

Nine Point Code of Conduct (4): Participation in community work and other programmes of the Organisation

1 What is Selfless Service?

It is an act that is performed with out any attachment to materialistic gain, or relationships. This act is solely performed to bring comfort and joy to the other.

Swami has said

- ◆ *“What is exactly selfless service? It is the very essence of devotion, the very breath of a devotee, his very nature. It springs from the actual experience of the devotee, an experience that convinces that all beings are God’s children, that all bodies are altars where God is installed, that all places are his residences.”*
- ◆ *“The spiritual exercise of service is quite distinct. In service you devote all your energy and attention to the task at hand, for it is dedicated task. You forget the body and ignore it’s demands. You set aside your individuality and its prestige and perquisites. You pluck your ego by it’s roots and cast it away. You give up your status, your conceit, your name and form, and all that they demand from others. This process makes the mind pure.”*
- ◆ *The Sathya Sai Service Organisation has a place of pride. The centres were started only with service in view. Services should not be mechanical or enforced. It should be filled with love and rendered whole heartedly. Whomsoever you serve, regard it as service done to God. It can be asserted a fact that only in the Sathya Sai organisations is service rendered without any feeling of egoism”.*

2 What is True Service?

Swami has said *“True Seva (service) is a small word but is filled with immense spiritual significance. Hanuman is the supreme exemplar to the ideal of service. When the Rakshasas asked Hanuman during his search for Sita in Lanka, who he was, he simply replied : ‘Humble servant of Rama’. God’s grace will come when Seva is done without expectation of reward or recognition. Sometimes ego & attachment rear their hands during Seva.”*

3 What is the purpose of service activities?

- ◆ Swami has said *“Was it beyond the power of Rama to discover Sita in Lanka himself? What need was there for HIM to send Hanuman? Rama wanted Hanuman to go on the search so that HE could show to the world the devotion and steadfastness and faith of Hanuman. In the same manner, if SAI so much as wants to do so many things Himself, HE could do anything. This endeavour is not for Sai. IT is done through these Seva Organisations so that members of the organisation get the chance to service and redeem themselves.
Try to understand the basic truth that these avenues of service have been provided so that you will get good name for yourselves and not for the sake of SAI. If people have any wrong notions about the service programme, endeavour to remove their doubts and explain the real purposes. For instance, some people say for the sake of 60th Birthday Celebrations we have embarked on this project of ‘Ceiling on desires’. This notion is wrong. “*
- ◆ *“Above all the basic purpose of all service activities is to effect a transformation from the state of man to the state of Divinity. Fill your hearts with that which is Godly. Then there is a meaning to your voluntary service”*

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4 A must for Spiritual aspirants – what does service have to do with worship?

Swami says

- ◆ *“Service to Man is service God” (Manav seva is Madhav seva)*
- ◆ *“Service to the community is the highest service”*
- ◆ *“Feel that it is this (Service) work that pleases me. Spend your days and years in activities that help those in dire need, and thus make this human existence of yours worthwhile and fruitful”*
- ◆ *“Chanting the name of God or doing other forms of worship will not help you to go near God, though they are good deeds. It is only by the selfless service you can get nearer to God.”*
- ◆ *“Whether you perform any kind of worship or not, when you render selfless service, you will be able to experience the bliss of Divine Love. Service demonstrates the unity that underlies the apparent diversity. To realise your own inherent divinity, service to the people is the best kind of Sadhana. What is so great about living for one’s own sake ? Only the man who lives for others can be said to live truly.”*

5 I work for in a governmental department/organisation which serves people?

According to management consultants, the purpose of an organisation is to serve its clientele (people) whatever or wherever the organisation may be. So, when we all work to earn a living, are we doing seva as described in the previous points?

Let’s see what Swami says.

Swami points out:-

“People may claim that they are engaged in Social Service that they are directing or sharing in Governmental activities which promote the welfare of the community. But, whatever is done as a job, without the inspiration or renunciation and of heartfelt Love cannot be “service”. I have come for promotion of the welfare and happiness of the world, and so, when you spread concord and Love, thorough out the World by means of this Organisation, your activity will certainly please Me”

As highlighted in the points by Swami, seva is to be done without acceptance or expectations of a reward. To that length, are not our wages given in return of the tasks performed?

6 How many hours should I serve?

Swami does not want or expect us to be renunciates. He expects us to take due cares of our worldly duties. Performing the worldly duties and practicing optimum utilisation of resources particularly time and money, Swami has suggested as 4 hours of service per week.

Attention must be paid to the following quote:

“God will not ask you, ‘When and where did you serve. He will ask ‘With what motive did you do it? What was the intention that prompted you? You may weigh the Seva and boast to its quantity. But God seeks quality, the quality of the heart, the purity of the mind, the holiness of the motive.”

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7 Requirements for Service?

Swami has indicated:

- ◆ *“The first requisite is to get rid of all the bad thoughts, the selfishness, pride and other undesirable qualities from the heart so that, spirit of Love can find its rightful place in it. Only a Heart filled with love is pure & holy. Hence, you should take up service activities in a loving spirit. You should not be concerned about name & fame. Fame is not a commercial product that can be got from someone. It flows spontaneously like a river, which starts in a small way, but gathers volume as it goes along. Do not go after name & distinction. Concentrate your mind upon achieving your objectives. Fill your heart with Love & engage yourself in service. The man who cannot do service is no man at all”.*
- ◆ *“Every Action should be performed with an attitude an attitude of offering to God.”*
- ◆ *“When you serve them bear in mind that you are serving Aryan (God) Himself in that particular form. Only those who perform such service with thought, word & deed will be able to purify their minds. While rendering service activity with that feeling and realise that invisible God through service. “*
- ◆ *“Will your every act with Love. Let no one suffer slightest pain as a result of your thought word or deed. Let this be your Sadhana. IT will surely help you to achieve your Goal.”*

8 Whom to Serve?

Swami has said:

- ◆ *“Whenever you see a sick person, a dispirited, disconsolate, diseased person, there is your field of service. Every blood cell, every nerve, must tingle with Love, with eagerness to share that love with the forlorn. When love has filled the heart, it has really transformed into Divinity, for God is Love & Love is God.”*
- ◆ *“He who has selflessly rendered service sweetened with love, to My creatures, he who sees Me in everyone and in everything, he who remembers Me at every moment is the yogi nearest to Me.”*
- ◆ *“Service to Man is service to God. All acts of service done to others are to be treated as service rendered to God”*
- ◆ *“Train yourselves to serve God by serving Man, in whom there is God installed in the heart.*

9 What is the best service & the best time?

Swami has advised:

- ◆ *“The act of service should not be judged according to the cost or publicity it entails; it may be only the offering of a cup of water in the depth of jungle. But the need of the recipient, the mood of the person who offers – these decide whether the act is Gold ore lead.*
- ◆ *“Time is infinitely precious. Hence the performance of good deeds should not be put off to another day. Time waits for no one. Hence both the body and time should be utilised for doing sacred actions. Regard yourself as a devoted servant ready to do any task. Service activities done in this spirit will lead to God realisation by extinguishing the ego. There is no meaning in preaching spirituality to a starving*

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man. Feed the hungry. Offer solace and courage to those in distress and despair. The educated should try to teach the illiterate and open the minds of ignorant to wider vistas of knowledge.

- ◆ *“the educated persons may be doctors, lawyers or businessmen. Doctors should be ready to render free medical service to the poor. Lawyers should be helpful to those who are in need of legal aid but who cannot afford to pay for it. Businessmen should be content to keep a reasonable income for their needs and utilize the surplus for charitable purposes. It is rare to find such persons. “*
- ◆ *The call for service to mankind is heard and welcomed; but, how and where that service is practiced is not reasoned out or decided. Each one follows his own inclination and impulse. The most powerful impulse is self-aggrandizement, which is camouflaged as service. In the name of ‘service’, neither worldly prosperity nor spiritual advance is furthered. More destruction than construction is achieved. Helping one, co-operating with another, sympathising with others when they suffer defeat, disease or distress – all these must cater, not merely for the individual, but also for the harmony and happiness of the world”.*

Ideally every moment awake, one must attempt to help others, when they need help.

10 Understanding the meaning of SAI

Inner meaning of SAI as explained by Baba is:

S => Service => Karma Yoga => Action => organs connected are Hands

A => Adoration => Bhakthi Yoga => Devotion => organ connected is Heart

I => Illumination, Jnana Yoga => Wisdom => organ connected is Head

From the above, one may say that SAI resides in the whole body. Body should be used for Service of humankind. Heart should be diverted to God. By constant self-inquiry (through head/intellect), realisation of oneness with God will come.

Swami has advised :

“The act of service should not be judged according to the cost or publicity it gives”.



At this juncture, we really need to self-audit and question ourselves. Do I really believe HE is Omnipresent (present everywhere, every time) ? or is it a buzzword for me?

Next question we need to ask is, if Swami in HIS form appeared before us asking us for help, would we stall ? or jump into action forthright ?

Pondering on these, will clarify and crystallise all our thoughts.

SAIRAM