shortcuts. Sometimes they lean on others to carry their weight and aspire for much fruit in return for very little cultivation. Some efforts here and there, such as listening to discourses or making speeches will not be sufficient. Rigorous discipline and steady faith are absolutely necessary for success in the spiritual journey. You must control your senses, which drag your mind towards the attractions of the external world. To have steady faith, one must control the wayward mind that paints attractive pictures in false colours to lure you on from birth to birth.

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Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Thought for the Day

(July 2012)

1.07.2012
Realize that mere cleverness has no place in spiritual affairs. Artifice and artificiality are truly impediments to spiritual progress. It is when cleverness increases and chokes sincerity and straightforwardness in spiritual matters, and in the relationship between God and Man, that the Avatar comes. You may have a costly transistor or watch with you, but if you do not know how to use it efficiently they are mere lumber. Now think what a wonderful machine you yourself are! Should you not know how to operate it and get the best results out of it? Ancient Indian seers discovered the art of operating this human machine, but their descendants have allowed that art to decline. If you have the thirst to know it, you can light the lamp of your life from that of the sages and experience joy and bliss.

2.07.2012
The Guru warns and awakens. He reveals the truth and encourages you to progress towards it. Unless you have the yearning, the questioning heart, the seeking intelligence, the Guru cannot do much. The hungry can be fed; the one who has no hunger will discard food as an infliction. The Guru is a gardener, who will tend the plant. But, the sapling must have sprouted before He can take charge. He does not add anything new to the plant, He only helps it to grow according to its own destiny, quicker and completely perhaps, but not against its inner nature. He removes poverty by pointing to the treasure that lies buried within you. He advises the method of recovering it and the vigilance needed to use it to the best advantage.

essential. Company of pious and holy people leads gradually to withdrawal from entangling activities. When a cold bit of coal is placed in the midst of glowing cinders, and when the fire is fanned, the coal too starts glowing with the fire. The Jnaana Agni or the Fire of Wisdom operates similarly. Individual effort and Divine Grace are both interdependent. Without effort, there will be no conferment of grace. To win that Grace, you only need to have faith and virtue. Knock - the doors of Grace will open. Open the door - the Sun's rays waiting outside will flow silently in and flood the room with light.

30.07.2012
What is needed is control of the senses, not their destruction. To control means, to keep under one's behest; obedient to one's will. And destruction means denial of activity, complete inaction. One must keep all senses under control and use them only when the purposes for which they have been devised are to be fulfilled. In your home, you decide and carefully watch who are the right people to walk through the door. Those who must enter by one door should not use some other door. If they do, then that house will have only confusion and disorder. It is wiser to take precautions against such disorder before they enter, rather than deal with the intruders after they have come in. You may excuse the trespass for the first time. But certainly, you must take enough care to see that it is not repeated. That is the better method, though not the best.

31.07.2012
People are eager to get happiness and when there is a prospect of earning undiminishing happiness, many people jump at the idea. But soon they are tired of the effort required, and seek

27.07.2012

Force your mind to breathe the grander atmosphere of the Eternal. Do this by reminding it of God and His Glory every second, with every breath, by repeating any of His Names. Or engage in some work, which will take you out of your narrow self into His vast magnificence; some task where you dedicate the fruit to God, or where you devote your time and energy to share your skill, joy or knowledge with your fellow beings. Or keep yourself surrounded always by persons devoted to the higher life; persons who will encourage you to move forward along the road towards the goal. Through these means, you can achieve Chittha Shuddhi (cleansing of your mind).

28.07.2012

Human beings are endowed with memory, as well as the faculty to forget. Both are useful skills. Perhaps, the power to forget is even more important – otherwise people will lament over the loss of millions of parents and kinsmen from previous births, and also the insults and injuries they suffered in this birth. Luckily the power to forget helps with all of these. People often remember only those things that have impressed them as significant – their birthdays, wedding days, their debtors, etc. Tragedy is that people forget the most critical thing about their earthly career – the key to happiness and liberation. Man cannot afford to forget the questions - "Who am I? Where am I going? Where did I come from? What is the nature and purpose of all this?"

29.07.2012

When you achieve Chitha Shuddhi (purity of mind), Truth will be clearly reflected therein. For this, good company is

3.07.2012

Practice detachment at every step, or else, greed and miserliness will overpower your finer human nature. Try to win God's grace by reforming your habits, reducing your desires and refining your higher nature. One step makes the next one easier; that is the excellence of the spiritual journey. At each step, your strength and confidence increases and you receive larger and larger instalments of grace. I command you on this day of Guru Poornima, to take the path of your chosen spiritual practice sincerely. Many people ask me, "Swami, give me a name of God, which I can repeat". Take any name you like, anything that appeals to you; all His names are equally sweet. In spirituality there are no differences of nationality, caste and so on; all belong to the State of God.

4.07.2012

By moderating and modulating the habits of eating and drinking, one can lay the foundation for a spiritual life. You must prefer sathwik (pure and vegetarian) foods to rajasik foods. By drinking intoxicating stuff, one loses control over one's emotions, passions, impulses, instincts, speech and movements; and one even descends to the level of a beast. By eating flesh, one develops violent tendencies and animal diseases. The mind becomes more intractable when one indulges in rajasik food. It is difficult to remould the mind, if such food is consumed with relish. To dwell on God, one should be vigilant about the food and drink consumed by both - the body and the mind.

5.07.2012

Parents have conferred this physical instrument called body, with which we can serve God in all living beings, glorify Him in and through Beauty and Truth, and attain the Absolute. This human body is essential to liberate ourselves from the direst of bondages. An iron box is essential to keep safe the precious gems. So too the body is essential to keep safe the gifts of faith, love and discrimination. God is immanent in the Universe. He is in the most distant star as well as the blade of grass under your feet. You can see Him, provided you curdle this Universe with discrimination, churn it with detachment and collect the nectar with earnestness. In the grain of the sand as well as in the grandest galaxy, God can be found by diligent and sincere spiritual practices. He is the core of every being, as butter is present in every drop of milk.

6.07.2012

Like a lighted lamp, God's Grace spreads all round, on all who approach Him and love to be near Him. But if you interpose a shade which shuts out the light from you, if Grace does not shine, you have only yourself to blame. Open the doors of your heart and let the sunlight of God's grace shine through and illumine all the corners and drive out the vices. To receive the desired programme on your radio set, you have to switch on and tune the receiver. That is an inescapable effort. Believe, strive and succeed - that is the message of the sacred texts.

7.07.2012

Faith is a slow growing plant. Concentration needs faith. Act according to your profession. Do not play false to yourself and to your ideals. To deny by your acts the truth of what you preach is a sign of cowardice and moral suicide. You say that

25.07.2012

The Lord is referred to as Kavi - one who is aware of the past, present and future. He knows all and sees all. It is the Lord who revolves in every heart and effects changes from step to step. He is the Motivator for the entire creation, the Prime Basis. He is the poet; His poem is all this (Kavi also means poet). He lays down the conduct for all. The five elements execute His orders. They cannot overstep the limits laid down by Him. His laws govern also the inner world of all beings as no human law can. And He is subtler than the subtle; subtle not in form, He is the subtlest because He is devoid of qualities; something that you cannot fathom with the eye, the ear or the other senses. During sadhana (spiritual practices), the Lord has to be pictured as the - un-picturable.

26.07.2012

Your nature is Divine; God is the very substance of which you are merely another name and form. To realize this you must develop the discrimination between the eternal and the ever changing. You must know that the Universe is constantly subject to change and modification, and that Lord alone is unchanging. Practice detachment from pleasures of this world and that of the other, being convinced that they are fraught with grief. Control the senses and the sensory promptings; exhibit fortitude in the midst of grief and pain, joy and victory. Have firm faith in the Teacher and the Sacred Texts, and on the steady contemplation on the Absolute, undisturbed by other waves of thought. You will then gain realization of your True Nature.

23.07.2012

The Lord does not discriminate between the weak and the strong, or the high and the low. Such an attitude will never warp God's vision. All are entitled to His grace; no one is invited, no one is prevented. All are entitled and welcome to enter His halls of worship. Its doors are ever open. What can anyone do if some do not approach the door? Those who desire warmth have to go near enough to the fireside and sit there. Those who stand afar can only know the light that emerges from that fireside. What do you say of that one, who, standing afar, declares that the fire has no warmth? It is inappropriate. Know that each and every one who yearns for the Lord's presence and to enter His darbar (Court), and who strive in their minds constantly for the fruition of this desire, have admission and accommodation there.

24.07.2012

It is the mind that weaves a pattern called "I" - the process by which it establishes the ego and elaborates it into a multitude of shackles which is called delusion. The mind prompts the senses to project into the outer world of objects, for it builds up notions of pleasure and pain, of joy and grief and constructs a whole array of urges and impulses. It resists all attempts to escape into the Eternal, Universal, and the Absolute. It protests when the individual is eager to become conscious of one's identity. But when it finds that the individual is determined to oppose its tactics, it surrenders and disappears without a trace! Diminish your desires – you will be free from delusion. Desire comes from attachment – deliverance comes from detachment!

God knows and sees everywhere, but you also do something wrong with the belief that God is elsewhere at that time. The most valuable message you must take from scriptures and sages is this: Carry on your legitimate duties, discharge your obligations, live up to your rights, but do not allow attachment to grow. Be like a trustee, so far as family, riches, reputation, knowledge and skills are concerned. Leave them gladly aside, when the call comes.

8.07.2012

I shall tell you just one thing, which is the essence of all noble scriptures. I want you to resolve to follow this, every single day - "Do not seek to find fault in others. Give up maligning and injuring others in thought, word and deed. Do not scandalize anyone; do not feel envy or malice. Be always sweet in temperament; use soft and sweet words. Fill your conversations with devotion and humility." Live in Love, for love, with love. Then the Lord, who is Himself Divine Love personified, will grant you all that you need, without you asking for anything. He knows. He is the Mother who does not wait to hear the moan of the child to feed it. He anticipates every need and rushes to you with help that you must have in every occasion.

9.07.2012

Aspirants, focus your yearning and efforts on the right goal - to be never born again. You may be born in a good family or in favourable circumstances; but subsequent Karma in this life, may not ensure a good death, one that will let you escape the cycle of birth and death. Every one born must have that end always in view. No tree will yield fruits the moment you plant

the seedling in your backyard. To reach that stage, you have to foster it with care over a long period of time, is it not? Similarly whatever result you seek, you have to follow through carefully the preparatory disciplines, without any break. Cultivate good habits of thoughts and actions in order to make the end of your life genuinely auspicious.

10.07.2012

If your loyalty is towards your family, you are a servant of the family. If it is to God, you are a servant of God. But do not pay heed to the wages He gives. Do not argue and bargain for rewards. Only hired labourers clamour for wages and declare they are poor. Be a kinsman, a member of the family, a scion of God. Then, it behoves Him to maintain you in comfort. Try to live near God as His own kin. Do not calculate the number of hours you have spent in serving Him and lament that He has not compensated you enough. Be ever in joy, in His service, in doing good and being good.

11.07.2012

Every being is a mixture of two strands - maya and Madhava (Illusion and Divinity); deha and Dehi (body and Indweller), jada and chith (inert matter and consciousness), and Jeeva and Brahman (Individual Soul and Supreme Soul). Both of these are in fact made of the same substance; they are like the two stones in a grinding mill, the Jeeva is the revolving one and the Brahman is the stable one on which the other is based. The Guru is the Teacher who removes the fundamental ignorance, which hides the knowledge of this truth from us. When you do not find a Guru, pray sincerely, the God inside you will Himself reveal the road and lead you on.

21.07.2012

Desires and wishes go on multiplying; they never end. The fulfilment of one leads to a new series. Strive to arrive at the stage when His wish alone will count and you are an instrument in His hands. Do not cater to low desires; control your listening. The Gopis desired to listen only to glory and achievements of Krishna, His charm and pranks, His words and exploits. When you fill yourselves with love for God, you achieve saaruupya (likeness to the divine form you contemplate) and saayuujya (absolute merger). Strive for that consummation, not for lesser victories. Live with Love, in Love, for Love. Then the Lord who is Premaswaruupa (Divine Love personified) will grant you all that you need in spite of your not asking for anything.

22.07.2012

You take great care to see that the house that you own and live in is charming, impressive and comfortable! You get angry even if a poster is pasted on its walls. Then one day, you sell it. It is no longer the object of your attachment. Even if lightning strikes it, you are not disturbed! With the money you got, you purchase some fields. Now your attachment moves to the fields. Over a period of time, you sell them and put the money in a bank. Now, your attachment grows towards the bank account. Now what exactly is yours and what are you attached to? It is not the house, fields, or money; it is prestige, comfort, show, greed – things that arose in your mind as desires! Truly it is your ego that you are attached to. Each of you must take up some spiritual effort in order to cleanse the mind of lust and greed, of envy and hate.

helps you to recognize the Divinity in and around you. Be sure to wield this instrument of the mind, rather than yield to it. Understand the technique of its working as well as its potentialities.

19.07.2012

I shall tell you just one thing which is the essence of all noble scriptures - one thing I want you to resolve to follow from this very day. Do not seek to find fault in others. Give up maligning others and injuring others in thought, word and deed. Do not scandalize anyone; do not entertain envy or malice. Be always gentle in temperament; use soft and sweet words. Fill your conversations with devotion and humility. Live in Love, for love, with love. Then the Lord, who is Himself Divine Love personified, will grant you all that you need, without you asking for anything. He knows. He is the Mother who does not wait to hear the moan of the child to feed it. He anticipates every need and rushes to you with help that you must have.

20.07.2012

To have the mind fixed on God in one's final moments, is not something that can be accomplished easily. It presupposes long training, and certain accomplishments. This is referred to as Purva samskara. The mind should have gone through a certain course of rigorous discipline. That alone is not enough; the mind must discard all other thoughts as low and inferior, even as defiling. This disgust towards all other objects should grow in strength. When these two – disciplining of the mind and an attitude of detachment to all other thoughts are present, concentration on the Divine will certainly emerge and be steady during the last moments.

12.07.2012

Some materialists argue that a bird in hand is worth two in the bush. They say that the pleasure you have now should not be given up in the hope of something promised, if and when the pleasure you have is given up. But the happiness of renunciation can be enjoyed here and now, and is much more sustaining and inspiring than the happiness derived from grabbing and attachment. In addition, in being the master of your senses rather than being its slave, there is a certain joy. Discover the fountain of joy present within you. It is a never failing, ever full and ever cool fountain, for it arises from God.

13.07.2012

You fill your days with unremitting labour, immersed in perpetual anxiety and worry, you are busy beyond description, with no time to silently contemplate God's handiwork. You are troubled by strange inexplicable misgivings and run helter-skelter after hollow comforts, blinded by hate and greed. Caught in this toil and turmoil, you sometimes lose the knowledge of the anchor that will save you - disciplining of the mind. Start this spiritual discipline as early as possible in life, do not postpone it any further. For, no one knows when the span of life will be brought to a close. Reflect on it. Knock and the doors of Grace will open. Open the door, the Sun's rays waiting outside your door will flow silently in and flood your room with love and light.

14.07.2012

What in reality is this body? It is but the Atma (soul) encased in five Koshas or sheaths – Annamaya (sheath composed of food), Pranamaya (sheath composed of vitality), Manomaya (one

composed of thought), Vijnanamaya (sheath of intelligence), and Aanandamaya (sheath of bliss). By understanding this truth and contemplating over it, one attains discrimination to recede from these sheaths to the inner, more real core. Thus, step by step, a spiritual aspirant abandons one sheath after another and is able to dissolve away all of them, to achieve the knowledge of his unity with Brahmam (Divinity).

15.07.2012

Most of you hear me say many things over and over again, year after year. But few take even the very first step in the spiritual path. You even take notes of my speeches, for purpose of reading them repeatedly. But, without practice, all of this is a sheer waste! You may talk in a flamboyant high-sounding style. Know that you are judged not by your tongue, but by your activity and attitude. There is no place for hypocrisy and double dealing in spirituality. Confidently, you must walk along the straight and narrow path, making Truth and Love as your constant guides and companions.

16.07.2012

Spiritual discipline is based on the faith in the unity of all beings on the basis of the all-pervasive immanent indwelling Aatma. You may see a thousands individuals but fundamentally, they are all One – for they are but many waves on the face of a single underlying ocean. Food procured by the cooperative effort of all the limbs of the body is converted by the stomach and other organs again by cooperative effort into strength which is shared by all the limbs and organs. Not one part of the body is neglected in this process. So too, know that you are all the limbs of that One Cosmic Lord, who is far more expansive

than the Universe. The Universe is just a small fraction of His splendour. All of you, are in Him and the God in you is the same in every other being.

17.07.2012

When young men and women go out to countries overseas, their aged parents are worried about their reactions to the attractions of the strange culture. The father or mother write to their children, pleading with them not to give up the family habits of worship, prayer, food and drink. The children may have tears in their eyes with fond remembrance of their parents, but that is all. They then yield to the temptations and slide away. The spirit with which the letter is written is not honoured in action. So too, many worship the sacred books that have noble thoughts present in them. They shower flowers and offer prayers, but when it comes to practising even a bit of what is written in them, it seems an impossible task for most! You must live in love, and practice it, every single day without fail.

18.07.2012

In a beautiful flower garland, the quickest to strike the eyes are the flowers, while the thread upon which they are strung has to be inferred, it is not so patent. But without the connecting thread, they all fall off. So too, without that bond in Divine, you will fall off as entities unrelated to the rest of your fellow beings. Never forget that every one of you are beings with a Divine spark within. The Divine Current flows through and activates each of you. Learn to direct your mind, so that it