

Feeling the Presence of God – Through Devotional Music

Love

Adoration

Devotion



Live in Love



Love is God

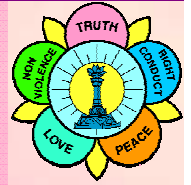
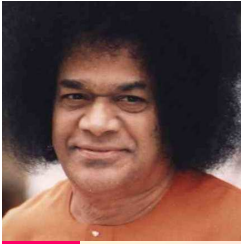


God is Love

Aum Sri Sai Ram

Sadhana Program

Sri Sathya Sai Baba Center
of Southfield
Sunday August 31, 2008



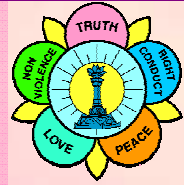
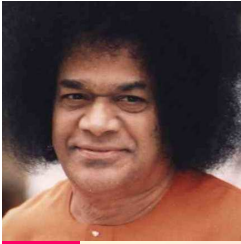
Sadhana Program

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- Inspiration through Swami's Divine Grace
- We are all instruments of Swami – we are learning from each other, finally inspired from Swami.
- The only purpose of human life is to realize the Divinity.



Significance of Sadhana

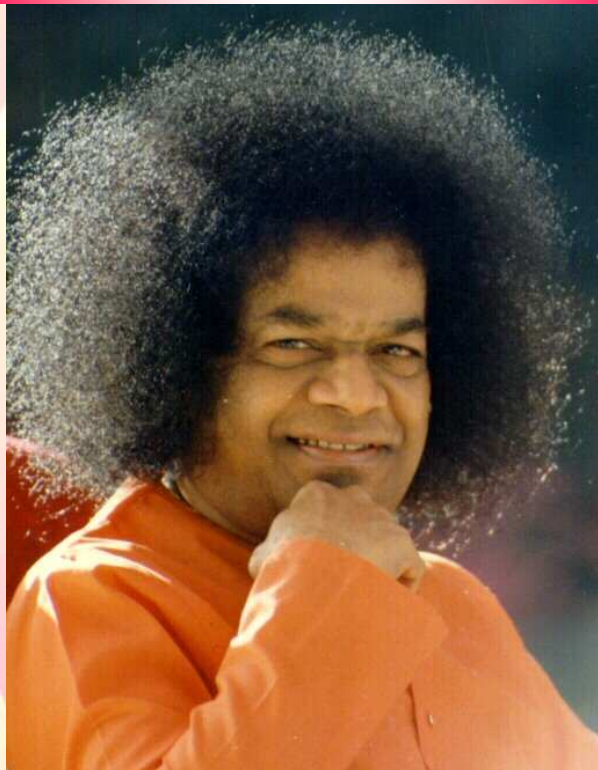
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“Without Love, no Sadhana has any value...”

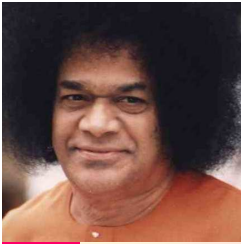
The purpose of all types of SADHANA is to train the mind to see the DIVINE in everything. That is true adjustment Sadhana. This you can carry on everything you do.

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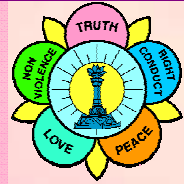


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Action oriented Study Circles



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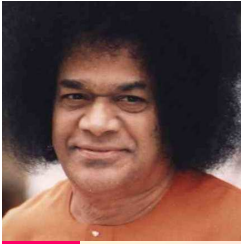


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- Young Adults from the ten regions of U.S. had developed study circles on different sub-values during the 2007 Pre-World Youth Conference
- Action oriented study circles:
 - Discuss the sub-value
 - Identify techniques in practicing the sub-values
 - As a group, pick up common challenges to practice
 - Next study circle, review how the challenges were overcome and what techniques were applied
- Applied the same format during the study circle/sadhana program at our center



Sadhana – How it can be practiced at any Sai center



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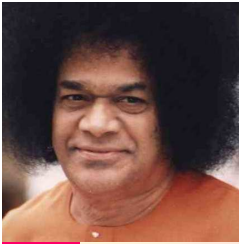


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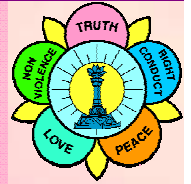


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- Discuss with Sai center members on the length of the sadhana program (Target could be Swami's Birthday or Center anniversary etc ...). True sadhana is life long but the goal set with time target helps everyone focus their efforts towards that date. Members can always extend the sadhana program beyond the target date.
- Pick few topics – one month each sub-value/value
- Form small separate groups for men and women separately. Small groups provide time and opportunity for all the members to share their thoughts/views/experiences.
- Keep one or two core challenges common throughout the sadhana program
- Share experiences and techniques
- In the group motivate each other.
- Offer it to Swami



Study circle format – Sense Control



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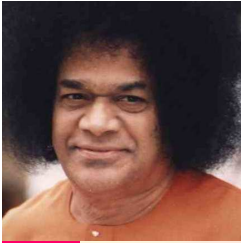


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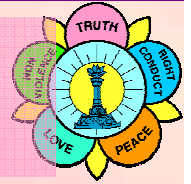
- Introduce the topic – ask everyone in the team – what does “Sense Control mean to you?”
- Review Swami’s quotes on Sense Control
- Discuss techniques on practicing Sense Control
- As a group select few Sai challenges
- Until the next study circle, face the Sai challenges using any of the techniques
- At the next study circle, share your experiences and techniques in facing the Sai challenges
- Example Study circle on Sense Control →



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Study Circle Example on Devotion



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- Spend a few minutes to share experiences from the last month's Sai challenge. Share any insights as well as difficulties encountered in the challenge.

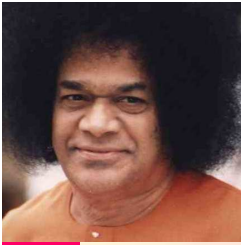
Introduction to the Study Circle on Devotion

AMONG all forms of Sadhana, Bhakti (devotion to the Lord) is the easiest and holiest. Bhakti is derived from the root "Bhaj", with the suffix "thi." It means Seva (Service). It denotes a feeling of friendship coupled with awe... "Bhaja Sevaayaam" (worship the Divine through Seva). Bhakti calls for utilising the mind, speech and body to worship the Lord. It represents total love. Devotion and love are inseparable and interdependent. Bhakti is the means to salvation. Love is the expression of Bhakti".

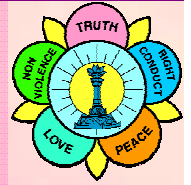
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Study Circle Example on Devotion – Slide #1



Two kinds of devotion



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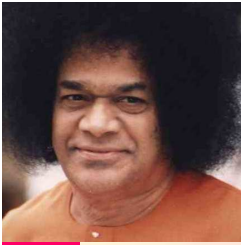
Devotion is of two kinds. One is acquiring knowledge about God and transforming oneself thereby. This is a natural process by which one starts with the physical, proceeds to the mental and ultimately attains the spiritual goal of mergence in the Divine. But in taking to this path of knowledge, only the individual concerned can benefit.

In the **second type** of devotion, the devotee **not only** benefits himself, but shares his experience **with others** and **benefits them** also. Such a devotee not only saves himself but **helps others to save themselves.**

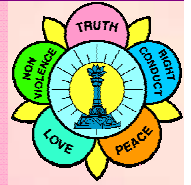
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Study Circle Example on Devotion – Slide #2



Essence of Bhakti (Devotion)



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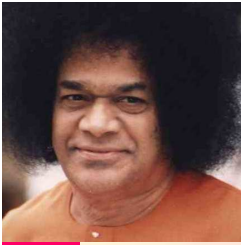
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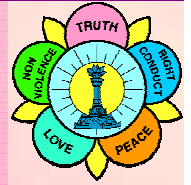
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The essence of *Bhakti* is Love and not formal exercises in *japa* or worship of various kinds. Worship should be offered to the Divine who resides in all beings. Love is God: live in love. Love is the means of realizing the bliss of the Self, which is centered in ourselves. It need not be sought elsewhere. It can be found within one's self when all thoughts are controlled and the mind is turned inwards. Dedicate all actions to the Lord. This is the highest knowledge. It is the summum bonum of existence. **Love should become a way of life.** That alone is true devotion.

Study Circle Example on Devotion – Slide #3



Techniques in overcoming challenges



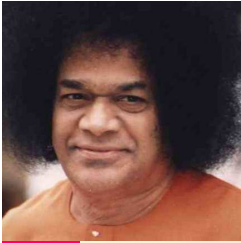
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- Find bliss inside yourself by controlling your thoughts and turn your mind inwards.
- Dedicate all actions to the Lord.
- Dedicate at least 20-30 minutes each day in at least one of the following paths of devotion:
 - *Archanam* (offering daily worship), *Vandanam* (prostration), *Daasyam* (dedicated service), *Sneham* (friendliness) and *Atmanivedanam* (total surrender).
 - *Sravanam* (listening to God's glories), *Keerthanam* (singing the glories of God), *Vishnusmaranam* (ever remembering the Lord), *Paadasevanam* (worshipping the Lord's feet),

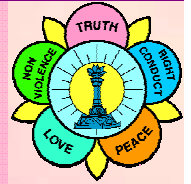
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Study Circle Example on Devotion – Slide #4



SAI Challenges



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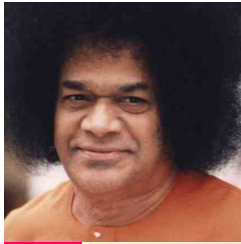
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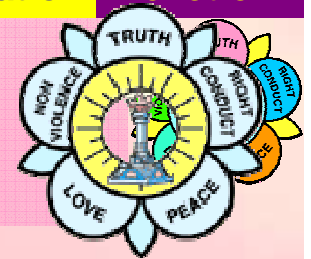
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- **Talk softly with everyone at home, at work and with friends.**
- **Control your anger at home, at work and with friends.**
- **Start fresh with someone you do not like.**
- **Learn active listening**

Study Circle Example on Devotion – Slide #5



Next Steps



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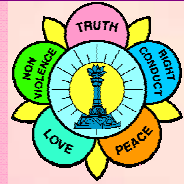
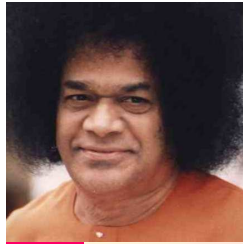
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- Practice the essence of devotion (Love should become a way of life), tolerance, sense-control, discrimination, compassion, ceiling on desires & selfless service and build from the previous study circles.
- Share experiences on how the week(s) after this study circle was different by practicing Sai challenges. Ensure that a holistic picture is obtained by sharing both challenges and successes.
- Try to incorporate the path of devotion in your efforts in overcoming the challenges.

Study Circle Example on Devotion – Slide #6



Summary

Live in Love

Love is God

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- Action oriented study circles or sadhana program can be applied at Sai Center
- Practice as a group with common Sai challenges for each group
- Share techniques and experiences among the group
- We learn from each other, but more importantly from Swami (Our Inner Swami)

**We offer this Sadhana program at the Lotus
Feet of Our Beloved Swami
JAI SAI RAM**

