

## 14. Four F's

THE process of education must render the individual a happier and more useful person; it must also make him a better citizen,; able and willing to further the progress of the nation to which he belongs. It must give up its present emphasis on the grant of degrees which are serving only as bowls, with which the graduates roam about the country asking for jobs to be deposited in them.

Today, we hear a great deal about 'duty' and the responsibility to perform the duties concerning each group. This is all to the good. But, the connotation of the words is not properly understood. The student thinks that his 'duty' is only to be punctual when he attends college or school, and to be attentive during the lectures and other academic exercises. The teachers too consider their duty done, when they attend during prescribed hours and perform the assignments allotted to them.

This misconception has to be given up. Education has to be welcomed as a *Saadhana* (spiritual discipline) for the establishment of *Shaanthi* (peace) in the individual heart as well as in Society, including the Human Commonwealth. Education is a spiritual endeavour, over which Goddess Saraswathi presides. Saraswathi is the *Shakthi* of Brahma, the First Member of the Trinity, who is the source and sustenance of all creative activity. Gaayathri---the vital *Vedhic manthra*, which prays to the Source of Light, to illumine the Intellect of the aspirant---is also a facet of that *Shakthi*.

### **People have now ignored Saraswathi & Gaayathri**

The *Gaayathri manthra* (*Vedhic* prayer to illuminate the intelligence) is a universal eternal call from the heart of man to the embodiment of Love and Light. It is the very basis of the educational effort in all lands and at all times. But, people have now ignored Saraswathi and Gaayathri; they have installed, Lakshmi, the Goddess of Wealth, in the altar of Education. The emphasis is on soft furniture, soft curricula, soft tests, and soft treatment for the idle and even the mischievous. The aim is to draw as much as possible from the common pool, not to contribute one's best and most of it. The teachers and the students try to do the minimum so far as teaching and learning are concerned.

This College is run on far contrary principles. Here, the emphasis is on giving and forgiving, not, on getting and forgetting those who gave what you got. We also encourage service, especially among the illiterate and the needy, in the villages around. We try to highlight the responsibilities of youth, rather than rights. The right is earned only by the proper discharge of the responsibilities. When duty is shirked, you have no right to ask for your rights.

### **In the observance of *Swadharma* lies progress**

Remember that the years that you spend in this College are the most precious in your lives; if they are wasted in indifference or positive idleness, you will have to rue for it, all the rest of your lives. And, being in this College is the highest piece of good fortune and, if you do not rise up to our expectations through negligence or waywardness, the loss is Irreparable.

You will learn here the valuable lessons of detachment, loving service, fraternity, humility, sincerity, fortitude and fearlessness. Treasure them, for, they will serve as reliable props when you enter the world of action.

In College, you will be marching from smaller truths to bigger truths, until you are taught the know how to reach the Ultimate Truth. There is no false doctrine, as such. What is so called is

only the result of ignorance. No falsehood is deliberate; it is only truth clothed in fog or fumble. You discard the foggy, vision and attain clear vision; and that reveals Truth. You give up fumbling knowledge and attain free, full, clear understanding. That is the purpose of all this teaching, all this curriculum.

You are now at the initial stage of a long journey. You have to equip yourselves better for it. You must know where it leads. Beware of the distractions on the way that might tempt you to alight from the railway train and lose your goal. Be steady in the faith which will smoothen the journey for you. Have confidence in the teachers who will guide you, and in God who decides your destiny and confers strength and sustenance.

Do not disturb your journey and delay it, by resorting to wild upheavals of anger or discontent. Your *Dharma* (prescribed duty) as students is to study. It is the *Dharma* of teachers to teach. In that *Swadharna* (performing one's duty that accords with one's nature) lies security, progress and peace. Every moment spent in these fallow pursuits is a moment lost, or a moment that inflicts even damage.

### **Today's students are the makers of tomorrow**

Remember you are the makers, the leaders and the guides of the India of tomorrow. Your shoulders have to be stronger than those of the present generation of leaders, for, as the years roll by, the burden is becoming heavier. Your hearts must become more expansive, your intelligence must become sharper and clearer, for, you have great things to do, for your own selves and for humanity.

You must prove to be fine examples of the educational system that India has to adopt for her progress and for the progress of mankind. Therefore, imbibe the ideals of Duty, Devotion and Discipline during the years you spend here. Devotion must be tested in the crucible of Discipline. It must be directed along the lines of Duty. Dharmaraaja, the eldest of the Paandavas, was the very embodiment of Devotion to the Lord Krishna. But, he had on both sides of him, Duty in the form of Arjuna and Discipline in the form of Bheema. So, he was able to defeat his enemies and crown himself Emperor.

Do not stuff your heads with the trivialities that fill the columns of periodicals, or absurd details of the personal lives of stars in any field. Don't get excited with external events; or, depressed with events that appear like failures. Keep your head high over the flood waters; do not be carried away like stalks of straw.

### **Every student must cultivate Devotion and Faith**

I appreciate the student who is not merely academically efficient, but, is also, full of *Bhakthi* (devotion) and *Prema* (selfless love) towards all. The student who secured the First Rank in the University Examination is, I am glad to say, named Premaa-nandha! When the results were announced and it became known that he had secured this unique distinction, the students gathered around him and pressed to give them 'sweets.' I too asked him for sweets! Do you know what his reply was? He held my hands, and said, with a flash of joy in his eyes, "Baba! You are sweetness itself; how can I give you sweets?"

Devotion and faith such as this must be cultivated by every student. Be as devoted and disciplined as Arjuna. Be as intelligent and strong as Bheema. Be steadfast and sincere, like Dharma-raaja. Then, no harm can come to you; you will achieve victory in all your efforts.

There are four F's that you will have to fix before your attention. (1) Follow the Master, (2) Face the Devil, (3) Fight to the End and (4) Finish at the Goal. Follow the Master means, observe *Dharma*. Face the Devil means, overcome the temptations that beset you when you try to earn *artha* (wealth or the wherewithal to live in comfort). Fight to the End means, struggle ceaselessly; wage war against the six enemies that are led by *kaama* (lust). And, finally, Finish at the Goal means, do not stop until the goal of *Moksha* (Liberation from ignorance and delusion) is reached. The F's are fundamental for the pursuit of the four *Purusharthas*---*Dharma, Artha, Kaama and Moksha*.

I shall be ever with you, wherever you are, guarding you and guiding you. March on; have no fear.

*Sathya Sai College, Brindhaavan, 6-7-1975*

*You must become an Aartha, torn by intense suffering to sense the Lord. Suffer the pangs of distress. You must realise that mere suffering is fruitless, without the knowledge of the path to attain the Lord. That is to say, you have to be transformed into a jijnasu, a spiritual Seeker.*

*Analyse the four Purusharthas (four goals of life) and realise that Moksha (Liberation) is the goal, the culmination. Start craving for that, as an Artharthi, the lover of the truest Gain. Seek that which, when secured, all else is secured.*

*Sri Sathya Sai*