



Y.E.S!

Youth in Eternal Service

srisathyasai.in/yes

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7 COLORFUL PAGES FILLED WITH EXPERIENCES OF PEOPLE AS YOUNG AS YOU.

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Dearest Swami, You are reborn each day in our lives. So every day is Your Birthday! On this auspicious day, I promise to make Your Message my life. Give me the strength, my beloved Bhagawan.

Read many more notes written by young devotees for Bhagawan on His Birthday.



YES! This word signifies *joy*. It is the word of *achievement* and *success*. YES! is the word of *celebration*. So, what better occasion could there be for Maharashtra and Goa to launch the YES! magazine than during Bhagawan's 86th Birthday Celebrations? We lovingly offer this gift to You, dearest Swami! Here's wishing You a very Happy Birthday!

YES!

It's time to say, "YES!"
 To a splendid launch,
 A dedication ever so staunch,
 At the Lotus Feet,
 With every heartbeat,
 To make beloved Bhagawan's words our life,
 Sincere attempts to end strife,
 To reach out to one and all.

'YES' promotes concern when conditions appall,
 'YES' does care and consideration install,
 A response to that divine call,
 To Help Ever, Hurt Never,
 To Love All, Serve All.

It's time to say YES,
 To all things positive,
 Blazing a trail,
 Defining a fine way to live,
 An affirmation to all things,

Encouraging and optimistic,
 A YES to humanistic characteristic,
 Yes,
 It's certainly time to say YES,
 To help heal the world,
 To make it a better place,
 YES also for sincere prayers,
 And for the continuance of uplifting grace.

Dear Sisters and Brothers,
 Together let us surge ahead,
 Surrendering to the One,
 By whom we are being led,
 YES, YES, YES,
 Let us spread far and wide,
 The fragrance,
 With which beloved Bhagawan,
 Did us bless.
 YES! YES! YES!

"Bhagawan, You have changed our lives in so many wonderful ways that it is impossible to express in mere words all that You mean to us. Yet, we make an attempt. Please accept our loving Birthday Gift, our heartfelt messages to You, dearest Sai Ma!"

"Dearest Swami! THANK YOU for the immense transformation you have brought in our lives! You have provided us with the strength to follow Your path. We love you and will continue to love you till the last breath of our lives."

"Swami, it is only because of You that love still awakens my soul and that faith takes root in the direst of troubles. I am happier because of the strength You have instilled in my heart. Thank you, Swami! We know You are always with us, but let us always and forever remain with You! HAPPY BIRTHDAY!"

"Swami, in the 86th year of Your Avatar, our new journey has just begun. Until now, the mere thought of Your Physical Presence filled our lives with joy and strength. But today, all we have is a bouquet of your cherished memories, a wreath around an irreversible vacuum, and a bud of new hope, all at the same time! Sai, help us remain connected to You always!"

"My Dearest Sai Ma, Happy Birthday! Thank You from the deepest pit of my heart for Your ever-loving gaze. I promise to love and live in You, forever and beyond."

"Beloved Bhagawan, I look forward more than ever to the adventure of finding You within me. I wish you a Happy Birthday, Swami - A birthday not just in terms of Your manifestation in this world, but in terms of Your birth in my heart as love, as joy, as peace... I remain Forever Yours."

"Dearest Sai Ma, You have been with me every moment of every day. I have overcome sickness and several challenges only because You lovingly carried me to the other side of Light and Good Health. How can I ever thank You, my dearest Lord?"

FROM UNDER THE STREET LAMP INTO THE SPOTLIGHT

Children find their voice at the Bol Bindaas Class

Opportunities to do *seva* are limitless and need not be confined to a fixed pattern. As Swami has instructed time and again, one has to keep one's eyes and ears open for a chance to serve those who are in need.

Under a project titled 'Midnight Scholars', volunteers from the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation support students studying under street lights during their exams. It was found that many of these students tend to drift into bad company and take up illegal activities due to the lack of a support system.

Lack of self confidence is a big obstacle that comes in the way of young people from pursuing higher education or gaining employment. This, the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation (SSSSO) found was largely due to their inability to speak English fluently. To address this linguistic requirement, the volunteers of the SSSSO started the Bol Bindaas Class (BBC). (The word '*bindaas*' is Mumbai slang for being 'full of confidence'.)

Bol Bindaas was started with the aim of empowering the students by helping them converse in English and gain self-confidence. This is done in BBC through several innovative ways:

To begin with, all students are required to be attired formally and wear a tie and suit in the class.

Every student is provided with a daily subscription to an English newspaper and is made to listen to FM radio channels where English is the spoken language. They are also given a dictionary to understand the meaning of new words that they encounter. English conversational tapes are played out in the class and students are encouraged to repeat the sentences. Students are given home assignments and are expected to learn new words as well as prepare to speak on various topics in class. They are also continuously assessed with constructive feedback from their classmates.

Students are also provided with training in computer hardware, so they can apply for rewarding jobs in the IT industry. Field trips are organised for the students so that they gain a wider perspective of the world around.

Typically, a new student picks up English-speaking skills in about 3 to 4 months. The examples of transformations are numerous, with many students being able to face interviews with confidence. They also enrol in new courses and hold steady jobs, which were earlier just a dream!

Says Akash, "I am very excited that I have been selected out of 600 students for IAS coaching. I have set my sights firmly on the IPS!"

Sandeep, another student, proudly exclaims, "I shook off my fear of English and am now a PSP programmer in a software firm!"

Yet another BBC student is an assistant to an advocate in the Bombay High Court and a fourth, an aspiring musician.

So happy are the students that they encourage their friends to join Bol Bindaas!

The Bol Bindaas classes have now been running for more than two years. The training imparted has given students the freedom to converse anywhere, anytime on any topic, be it for professional, academic or even personal fulfillment. It has brought out a new dimension in their personality, enhanced their social skills and opened up exciting new avenues for immeasurable growth!



A Bol Bindaas Class student speaks confidently in public

BBC TIDBITS

Class strength: 30 to 35 students

Class Mantra: So What, What Next!

Day & Venue: Every Sunday evening in the premises of the Dhanalakshmi Bank Building, Chembur.

Next step forward: BBC now aims to get computers and train the students in presentation skills.

Be a volunteer: We invite you to visit the class and contribute either by becoming a volunteer or bringing experts into the fold.

For details contact Mr Chandrashekhar on 98214 82711.



“*Licence kis ne diya?*” teased Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba as He settled back into His car seat. The driver, a long-standing devotee, had just swerved rashly, causing all those in the car to lurch sideways with a collective gasp.

While Swami made light of the grave situation with His seemingly humourous dig at the RTO, one didn’t miss the profundity from the Lord:

Who gave you the permission to drive irresponsibly?
“*Licence kis ne diya?*”

A question we should ask ourselves each day—as we cut recklessly into another lane, honk ceaselessly, disrespect traffic signals, and abuse fellow drivers.

Why has our beautiful city, which was loved for its courteous ‘*pehle aap*’ demeanor, broken down into hundreds of intolerant ‘*pehle main*’ individuals?

Truth is, we’ve lost the ability to be patient. Fast money, superfast bikes, racer cars, zippy laptops, blazing internet—we’re racing against Speed itself. Naturally, no one in his right mind wants to be branded a ‘slow poke’ who just waits for the ‘smart ones’ to overtake him in the lanes of life.

And how vindictive the ‘smart ones’ are! Should someone cruise along leisurely smack in the middle of their path, the ‘smart ones’ just cannot bear it! So they honk the ‘loser’ down, hurl him a murderous look while overtaking sharply from the left, bark out the choicest abuse and after much edging out of steel and screeching of brakes, finally get ahead of the ‘slow’ one.

YES! What an achievement! The ‘smart one’ thumps his chest in victory.

Without realising the dreadful harm he has caused himself.

Ten minutes after such near-death incidents, the heart still beats faster than usual. Fifteen minutes later, the brow is still furrowed in anger. Each time one thinks of the implacable ‘slow poke’, one’s blood boils. We scowl all through our journey, aggressively getting back at everyone who dares to cross our path.

In an all-consuming fury, we drive worse than ever—shooting over speed breakers, landing hard in potholes, overtaking thoughtlessly and being a menace to everyone, especially those travelling with us: little children, ageing parents, loving wives and caring husbands.

What pain we must be causing God each time we indulge in such bumptious behaviour. Countless times Bhagawan has emphasised, “Start early, drive slowly, reach safely.” But we ignore His plea. We hurtle on, stopping for nothing and no one.

In our foolish stupidity, we forget that God is journeying invisibly with us—in the very vehicle we are driving.

We forget the most basic law of Karma: What you give, that shall you get. Just as we abuse bad drivers, others too assault us with their negativity and ill thoughts when we disrespect them on the road.

Can any good come of such badness?

It’s time we set about some serious course correction—within ourselves.

When we get behind the wheel, let’s put into motion a new mission:

Let’s honk less, swear less, obey traffic rules, and give way. If we must lead, let us lead a politer, happier road revolution. And if ever we feel the impulsive urge to overtake needlessly or drive recklessly, let us ask ourselves, “*Licence kis ne diya?*”

Never blame anyone for your plight. Your thoughts and actions alone are responsible for your plight.
If you do not love other human beings, you do not love God.



Today in the world,
friends turn into enemies OVERNIGHT.

This is not right at all.

Friendship
 should be
ENDURING and last
FOR ALL TIME.

Normally it lasts **AS LONG AS**
 one has **wealth** and **strength.**

But *God's friendship* is not like that.
GOD is always with you,
 in you, behind you,
AROUND YOU.

This is the kind of friendship
 that **EVERY MAN** should
e x p e r i e n c e .

~ Baba

DIARY OF A SEEKER

It's just not easy being young! Our parents wish we were righteous, studious geeks whereas our peers want us to be fun-loving freaks. Well, and what about ourselves? I thought, "Well, I want myself to be loved by all: parents and friends. I want to be **RICH, FAMOUS, SUCCESSFUL AND SOUGHT-AFTER!**" But oh! This is more easily said than done... 😞

There are times when neither my parents nor my friends understand me; indeed there are times when I don't understand myself either!

As these thoughts raced through my mind, I tossed in bed, feeling frustrated and forlorn.

Slowly, I drifted off to sleep... ZZZZ 🌙🌠

And lo! What did I see before me as I lay on my bed; motionless in deep sleep! A brilliant and spectacularly, shining light appeared before me: so bright that I closed my eyes and bent my head in reverence. A thunderous voice which was both deep and peaceful boomed, "Neil! Only **GOD** can understand you truly and fully... even better than your own family, friends and for that matter, better than you yourself! If you please God, you can please them all. When God is happy with you, you will be happy with yourself." So saying, the voice faded and the vision vanished.

Sometimes, what happens in our sleep can move us and have a more profound effect on our lives than our wakeful experiences.

I woke up in the morning with renewed energy. After all, I thought, now I must please not many but only one... **THE ONLY ONE.** "O, wakefulness! Help me conquer my dreams," I prayed silently.

I must please God each day. Maybe, simply do my daily work a little differently so that He may love me more! At least I can try! Experiment a bit maybe... See what works best. Will everyone really respect me more? From the bus conductor to my sister... Will I be able to touch their lives and move their sensibilities as I churn my soul and transform my own life?

The change has begun. Because it has taken root in my mind's eye! 🌀 So, welcome to my world, my brand new world of trial, effort, rise and fall! And be by my side through my defeats as through my victories: as I march towards my goal! Come and be a part of my life as I begin this new journey. O, Diary! You shall be my confidante, my best friend. I shall confide in you, share with you, seek solace in you and exult with you. Until later,

Neil

Yada yada hi dharmasya glanir bhavati Bharata abhyutthanam adharmasya tadatmanam srjamy aham. Paritranaya sadhunam vinasaya ca duskrtam dharma samsthapanarthaya sambhavami yuge yuge.

“Whenever and wherever there is a decline in righteousness, O descendant of Bharata, and a predominant rise of unrighteousness, at that time I descend Myself. In order to deliver the pious and to annihilate the miscreants, as well as to reestablish the principles of righteousness, I advent Myself millennium after millennium.”

Thus spoke Lord Vishnu, in His Krishna Avatar.

Through their Sanskrit verses, our scriptures have said that the Lord incarnates as Man, so that Man may accept Him and learn His Divine Ways.

Ironically, in Cameron's film *Avatar*, Man ‘incarnates’ as a Spiritual Being—and transforms into The Saviour. Predestined by the Universe, Jake Sully frees the Omaticaya from the clutches of the *adharmi* militants. True to His Higher Purpose, the Avatar re-establishes *Satya, Dharma, Shanti, Prema* and *Abimsa* (Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love and Non-violence).

Those familiar with the scriptures would surely have sighted the striking parallels drawn by this 'epic' film, the blue body of Cameron's *Avatar* being only one of the most obvious signs.

Ancient *gurus*, well-versed with our epics, have described Lord Rama as being significantly taller than the average human being—ten feet tall, to be precise. In Cameron's film too, the avatars tower above their human counterparts, at ten feet.

And, they wield the bow and arrow, the chosen weapons of Lord Rama and Lakshmana.



From time immemorial, the people of Bharata have worshipped the *Panch Bhootam*, the Five Elements, the forces of the Universe: *Agni, Jal, Vayu, Prithvi* and *Aakash* (Fire, Water, Wind,

Earth and Ether). The Omaticaya too, are evolved souls perfectly tuned into the higher energies that sustain the Universe.

Also notice Jake Sully's vehicle: Toruk, a great winged creature whose powers were second to none.



Sully is hailed as Toruk Macto, the mighty 'Rider of Last Shadow'. Compare this to Lord Vishnu's *vahana*

(mount), Garuda. The eagle deity, is known to be massive—so large that he can block out the Sun. In fact, one of the thousand names of Lord Narayan is *Om Garudadwajaya Namah* (One who has Garuda emblazoned on His flag).

Another fascinating feature is the focus on the moon: Pandora, sacred home of the Na'vi. Indian rituals are replete with prayers to the moon. On the auspicious nights of *Karva Chaut* and *Teejri*, women worship the moon and pray for the well-being of their husbands. Every day of their lives, devotees from all over India pay their obeisance to Chandrashekhara, Lord Shiva, whose forehead is adorned with the crescent moon.

The ascetic God resides in Kailasa, the meditative

mountains through which flows the holy river, Ganga. Does the film's scenic Hallelujah Mountains with gushing waterfalls resemble this breathtaking locale? And the fur clothes of the Lord, the costumes of the Na'vi? Are His matted locks the inspiration behind the hairstyles of the Omaticaya? And the stripes on His tiger-skin aasan the influence behind the imprints on the tribe's body?



And who can forget the divine Hometree with its great floating roots? Perhaps the sanctum sanctorum is a reflection of the Piplal tree (Ficus

Religiosa i.e. sacred fig). Notice the 'religiosa'—the Piplal tree is deeply significant to Indians. It is said that this 'life-giving' tree represents the Holy Trinity: Brahma

Was Cameron's Avatar written by Indians?

(the roots), Vishnu (the trunk) and Maheshwara (the leaves).

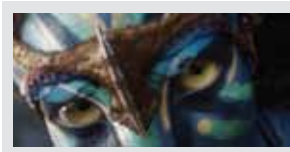
For centuries, couples have taken their marriage vows at the Pipal tree. In Cameron's *Avatar* too, Neytiri leads Jake to the Hometree and says, "This is a place for prayers to be heard. And sometimes answered." She then asks Jake to choose his woman—and they marry for life under the magnificent canopy of the Hometree.

Since 589 BC, the Pipal tree has also been referred to as the Bodhi tree (the Tree of Enlightenment) for it is under its meditative shade that Prince Siddhartha attained *Nirvana*.

Is it any wonder then that the Hometree assumes such spiritual importance in the film?

Avatar also depicts strong female characters: Neytiri, Eywa and Grace. One cannot help but notice that the core traits these women reflect those of our *Devi Matas*.

Neytiri displays the characteristics of Goddess Durga, the fearless one, the epitome of shakti. Eywa, the one who confers prosperity and peace represents Goddess Lakshmi. And Goddess Saraswati, the fountainhead of knowledge, seems to be the inspiration behind Grace's erudite character.



Over the fifteen years that Director James Cameron incubated this magnificent idea in his head, he and his team must have read several

books on Indian mythology.

No wonder his epochal film is so inspiring, uplifting and yes, deeply spiritual too.

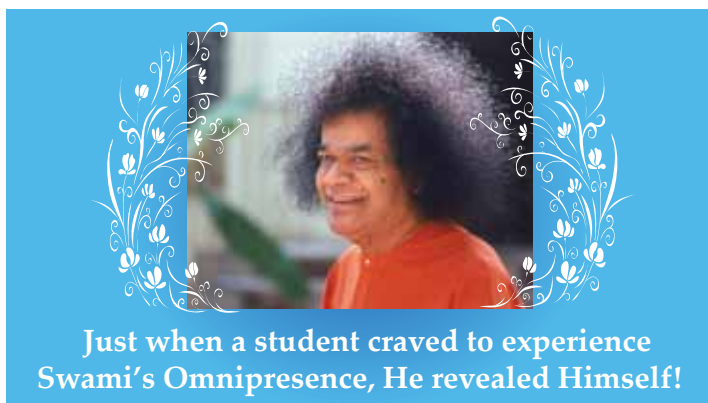
A SECOND LIFE

decided to make the necessary changes the next morning as night had already fallen. When I reached my room, my roommates were asleep. But sleep eluded me, given the excitement of the next day's programme. Suddenly I saw a streak of light streaming into the room from the street lamp outside. With a flash of inspiration, I took out my script, changed the words and slept.

The programme was conducted successfully the next evening and such was Swami's happiness that He called all of us on stage and blessed us with *Sambhashanam* (conversing with the Lord) and *Padnamaskar* (placing one's head at the Lord's feet). After a quick photo session, Swami signalled for *Aarti*. As Bhagawan was leaving for His residence, He caught my hand and with a sweet smile said, "*Kal raat ko light mein do line change karta hai. Mujhe pata hai!*" (Last night you changed two lines sitting in the light. I know it!)

It made no sense to anyone but I felt as though I had been struck by a thunderbolt. He had been there in the room watching over me all the while. In fact, I correct myself. Bhagawan is there in my heart and at every moment, is watching over me. Why should we miss Him, when He is closer than ever before!

(The writer is an alumni of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Whitefield, Bangalore.)



Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba has always said that he is Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient. Having lived in His presence for seven years, I never had any doubt about this. However, the mind craves for an experience all the same. And in all His benevolence, Swami willed that I too should be a part of one of His infinite *leelas*.

Brindavan, the Lord's temple at Bangalore, was blessed by Bhagawan with a one month visit. In those days, I was in the first year of my under graduate course. The students had organised a *Kavi Sammelan* (Poet's Meet) to be held in Swami's divine presence. As Master of Ceremonies, I had to give an introduction in English. My script included two lines in Hindi to express my love for Swami. However, the organising professor suggested that I replace the Hindi lines with English since a Hindi poet was scheduled to speak immediately after me. I agreed and

RING IN THE NEW YEAR!

A special hallmark of India is her rich heritage and cultural diversity. Irrespective of our own community, we enthusiastically celebrate several festivals, New Year being the most significant. Bhagawan Baba says, "The New Year does not bring new principles of truth (*Satya*) and righteousness (*Dharma*). These are changeless and eternal." In this contest, match the name of the New Year with the community celebrating the same.

New Year Names	GUDI PADWA	UGADI	VAISAKHI	CHETI CHAND	NAVROZ	ROSH HASHANA
	PUTHANDU	VISHU	VIKRAM SAMVAT	MUHARRAM	POHELA BOISHAKH	
Communities	JEW	GUJARATI	TAMIL	ISLAMIC	KONKANI	PUNJABI
	BENGALI	SINDHI	TELUGU	PARSI	MALAYALEE	

Answers: Gudi Padwa - Konkani, Maharashtra | Ugadi - Telugu, Kannada | Vaisakhi - Punjabi | Cheti Chand - Sindhi | Navroz - Parsi | Puthandu - Tamil | Vishu - Malayalee | Vikram Samvat - Gujarati | Muharram - Islamic | Pohela Boishakh - Bengali | Rosh Hashanah - Jew

HAVE A GOD-DAY

Here's a list of spiritual events you can attend and activities you can participate in, in November and December.

- Nov 13 to 16, 2011** Cataract Camp • Sri Sathya Sai Gramin Kendra, Malegaon, Washim
9:00 am to 3:00 pm • Contact Dr. Sanjay Vora on 90110 14442
- Nov 19 to 23, 2011** 5-day celebrations for Bhagawan's birthday • All *samithis* in Goa
Contact Shri Pramod Divgi on 95611 58338
- Nov 20, 2011** Maha Nagarsankeetan • All zones culminating at Shivaji Park, Mumbai
5:30 am • Contact Shri Suresh Mavinkurve on 99691 98330
- Nov 21 to 23, 2011** Cataract Operation Camp and Bhagawan's birthday celebrations • Jain Bhavan, Washim
9:00 am to 5:00 pm • Contact Dr. Sanjay Vora on 90110 14442
- Nov 23, 2011** Bhagawan's Birthday will be celebrated across Maharashtra and Goa. Details are below:
- Blanket Distribution • Nanded Railway Station • Contact Shri Anil Patre on 99230 00025
 - Maha Mrutyunjay Jap • Nashik • Contact Shri Shashi Bhattad on 98222 63786
 - Palkhi Procession, 7:00 am • Cultural Programme, 5:30 pm onwards • Dharmakshetra, Mumbai
Contact Shri Mehul Parab on 98202 51432
 - Sri Sathya Sai Seva Kendra, Subhash Nagar, Miraj • Contact Shri Sandip Kalage on 98905 23806
 - Res. of Phatte Jadhav, Tarabai Park, Kolhapur • 10:00 am to 12:30 pm • Contact Shri B. Buchhade on 94223 33804
 - Gharpan, Taluka Panhala, Kolhapur District • 9:00 am to 12:30 pm • Contact Shri Maruti Mole on 94238 42113
 - Rukadi, Hatkalangale Taluka, Kolhapur District • 6:00 to 9:00 pm • Contact Shri Kuber Langare on 94049 87050
 - Dattawad, Shirol Taluka, Kolhapur District • 9:00 am to 1:00 pm • Contact Shri Sanjay Relekar on 94211 08441
- Nov 25, 2011** Blood Donation and Medical Camp • Nashik • Contact Shri Shashi Bhattad on 98222 63786

We value your feedback :-) Email us at yesmag.feedback@gmail.com

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