

12. Ideal Parents Have Ideal Children

Modern education leads only to argumentation, not to total wisdom.

What is the use of acquiring education that cannot lead you to immortality?

Acquire the knowledge that will make you immortal.

(Telugu Poem)

In spite of education and intelligence, a foolish person will not know their true Self and a mean-minded person will not give up their evil qualities.

(Telugu poem)

You may acquire as high an education as you can, but if you do not put it into practice, it is of no use. You may earn any number of degrees or titles, but they do not make you a truly learned person. All your learning is flawed if what you practise is different from what you have learnt. Therefore, put into practice what you learn.

A teacher should be a role model in human values

A mean-minded person does not give up evil qualities in spite of a high education. These so-called highly educated persons are, in fact, much more ignorant than those who are illiterate. Unfortunately, children today imitate and follow such 'highly educated' persons.

(Bhagawan answered the questions of the delegates to Sri Sathya Sai World Education Conference 2008.)

The first question: What type of relationship should students have with God?

God is not separate from you. He is not outside. He is very much within you. Therefore, develop a relationship of love and oneness with God. If God were separate from you, you could form a mundane relationship with Him. But He is not separate from you. He is with you, in you, around you, and behind you (loud applause). You cannot have worldly relationship with God, who is all-pervasive. You should strengthen the feeling, "God is in me," and develop oneness with Him. This is the answer to the first question.

The second question: What are the signs of spiritual transformation?

You should examine yourself whether you are leading your life with worldly feelings or with wholehearted faith in God. Have the firm conviction that you are equal-minded in both pleasure and pain. There are no special signs of spiritual transformation. But, at times, you may have certain spiritual dreams and visions. Ask yourself whether you are progressing or declining in your devotion. Everything depends upon your faith. Other than this, there are no special signs.

The third question: What should be the qualities of a teacher in the Sai System of Education?

Teachers should not give too much freedom to the students. They should exercise control over the students with loving and convincing words. They should not allow them to act in an arbitrary way just because they are their students. They should give them freedom in a measured manner, but in between they should apply brakes. The teacher should also punish the students whenever it is necessary. They should not punish just for the sake of punishment. They should use punishment only as a deterrent.

The fourth question: How should a teacher conduct himself in this system of education, and what sort of discipline should the teacher observe? What efforts should a teacher make to become a role model in human values?

This is another question that has been asked. This is a very important subject. A teacher should conduct himself like a teacher. Similarly, a student should behave like a student. The teacher should take care that proper learning environment is provided in the classroom and the students are happy and satisfied.

When the teacher behaves with the students in an ideal manner, the students will also follow the teacher. What you want your students to do, you should show them by your own example. Not only that, the teacher should eat the same food that they advise the students to eat. If the teacher asks the students not to eat fish and meat and the teacher eats all these things, it is very bad. Whatever you tell your students, first practise yourself. Whatever you want your students to become, first become that yourself. Do not act in an arbitrary way with pride that you are a teacher. Be humble, caring, and full of love when you are dealing with your students.

The next question is: How should teachers behave with girl students?

If there are only boys in the classroom, it is okay. But if there are girl students also, the teacher should behave in a much more refined and disciplined manner. Consider all the girl students as your sisters. Make them happy and treat them with respect as you do your own sister. Only then can you inculcate virtues in them. In this way, you should lead an ideal life and become a role model for others.

How should the parents impart human values to their children, and how can we involve parents in the education of their children?

Children should make their parents happy

Parents should never discuss family matters in the presence of their children. They may be having financial and other problems, but they should not let their children know about them. They should deal with their problems themselves and try to keep the children as happy as they can and work for their progress.

First and foremost, the parents should put human values into practice in their own life and then encourage their children to develop these values. The parents should guide their children on the right path by their own example. At the same time, the children should not cause any trouble to their parents. Their parents bring them up with great expectations. The children should develop the understanding that they have made progress in life only due to the sacrifice of their parents and hence should show gratitude to them. However great may be the difficulties that parents have to undergo, they hide them from their children in order to make them happy. In such a situation, if the children cause even a little trouble to their parents, they will be totally dejected.

Set your life on a course that gives happiness to your parents. Even if you have your own family, see to it that your parents do not suffer in any way. Do not ignore your parents, thinking, “My family should be happy, why bother about my parents?” This is not good. Only an illiterate fool will behave like that; no educated person will act in this manner. From time to time, go to your parents, serve them, make them happy, and try to fulfil their needs. Giving happiness to parents is the main duty of the children.

But some children associate themselves with bad company and acquire evil qualities. People are known by the company they keep. That is why it is said, “Tell me your company I shall tell you what you are.” Therefore,

never associate with bad company.

Look after the needs of your parents carefully. Those who do not look after their parents should be condemned. Differences between parents and children are on the rise in today's world. The tastes of the children are different from the expectations of the parents. If you merely pursue your own tastes, then what about your parents? You have every right to satisfy your tastes provided you fulfil the needs of your parents. It is sheer selfishness to work merely for your own satisfaction and cause grief to your parents. Children should not resort to this type of behaviour.

You have your mother-in-law and father-in-law after your marriage. But from your very birth, you have lived with your parents. Therefore, it is your duty to make your parents happy. The children should always pray for the welfare of their parents and discharge their duty toward them. Moreover, do not interfere in the affairs of others unnecessarily. Before asking about others, ask about your parents and try to know their wishes. Parents should also educate their children in this regard. If you pay all your attention to your in-laws and forget your parents, with whom you had a long association, that amounts to selfishness and deception. It is due to the rise of selfishness that there is a lack of happy and cordial relationship between parents and children today. However, such selfish children are in minority. Hence, there is no need to worry too much about it.

Parents should inculcate human values in children

Whatever parents tell their children to follow, they should themselves adhere to it. Then only will their children become good. Due to the effect of modern times, some children try to keep distance from their parents, thereby causing them to develop tension and bad temper. But control your temper. It is a great mistake if you show your temper to your parents, who always wish for your welfare. Show gratitude to your parents, to God, and to all those who have helped you. Never do anything due to which your parents may shed tears. When you make your parents happy, you will also be happy.

Sathya Sai education (*bal vikas*) is very necessary for children because the children learn human values in the this class. But, first of all, parents should themselves develop human values. Then only will they have the right to teach human values to their children. When you do not practise yourself and merely tell the children to follow, how would they listen?

Whatever you tell the children, you should demonstrate by your own example. But, you say, you don't have time and you are busy with your office work. When you pay all your attention to your office work, who will look after the children? I have written a poem in this regard.

When husband and wife go out to office, who will do the household work?

If women go out to teach others' children in schools, who will teach their own children?

If women also go to work just like men, who will cook food in the kitchen?

Earning money may solve some financial problems, but how will it resolve domestic problems?

Women can work and earn money, but they cannot lead a happy life if they neglect their home.

(Telugu poem)

Educated women want to take up jobs. But if women go for jobs, who will do the household work? When

both husband and wife go to office for work, who will look after the children? Some people employ a female servant (*ayah*) to look after their children, but can an *ayah* look after the children with love like a mother? No, it cannot be so. Therefore, mothers should themselves look after their children even at the cost of their jobs. If women also go to office like men, who will cook food in the house?

Here is a small example. Both husband and wife phone from their office to their cook that they will come home at 5 o'clock and therefore he should have tea ready. But have they provided the required articles for the preparation of tea? No. For the preparation of tea, milk, sugar, and tea leaves are required. Without them, how can anybody prepare tea? Besides that, cups and saucers are also required. In the absence of all these, if you ask the cook to prepare tea, how can he do so? In this way, you will lose respect before the invited guests. First of all, set your house right; then only should you pay attention to the outside work.

There is nothing wrong if both husband and wife go to work, but they should make sure that the children are not put to any inconvenience in the house. If you leave your children to the care of the *ayah* and the cook and go to work just to earn more money, what is the use? It is of no use because you will have to pay a salary to both the *ayah* and the cook. Not only that, you will lose so many articles in the house. Then, what is left with you out of your earning?

When you yourself look after the children, you save that much money. But parents do not give importance to this. Sometimes, even cups are not available in the house for drinking coffee. In such a situation, what is the use of women taking up jobs outside? Nowadays people are crazy for jobs, but they do not care whether necessary comforts and conveniences are there in the house or not.

As soon as the husband and wife return from office, they engage themselves in reading newspapers, listening to radio, and watching TV programmes. Some do not come home but straightaway go from office to clubs, where they play some cheap games. How can such people bring up their children in an ideal manner? If the children are not doing well in studies, it is not their fault; it is the fault of their parents.

Therefore, women should remain at home and look after their children in a proper way. That is your real income. If you lose that real income and strive to earn some money by working outside, spoiling your children in the process, you will be called selfish parents. When your children take to bad ways, you will have to undergo a lot of suffering. The main responsibility of parents is to look after their children properly.

Practise human values in your profession and at your workplace. Human values are not separate from day-to-day life. You may be a police officer or a nurse or a doctor or in any other profession. Perform your duty sincerely. Then everything will become good. But, unfortunately, people do not perform their duty honestly. Consequently, children have to suffer entirely due to the fault of elders. Engage yourself in good and honest work —only then can your children attain progress and happiness.

Parents should keep a watch on their children

Sai schools can have a corpus fund for their maintenance. They can take the help of parents in running the school. Such mutual cooperation between the school and parents should be developed. Discipline, devotion, and duty should be given utmost importance in these schools. Teaching of human values should find a prominent place in the school curriculum. Put the children on the spiritual path, so that they develop love for God. If they want to put on an improper dress, do not allow it. Observe moderation in everything. Only then can the children be kept

in check. It is the responsibility of parents to keep a check on their children. Parents should be made aware of the Sai System of Education. Some of the parents may not be aware of this system. The children can also explain the various aspects of this system to their parents. Only then will the parents understand it clearly. Otherwise, they may have some doubts regarding what their children are being taught in the school.

Sometimes, out of fear, children may not tell their parents everything correctly. Therefore, the parents should go to the school at least once a week and check whether what the child is telling is correct or not. Parents should go to school without the knowledge of their children and try to know the facts personally. They should also try to ask about the studies and behaviour of their children. Some children may tell their parents that they have secured 50 marks, when actually they got only 20 marks. Some parents blindly believe what their child tells them, and they do not go to the school to check the correctness of the child's statement. I am not saying anything about schools in other countries, but this is a common practice in India.

Only in villages do we find the parents taking proper care of their children to inculcate necessary discipline in them. Whenever it is necessary, they punish their children and put them on the right path. But in towns and cities, the parents, particularly those in the higher strata of society, do not pay much attention to their children. In fact, it is only they who are supposed to be more vigilant.

When children have time, they should sit quietly and study, but many of them roam in the bazaars. This is not good. Students should not loiter in the streets at all. Only stupid roam the streets. They behave like street dogs. Students who want to maintain their honour and dignity should sit calmly in the house and engage themselves in studies. The parents should check their children to see that they do not spend money in an arbitrary manner. They should tell them what is right and what is wrong and make them understand that spending money lavishly is not good. In this manner, the parents should teach them what is good and put them on the right path.

There should be harmony between the parents and children at home. What is the use if there is no harmony at home? The parents do not pay heed to their children and the children do not listen to their parents. This should not happen. They should discuss among themselves what is right and what is wrong and maintain harmony in the house.

More importantly, the parents should be vigilant with regard to the studies of their children. They should know about the types of books they are reading. Some children keep cheap novels in their textbooks and read them. When we see from a distance, we think they are reading their textbooks. But it is not a textbook but a novel of bad taste! Only when we keep a watch on children will they come up in life. We should throw such books away as soon as we see them. There is not even one such book in our library (loud applause). If somebody brings such books, they are immediately destroyed. If you follow this practice in your home also, then your children will become good. We should look after the children carefully and strive for their progress in this manner.

Observe ceiling on your desires

Don't waste money, Don't waste energy, Don't waste food. And don't waste time. This is what is meant by ceiling on desires. Only when we ourselves practise ceiling on desires can we keep our children in check. But today, neither the elders nor the children observe ceiling on desires. Many of the elders do not even know what is meant by ceiling on desires.

Only in India do we find some people practising ceiling on desires, but in other countries, like America,

people do not practise this. In fact, they waste a lot of food and money. They spend so many dollars even on one dinner party. They should observe certain limits. They should feed those who are in need. Ceiling on desires is very important because it can help man to progress in life.

Misuse of money is evil. Waste of food is bad. If you waste money, you may have to face many difficulties. Do not throw away the food that is left after you have eaten. Better you give it to someone who is hungry. Unfortunately, people throw away the food instead of giving it to those who are hungry.

Ceiling on desires is necessary in every aspect of life. Even in talking, we should observe a ceiling and not talk too much. Then, we will experience immense happiness. If you make someone happy by giving them food, your happiness will also become double.

Nobody should waste anything. Time waste is life waste. By wasting time, we waste our life. We should also not waste money. What is the use of wasting money? Misuse of money is evil. Therefore, never misuse money. Spend only when it is necessary. Is it proper for you to spend money unnecessarily only because your pocket is full? Is it not a mistake? In this manner, many people waste money.

Those who get fat salaries spend money in an arbitrary way. When you lead your life in such a lavish manner, low income people like sweeper and milkman will also try to imitate you and ask for more salary. Do not set a bad ideal to others. We should follow the path that is beneficial to all. When you have too much money, you don't mind wasting it, but do not spend money like that. Think before spending whether you are making proper or improper use of money.

With this, all your questions are answered. Lead your life very carefully. Even a small mistake can be blown up by others in society. Therefore, do not make even a small mistake. Conduct yourself in this careful manner.

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If you are good for the world, then the Lord of worlds will shower love on you. Become a blossom, exude the fragrance of selfless service and love; then I shall gladly wear the garland composed of all of you.

Take the name of the Lord and repeat it always. I was listening to the *bhajan* you did here yesterday and today. Your voices were low; they could scarcely be heard outside this hall ...

Do *bhajan* with faith and enthusiasm. Let the whole city shake with the devotion you put into every Name that you sing. The Name promotes comradeship and establishes concord; it stills all storms and grants peace.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Wear the glasses of love, and all will appear lovable and good. Reference was made here to service of the poor; the eye of love will see all as Narayana; not only the poor, but the rich also. The rich too have to be sympathised with. You must

pity the rich, for they have so few chances of developing the attitude of renunciation!
See all as Embodiments of Lord Narayana and worship all with the flower of love.

Even My nature can be understood by you only when you wear the glasses of holiness; holy things can be cognised only by the holy seeker. You get what you search for; you see what your eyes crave. The doctor is found where patients gather; the surgeon stays in the operation ward. So too, the Lord is ever with the suffering and the struggling. Whenever people cry out in agony: "Oh God," there, God will be.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba