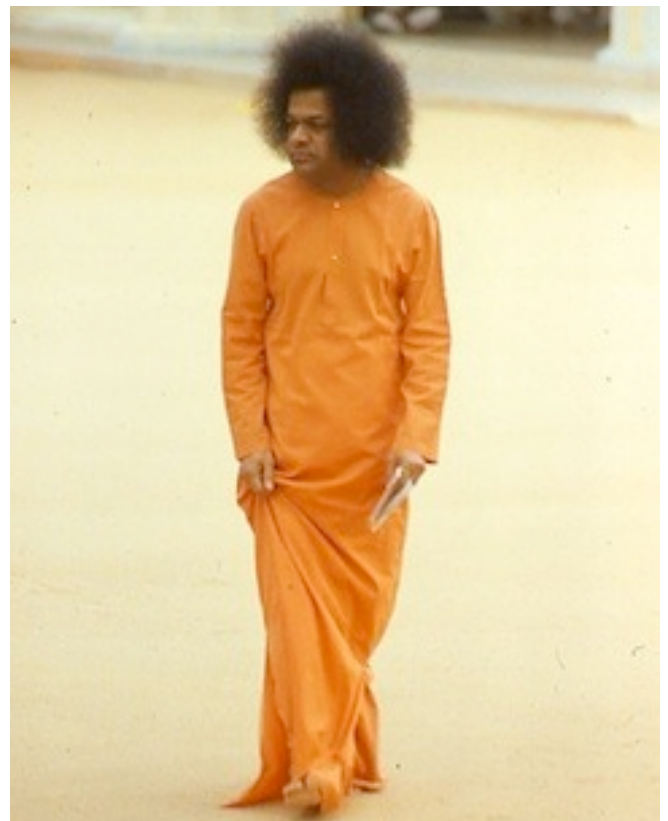
The 'I' in you is Supreme Being (Paramatma) Himself. 'I' is the tiny wavelet that plays with the wind for a moment, over the deep waters of the sea. The wave gives you the impression that it is separate from the azure and timeless ocean below. But it is just an appearance, a creation of the two ideas - Name and Form. Get rid of the two ideas and the wave disappears in the sea; its reality flashes upon you and you know.

Paramatma reveals Its Glory as Love (Prema) in man; Love appears in various forms: attaching itself to riches or parents or children or one's a life-mate or friends. All these are sparks of the same flame and the Love of the Universal is its highest expression. This Love cannot be cultivated by reading guide-books and made-easies and learning the steps by rote. It has to begin with a great yearning for the Light, an unbearable agony to escape from the Darkness and see Light, as in the prayer, "Thamaso ma jyothir gamaya". The yearning itself will draw down the Light. The Love will grow of itself and by its slow and inevitable alchemy turn you into Gold. Prahladha was a demon, but Love liberated him nevertheless; Jatayu was a bird, Dhruva but a toddler, the cowherds of Brindhavan were unlettered folk; yet, through that alchemy, they all shone in the splendour of Love and knew the Source.

Samskara will have its say at the time of death

Once you take on the Name of the Lord, which is sweetness itself, it will awaken all the sweetness

latent in you; when you have tasted the joy, you can never for a moment exist without that sustenance. It becomes as essential as air for the lungs. You may say, listening to some mythological tales, that it is quite enough if the name of the Lord is remembered, however casually, at the very last moment of life! But it is a hard task to recall that name, if you have not practiced it for years. In the surge of emotions and thoughts that will invade you at the last moment, the Name of God will be submerged unless you learn from now on to bring that Name to the top of the consciousness, whenever you want it.



There was a shop-keeper once who was inspired by that tale of Ajamila. He decided to remember the Name with his last breath, by a short cut; he named his sons after the various divine incarnations, for he knew that he has bound to call them when he was about to die. The moment came at last and as expected, he called on all his sons by name, one by one. There were six of them and so he called the Lord by proxy six times in all. The boys came and stood round his cot and as he surveyed the group, the thought that came to the dying man's mind, just when he was about to die was, "Alas! they have all come away; who will look after the shop now?" You see, his shop was his very breath all through life and he could not switch it on to God at short

notice. The merit of actions will have its say, whatever you may wish.

Without faith, no progress is possible

It is no mean achievement to get the Name of the Lord on one's tongue at the last moment. It needs the practice of many years, based on a deep-seated Faith. It needs a strong character, without hatred or malice; for the thought of God cannot survive in a climate of pride and greed. And how do you know which moment is the last? Yama, the God of Death, does not give notice of his arrival to take hold of you. He is like the man with the camera taking snapshots; he does not warn, "Ready? I am clicking". If you wish your portrait to hang on the walls of Heaven, it must be attractive; your stance, your pose, your smile must all be nice, is it not? So it is best to be ready for the click, night and day, with the name ever tripping on the tongue and the glory always radiant in the mind. Then, whenever shot, your photo will be fine.



What is most needed is the cultivation of virtue, and fear of sin and the fear of wrong. How do you decide that an act or a thought is sinful or wrong? It has to be done on the basis of the Shastras and of the Voice within. Without faith, no progress is possible, even in the material world. Science considers the seen, as the final proof; but how far can you trust the seen? You respect a person not on the basis of his dress or hairstyle which are seen, but on the basis of his character and attainments, which are invisible.

You suffer now because all your attachment is towards Nature, and all your non-attachment (Vairagya) is towards God! This has to be reversed! You must cultivate non-attachment towards Nature and attachment to the Lord.

All joy is derived from the form-full aspect of God

I am reminded now of the story of Shankara Bhatta. He was a great spiritual seeker intent on remembering the Name and meditation to such an extent that he was reduced to skin and bone. He worshipped Goddess of Learning (Saraswati) which is the key to open the doors of Liberation (Mukthi). Goddess of Wealth (Lakshmi) saw his sad plight and was moved with great pity. She chided Saraswathi for denying Her votary even the common joys of life and Herself hid in his leaky hut to pour on him Her Grace. She offered him plenty and prosperity, fame and fortune. She derided Saraswathi for neglecting to award comfort and joy on Her hapless servant. But Shankara Bhatta turned a deaf ear to Her allurements; he said, politely but firmly, "No, Saraswati has blessed me with the most precious wealth, the gift of knowledge that liberates me. I do not crave Your Grace. Please remove yourself from my presence".

There is nothing so grand and so sublime as the Lord in whom you find refuge. Call on Him by any Name or speak of Him as the Nameless one. It is both with Form and Formless. The ocean takes the form of the vessel which contains a part of it. When that is done, the Formless takes Form; the Absolute is reduced to the Particular. You will find out, however, that all the joy is derived from the Form-full aspect of God; the Formless causes no joy or grief; it is beyond all duality.

Jewels give joy, not gold. You can experience the Name, you can imbibe the Form; you can take them to heart and dwell upon them and fill yourself with the joy that they evoke. That is why Jayadheva, Gouranga, Ramakrishna and others wished to remain ants, tasting Sugar rather than becoming Sugar itself. The Name is like the seed, implanted in your heart; when the shower of His Grace falls upon it, it sprouts into a lovely tree. All trees that sprout from the Names of the Lord are equally lovely and shady. If you have Krishna-nama, the vision that you win and the form that you evoke is that of Krishna; if you have Rama-nama, it is the Ramaform that sprouts.

Do not allow your mind to waver due to doubts

Lelashukha had the Name of Krishna embedded in the well ploughed field of his heart and so, the Lord appeared before him with a peacock feather, a flute and a charming mischievous smile! He fulfills your innermost aspiration in a flash, if it is compelling enough. Only you should not allow your mind to waver due to doubt or disappointment. Leave all to Him and be at ease; it is the man with no faith that is tossed about on the sea, like a ship caught in a storm with neither rudder nor anchor. A devotee bears the ups and downs of life, keeping the balance of his mind even.

You sometimes talk as if the devotee leads a life beset with hardships and sorrows and that the man who does not bend before a Higher Power is care-free and prosperous; but this is a totally wrong idea. The devotee sails on an even keel; he has inner peace, a spring of joy which sustains him and keeps him together.

Bairagi Shastri said that this is an auspicious day for you because this is My Birthday; but let Me tell you, I have many Birthdays like this. The Auspicious Day for you is the day on which your mind is cleansed and not the day on which I took this human form. I am ever new and ever ancient, ever modern and ever eternal. I come always for the sake of reviving Dharma, for tending the virtuous and ensuring them conditions congenial for progress. Some doubters might ask, "Can Paramatma assume human form?" Well, man can derive bliss only through the human form; we can receive instruction, inspiration, illumination only through human language and human communication.

God bows to your will and carries your burden

I will never force you to take up a particular Name or Form of the Lord as your wish. The Lord has a million Names and a million Forms, and He wants that faith and attachment should be evoked in you by any one of them, as you recite the Names or contemplate the Forms. That is why they have a string of 1008 Names for use to worship; the devotee might be drawn closer to the Lord while any one Name is being repeated, however distracted or inattentive he might be during the rest of the list. Like the coldness of the atmosphere which freezes the water, the compelling agony of a devotee's heart solidifies the Formless Absolute into the shape and the

attitude that are yearned for. As felt, so fashioned. He bows to your will, He carries your burden, provided you trust Him with it.



Therefore, so act and feel and speak that you get "joy here, joy hereafter, joy everlasting" all three. I bless you all that you get more success in the struggle.

Divine discourse 23-11-1960

You must tread the spiritual path with an uncontrollable urge to reach the Goal; you must cultivate the yearning for liberation from all this encumbrance.

Remember that you have to dwell in a house built on four stout pillars: righteousness, wealth, desire and liberation (dharma, artha, kama and moksha); Dharma supporting artha, and moksha being the only kama or desire.

However much you may earn either wealth or strength, unless you tap the springs of bliss (ananda) you cannot have peace and lasting content.

Sri Sathya Sai

Zonal meeting 2013

Zones 6, 7 and 8

Prasanthi Council and new appointments

The Prasanthi Council is reconstituted and the members are:

- Dr Narendranath Reddy
- Mrs Marianne Meyer
- Dr Art Ong Jumsai
- Dr William Harvey
- Mr Leonardo Gutter

The World Foundation's focus is to support for the Medical and Educational Institutions and Humanitarian projects.

There are now the following committees:

- International Sathya Sai Youth committee—
International coordinator, Mr Shivendra Kumar
- International Disaster Relief committee –
Co-chairs Dr John Behner and Dr Jack Feely
- Information Technology committee –
Chair Dr Venkat Sadanand
- Hospitality committee – Co-chairs Mr Harshad Patel and Mr Rohan Balasuriya

New appointments Zone 7:

- Jan Floris - DCC Region 72
- Marta Panjeta - Zone 7 Youth Coordinator

Dr Reddy sharing wisdom



World Youth Conference in July 2015

In addition to a Conference on day 1, there will be a Festival on day 2 and 3 (with drama, exhibition and other forms of youth energy...). The goals of the Youth Conference will be: Bring Sai teaching closer to youth all over the world. Express all the talents and skills.

As preparation for the Zone Youth conference, pre-conferences and retreats are planned for 2014.



Group photo from Zones meeting, Athens 2013

Zonal meeting 2013

Serve the Planet

On 20th October 2013, a worldwide Sai challenge project will be held "Feeding the Needy". This project for devotees of all ages is managed by the Youth of all Zones.

Public speakers

(also applies to musical performers)

All speakers need to be approved by Zone chair of the country where a performance is planned and if the speaker is coming from another Zone, Prasanthi council needs to be sought for approval, using the traditional channel: "member - NC - CC - ZC - PC".



Male leaders of European SSO

Zone 7 meeting 2013

Zone 7 meeting

Centre Leader Meeting, Tallinn 2014

From April 11th til 13th 2014 there will be a Centre Leader Meeting in Tallinn, Estonia. All office bearers of centres and groups are welcome to Tallinn to participate. All leaders as well as all members who are potential office bearers are welcome and we will make our best to offer accommodation for all.

LASA (Love All-Serve All) Youth project

LASA project is an activity of the youth of Zones 6&7, combining music and service for the public. Current LASA committee: Jadranko Panjeta (coordinator), Joerg Schuppler (music coordinator), Marta Panjeta + Katarzyna Andersson (committee members), Illona Oranen + Petra Shivareddy (design).

Songs for the first CD are recorded, now it is going to be mixed in studio. The music will be planned to be released on Christmas 2013. LASA website in progress, to be finished soon.

Zone 7 meeting 2013

ESSE Institute report

7 ESSE Standard Diplomas conferred. First Standard Diploma Project Presentations were held in North Europe.

Seminars	No	Countries served	Participants
SDC Courses 1, 2,3	7	Hungary, Austria, Poland, Russia, Germany	110
Update Seminars Courses 1,2,3	7	Poland, Lithuania, Netherlands, Russia	192
Seminars for Members + OB	5	Hungary, Lithuania, Netherlands, Austria	139
	19		441



Ladies leaders of European SSO



M. Meyer as the ESSE Institute Director

OVERVIEW: ESSE Institute Europe

Institutes	No of Seminars	No of Participants
ESSE Institute	19	441
ISSE SE/ ESSE	9	219
ESSE Campus GER	14	117
ESSE Campus-to-be Russia	5	111
TOTAL:	47	878

Certificates (September 2012 – August 2013)

Country	Zone	Course 1	Course 2	Update Courses 1+2	Diploma
Poland	7			14	
Netherlands	7			3	
Russia	8			13	
German Campus	7	4	5		
Russia	8				6
Germany	7				1
TOTAL:		4	5	30	7

<h1>Zone 7</h1> <h2>news</h2> <p>Outstanding activities and best practices from Zone 7</p>	Region 71	Region 72	Region 73
	Austria Czech R. Germany Hungary Slovakia	Belgium Denmark Netherlands Norway Sweden	Estonia Finland Latvia Lithuania Poland

North European meeting of devotees
 31.5 - 2.6 2013, Sweden

There were 45 participants from Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Netherlands and Germany. The theme of the meeting was Love and Leadership.

Petra von Kalinowski from Germany spoke about "My work is my blessing" connected to Sathya Sai Baba's important message about spiritual transformation through service. The importance of character and developing of team spirit has been highlighted. One of the questions worked with in the workshop was: What can I do in our centre to make Swami happy?

Marianne Meyer spoke about the path to spiritual excellence with exciting stories showing how to deepen our personal spiritual development.

Jan Floris from Netherlands spoke about love and leadership and gave good examples from his own work



Zone 7 news

Outstanding activities and best practices from Zone 7

experiences. The lectures were mixed with group work and a practical cooperation exercise where lots of attention, concentration, power of insight and initiative ability was needed.

There was an evening programme on Saturday evening on the theme "Service of Gratitude to God, Mother Earth and the five elements". It was held outside on a theatre stage in the beautiful surroundings. Devotional songs in respective languages were sung to express the gratitude of the participants.

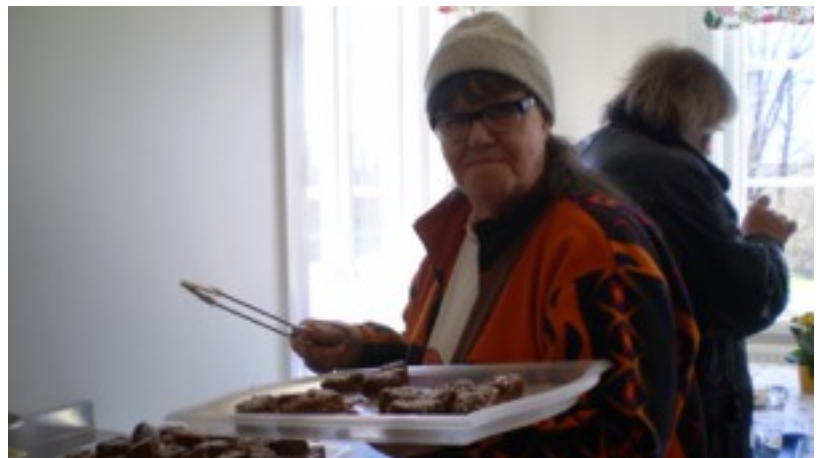
After the programme on stage the participants assembled inside to listen to personal and exciting experiences with Sathya Sai. It was very inspiring and the audience listened attentively to the variety of divine plays and experiences.



SWEDEN

SWEDEN

Mahasamadhi service



Service on Mahasamadhi Day

On 24th of April Mahasamadhi day was celebrated with devotional songs in the Stockholm Centre, Sweden. On 5th of May on Easwaramma day, we continued the Mahasamadhi celebrations with service for the homeless. Four devotees baked about 108 soft cakes and cookies. About 100 apples, coffee, shampoos and soap were distributed.

We arrived at an event held for the homeless and as they had forgotten to arrange for coffee-bread they were very happy for the sweet gifts.



Zone 7 news

Outstanding activities and best practices from Zone 7



Summer of Culture (Sathya Sai Festival)

July 2013

Sathya Sai Cultural Summer Festival, a five day event held in July 2013, attracted about 60 German devotees.

This year, we followed up on last year, when we worked with the spiritual roots of the German culture. This year, we focused on the "Everyday Culture and its Spiritual Aspects".

The festival gathered devotees from all over the country and had its inauguration on Gurupournima evening. It started with devotional songs and reading of Swami's Texts relating to the day. The following days came under these headlines:

- Man and Nature Encounter
- Man and Animal Encounter
- Man and Man Encounter
- Man and God Encounter

Summer of culture
GERMANY



They were filled with elaborated lectures, workshops, excursions and cultural programmes in the evenings. Several lectures dealt with the "Art of Communication" and how it has changed throughout the decades. Its implications have been compared with Swami's teachings and two of His Divine Discourses, which elaborate the effects of using mobile phones.

Other lectures and workshops dealt with Albert Schweitzer and his way of serving the needy, with the mutual service among man and animal or with the satvic (pure) way of life. A lady guest speaker introduced the devotees in the honorary activities of social institutions in Germany.



Zone 7 news

Outstanding activities and best practices from Zone 7

Providing Hungarian poor children with a sense of home

In early autumn 2012 the Sai Centre Budapest decided to organize a Service Day, thus adding an extra dimension to a spiritual get-together planned for the weekend. Since we have established cooperation with a Children's Temporary Home located in Budapest, we chose to dedicate service to them, apart from the usual devotional songs, good food and the peace of suburban surroundings.

After arts, crafts and music programmes organized in the institution of the children's home, the Sathya Sai Centre in Budapest decided to invite the children to a special Service Day. As these children had been living in the temporary home for months or sometimes even over a year, due to the financial difficulties of their parents in providing them with proper living circumstances, they had been in constant need for the atmosphere of a safe, secure and warm home.

Upon the arrival of the 11 children ranging from age 7 to 15 and their accompanying preceptors, they were welcomed with a variety of fruits, nuts and all sorts of other treats and also small gifts, such as toys, magazines etc. They enjoyed all sorts of arts and crafts activities led by devotees in the morning and they also had the chance to receive some guitar lessons. At noon all children and the 15 devotees present had a wonderful home prepared vegetarian meal together. There were team games arranged for the children in the afternoon. During these team activities they had the chance to demonstrate their mental and physical skills, which they carried out with a lot of enthusiasm.

Before their departure around 4 pm, the team gathered for a special session of Hungarian religious songs.

Seeing how quickly they opened up and connected with the adults, it was obvious that combining service and leisure time in such a way was a good idea and consequently the children returned back to the institute with a sense of feeling at home for a while.



Service Day
HUNGARY



Sai quotes on...

A satvic diet, also referred to as a yoga diet, is a diet based on foods that—according to Ayurveda and Yoga, lead to clarity and equanimity of mind while also being beneficial to the body (www.wikipedia.org)

“As is the food, so is the head (thoughts). As is the head, so is God” Thus, the food, the head, and God will be on the same wavelength. Hence, one has to cultivate good and noble thoughts always. If you eat pure food and cultivate pure nature right from childhood, your entire life will run smoothly. Hence, one has to be wary of his food and head (thoughts).

ssspeaks/volume38/sss38-17

While taking our food, if we use exciting words, such ideas, which are related to these exciting words, will sprout in us also. The lesson that we should learn is that when we take our bath, when we sit for meditation or when we take our food, we should not think of other activities and other ideas. Too much talk, while we take our food, will also cause harm to us. We should not give room to any kind of talk when we take our food. With a happy heart and with a sacred food prayer, we must undertake to utter this particular verse and then take our food. In this way, whatever has been offered to Brahman will become the Prasad which comes to us as a gift of Brahman.

summershowers/ss1977/ss1977-18

Pure food, according to some, consists in milk and fruits. But, it is much more; it may not even be these. For, the calories that one takes in through the mouth are but a small part of the intake of man. The intake by the senses are part of the food that builds the individual. The sounds heard, the sights seen, the tactile impressions sought or suffered, the air breathed, the environment that presses for attention, appreciation and adoption—all these are 'food.' They have considerable impact on the character and career of the individual.

ssspeaks/volume11/sss11-08

Pure Food

The meaning of the Food prayer is that God Himself, who is in a human form in you, is taking the food. Therefore, this changes our food into food for God. While taking food, we should not be excited, and we should not get into passion, but we should eat very peacefully. Even if we cannot perform any other spiritual practice, at least if we take care to see that we eat in this manner, we will develop good ideas.

summershowers/ss1977/ss1977-18

Food is generally looked down upon by ascetically minded seekers and treated as something which does not deserve attention. But, since the body and the mind are mightily interdependent, no one can afford to neglect it. As the food, so the mind, as the mind so the thought; as the thought, so the act. Food is an important factor which determines the alertness and sloth, the worry and calm, the brightness and dullness.

ssspeaks/volume14/sss14-31

In the matter of food, there are three aspects regarding the cleanliness of which we should take great care. One is the cleanliness of the material which we use for cooking the food. The second is the cleanliness of the pot in which we want to cook the food. We can certainly clean the materials which constitute the food and also clean the pot in which it is cooked. The third aspect relates to the cleanliness of the process of cooking. This is not easily possible. Until the material gets cooked to its final stage, our ideas should be good for this to be achieved.

summershowers/ss1977/ss1977-18

You may be hungry. In spite of your hunger, you must make an attempt to get a clean place and clean food to eat. When such clean food is available, you must first offer it to God and then eat it. Not only here, wherever you may go, when you take your food, you should remember your food prayer, utter it, offer the food to God and then take the food.

summershowers/ss1977/ss1977-18



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