



# Food For Thought Monthly

## Editors note:

Om Sri Sai Ram Region 5 Young Adults and SSE 4 students! The newsletter team would like to wish each and everyone of you a very happy and spiritually uplifting New Year!

The Tri-State YA's are excited about this year's Eashwaramma day because we will get to interact closely with some SSE 4 students in-person. As part of our efforts to bring ALL region 5 YA's and SSE 4 students closer, we want to open the lines of communication early by introducing this monthly Eashwaramma Day newsletter, *Food For Thought*.

Through *Food For Thought*, we will explore various facets of this year's Eashwaramma Day theme: **pure thoughts lead you closer to God**. We will bring you personal anecdotes, thought-provoking excerpts, suggested readings from Sai literature, puzzles, etc. on the 1st of every month leading up to the May event.

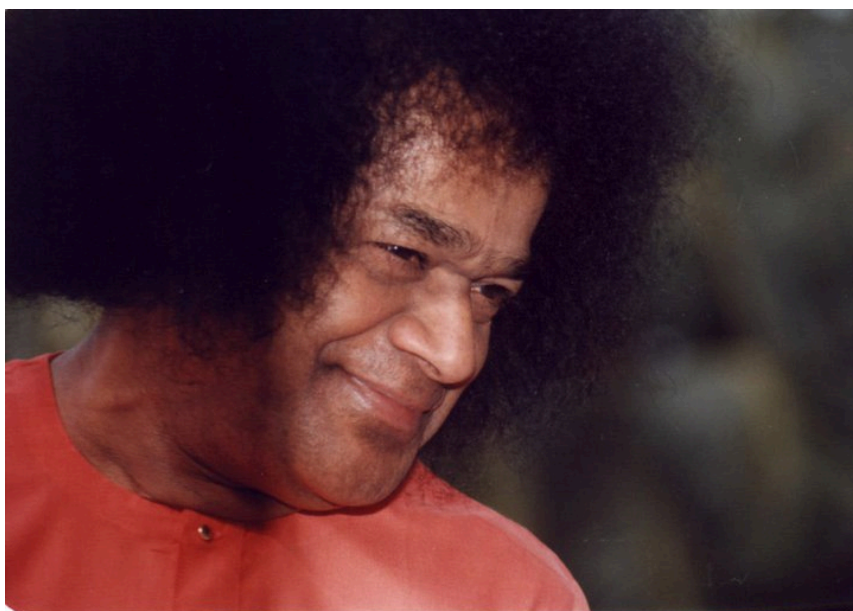
we want everyone to take an active role in making this newsletter great— whether it is through article or art submission, (anonymous) responses, theme ideas, etc. We ask that each of you take this newsletter as a tool for exploring your personal relationship with spirituality through thoughts and

then share your insights with the YA and SSE 4 community. The more reader-input we receive, the more personal and uniting this newsletter will be.

Our hope is that through *Food For Thought*, we will learn more about each other and build lasting spiritual connections of Region 5 YA's and SSE 4's that will facilitate all future interactions.

All submissions/questions/comments/etc. can be sent to the newsletter team at: [YA.EDAY2013@gmail.com](mailto:YA.EDAY2013@gmail.com)

We hope you enjoy Volume 1 of *Food For Thought*!



## Laughing Angels

*A true story by a region 5 young adult.*

It is 3:55am and I am sitting at my computer, jamming to some sick beats, and wondering what I will write here. You are my little brothers and sisters, and you are expecting that I, as a Young Adult, will set a heroic example of what it means to be Baba's devotee. Perhaps you are thinking that this will be a story, or some profound observation.

The truth is, I am not sure I am the sparkling choir-boy version of a Sai youth you might expect. I never went through SSE, I haven't always kept in

Continued on Page 2...



touch, and I spend a lot of time sifting through cat memes and listening to free YouTube music of all genres-- with my headphones turned up, insanely loud.

Growing up I always had this idea that an ideal Sai youth was some sort of shining angel, devoid of too much blemish, and incredibly mature. As those thoughts followed me, so did my actions and I tried to be an angel, I tried to be mature, and I tried not to make too many mistakes. Well, I failed over and over, until I lost confidence in my ability to be "pure".

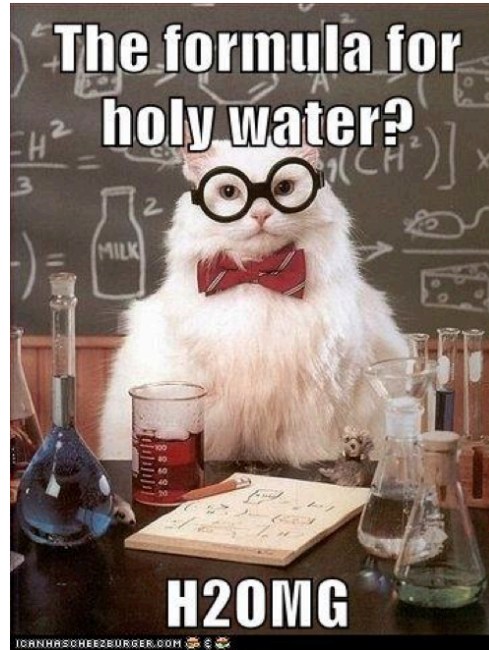
In all that failure, one thing I managed to impress upon my little heart was: **Prayer works.**

Have you ever said the prayer *Asatoma Sat Gamayaa*? It means, "Lead me from untruth into Truth". This prayer is very important because the reason we live in this wonderful, sometimes awful, world is that we have to move from untruth to Truth.

See, I couldn't be an angel no matter how hard I tried because I was under the misconception that I was not an angel. However, through a little living experience, I learned the truth. **We are angels ALREADY.** If you don't believe me I can prove it. This is what you do: Go online and find a silly cat (or other animal) picture.... When you smile or start laughing hysterically, remember that joy is the quality of an

angel. Angels are joyful. Baba says, "Be happy".

Was that not really easy to do? That is Truth, and if you don't see it now, say a prayer and you will eventually.



In your quest to fill your mind with pure thoughts, start with things that make you laugh like a baby playing peek-a-boo. I'll tell you a secret, when you are laughing- you become the perfect devotee. This is how:

1) While laughing, you cannot talk.

*The less you talk, the more will become your mental power.*

2) While laughing, you only think about joy and humor.

*As you think, so you become. Think God, be God.*

3) While laughing, your body relaxes and your heart is happy.

*Don't worry, be happy.*

4) While laughing, you cannot feel angry, aggressive, or sad.

*Where divinity is sought after, one ought always to behave in the spirit of Love, devoid of the slightest trace of hate, envy and anger.*

As awesome as Joyfulness is, the real wonder is in sharing it. If you find something funny or something that might make someone smile, go ahead and share it! When you share a smile or a laugh, a special type of communication occurs with the person you share with. Your spiritual hearts begin shining and expanding wild-crazy-fast, and then love and healing is exchanged between you and the other person. A lot of people actually get healthier after such an exchange. This is a nice way to fulfill another teaching of Baba, to *Love All, Serve All*.

So, this you can take away: In your quest to have pure thoughts, spend some time thinking of things that make you smile or giggle. It can be a joke, an adorable picture of baby seals, or a game of peek-a-boo. After you enjoy the humorousness, share it with an audience. Every time you make someone laugh, Baba laughs too, and everyone taps into his or her Angel self.

### 5 Tips to Overcome Negative Thoughts:

- 1) Do Surya Namaskar (Sun Salutation Yoga) 3x each morning for the next 21 days.
- 2) Smile - Even if you are really angry and can't manage a smile, keep a pencil between your teeth for 4 seconds and feel the rewards of a pseudo-smile :-).
- 3) Sing or listen to a happy song.
- 4) List 5 things you are grateful for immediately upon becoming aware of negativity.
- 5) Remember no one (including you!) is perfect so help someone who needs you and ask for help when you need it - this



## Monthly Challenge:

It takes 21 days to form a habit so each month we will post a monthly challenge for all of us to follow. This month we will follow Swami's edict: ***SAI-lence is Golden.***

In an effort to clear some of the background noise of our constant stream of thoughts, January's challenge is to **remain absolutely silent for 10 minutes a day.** This means: no talking, singing, calling, texting, facebook, twitter, any other form of external expressions of thought.

Our hope is that through this daily 10 minute silence meditation, we will be more aware of our constant thought stream and it will eventually thin out enough that we can hear our inner-Swami more clearly.

## Scenarios Of The Month

Dear readers,

In this portion of the newsletter, we wanted to exercise your ethical mind through value-related scenarios. As this is the first issue of *Food For Thought*, we have mixed in a few conversation- and thought-starters so that from next issue onwards we can bring you scenarios based on your personal experiences. Take time to think about what you would do in these situations and respond to us with insights and questions so we can make next issue's scenarios more relatable!

1) **Time-out:** One piece of advice often given to those plagued by a short temper is "take a time-out and think about what is causing your reaction." Sometimes taking a time-out is not feasible (for example, while in a conference at work or during a presentation at school). In these types of situations, how do you suppress your temper? Is suppression always the right answer?

1) Scenario: You are busy working on a project (either for class or to meet a deadline at work) and have scheduled a meeting with

Bob (your teacher/boss) to go over your progress. During the meeting, Bob gives you very specific areas in which he expects to see improvements. The following week you schedule another progress meeting to show that you have updated all of the edits Bob suggested. During this 2nd meeting, Bob becomes very flustered and almost angry at the turn your project has taken. He yells in a loud voice "this is not at all what I expected you to bring me!" You are very upset because all of the changes you have made were solely based on Bob's input. How do you honestly react? What are your first thoughts towards Bob? Do your thoughts towards Bob change over the course of the week? How? What have you done in similar circumstances?



Continued on Page 4...





- 2) **See Good:** Another piece of advice often given is to “see the good in others when you have a bad thought about them.” Is this easier to do with a strangers or a friend/family member? At first, one might think it would be easier to see the good in someone who is already close to you. Think about that as you put yourself in the next scenario.

“As a single footstep will not make a path on the earth, so a single thought will not make a pathway in the mind. To make a deep physical path, we walk again and again. To make a deep mental path, we must think over and over the kind of thoughts we wish to dominate our lives.”

- Henry David Thoreau

- 2) **Scenario:** It's Monday and you are busy at work on a project that is due on Friday to your teacher/boss. Your mom, close friend, or coworker is in a particularly chatty mood and comes over to spend time with you. He/she doesn't pick up on your first subtle insistence that you are busy. After a couple minutes you say in a direct yet polite way “I am actually a little busy with this project now, can we talk a bit later?” He/she immediately gets the hint and walks away, only to reappear 5 minutes later with some more chatty news unrelated to your project. How do you honestly feel? At what point during this interchange do feelings of annoyance creep up? How do you channel these negative thoughts and feelings? What have you done when you have found yourself in similar circumstances?

#### Find These Words:

ANGEL	LOVE
ATTITUDE	PERCEPTION
DISCIPLINE	POSITIVE
GRATITUDE	PRAYER
HONESTY	SHARE
JOY	SMILE
LAUGHTER	THOUGHT

Once all words are found, a hidden message about thoughts will be revealed:

-----  
-----.

-Marcus Aurelius-

#### POSITIVE THOUGHTS WORD SEARCH

E	A	P	O	U	R	L	I	P	F	E	I	S	W	H
N	L	T	R	A	T	O	U	O	R	T	H	O	U	G
I	H	A	T	A	T	S	M	S	H	L	E	G	N	A
L	A	K	U	I	Y	E	I	I	O	S	T	A	P	R
P	N	Z	P	G	T	E	H	T	N	R	M	I	P	Y
I	O	G	B	R	H	U	R	I	E	M	Y	I	O	J
C	I	Y	D	W	Z	T	D	V	S	G	B	J	L	G
S	T	J	D	B	G	M	E	E	T	R	O	K	M	E
I	P	T	O	N	I	P	E	R	Y	A	S	Q	T	N
D	E	V	H	G	G	R	Z	Q	F	T	I	E	F	M
W	C	V	U	G	A	M	F	B	C	I	F	I	F	Q
B	R	T	O	H	U	D	L	C	N	T	Q	R	G	S
J	E	D	S	L	L	O	T	P	I	U	M	F	U	N
R	P	H	W	M	H	E	H	E	X	D	O	H	H	J
U	V	M	V	R	O	B	T	T	D	E	B	I	X	Y

#### EMAIL US!

We want to hear from you! Are you facing any particularly confusing problems? Do you have any opinions or experiences that you would like to share with your peers? If so, please e-mail us at [ya.eday2013@gmail.com](mailto:ya.eday2013@gmail.com) with “**editorial**” as the subject.

