



BASED ON THE UNIVERSAL TEACHINGS
OF SRI SATHYA SAI BABA



LIVING THE FIVE HUMAN VALUES *FOR MOTHER EARTH*

TRUTH ❖ RIGHT ACTION ❖ PEACE ❖ LOVE ❖ NONVIOLENCE





THE FIVE UNIVERSAL HUMAN VALUES

The five universal human values of Truth, Right Action, Peace, Love and Nonviolence are found in all major religions, faiths and spiritual philosophies of the world, including indigenous cultures and traditions, and in all secular societies. They represent the highest ideals of humanity.

Truth, right action, peace, love and nonviolence are the innate qualities of a human being. To lose awareness of these five values is to lose our humanity.

The five universal human values are within us. They reside in the seat of our soul, in our heart. The highest aim of education and our human experience is to elicit these values from within and to manifest them in all our interactions and experiences with other people and our environment, or Nature and Mother Earth. In this way, we begin to experience the Truth that we are in reality spiritual beings having a human experience.

When we live our life in tune with the universal human values, Mother Earth is sustained and protected.

Therefore, to protect Mother Earth we must first understand these values and then learn how to practise them in all that we think and do.





TRUTH

Truth is very much within each of us. The value of Truth is based on the omnipresence of God in the entire Universe as well as within ourselves. The qualities of living in Truth include faith, honesty, discrimination, goodness, respect, humility and integrity. Truth is eternal. The value of Truth is unchanging throughout time, even when we do not recognise or practice it. When we recognise Truth and align our lives with it, Mother Earth and indeed the Universe function in greater harmony. The opposite is also true.

Understanding and practicing Truth helps us better care for each other and Mother Earth. When we live in Truth,

- We know that God exists as the unseen dynamic force or consciousness that sustains all of Nature and all beings.
- We sense the presence of God in Nature.
- We live our lives in such a way that we witness and experience the divine in all Creation, including within ourselves and all others as well as all matter.
- Knowing the omnipresence of God, we cannot cause harm to the Earth and its beings, nor to the waters, atmosphere, or soil.
- We spend time in Nature, not simply to enjoy the sights and sounds or to exercise, but as communion with its essence or Truth.
- We revere Mother Earth, pray to know Her better, and ask forgiveness for the harm we may have caused even unknowingly. This helps us realise the Truth of Nature, that we are all one and there is only Oneness in God.

- We bring our thoughts, words, and deeds into harmony. We walk our talk in an honest way.
- We not only think and speak about the importance of protecting the planet, we do so, even when others are not aware.
- We understand that Truth tells us it is within our power to transform ourselves—to realise the spiritual beings that we truly are—such that we focus less on material goods and more on spiritual goodness.

“First and foremost, establish Truth in your heart. Thereafter, the other four human values of Righteousness, Peace, Love and Nonviolence will reign in the world. Then, there will be no violence at all in the world and all human beings irrespective of religion and nationality will live in peace and harmony.”

(SSS Vol. 40:4, 2007)



When have you experienced the feeling of God in Nature?





Right Action is following the moral path. It is characterised by holiness, good conduct, responsibility, virtue and fortitude. Its qualities include justice, sense control, sense of honour, moral behaviour, dignity, goodness, fairness, sympathy, simplicity and ethical living. Practicing Right Action leads us to universal love and unity, and to knowing ourselves as the divine beings that we are.

Right Action is living in accord with our proper role as humans within the play of creation.

All aspects of Nature have their own prescribed role, but human beings sometimes choose not to follow their prescribed duties. This is why Spiritual Teachers and Messengers of Truth are born—to remind us of our spiritual duty, including to Nature, and to show us how to live as moral beings. Like Truth, Right Action is unchanging and indestructible throughout time.

What does it mean to follow the moral path of Right Action for Mother Earth?

- We acknowledge and serve God by lovingly and selflessly serving others and Nature.
- We seek to know Nature as a manifestation of the Will of God by spending quiet, meditative time in natural places.
- We know that anything we do for Mother Earth we are doing for God.
- We live with a sense of justice, knowing that all beings, including animals and plants and our future generations, depend on Nature. We become aware of our duty and responsibilities as custodians of the Earth's goodness.
- We are careful in our use of resources so that others have enough, and we support

charities that provide for those less fortunate, including humans and all beings.

- We listen to the voice of God within our heart (our conscience) and act with love, reverence, gratitude, and the strength to do good always.
- We work at doing the right thing at the right time. Given the trauma we have inflicted on Mother Earth, there is no better time to act on Her behalf than now.
- We place a ceiling on our desires, such that we limit our use of natural resources, we don't waste food, and we use the money and time we saved to help others.
- We remain aware of the impact our actions may have far from our sight and avoid harming the Earth's atmosphere and climate by reducing energy use and our carbon footprint.

When we follow Right Action, we experience the joy of knowing we are helping, not harming, Mother Earth. Our lives become more free and fruitful. Pathways to even more service open and we happily carry out our responsibilities. Walking with God in this way, our burdens become less heavy and our love glows more brightly. Eventually, we become one with the One behind Creation, which benefits Mother Earth and all beings even more.

"Your duty is to yearn for the attainment of the consciousness of the One behind all this apparent multiplicity. Be centres of love, compassion, service, mutual tolerance, and be happy, very very happy."

(SSS 11:28, 1971)

"What is the lesson to be learnt from the observance of Nature? It is...excellence in the performance of duty. It is because Nature ceaselessly performs its duty that the world is able to derive so many sacred benefits."

(Summer Showers:18, 1990)



What are some other ways you can express your duty to protect Mother Earth?



Peace in the world is a sign that God's Creation is working in harmony. Peace within us is a sign that we are practicing Right Action, that we are controlling our senses and mastering our mind. When we put Peace into action, we experience greater friendship, tranquility, harmony, equanimity and serenity. We keep greed, anger, and desire for possessions and material things in check and experience the peace and joy of pure consciousness. In such a state, we are in unity with Nature, the very embodiment of Peace.

To cultivate the value of Peace in our interactions with Mother Earth,

- We foster peaceful qualities by spending time in Nature and learning the lessons of Peace that Nature teaches.
- We seek the peace and happiness that does not come from material wealth, comfort and excessive consumption.
- We serve as a model for living in Peace. In doing so, we help others to see the importance of seeking happiness within, rather than in worldly things. Such inner Peace helps us preserve Nature's bounty for essential needs.
- We recognise our unity with Nature and practice equanimity in the face of disturbances in the outside world.
- We show gratitude for all the gifts we receive from Nature. We demonstrate this through prayers that honour God and Nature as givers, and we as grateful recipients.
- We cleanse the atmosphere with good thoughts, prayer, devotional singing, mantras and meditation, which also promotes our inner balance in tune with Nature.

- We place a ceiling on our desires such that we do not waste Nature's gifts in the form of food, time, money, or energy.
- We are true to our duty to promote peace within the community of humanity and thereby in harmonious relationship with Mother Earth and all beings... and better able to serve them.
- We endure triumphs and tragedies with equanimity. In so doing, we are better prepared to help others in distress—especially those harmed by disasters arising from human actions that disrupt Nature's balance.

Most of all, Peace teaches us to be happy with what we have and to calmly accept whatever difficulties come our way. It keeps us strong and able to stand up for Truth in the world. We do not fear what others think when we choose to tread lightly on the Earth. Instead, we develop our inner strength and step away from actions that may harm Mother Earth. We demonstrate a better way, a more peaceful way.

"Peace does not exist in worldly things. Peace can only be found inside, within you. 'I want peace' consists of three words. 'I' is the ego, and 'want' is desire. If you remove these two, then you have Peace."

(Sathya Sai Newsletter, 5 August 1988)



How might you make time in your day to experience the peace of Nature? For example, walking to a destination through a park where possible, and away from traffic and noise.





LOVE

Love is the basis for all of Creation and is the very form of God. It springs forth as pure joy that flows naturally from the depths of our soul. The experience of Love fosters our understanding that all are One, meaning we are one with Nature, all beings, and Mother Earth. Love is selfless, universal, and unconditional. It seeks no rewards and knows no fear. It serves as the ever-pure spring of divine energy that motivates us to practice all the other human values.

Love in action is experienced through unity, compassion, empathy, reverence and respect. When we act through Love for Mother Earth:

- We behave with full awareness of our oneness with all beings and Mother Earth.
- We reflect God's love in our life through our love for Nature.
- We spend time in Nature to reconnect and acknowledge the interdependence and inter-connectedness of everything.
- We feel Nature's abundant beauty and bounty and show our greatest respect and reverence.
- We are prompted to serve selflessly, not looking for the fruits of our action. We give to Mother Earth in gratitude for all She provides, unceasingly. This may be through dedicated prayers, offerings, and heartfelt appreciation for Her material gifts that are filled with divinity.
- We practice selflessness as the full expression of the Love we feel, ever ready to help, not hurt, and willing to sacrifice as needed. This includes prayers for the wellbeing of all those we cannot directly serve.

- We demonstrate our compassion for the suffering of others and, thus, do our best to avoid polluting or wasting resources, while embracing opportunities to relieve suffering (like improving habitat, picking up trash, or helping to rebuild after disasters).
- We connect easily with other beings and Nature because divine sweetness, Love, and peace flows from us in a way that we feel one with them. We establish heart-to-heart relationships.
- We trust that our needs will be met and avoid striving for and using more resources than we need.
- We allow the wisdom that wells up from our heart to inform our actions, such that we are ready to do what is most needed at any moment.

"Love binds one person to another; Love attaches one thing to another. Without Love, the universe is naught... Life is Love; Love is Life. Without God, deprived of God, nothing and nobody can exist. We live on and on through Divine Will. It is His Will that operates as Love, in each of us. It is He that prompts the prayer, 'Let all the worlds be happy,' for He makes us aware that the God we adore, the God we love, the God we live by, is in every other being as Love. Thus Love expands and encompasses all Creation."

(SSS 11:39, 1981)



How do you express your love for Nature?





NONVIOLENCE

Nonviolence is the natural expression of universal Love. It includes being nonaggressive, soothing, calming, gentle and serving as a peacemaker. The principle of *“Help Ever, Hurt Never”* best describes it. Nonviolence results from putting all four previous values into practice and is a natural outcome of developing unity and purity in thought, word, and deed. Practicing Nonviolence, we inflict the least harm possible at all times, in all ways, and in all circumstances, and are selflessly drawn to relieving the suffering of all beings.

Nonviolence is an essential virtue for those wanting to live in harmony with Mother Earth. We express Nonviolence best when,

- We live in awareness of our oneness and know that any harm we do to others is also harm to ourselves.
- We are aware of the suffering we may cause by using too much energy or water, or by polluting the soil, water, and air. We try our best to avoid such harm.
- We consume vegetarian foods that are grown organically.
- We make sure any animal products we use are from animals treated humanely.
- We live a simple, eco-friendly life as spiritual practice.
- We use household products that are produced from environmentally-friendly ingredients and are not polluting.
- We manage our landscape so that it provides opportunities for birds and other species to gain food, water, and shelter and avoids harming them.

- We demonstrate our inner strength by nonviolently opposing harm being done to others and supporting actions that help protect the environment.
- We listen for the call to relieve the suffering of any being and respond as best we can. This may take the form of direct help or it may be in the form of prayers such as *“May all the beings in all the worlds be happy.”*
- We are ready and able to work cooperatively with others in selfless service to improve the environment. This may include litter pickups, planting trees, growing organic gardens, creating natural respite places in the midst of urban areas, writing and disseminating information about environmental protection, and helping to ensure waste is recycled to the fullest extent possible.

“We generally think that Nonviolence means not causing harm to some living being. Nonviolence is not just this. Even bad vision or bad hearing or bad talk is violence. Nonviolence really means that you should not cause harm to anyone through your vision, hearing, or talking. Buddha also said, ‘Nonviolence is the Supreme Right Action.’ ...We should interpret Nonviolence as not causing any harm to any individual by any means.”

(Summer Showers 1978)



Consider how practicing the other four values helps us adopt nonviolent behavior. What are some other practical ways we can observe Nonviolence and help Mother Earth?



REFLECTIONS



A series of horizontal dashed lines for writing reflections.

*“Love as thought is Truth.
Love as feeling is Peace.
Love as understanding
is Nonviolence.”*

(SSS XII, ch. 15)



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