



Food For Thought Monthly

Role Model of Practical Creativity

An excerpt from an article on George Washington Carver

George Washington Carver is an important central figure in American history. He is a great role model of how positive thinking and a keenly curious attitude can lead to major accomplishments regardless of circumstances.

Carver is a prime example of love in action. As accounted in the following excerpt, Carver's motivation came from a desire to **serve** his fellow man. With **humility**, he respected that his community held invaluable ideas that could be combined and refined for a positive purpose. His perseverance allowed him to **focus** on his tasks until he mastered them. He was a big proponent of **waste never**. The combination of all these practical spiritual disciplines allowed him to thrive in a time of oppression.

Having lived during a time when it would have been easy to allow negative thoughts overpower your existence, Carver focused his

thoughts, words and actions in a productive manner and has shown us the only true obstacles to creativity are our own thoughts.

Below (page 2) is an excerpt from an article expounding Carver's inventive genius. The full article can be found at:

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/imagine/201008/george-washington-carver-and-everyday-inventivity>



This shows Dr. Carver as he appeared while on one of his paintings, one of his pastime side lines.

Editors note:

Om Sri Sai Ram Region 5 Young Adults and SSE 4 students! Welcome to the 2nd issue of *Food For Thought*! Thank you to all the SSE students and teachers who shared their comments and responses to January's issue! We are eager to hear from more of you so please take some time to read through this issue and respond with any questions/comments / suggestions! We want to this newsletter to be a medium through which SSE students, YAs, and teachers are able to discuss spiritual and practical life situations so please keep sending us your experiences - we promise to respect anonymity when requested!

February brings about many beautiful occasions like Black History month and Valentine's Day. In this issue, we will tie all of these events with the E-day theme of **pure thoughts lead you closer to God**.

Remember, all submissions should be sent to us at: YA.EDAY2013@gmail.com

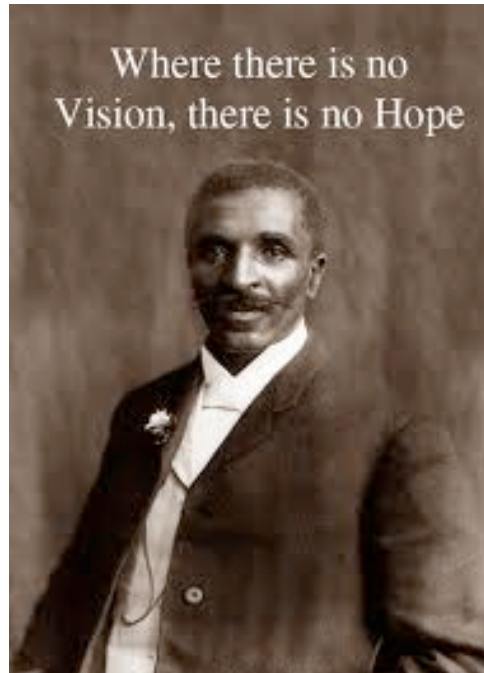
We hope you enjoy Volume 2 of *Food For Thought*!



George Washington Carver (b.1864, d. 1943) was one of our greatest African American inventors. Some call him "the peanut man" for the 199 products that he, by his own count, derived from the peanut (Kremer, 1987, 116). These included various oils, gums, paints, food products and packaging materials. He repeated his success with the sweet potato, producing 118 products; the pecan, which yielded 85; and cow peas and soy beans; which each yielded more than 35 (Kremer, 1987, 116). As Carver himself wrote, **he invented to help his people thrive**: "The rapid growth of industry, the ever increasing population and the imperative need for a more varied, wholesome and nourishing foodstuff makes it all the more necessary to exhaust every means at our command to fill the empty dinner pail, enrich our soils, bring greater wealth and influence to our beautiful South...." (Kremer, 1987, 116).

Carver's creative methods can still teach us a great deal about inventiveness today. One of the most important strategies that Carver used was to collect information from sources that other people overlooked. His most

common source was community knowledge and practice.



He spent a great deal of time enquiring about what uses people in the street or in the home had already found for the materials he was studying. In fact, these everyday inventions were often the inspiration for his own more refined and sophisticated versions. Carver made no secret of his strategy. "Inspiration is never at variance with information," he wrote; "in fact, the more information one has, the greater will be the inspiration" (Kremer, 1987, 129).

Carver's second strategy was to treat the making of all things as something he could and should master. He was a music major in college; he learned to paint so well that his paintings were exhibited at international exhibitions; he made his own paints; he sewed, knitted, and crocheted his own clothes while working his way through school; he took up weaving baskets and rugs and doing woodwork; he mastered botany and agriculture to the extent that he made fundamental contributions to each; and so on. Carver would probably have agreed with the sentiment that there is nothing you can know that isn't useful.

Finally, Carver was a successful inventor because he worked on the principle that nothing should go to waste. In a letter to one correspondent about improving farming productivity, he ended with the following advice in capital letters: "TAKE CARE OF THE WASTE ON THE FARM AND TURN IT INTO USEFUL CHANNELS!" (Kremer, 1987, 126). Whatever other people threw away, Carver looked upon as free material for new inventions.

3 Tips to beat procrastination:

- 1) Do a power hour. A power hour is 1 hour where you put 100% of your effort in 1 task. No getting up for water, bathroom breaks, phone calls, questions, emails, etc. Turn everything off/silent. Keep a pad and paper handy to jot down passing thoughts on other tasks so you can focus on them AFTER your power hour is over.
- 2) 5 minute rule. Often times we put off small tasks because we don't feel like getting up and they turn into giant chores (i.e. picking up some clothes vs cleaning a dirty room). If a task takes less than 5 minutes to do, do it as soon as you think of it.
- 3) Forget perfection. Just start your task, worry about perfecting it after.

**Monthly Challenge:**

How many of you were successful in last month's challenge of Sai-Lence? Tell us what your experience was!

To keep in line with Valentine's Day, our monthly challenge will deal with **Loving Thoughts**. Our hope is that in actively practicing January's Sai-Lence, you found your background "white-noise" thoughts have lessened in frequency and intensity. This month, we want you to fill this newfound space by:

filling 10 minutes of idle time daily with loving thoughts towards 1 person.

You can pick anyone! Your mom, dad, sibling, friend, teacher, coworker or if you want to really challenge yourself, choose someone you don't get along with!

Scenarios Of The Month

Dear readers,

Are you facing any spiritual or ethical dilemmas in your daily life? Do you think your Sai family could relate or help? TELL US! send us a quick email with your situation and we will publish an anonymous scenario in next month's newsletter to see how others would react! Here are 2 new scenarios to ponder for this month:

1) **Too nice?** We all know Swami's famous edict "Help Ever Hurt Never!" Is there ever a situation when helping someone could actually be hurting them or yourself? Think about that while reading the following scenario.

1) Scenario: Harry is an extremely shy new member in your group. When he first arrives, you take him on as a protege to help him get up to speed. 6 months go by and Harry should be able to work independently but lacks confidence in his skills and is too shy to ask for help

from anyone... except you. He is constantly asking for your assistance and thus far you have been helping him. You now realize that helping him is so time-consuming that it is cutting into your productivity and quality of work. How would you handle the situation? Would the fact that he is shy change how you react? Why or why not? Can you think of other situations when being too nice has gotten you into trouble? What did you do?

2) **Value of "peace"** - We have all been in situations where a misunderstanding has caused a conflict. Have you ever been in a conflict where a misunderstanding has caused temporary peace? In a situation like that, do you think it is important to right the facts that you believe are wrong to risk the uproar of a conflict?

2) Scenario: Sarah and Julie, 2 of you coworkers, can never seem to get along. They are always fighting about who has the best method for solving a work related issue. One

day in a staff meeting you announce that a "best practice" will be put into place which happened to be Julie's idea. You accidentally forget to recognize who





created the method so both Sarah and Julie leave the meeting satisfied that their process will be used. As a result, they stop their incessant and unnecessary bickering. You realize your mistake later that day after other coworkers comment on the newfound peaceful work environment. Do you risk fixing your mistake by

acknowledging and rewarding Julie for her hard work on creating the process? Do you think it would be unfair to keep quiet or do you think sacrificing someone else's recognition for the greater purpose of a peaceful environment is worth it?

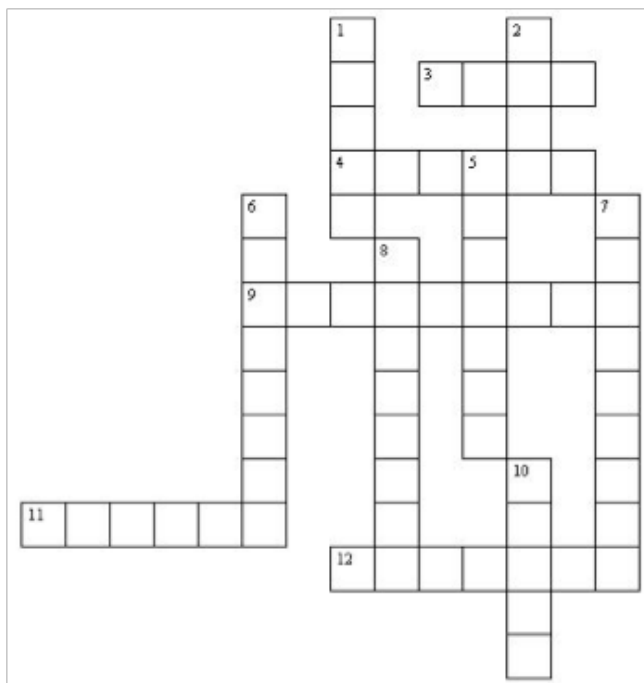
SSE 4 Testimonials

In this section we will publish SSE/YA/teacher experiences which you have so graciously shared with us. We hope to share at least 1 testimonial in each issue so please come forward with your beautiful experiences!

"My name is Murali Bollampally and I would like to share my experiences as I came to know swami. I joined the Sai Center very late, when I was 13 years old. Before I came to Sai Center, I had always wondered why God never came down to the Earth. When my mom joined

me in Sai Center though, I immediately became skeptical. Thoughts such as, how can I know that this is really God in human form? came rushing through, constructing a barrier against my full devotion to Swami. I was skeptical for over 4 months, but gradually as I learned the core human values, and sang at the bhajans and spoke the powerful vedas that Swami made available to us, I had a realization that this was really God. All doubts and all barriers between me and Swami vanished instantly, and I now feel one with God. My only regret now is that I didn't join Sai Center from the moment that I was born."

FEBRUARY CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS

- 3 Impartial, unprejudiced
- 4 firmly established
- 9 Broad minded
- 11 Last, bear hardship
- 12 Carry on despite difficulties

DOWN

- 1 Self composed
- 2 Strong desire
- 5 Equilibrium
- 6 Capacity, willingness to endure
- 7 Faithful or determined
- 8 Have a fixed purpose
- 10 Belief or trust

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 with "editorial" as the subject.



Scenarios Of The Month: January Responses

Dear Readers,

Thank you to all of the teachers who responded to last issue's scenarios! Below are some of the most popular responses from the SSE 4 teachers - students, we would love to hear from you! Do you agree with the way your teachers would behave in the situations? what would you have done differently if anything? Let us know your thoughts!

Time-out (scenario 1):

*"I would first view the "situation" bereft of the 2 personalities - (my boss and me), until the actual "problem" gets reduced to a "situation" and the answer stares me in the face which is. **Expectations were not met.** Did the expectations remain consistent from week1 to week 2? No. Is my boss a very busy man*

and likely to forget? Yes. Even if the answer is a no the following is an objective approach. I would write down the expectations right after the meeting, take it to my boss personally and say "These are the changes you suggested, here's a copy and I'll be happy to make them by end of next week and be ready to go over the changes with you" and leave a copy with him. He may not keep his copy, but is more likely to remember that I gave him one. I will have my copy with me at the week2 meeting and he will begin to trust me more, than his own busy mind.

See Good (scenario 2):

"Instead of saying, "I will talk to you a little later I would give the person a specific time to call me and talk to me." This tells the person that I care about the person and would like to set aside quality time with that person- thus creating respect for each other's

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:

**OUR LIFE IS WHAT OUR
THOUGHTS MAKE IT**

-Marcus Aurelius-

JANUARY CROSSWORD ANSWERS

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



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