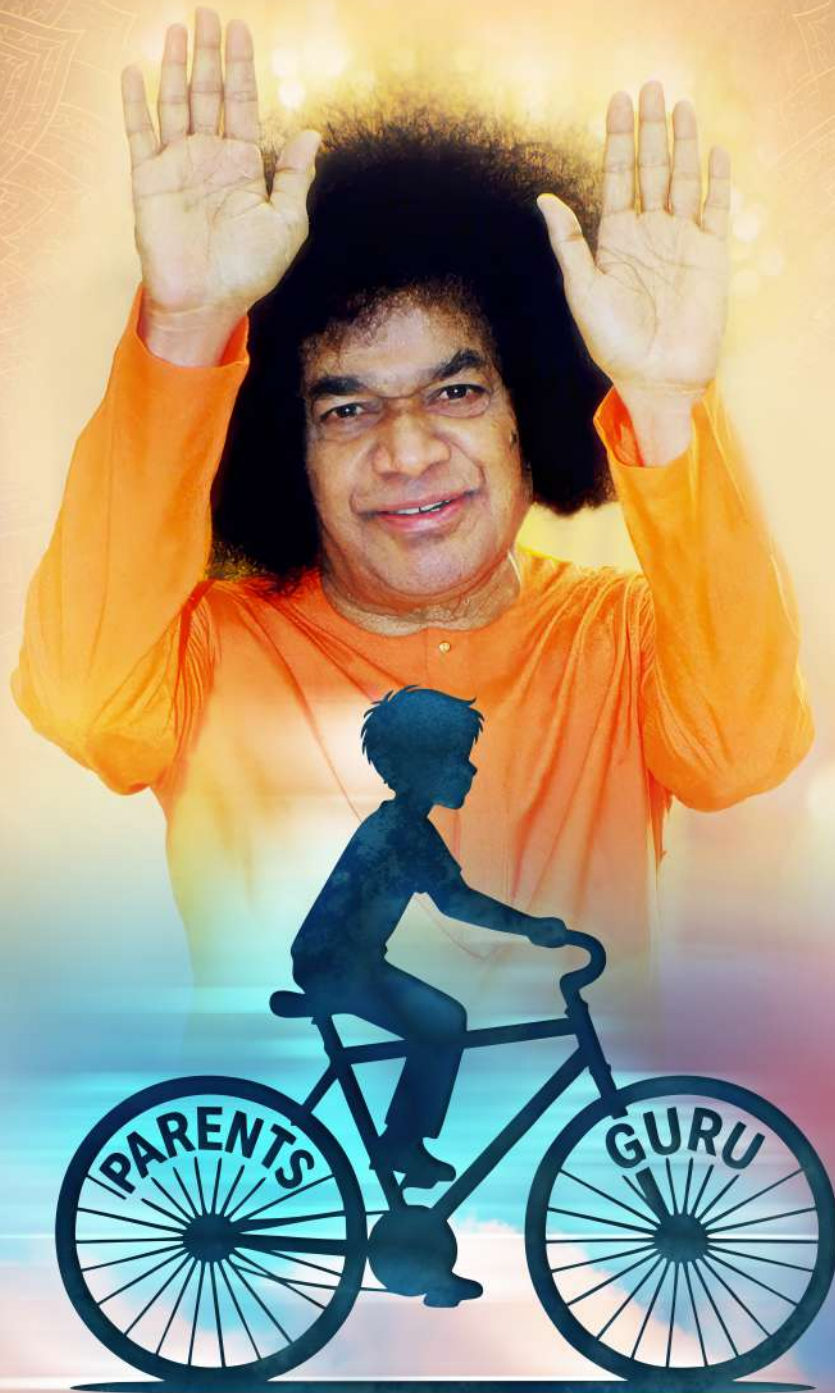


Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas



The Triple Divine Bond
of
BAL VIKAS

2026

The Front wheel of the bicycle which the child is riding is
the Bal Vikas Guru and the rear wheel, the Parents.
If the rear wheel does not move, the bicycle will not move.
Thus, Parents and Gurus must work hand in hand,
blending love and law to achieve their objectives.

- Baba

Copyright @
Sri Sathya Sai Books And Publication Trust
Mahakali Caves Rd, Near Ginger Hotel,
Sri Sathya Sai Chowk,
Andheri East, Mumbai,
Maharashtra - 400093
All rights reserved.



July 2026



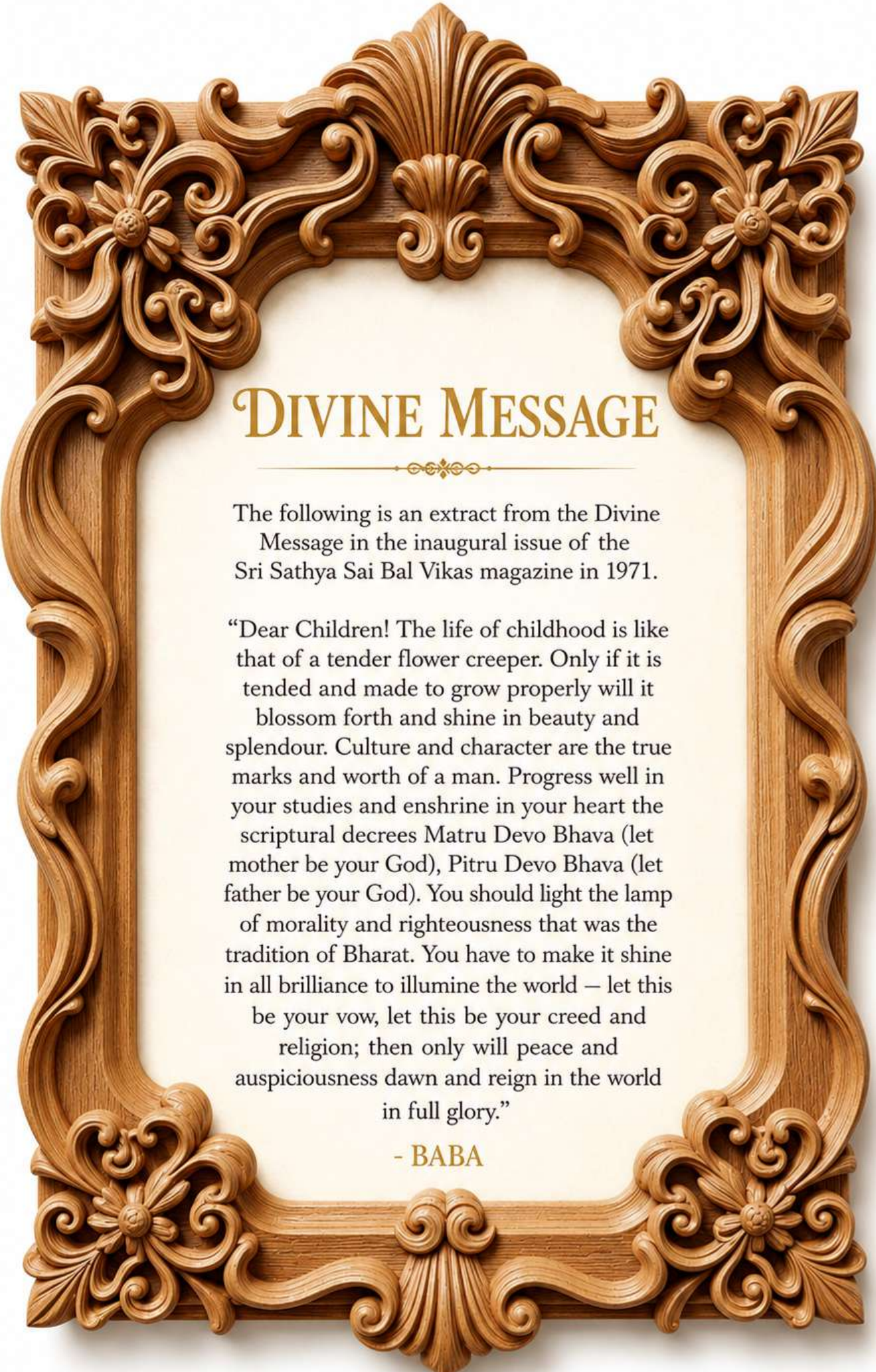
Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas

The Triple Divine Bond *of* BAL VIKAS



Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations - India





DIVINE MESSAGE

The following is an extract from the Divine Message in the inaugural issue of the Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas magazine in 1971.

“Dear Children! The life of childhood is like that of a tender flower creeper. Only if it is tended and made to grow properly will it blossom forth and shine in beauty and splendour. Culture and character are the true marks and worth of a man. Progress well in your studies and enshrine in your heart the scriptural decrees Matru Devo Bhava (let mother be your God), Pitru Devo Bhava (let father be your God). You should light the lamp of morality and righteousness that was the tradition of Bharat. You have to make it shine in all brilliance to illumine the world — let this be your vow, let this be your creed and religion; then only will peace and auspiciousness dawn and reign in the world in full glory.”

- BABA

FOREWORD

At the Divine Lotus Feet of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, we offer this humble Centenary edition of the Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas Magazine, in loving gratitude for the sacred journey of Bal Vikas, ever guided by His unseen hand and boundless Grace.

As we stand at this momentous milestone, we pause in reverence to reflect on a journey that begins not within the walls of a classroom, but in the sanctity of the home.

Here, the first lessons are not merely taught, but quietly lived.

In this sacred space, the mother becomes the child's first Guru: the silent sculptor of character. While a Guru may guide a child for a few precious hours each week, it is the mother who breathes life into those teachings every moment. Her love reflects HIS message of Love All, Serve All, and her every action gently echoes Help Ever, Hurt Never.

Through her, values are not imposed, but absorbed, naturally and divinely.

The Guru, as His chosen instrument, kindles the flame of wisdom and righteousness in the young heart, nurturing the eternal human values of Truth, Right Conduct, Peace, Love, and Non-Violence.

Together, parents and Gurus shape not only individuals, but the very foundation of a compassionate society.

To our parents and our Gurus "Living embodiments of His Love":

we offer our deepest pranaams. Through their hands, He shapes; through their hearts, He loves; through their lives, He teaches.

Bhagawan's timeless vision continues to illumine this sacred path:

"Bal Vikas leads to Mano Vikas, and Mano Vikas leads to Loka Vikas."

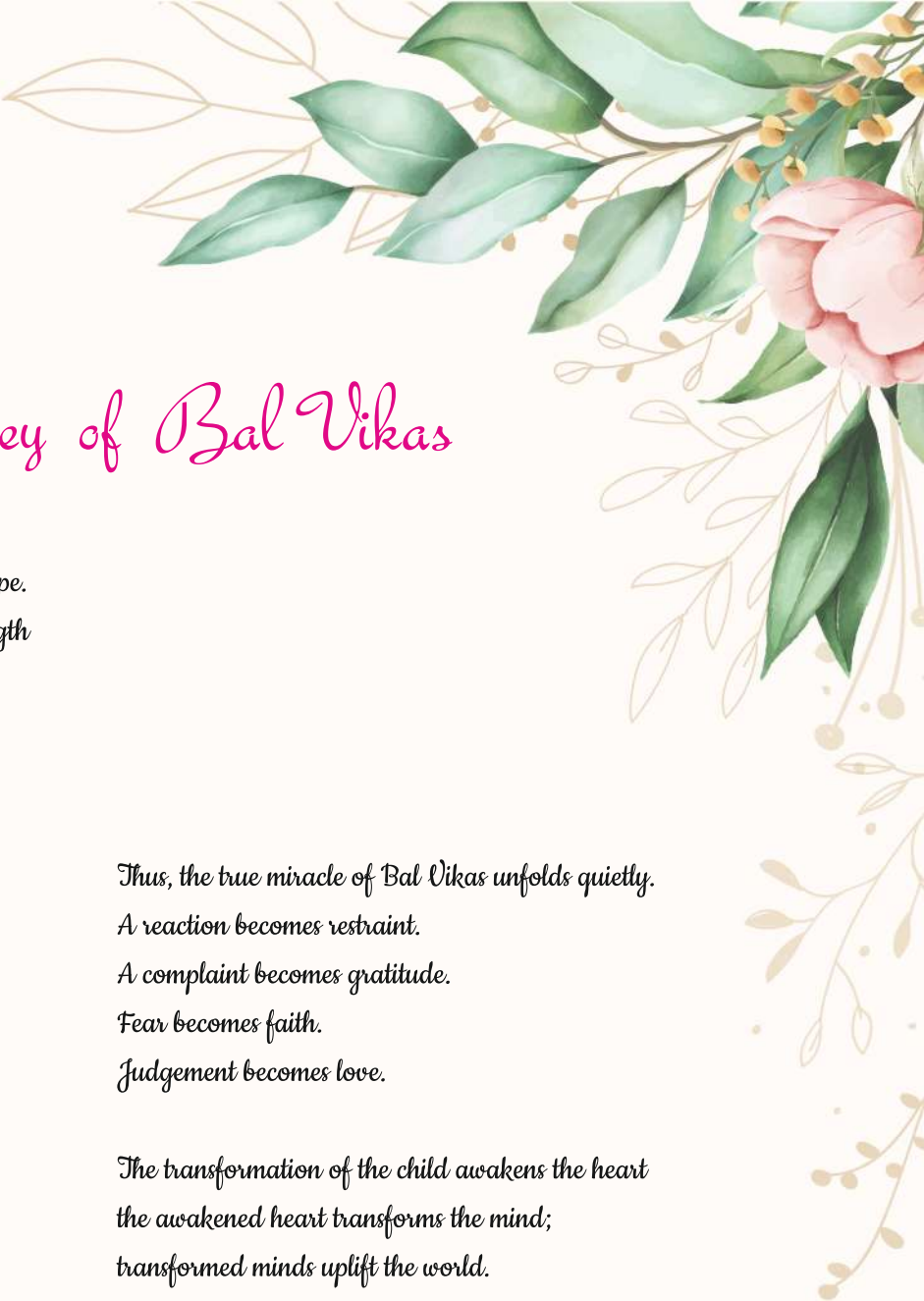
By nurturing the child (Bal Vikas), we refine the mind and heart (Mano Vikas). Through this inner transformation, we move towards the upliftment of the world (Loka Vikas), a world that reflects His Divine ideal.

This offering is a garland of devotion placed at His Lotus Feet, woven with a hundred years of faith, values, and silent transformation. Each page carries the fragrance of His teachings and the gentle imprint of lives touched and hearts awakened.

As you turn these pages, may you feel His presence within, guiding, protecting, and inspiring. May every value sown in a child become an offering to Him, and every small act of love, a step towards a more compassionate and peaceful world.

Let us celebrate the Triple Divine Bond of Bal Vikas.

Loving Sairam
Kamala Pandya
National Educational Co-ordinator



The Sacred Journey of Bal Vikas

A child arrives with eyes radiant in wonder.
A parent comes bearing a heart filled with hope.
A Guru steps forward, offering the quiet strength
of love, wisdom and grace.
Three souls.
Three sacred callings.
One Divine Purpose.

Like the three wheels of a chariot,
none can carry the journey alone.
Gurus lovingly cultivate the heart
Parents nurture the seed of character,
and the child, through sincere effort,
blossoms into Truth.

Yet behind every visible effort stands
the Eternal Charioteer.
The One who is both the path and the
destination.
He alone is the Source, the Strength,
the unseen Power
guiding every step.
When faith wavers, He steadies;
when hearts grow weary, He renews;
when purpose fades, He rekindles the inner flame.

Stories become mirrors for self-discovery.
Prayers become conversations with God.
Silence nurtures wisdom.
Service becomes worship.
Values become a way of life.

Thus, the true miracle of Bal Vikas unfolds quietly.
A reaction becomes restraint.
A complaint becomes gratitude.
Fear becomes faith.
Judgement becomes love.

The transformation of the child awakens the heart
the awakened heart transforms the mind;
transformed minds uplift the world.
Such quiet transformations ripple through families,
strengthen communities and inspire generations.
The success of Bal Vikas not measured by certificates earned,
but by lives that increasingly reflect Divine Love.

May every parent nurture with faith.
May every Guru guide with humility, patience and love.
May every student seek not merely knowledge, but wisdom;
not merely success, but goodness;
not merely achievement, but God.
so that they begin to live in God,
live for God and see God in all.

Saileela R K
Delhi



CONTENT

GURUS

1.	From Helplessness to His Instrument	Arshee Singh	10
2.	Reflections on a Sacred Journey...	Santosh Java	12
3.	Enriching Lives through Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas	Indrani Das Bhuyan	14
4.	Bal Vikas - A Path of Introspection	Dr Pallavi Krishnamoorthi	16
5.	The Transformative Journey	Sathya Jyothi S M	18
6.	My Transformation, His Mission	Swapna Sen	20
7.	How Being a Guru has Impacted my Life	Jaya Subramanian	22
8.	Bend the body, Mend the Senses, End the Mind	Dr Sapna Bhardwaj	24
9.	Being a Bal Vikas Guru - Shaping my Character	Vaishali Lele	26
10.	Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas - A Divine Journey	Lakshmi Gurumoorthy	28
11.	A Journey of Transformation	Pooja Sawhney	30
12.	Mother Sai - The Divine Engine	Sreeprabha Sivaswamy	32
13.	Bal Vikas - Gateway to Experiential Wisdom	Sanchita Bose	33
14.	Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas - My Conscience Keeper	Chitra Mohan	34
15.	The Divine Cycle	Akriti Pradhan	36

ALUMNI

1.	Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas and Me	Lt Gen Madhuri Kanitkar	39
2.	Living the Sai Way	Narayan Sethuramon	40
3.	Bal Vikas - My Beacon Light	Geetanjali P Shetty	42
4.	From Bal Vikas to Beyond	Sai Prasant Das	44
5.	From Bal Vikas to Life	Dr Aniruddh Khare	46
6.	Roots of Grace	Gayatri Rattan	48
7.	Bal Vikas - The Seed for Unshakeable Faith	Dr Saipavitra M Manohar	50
8.	Bal Vikas - A Doorway to Seva	Amishi Seth	52
9.	Bal Vikas - A Beautiful Lens of Love	Dr Aiswarya R Nair	54
10.	Education is the one that Liberates	Sanya Ahuja	56
11.	Bal Vikas - The Engine, the Wheel and the Grace	Abitaha Roy	58
12.	A Journey of Love, Faith and Quiet Miracles	Geetali Vohra	60
13.	My Journey with Swami - A Constant Reflection	Anuz Subba	62
14.	Bal Vikas - An Inclusive Approach	Devrani Sahoo	64
15.	Bal Vikas - The Architect of Character	SVS Anjaneyulu	66
16.	Swami - My Sole Protector and Guide	Sai Sneha Das	68
17.	Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas - A way of Life	Mayur Kumar KN	70
18.	The Journey that gave me Wings	Wahengbam Tilorama	72

PARENTS

1.	Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas - The Sacred Bond	Resmi S Natesan	75
2.	Sri Sathya Bal Vikas - Bhagawan's Gift	Brijesh Bamalwa	76
3.	When Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas enters a Home	Sai Gunaranjan	78
4.	Bal Vikas - The Royal Pathway to Him	Kanchana Jayasankar	80
5.	Bal Vikas and Character Building	Nandini B S	82
6.	Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas - A Sacred Institution	Dr Satyam Shah	83
7.	The Transformative Power of Bal Vikas	Rajagopal P Karumampurath	84
8.	Bal Vikas - The Divine Connect	Mrs & Mr Anil Bhatnagar	86
9.	Growing with Grace	Nisha Saikumar	88
10.	Blossoming of the Soul	G Anitha	90
11.	Bal Vikas - A Transformative Experience	Lalitha K	92
12.	Bal Vikas - Aligning with Divine Rhythm	Dr Rupali N Patil	94
13.	Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas - The Divine Path	Suraj Tamang	96
14.	Bal Vikas - A Guide to Karma Yoga	Prashanti Rai	98
15.	Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas - A Divine Blessing	G Lakshmi Priya	100



GURUS

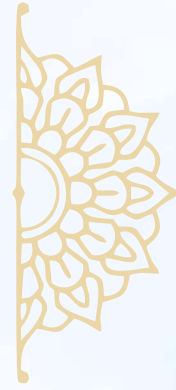
“The Gurus of Bal Vikas should be of exemplary behaviour,
be selfless and be free from over-attachment to worldly
things - this is the right path and this is Sai's word for you”.

- Baba



Arshee Singh

Himachal Pradesh



From Helplessness to His Instrument: *My Journey with Swami*

Life does not always unfold the way we plan.
Sometimes, it breaks us first...
only to rebuild us with a deeper, divine purpose.

I still remember that painful day - 21st December 2010 - when everything changed. A sudden accident, and in a single moment, my mother was gone. There was no time to hold her, no chance to say goodbye. In that instant, something inside me collapsed. I was no longer strong - I was just a helpless child again - lost, shaken, and searching for something to hold on to.

At the same time, my father was battling severe injuries. The house felt heavy with silence. Every corner echoed with absence. Life felt uncertain, fragile, almost unbearable.

And yet, even before this storm, grace had quietly entered my life.

In April 2010, just months before the accident, something extraordinary had happened. When Swami visited Anand Vilas in Shimla, our family received a blessing that would later become the foundation of my strength. Swami called us for an interview. Even today, those moments do not feel like memories - they feel alive within me. The way He looked at us, the love in His eyes, and the quiet assurance in His presence made it seem as if time had paused, just to let us experience His grace.

In the early days of our marriage, Swami blessed my husband and me, gently saying, "Beta lekaraana." At that time, it felt like a simple blessing, but later I understood - it was His sankalp. The very next year, in 2011, we were blessed with our first child, a son. It could only be His grace.

We were again blessed to visit Prasanthi Nilayam during Shivratri. Swami Himself had instructed our family to come, and it turned out to be the last Shivratri in His physical presence. The divine vibrations, the silence filled with His energy, and the devotion in the air are etched in my soul forever. Receiving His Charan sparsh during the interview at Anand Vilas became my inner strength. Whenever I feel weak, I close my eyes - and I am there again.

Then came 2013 - the year that truly tested my faith. Grief, responsibility, and fear came together all at once. My heart kept praying—sometimes in words, often in silence. And then, from somewhere deep within, a quiet yet powerful voice arose: "Start Bal Vikas classes."

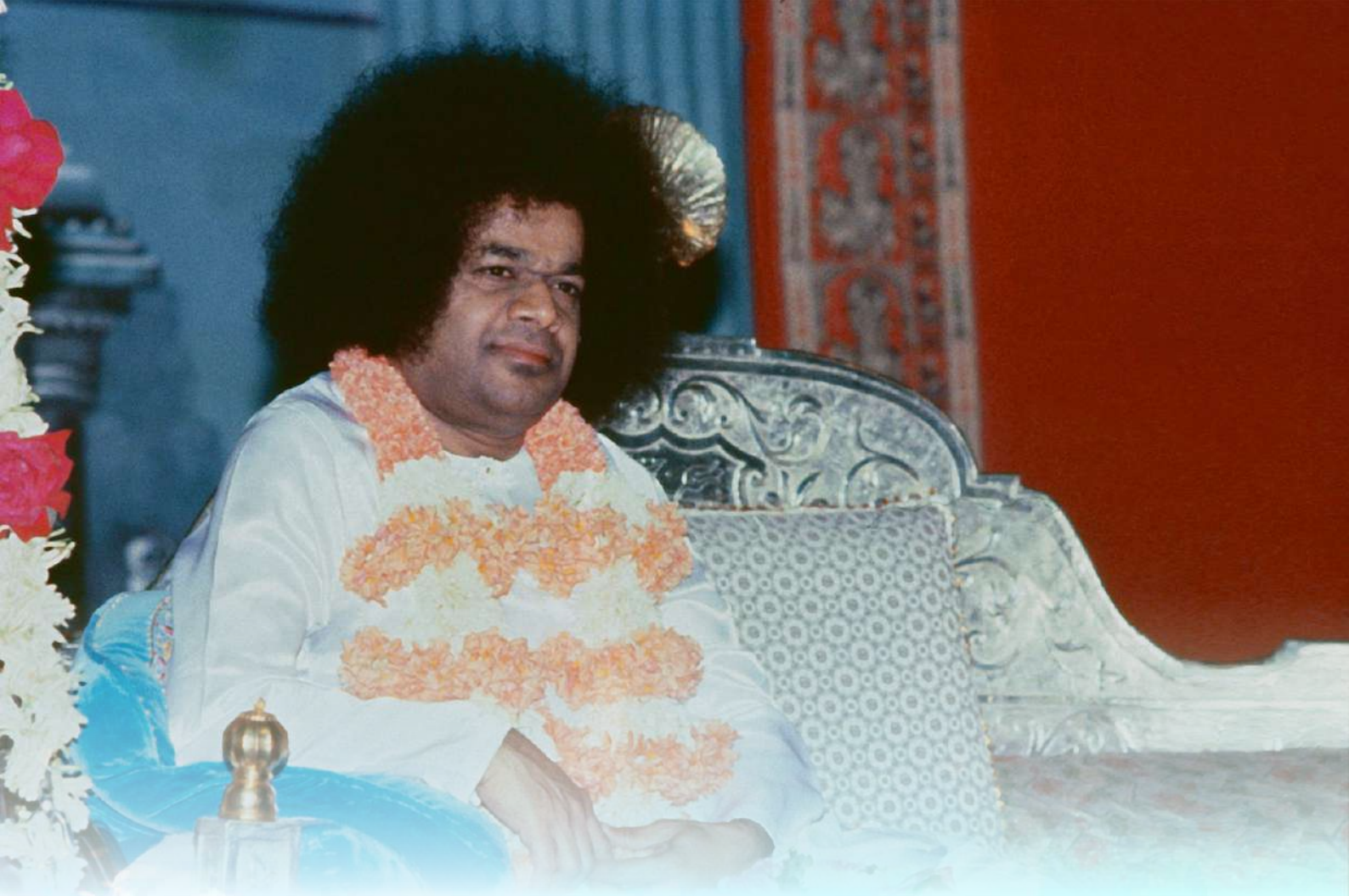
I had no experience, no training, no confidence. But I had faith.

At Sai Bhawan in New Shimla - a place deeply connected to my father-in-law, an ardent devotee who dedicated his life to Swami's service - I took that first step. And then, everything began to change.

A beautiful group of children came together. Their innocence, enthusiasm, and love for bhajans and stories were pure and uplifting. Many times, I felt they were teaching me far more than I could ever teach them.

With the guidance of a senior devotee, lovingly known as Puri Sir, these children blossomed. Every Saturday, their bhajans filled the space with such devotion that hearts





were naturally drawn. What began as a small effort gradually grew into something extraordinary.

Together, we created dance dramas, spiritual songs, and cultural programs. These were not merely performances - they were offerings. Over time, Bal Vikas at Sai Bhawan became one of the most awaited gatherings in Shimla. Devotees came not just to watch, but to feel, to be inspired, and to encourage these children.

I would often stand there quietly, asking myself, "How is all this happening through me?" The truth is - I am just a simple person. I had no special talent, no great knowledge. **Yet everything flowed so effortlessly. Every word, every idea - it never felt like mine. It was always Him.**

Even today, as I serve as the District Education Coordinator for Urban Shimla, I sometimes question myself: "Am I capable?" And each time, the answer comes softly from within: "You are not the doer. You are just the instrument."

Recently, I made a difficult decision - to pause my role as a teacher at a reputed convent school. It was not easy. Yet, on that very same day, I was entrusted with the responsibility of District Education Coordinator for Bal Vikas. This was not a coincidence - it was His plan.

Today, after almost a decade, I am witnessing a beautiful blessing. **The same children who once sat before me with folded hands and curious eyes are now returning - not as students, but as young gurus.** With strong sankalp, they are ready to serve and carry forward this mission.

Then came another moment of surrender. In October 2025, my father also left this world. That day brought back the same emptiness - but this time, I was not alone. Now, when I close my eyes, I do not just miss my parents, I feel them in my beloved Sai. I have placed everything at His lotus feet.

Today, with my second son, I continue to go to Bal Vikas. **Even now, I am still learning - especially from the youngest children. Their purity and simplicity carry lessons beyond words, and I know it is Him teaching through them.**

What more could one ask for?

From helplessness to purpose, from grief to grace, from doubt to surrender - this journey has never been mine. It has always been His.

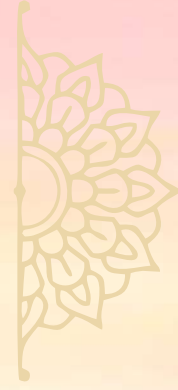
My only prayer remains:

"Swami, make me Your instrument. Let my life be worthy of Your purpose."



Santosh Jawa

Delhi



Reflections on a Sacred Journey in

Bal Vikas

My journey as a Bal Vikas Guru began in 1988. Looking back today at 37.5 years on this sacred path, my heart overflows with gratitude. What started as a small step, guided by my Guru, Nimmi Aunty, has unfolded into a beautiful journey of love, learning, and divine experiences.

The Essence of the Path

On my very first day, I was filled with a mix of excitement and a sense of responsibility. My Guru gave me a simple yet profound instruction: **“Just share love, love and love.”** Over the years, I have realised that this one message contains the entire essence of Bal Vikas. **Children do not learn from what we say as much as from what we are. When we offer them pure love, they open their hearts in the most beautiful ways.**

The Divine Omnipresence: Story of Tanu

One experience that reaffirmed my faith involved a young Bal Vikas student named **Tanu**. One day, she approached with great innocence and excitement *“Aunty, Baba came in my dream last night. He asked, Tanu, why you did not come to Bal Vikas class yesterday.”*

She was puzzled—how did Baba know her name, and how did He know she had missed the class?

Her simple questions left all of us in awe. It was a powerful reminder that, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is truly omnipresent, aware of every child, every thought, and every action. That experience transformed Tanu. She became regular in classes and grew deeply connected to Bhagawan. Today, as an adult, she continues to spread these values in her own way. For me, it was a gentle reminder that in Bal Vikas,

we are never alone - HE is always guiding each child.

The Silent Listener: Whitefield

A profound moment during National Bal Vikas Conference at Whitefield, Bangalore, in physical presence of Bhagawan Baba. It was my first time attending such a conference, and unexpectedly, with His blessings, I was asked to speak at Sai Ramesh Hall on suggestions for the Bal Vikas syllabus.

As my turn approached, a quiet thought arose within me: *“How I wish Baba would be present to listen to my talk.”* It was a simple, heartfelt desire.

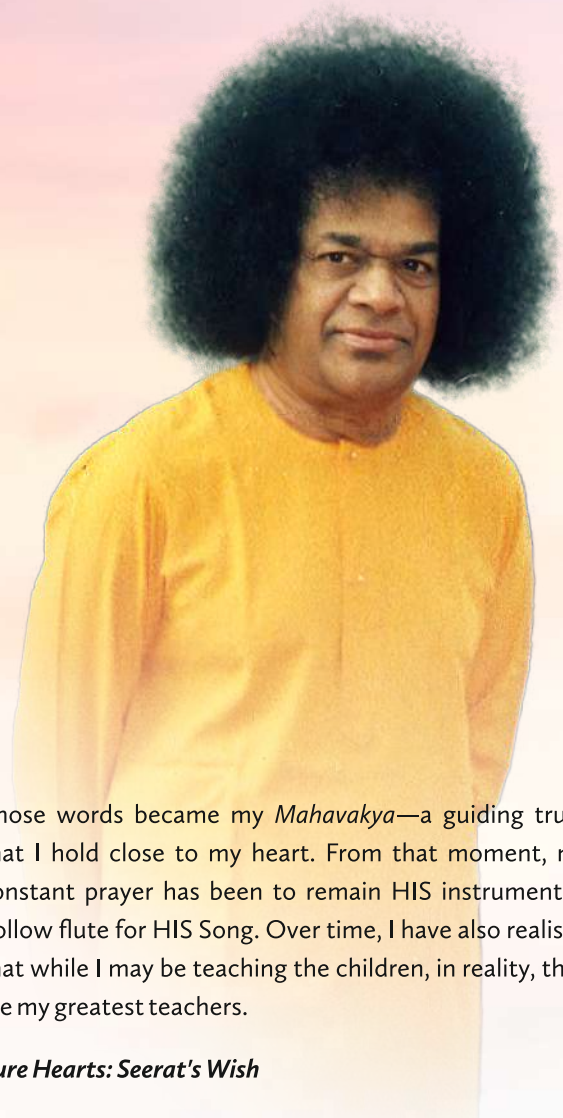
To my amazement, as I began speaking, Bhagawan emerged and stood behind me. This was unexpected, as He had already retired for the day after giving Darshan. While I could not see Him from the Podium, I could feel His presence, strength, and reassurance. The audience could see Him standing there, listening patiently.

That day, I learned, **He doesn't only listen to our words, but to the deepest whispers of our hearts.** That day strengthened my faith forever. Since then, whenever I speak or share, I know He is with me, guiding every word.

The Power of Surrender: Ekansh

As a psychologist by profession, I initially believed, I understood child behavior well. However, one six-year-old Bal Vikas student, **Ekansh**, challenged every tool in my professional kit. He was constantly disruptive during silent sitting sessions, and despite my best efforts, I could not bring any change in him.





Eventually, I reached a point of total helplessness. I turned to Bhagawan in prayer and said, “Swami, I surrender. I cannot handle this child. You have to guide me.”

In a meditative state, I had a vision of Baba, where He gave me a simple but unexpected instruction: **“Make him the monitor for silent sitting.”**

Though it seemed contrary to logic, I followed His guidance with faith. From that very day, the transformation in Ekansh was remarkable. He became disciplined, composed, and took responsibility for maintaining silence in the class. Not only did he change, but he began to positively influence other children as well.

That day, I learnt that true transformation does not come from control, but from trust, love, and divine guidance. Today, Ekansh has grown into a fine young individual and is pursuing his Master's degree in Artificial Intelligence in the United States.

Becoming The Instrument

One of the most sacred moments of my journey occurred during my silver jubilee wedding anniversary. My husband and I were blessed with an interview with Bhagawan in Prasanthi Nilayam. During the interaction, Baba lovingly asked me about my Bal Vikas classes and then I gathered the courage to ask, “Swami, during my classes, there are times when I feel that it is You who is speaking through me. Is that true?”

With immense love, Bhagawan replied, **“Yes - you are My instrument.”**

Those words became my *Mahavakya*—a guiding truth that I hold close to my heart. From that moment, my constant prayer has been to remain HIS instrument, a hollow flute for HIS Song. Over time, I have also realised that while I may be teaching the children, in reality, they are my greatest teachers.

Pure Hearts: Seerat's Wish

Recently, I asked a simple question to my Bal Vikas children: “If you had a magical lamp, what would you wish for?”

A six-year-old Bal Vikas student named **Seerat**, in all his innocence replied, “I will ask the magical lamp to please let my mother stay with me for 100 years.”

Her words deeply moved me. Such pure love and selfless feelings can only arise from a heart that is being nurtured with the right values. Moments like these reaffirm that Bal Vikas is truly shaping not just minds, but hearts.

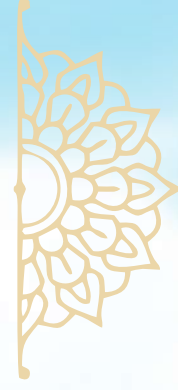
Through such countless experiences over this graceful journey of 37.5 years, I have realised that Bal Vikas is not about teaching—it is about being an instrument. Bhagawan shapes not only the children, but also the Guru, every single day.

I feel deeply grateful for this opportunity to serve. Every child, every class, every challenge has been a blessing. Above all, I remain ever thankful to Bhagawan for allowing me to be a small instrument in His divine mission.



Indrani Das Bhuyan

Assam



Enriching lives through

Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas

“Aumkaaram Bindu samyuktam...”

The sonorous chants of the children in their lilting voices filled the hall. I was sitting at the very end of the hall, wishing I was one of the groups in front of me. I had only recently come into Bhagawan's fold, though I had heard of him since childhood, I never really took much interest. But an early morning dream changed all that and Baba became my dearest closest friend, Guru and God. I was too old to be a Bal Vikas student, as I was already in college, but that did not stop me from going to the classes and enjoying the stories and lessons imparted to the children. With every class my longing to belong to Bal Vikas grew for I had read somewhere that Bal Vikas was very dear to Swami. I wanted a way to connect to Bhagawan, to love Him and do something to make him happy. One of the Guru Aunties asked me if I would like to help with the children and kindly gave me all the Bal Vikas books to acquaint me with the syllabus. These along with *Chinna Kathas* and other books on Swami opened up a whole new world for me.

That was some 33 years back and there has been no looking back since then. What better way to remain immersed in His teachings! **I was not just teaching little children but learning everyday. Now the stories that fascinated me enthralled the little ones. I thanked Swami for teaching me the various prayers, stotras and shlokas through the children, for I was the one benefiting most when I learned first in order to teach the children. The bond with Swami grew stronger, my introspection grew deeper. I now had a holistic purpose in life spurred by spiritual and Divine intent.**

With the opportunity to become a Bal Vikas Guru came the yearning to become closer to Bhagawan, by reaching out to the young minds, instilling discipline and love for God in the small children. I loved telling them stories from the scriptures. In the current social setting where joint families have given way to nuclear families, most children do not have the privilege of listening to stories from their grandparents. Story telling in Bal Vikas filled this lacuna. I prayed to Swami to conduct the classes and simply make me His instrument. This I found to be true, for often times he made me speak on topics which I never prepared, but which later on turned out to be relevant to some student. Stories and anecdotes would occur to me in the middle of classes, which made maximum impact on their young minds. **Sometimes parents would come up and share how that particular story or talk matched a situation at home and became a lesson for their child. It made me realize the importance of catching them young and sowing the seeds of spirituality, before their minds get tainted by worldly distractions. So that in time it grows into a sturdy tree of sterling character nurtured by the “pristine waters of human values”.** At a personal level, when my daughter won a speech competition in school, she expressed her gratitude to Bhagawan as according to her she was able to overcome her fear of public speaking only because of the practice she had while preparing for the various dramas and competitions organised on Easwaramma day.





Once we become a Bal Vikas Guru, we carry it through our lives wherever we go. As a teacher in a private missionary school, I carried Bal Vikas with me. The children here were not from Bal Vikas but nevertheless they listened to the same stories with rapt attention. I was able to drive home many a point with stories from the Chinna Katha, and the posters in my class were those of “Help Ever Hurt Never”, “Love All serve All”. I started to think of all the children as Swamis Bal Vikas students whom he had entrusted in my care to love and to mould.

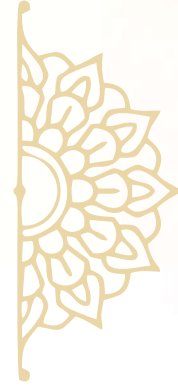
I always told them that Discipline is from Source and not by force, because God is in you in the Altar of your heart, in the body which is a moving temple. As I interspersed math and science classes with Swami's teachings, I told

them how one should always be careful while following the ABC of life. They, along with the Bal Vikas students imbibed values and learned to practice them in real life situations. **A few years back my principal called me aside to ask “What do you tell your students, Ma'am, your boys are so well behaved even when the teacher is not there in class and they are the first to line up in a disciplined way for morning assembly? “That day I felt that Bal Vikas Gurus have been empowered by Bhagawan to make a difference in the lives they touch.** Thank you Bhagawan for this opportunity to serve in your mission as a Bal Vikas Guru, though it is you alone who teach, inspire and transform and I am but a mere instrument.



Dr. Pallavi Krishnamoorthi

Gujarat



Bal Vikas -

A path of Introspection

There comes a time in life when outward achievements no longer answer the deeper questions within. For me, that phase came towards the end of my PhD journey, when I found myself searching for meaning beyond the routine “run and rush” of life. It was then that Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba entered my life like a gentle, uplifting fragrance.

With time for myself after submitting my thesis, love for music, and questions galore about the fundamentals of life, I immersed myself in Sai bhajans and His discourses. My husband, a long-time devotee of Bhagawan, who never tires of sharing Swami's teachings and *mahimas*, ensured that I had a printed discourse to read each day.

I was fortunate to get time to spend with Swami's words, without any pressing assignments. How lucidly Swami unfolds complex scriptural ideas with simplicity! Every question of mine seemed to find an answer, while also encouraging deeper inquiry. This inner journey naturally flowed into action when my daughter turned four, and children began gathering at our home. Swami's guidance to share knowledge with children felt deeply practical. That is how my Bal Vikas journey began.

What started as a small effort soon became a powerful sadhana. Preparing for classes, teaching bhajans, narrating stories, and guiding children through skits was not merely instruction; it was a mirror for me. Each value I taught subtly and powerfully questioned me: *Do you live this? Are you practising what you are preaching?* Thus, Bal Vikas became a path of constant self-introspection and inner growth.

The Bal Vikas syllabus itself is a journey of holistic learning. From the timeless wisdom of the Ramayana

and the practical guidance of the Bhagavad Gita, to the devotional depth of *Bhaja Govindam*, it offers a rich foundation rooted in our spiritual heritage. At the same time, it expands the mind through the study of all religions, nurturing respect and unity. What makes it truly transformative is its emphasis on living these values through simple yet powerful practices like WATCH (Watch Your Words, Actions, Thoughts, Character, and Heart) and Ceiling on Desires. It has been remarkable for me to witness how this journey seamlessly blends knowledge with daily practice, making learning both meaningful and deeply personal.

One defining realization came when my daughter reached Group 3. I felt she should learn under another guru, rather than only me. After being my student in Groups 1 and 2, I enrolled her with another senior guru for Group 3. Due to relocation towards the end of the year, I was concerned about how she would complete her Group 3 assessments and continue her Bal Vikas journey. This senior guru from Coimbatore ensured that she completed her assignments and even mailed her the certificate. Witnessing such sincerity and dedication among Bal Vikas gurus, towards each child's learning journey, revealed to me the unseen higher hand guiding this mission.

Similarly, while I conducted Bal Vikas (EHV) classes in Wollongong, Australia, parents travelled long distances, from Sydney to Wollongong, just so their children could attend classes. This reaffirmed the deep thirst in society for values-based education as envisioned by Bhagawan. It became evident that Swami brings together gurus, children, and parents for a larger purpose.





Bal Vikas has transformed me in ways I could not have imagined. From feeling somewhat lost earlier, I now experience a deep sense of fulfillment and grounding. It has allowed me to contribute meaningfully while staying anchored within. Over the years, Swami has also helped me develop the ability to connect with children across diverse age groups, making learning joyful and engaging. Preparing for the classes with the excellently crafted syllabus is in itself a profound learning experience.

The impact extends beyond the individual. I have seen my class children gradually become more disciplined and receptive, as if they were waiting for guidance. Parents find comfort knowing their children have a value-based support system. At home, Sundays evolved into a

collective effort, with every family member contributing in some way. It was no longer just a class; it became an ecosystem of shared growth.

Being called a “Guru” itself brings with it a quiet responsibility. It is not a title, but a reminder to live what one teaches. Yet, this responsibility is joyful, for one realizes that the true doer is Swami Himself, guiding, shaping, and nurturing every step.

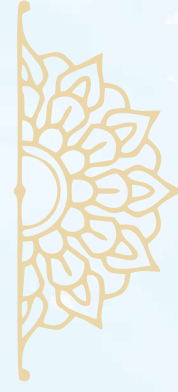
Bal Vikas, to me, is a powerful sadhana. It is a path to connect with one's inner self, and to experience the truth of the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God.

With deep gratitude, I offer this journey at the Lotus Feet of Sai Maa.



Sathya Jyothi S.M.

Karnataka North



The Transformative Journey

The role of a Guru is one of the most respected and noble in society. Serving as a Bal Vikas Guru in the Sri Sathya Sai Organization is not merely a responsibility, but a divine journey of self-transformation. It is a rare privilege to live by sacred human values and to serve as an ideal example for young minds.

I have had the privilege of being a Bal Vikas student, as well as a Guru. This role has:

- Helped me become calmer and more balanced, even in challenging situations
- Strengthened my sense of purpose and inner fulfilment
- Encouraged me to lead by example, knowing that children learn more from actions than words.

As a Guru, I have learnt more than I have taught. While narrating stories, teaching bhajans and teaching about human values through the lessons and moral stories, I was gradually led into deep self-introspection. I realized that a Guru's life is continuously refined through the very act of teaching. One cannot simply preach values; one must live them.

Bal Vikas classes became a powerful medium for my inner transformation. They helped me overcome anger and taught me to interact with everyone with love and compassion. I developed tolerance, patience, self-confidence and the ability to work independently. Earlier, I had a tendency to become angry and remain silent for a long time. However, after taking on the role of a Guru, I realized the importance of controlling my anger. Gradually, I began to regulate my emotions and consciously changed my approach. I learned to communicate calmly even after a heated argument,

choosing to speak with understanding and composure. Over time, I developed the habit of letting go of past misunderstandings and responding with patience and love.

I also learnt to manage multiple responsibilities with clarity and efficiency. When I guided children to have faith in God, to respect and serve their parents, to be disciplined and to speak lovingly, I found myself striving to practice the same in my own life. Gradually, these teachings transformed into habits, shaping my character and conduct.

My faith in our beloved Swami deepened profoundly through this journey. When I was 35 years old, I was diagnosed with a slipped disc condition and lost sensation in my left leg. Doctors advised immediate spinal surgery. During this challenging phase, I turned wholeheartedly towards prayer and began chanting the Gayatri Mantra 1008 times daily with unwavering faith. By Swami's grace and the power of the mantra, I recovered within three months through medication and spiritual strength, without undergoing surgery. This experience reinforced my belief in divine grace and the transformative power of faith.

It is indeed Swami's abundant blessing that I was given the opportunity to serve as a Principal in one of the Sathya Sai Schools of Karnataka, Ananda Sai Shikshana Samsthe, Shivamogga. Earlier, I was conducting Bal Vikas classes in our locality. Later, I was blessed with the opportunity to take Bal Vikas classes in our own Sathya Sai School. Teaching, especially the Group III Bal Vikas classes, moulded me to become humbler and more dedicated. While guiding my students, I also began to introspect and correct my own small shortcomings.





Through these classes, the students imbibed values such as unity, gentle communication, helpfulness, respect towards parents and the ability to take responsibility for their own work. The impact of Bal Vikas is clearly visible today. Many college lecturers have appreciated our students, often remarking on their humility, discipline, and cultured behaviour and expressing their desire to have more students from our school. The positive transformation they observe in our students is truly the result of Bal Vikas. Our students stand out for their humility, discipline and dedication, reflecting the true essence of value-based education. The moral stories, numerous shlokas and the service activities in which they participated at our Mandir have helped them develop essential qualities such as time management, cooperation, discipline, leadership and harmonious relationships. Many of our alumni, now

engaged in diverse fields, acknowledge that the values they learned through Bal Vikas have played a vital role in shaping both their personal lives and professional careers.

It is truly heartening to see our former Bal Vikas students, now serving in responsible and higher positions, returning to participate in Swami's Birthday celebrations. They actively involve themselves in service during festivals and regularly take part in Narayana Seva, reflecting their continued commitment to the values they have imbibed.

Thus, the journey of a Bal Vikas Guru is not limited to teaching children; it is a continuous process of self-purification, learning, and spiritual evolution. It is a path blessed by Swami, filled with purpose, inner peace and deep contentment.



Swapna Sen

Jharkhand



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas -

My Transformation, His Mission

Education is not merely the knowledge of alphabets but the formation of character. When we speak of 'Child Development' (Bal Vikas), it is not just a curriculum, but a way of life. Joining Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organization as a 'Guru Maa' has been the most transformative decision of my life. This journey has not only changed my perspective but has also opened new doors of progress for the children and their parents.

Personal Transformation After Becoming a 'Guru Maa'

Before taking on the responsibility of a Bal Vikas Guru, my outlook was limited. But when I began teaching children as a form of 'Sadhana' (spiritual practice), the first changes within me were patience and love.

Before teaching discipline to children, I had to become disciplined myself. The principle of "Practice before Preaching" made me more mindful of my daily life. After becoming a Guru Maa, personal attachment was replaced by 'universal motherhood'. Now, every child in society feels like a part of my own self.

Spiritual Awakening

While studying the Vedas, Puranas, and stories of great personalities to prepare for classes, my own spiritual understanding deepened. I learned that a teacher is, in truth, an eternal student.

Progress and Change in Children's Lives

The primary objective of Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas classes is to nurture the seeds of human values - Truth, Right Conduct, Peace, Love, and Non-violence - in the hearts of children. In a short span, remarkable improvements were observed in their behaviour.

Children who previously did not hesitate to lie or commit petty thefts now understand the glory of truth. They have developed the ability to listen to the 'voice of conscience'.

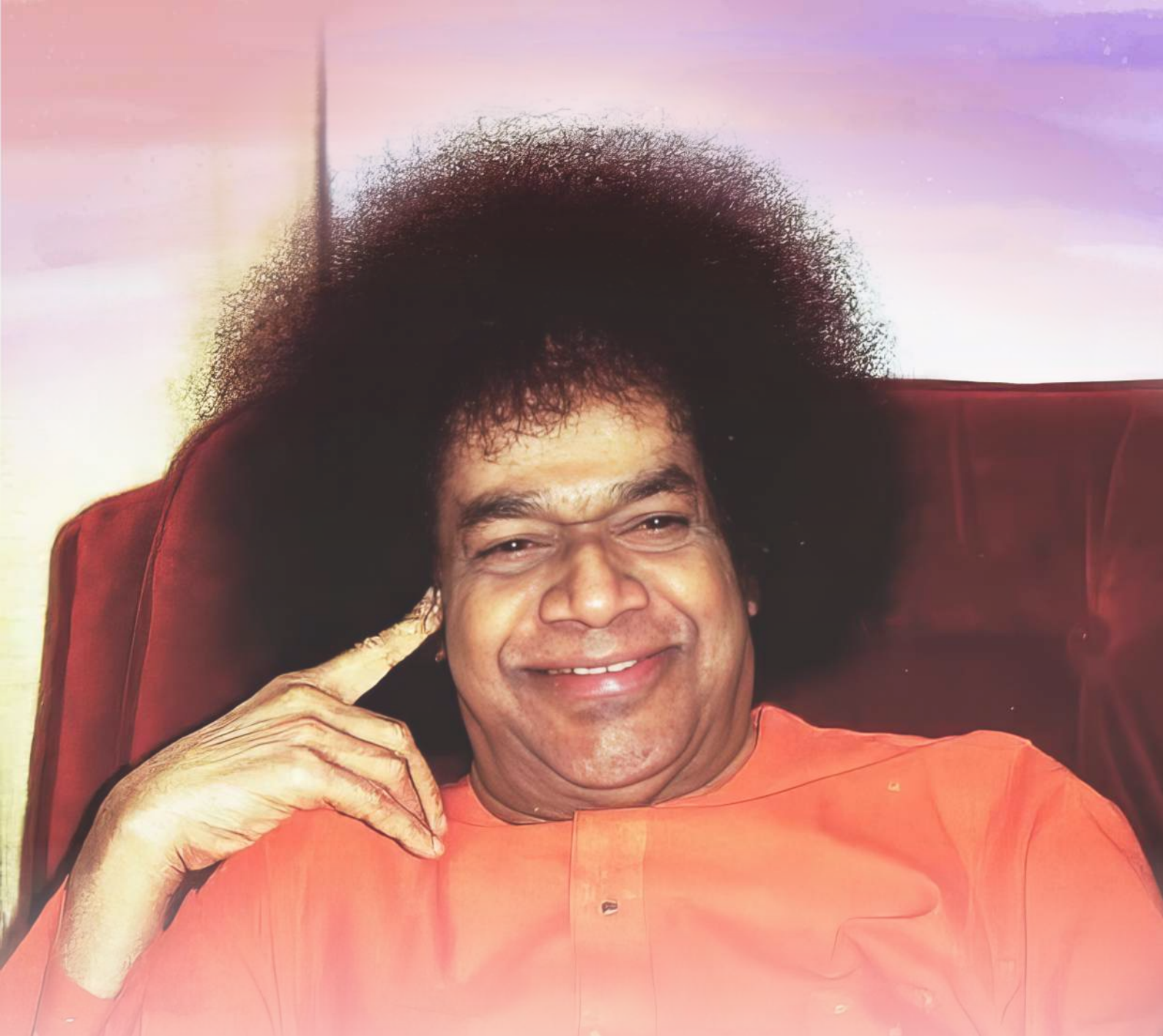
Through 'Jyoti Meditation' (Silent Sitting) and Bhajans, there has been a significant increase in children's memory and concentration. Children who were once afraid to speak on stage now recite shlokas and stories with confidence.

Children now operate with a sense of "We" instead of "I". They assist their parents at home and have become sensitive towards Nature. Small resolutions, such as practising silence and not wasting food, have made them responsible citizens.

Change in Parents' Perspective

The impact of Bal Vikas has not been limited to children; it has had a positive effect on their families as well. When children touch their parents' feet and pray at home, the domestic atmosphere becomes peaceful and free of conflict. Many parents have admitted that, because of their children, they are now giving up profanity and anger.





Parents are also influenced by the 'Ceiling on Desires' lessons taught to the children. They are reducing wasteful expenditure and prioritizing pure (Sattvic) food and thoughts.

Meaningful Connection

In today's mobile age, where the distance between parents and children was increasing, Bal Vikas has reunited them through 'cultural discussions'. Parents now feel proud that their children are not just modern, but also well-cultured.

The Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas is truly a workshop where the future of India is being built. As a Guru Maa, I have experienced that if we water the childhood with the

nectar of values (Sanskars), the child will grow into a vast Banyan tree that provides shade and coolness to society.

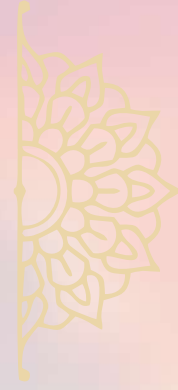
This journey has taught me that the greatest path to social service is showing children the right direction. The progress of the Nation lies in the progress of its children, and the cooperation of parents is like the main offering (Aahuti) in this sacred ritual (Yagnya). I feel extremely fortunate to have had the opportunity to be a part of this holy mission of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

**"May all the beings in all the worlds be happy."
(Samasta Lokaah Sukhino Bhavantu)**



Jaya Subramanian

Kerala



How Being a Guru Has Impacted My Life

My entry into Swami's fold was truly mysterious. As a child, my parents enrolled me in Bal Vikas for the values it imparted, and since classes were nearby, I attended regularly. My parents, back then were not much connected to Bhagawan. I too drifted away and focused on higher studies. Much later, in 2013, we enrolled our son in Bal Vikas on my sister's suggestion. One day, his Guru asked if I could serve as a Bal Vikas Guru. I agreed, and at 43, that moment marked the beginning of my journey as a Guru. Truly, the Divine Will cannot be explained or analyzed!

At first, I was hesitant, unsure of the structured syllabus compared to my time as a Bal Vikas student in 1977. Yet Swami guided me throughout. **As a Guru, I learned patience in dealing with parents and children, and through many experiences and miracles I realized Swami is the Doer and I am only His instrument. I also understood that if I encourage students to chant Sai Suprabhatham, I must practice it myself. This inspired me to begin my daily sadhana—chanting 21 Omkara and Suprabhatham each morning.**

Becoming a Bal Vikas Guru transformed me profoundly. Earlier, my focus was limited to my family, but as a Guru my heart expanded to embrace love and compassion for all.

Once shy and hesitant, Swami gave me the courage to speak in study circles and satsangs. Writing has been my passion since childhood, and for many years Swami blessed me with the opportunity to serve as a content writer for the National Bal Vikas Website.

How I Have Brought Qualitative Changes in My Surroundings

Dr. Uma Bellur, who followed the teachings of Bhagawan effortlessly, entered my life and introduced me to Swami's discourses, Vahinis and Radio Sai. This helped a lot in applying Swami's teachings in my daily life and to participate as a speaker in the online Vahini Satsang – Vahini Swadhyaya (South Bangalore).

Soon, my family too imbibed the spirit of Seva, and during COVID we joined the weekly Thepla Seva started by our Samithi. Bal Vikas parents, children, and residents prepared Theplas—a Gujarati spiced flatbread with fenugreek and seasonings—at home, packed them, and every Thursday my husband delivered them to the Samithi for distribution to migrant workers.

As a Seva, I had taken up the tutoring of our house-help Radha's son Manju, guiding him not only in academics but also in etiquette and values. We sponsored a short course in Computers for him after his 12th grade. I encouraged him to take part in Narayana Seva (packing and distribution) in Sai Gitanjali Samithi. I felt his company with Sai brothers will help shape his personality. Once he completed his BCom, he got a job in a Sai brother's office. Today, his mother's joy is immeasurable! Manju transfers his entire salary to his mother's account!

During the pandemic, our Bal Vikas student Trinesh lost his mother, and his father struggling for income, soon withdrew him from school. Moved, I prayed to Swami, and soon two sponsors came forward to support his education. Together, we enrolled him in a good government school, and today he is one of the school



toppers and is in Grade 9th and a Bal Vikas alumnus. In all this, I know I am only an instrument in the hands of the Divine.

In Bal Vikas cultural programs, I encourage all children to participate, reminding them it is a loving offering to Swami, not a talent show. This approach has helped many shy children blossom in a safe, non-judgmental space. Four years ago, we moved to Ernakulam, Kerala and I continue to serve as a Bal Vikas Guru in a Samithi. Again, His mercy!

I would like to conclude by offering a small poem at His Divine Lotus feet.

Look Inward, said Swami

*Born to earth, as a daughter, as sister,
Life unfolded with names and roles—wife, mother
Perplexed with life, the question lingered: Who am I?
A Bal Vikas Guru I became, teaching values
To children with eager eyes, tender hearts, calling me Aunty.
Yet the question lingered: Who am I?
Then I heard Swami say: “Seek the truth, for time is running.”
Guided by His love, His tender eyes and sweet smile,
Self-enquiry became my path, shedding fear and pride.
Then came His whisper: “I am You, You are Me.”
Mystified, I asked softly, “Is it so?”
“Yes, dear child,” He affirmed.
Today, with folded hands I pray for His grace,
That this truth may dawn within me someday.*



Dr Sapna Sharma Bhardwaj

Himachal Pradesh



Bend the Body,

Mend the Senses and End the Mind

As a Bal Vikas Guru, I have not yet been able to measure the impact I might be having on my immediate surroundings or on the students who have come in contact with me because an external measurement is difficult. **The work of a Bal Vikas Guru operates in subtle dimensions. It has impact on children (invisible but lasting) in values like truth, love, discipline and this may not show immediate results but they seed the subconscious and years later, in moments of crisis or choice, these teachings will surface as conscience.**

However, I have discovered that the entire exercise of the Bal Vikas Training Programme, as conceived and started by Sathya Sai Baba, is actually a deep reorientation and research process meant primarily to benefit us, the Gurus.

I am the daughter of an Army officer. We are three sisters, raised by deeply devout parents. All three of us are doctors, married to doctors, and are part of families with strong devotional backgrounds. Our parents attribute all our success, happiness, and the many miracles in our lives to our Beloved Swami.

Swami gently entered our lives in the 1990s through word of mouth, vibhuti, and the *Sanathana Sarathi* monthly magazine, which, at that time, were among the primary means of His message reaching devotees—apart from His divine darshan in dreams. These experiences were His benediction: a never-ending grace, a soulful call for a deep heart-to-heart connection, and a divine assurance.

Life was good and fulfilling, yet something within continued to tug at the heart—"this is not enough." Observing the impermanence of the world, and with

Swami's physical form no longer present, there arose a deep and urgent need for a more tangible proximity to Divinity.

Once again, His literature was studied more intensely, and His discourses were listened to with greater attention, in an attempt to find clues to the mystery of the universe, to understand the purpose of life, and to attain lasting peace and security.

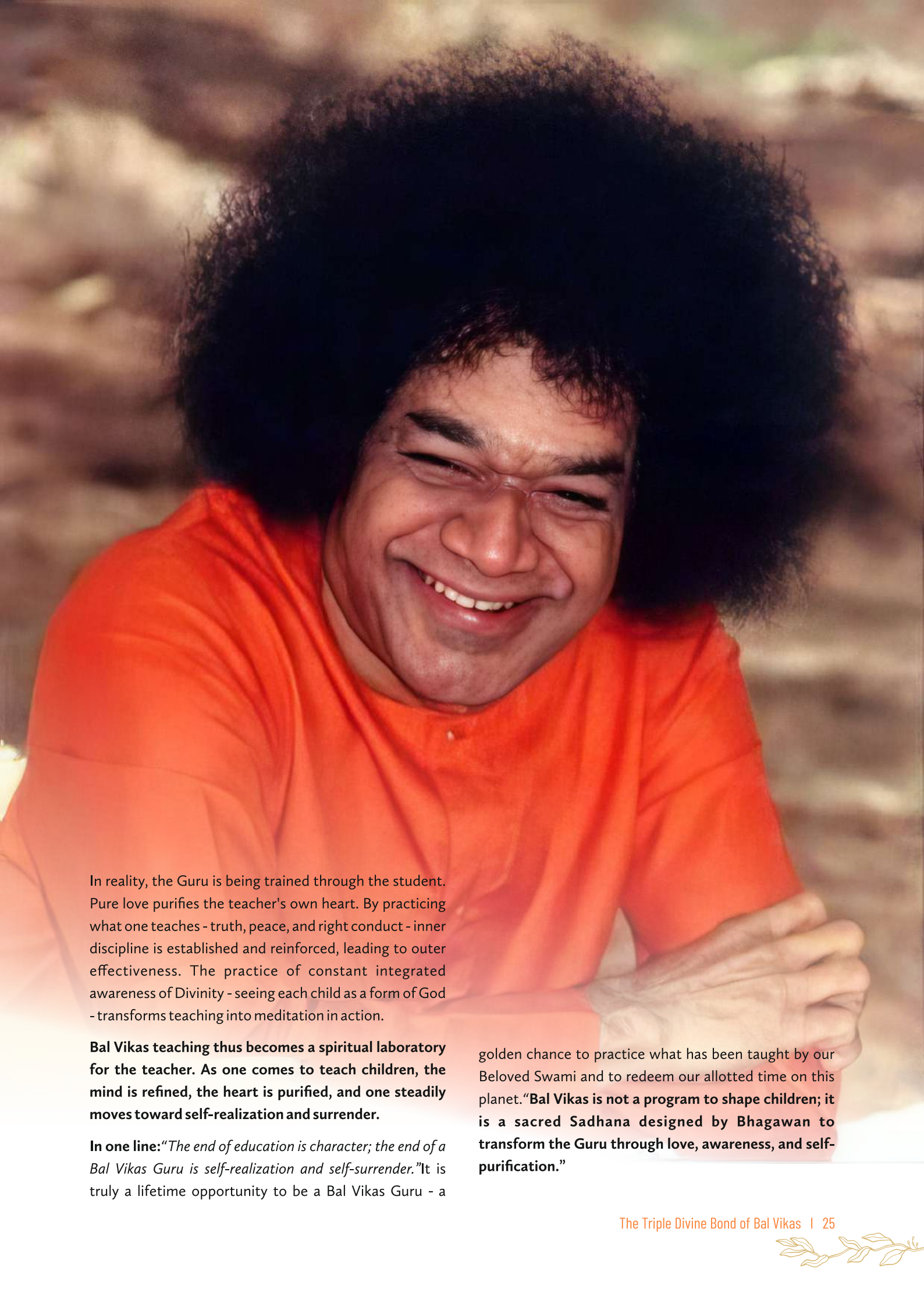
Swami's universal message has always been to realize the latent divinity within us, with constant exhortations of "*Divya Swaroopalara*." The path is clear: remove ego → purify the mind → express love → experience unity → realize divinity. He has repeatedly emphasized purity of heart (*Chitta Shuddhi*), declaring, "Purity is Unity"- when the mind is pure, one naturally experiences oneness.

Sadhana is the Sanskrit term for spiritual practice or discipline. Bhagawan Sathya Sai Baba defined sadhana as "an activity undertaken for achieving one's goal or purpose in life." It purifies the mind and heart, enabling us to know and experience our true Self as love.

Bal Vikas, therefore, is a form of sadhanaa technique for sincere seekers. A Bal Vikas Guru is not merely an instructor, but an ideal. Children learn more from who you are than from what you say. One's character, patience, and love are the true teaching tools.

Thus, teaching as a Bal Vikas Guru becomes a lifelong journey of self-observation and self-transformation. Teaching children acts as a mirror for one's own growth. Every class becomes an opportunity for self-audit—to reduce anger, increase compassion, and practice humility.





In reality, the Guru is being trained through the student. Pure love purifies the teacher's own heart. By practicing what one teaches - truth, peace, and right conduct - inner discipline is established and reinforced, leading to outer effectiveness. The practice of constant integrated awareness of Divinity - seeing each child as a form of God - transforms teaching into meditation in action.

Bal Vikas teaching thus becomes a spiritual laboratory for the teacher. As one comes to teach children, the mind is refined, the heart is purified, and one steadily moves toward self-realization and surrender.

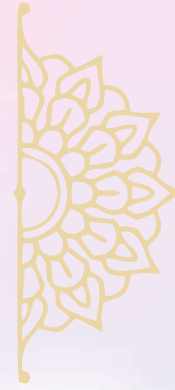
In one line: *"The end of education is character; the end of a Bal Vikas Guru is self-realization and self-surrender."* It is truly a lifetime opportunity to be a Bal Vikas Guru - a

golden chance to practice what has been taught by our Beloved Swami and to redeem our allotted time on this planet. **"Bal Vikas is not a program to shape children; it is a sacred Sadhana designed by Bhagawan to transform the Guru through love, awareness, and self-purification."**



Vaishali Lela

Maharashtra West



Being a Bal Vikas Guru -

Shaping my Character

I consider myself truly blessed and deeply fortunate to have served as a Bal Vikas guru for over 20 years. Teaching has always been my passion, but serving as a Bal Vikas Guru goes beyond passion, it is a true expression of selfless service. This is because in each Bal Vikas class I experience Swami's presence always guiding me. It is Swami who conducts His Bal Vikas class.

Few years back as a new guru, exploring Bal Vikas syllabus was a completely new and enriching learning experience for me. With every passing year, I find myself gaining deeper insights and discovering new dimensions within the syllabus.

Becoming a Bal Vikas guru is not just about guiding others, it is a journey of transforming oneself. **“TRANSFORMING SELF TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD.”**

It involves a continuous process of self-reflection. This role has significantly influenced both my life and personality by fostering self-awareness, mindfulness, emotional regulation, and ethical responsibility.

Swami says: **“ THE END OF EDUCATION IS CHARACTER “**

Being a Bal Vikas guru is shaping my character, enhancing my moral values.

Being a Bal Vikas guru has impacted my personality and life on multiple levels: cognitive, emotional, social, spiritual, and physical.

On cognitive level it has sharpened my thinking and understanding. When you teach the same topic to multiple batches of Bal Vikas students you revise the

material repeatedly, explain concepts clearly. Different students ask different questions, this refines our explanations each time, making them simpler and more intuitive.

The syllabus is based on 5 universal human values, spirituality, Indian heritage, and Indic philosophy. Initially, teaching these profound concepts to children seemed quite challenging. However, the five teaching techniques of Bal Vikas made the process much simpler and more effective, helping me first understand the concepts clearly and then convey them to children in an engaging and relatable way.

This has boosted my confidence, improved my communication skills and shaped my personality.

Swami says: “Knowledge without action is useless”

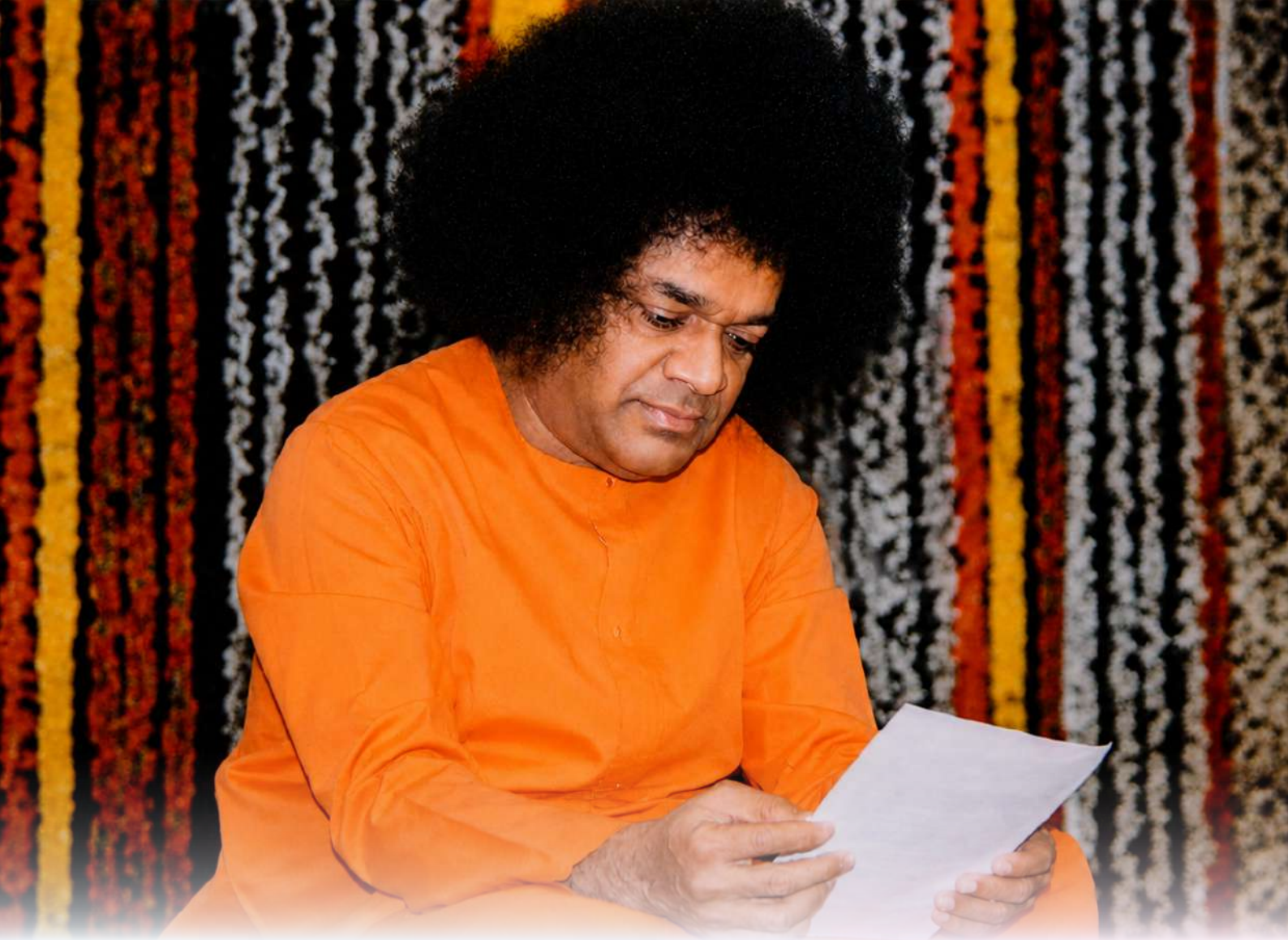
Teaching concepts in Bal Vikas helps me to impart knowledge to my children and ensure that I as a guru and my Bal Vikas children both implement this knowledge in our day to day life.

On an emotional level, my journey as a Bal Vikas Guru has truly transformed me.

It has enabled me to genuinely understand and connect with others' feelings (students, co-gurus and parents). I have become a more attentive and patient listener, and I am able to respond with both sympathy and empathy, gaining a deeper and more meaningful understanding of the 5 universal human values and sub-values, and learning how to live them in everyday life.

The social aspect: Bal Vikas has strengthened my social connections. The success of Bal Vikas is the triple





partnership between Bal Vikas guru, Bal Vikas student and Bal Vikas parent. Hence it is my family and my Bal Vikas extended family. And this journey has been a beautiful transformation - from “I” to “We” to “Him.” It has helped me move beyond self-centred thinking towards collective well-being, and further towards a deeper spiritual connection with the Divine.

This has helped me cultivate harmony, love, and understanding within my family and my extended Bal Vikas family (other by gurus, students, parents). Through this practice, I have been able to live my Stree dharma fully - fulfilling my responsibilities as a daughter, wife, daughter-in-law, mother, and in numerous other roles, along with my role and my duties as a Bal Vikas guru.

Bal Vikas has helped me to lead a true spiritual life.

Bal Vikas, has played a role in awakening the divine spark within me through questions like “*Koham?*” (Who am I?), encouraging reflection on one's true identity beyond the

physical and material world. *Japa* and *dhyana* help me calm my mind. This cultivates the ability to concentrate, contemplate, and meditate on the divine. Bal Vikas not only imparts knowledge but nurtures a lived experience of spirituality, guiding one towards inner peace.

At physical level, everyone has to undergo many health issue. I too face certain health issues but Bal Vikas is a multivitamin tablet with the following composition:

5Ds: Devotion, Discipline, Dedication, Discrimination, Determination

3Ps: Purity, Patience, Perseverance

ONE MOTTO: First BE then DO then TELL

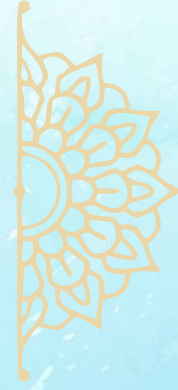
I offer my heartfelt and humble gratitude to our beloved Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba for His constant presence in my life - guiding me at every step, protecting me, and showering His infinite grace and blessings upon me.

I earnestly pray to Swami to continue to guide and strengthen me in the future, so that I may carry forward His sacred and divine Bal Vikas program.



Lakshmi Gurumoorthy

Maharashtra West 1



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas -

A Divine Journey

My foundation in Bal Vikas was laid more than twenty-five years ago, when I first became associated with Swami's Education in Human Values (EHV) Program. Being a qualified teacher, teaching has always come naturally to me. However, life took its own course - there was a gap of nearly a decade during which I got married and was blessed with a child. During those years, I accompanied my son to his Chinmaya Bal Vihar classes, and as a parent, I found myself enjoying the sessions immensely. Soon after, my son was admitted into Class I at Swami's primary school, and I suddenly felt a vacuum in my life, with emotions that were difficult to process.

As destiny would have it, we moved into a new locality where Sai activities were vibrant and flourishing. I became a regular participant in bhajans and gradually began teaching value songs in a few Bal Vikas classes. Around this time, I was encouraged to attend a two-day Guru training program, which I completed with enthusiasm. Shortly thereafter, one of the Gurus went on maternity leave, and I was asked to take over her class. With the guidance of two wonderful mentors who supported me at every step, my life - once seemingly empty - was suddenly filled with new meaning and purpose.

I discovered immense joy in being with children. Each week, I eagerly awaited the Sunday Bal Vikas classes, spending the days in preparation - reading stories, planning activities, designing games, and selecting songs. This process became a form of sadhana for me, filling me with energy and devotion. Cultural programs brought me great satisfaction as well, whether it was searching for themes, identifying children to

participate, or training them for performances. These activities fulfilled my creative aspirations while deepening my spiritual connection.

Teaching Group 1 gave me the joy of being a Guru, but it was in Group 2 that I felt my own spiritual evolution truly begin. Topics such as Omkaaram and Suprabhatam instilled discipline in my daily life. Having been introduced to Swami at the tender age of one, and visiting Puttaparthi every year, I found my bond with Him growing stronger. While teaching Ashtotram to children, I often shared incidents from Swami's life, which further deepened my own connection with Him. Inspired, I began reading Sai literature, and through topics like the Bhagavad Geeta and Bhaja Govindam, I was introduced to the timeless teachings of Krishna and Adi Shankara. Exploring different religions broadened my outlook, while Group 3 subjects such as the Management of Thought, Breath, and Time served as practical guides for living a balanced life.

My role as a coordinator taught me the importance of teamwork. Leadership, I realized, was not merely about delegating tasks but about standing alongside the team, guiding and supporting them. My public speaking skills improved, and the experience of planning and executing events taught me to pay attention to the smallest details, which are often overlooked. Conducting training sessions gave me the opportunity to motivate new Gurus to embark on this path of self-improvement and spirituality.

Of course, life is never without trials, and mine has been no exception. Many times, personal challenges coincided with major Bal Vikas events. Yet, my involvement in Bal





Vikas gave me the strength and fortitude to face these difficulties with courage and faith.

It is heartening to see parents encouraging their children to engage in seva activities such as Narayan Seva, cleanliness drives, and visits to destitute homes. Hearing parents describe the positive changes in their children affirms that Swami's message is reaching young hearts. The most rewarding part of this journey, however, has been witnessing the children's own transformation. **One Bal Vikas student, after completing the nine-year program, went on to study at a premier national institution in Delhi, where she actively participated in social service—coaching underprivileged students for competitive exams, organising health camps for sanitation workers, and joining a Yamuna River clean-up drive. She later shared that these experiences constantly reminded her of the seva activities she had**

participated during her Bal Vikas days, saying, “All this was possible because of the profound impact that Bal Vikas had on my life.” That moment truly became the most fulfilling reward of this journey

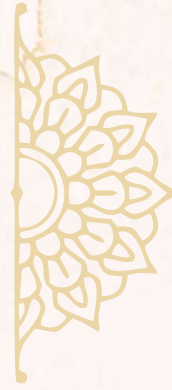
Looking back, I realize that although I missed the golden opportunity of being a Bal Vikas student myself, Swami, in His infinite kindness, blessed me with the chance to shape young minds and contribute to His mission. What I could not receive as a child, He lovingly allowed me to experience as a Guru. For this priceless blessing, my heart overflows with gratitude.

I remain deeply thankful to my parents and my family for their constant support throughout my Bal Vikas journey. Above all, I offer my heartfelt gratitude to Swami, who has held my hand and guided me every step of the way.



Pooja Sawhney

Telangana



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas -

A Journey of Transformation

I offer my most reverential Pranams at the lotus feet of my Master, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. A proverb goes that, ***“When a disciple is ready, the Master appears.”*** It highlights that the guidance and knowledge arrive when an individual is genuinely prepared and is open to receiving that knowledge. The appearance of my Master in my life happened in 1992, when I saw Swami for the first time at a tender age of 15. I had visited Puttaparthi on a school trip and my first glimpse of my Master left me teary eyed and with emotions that as a 15 year old I was unable to describe or fathom then.

Two years later, in 1994, I joined Swami's women's college at Anantapur for under graduation and my journey as his student began. The college gave me academic excellence coupled with spiritual values, the fruit of which ripened in my life much later. As a student, I was always drawn to the 5 human values and wanted to exemplify them in my life. I finished my under graduation and had a brief stint at work before getting married into a family whose life breath was Swami. With Swami's blessings, a new chapter of my life began, where Swami was the center and our lives orbited around him.

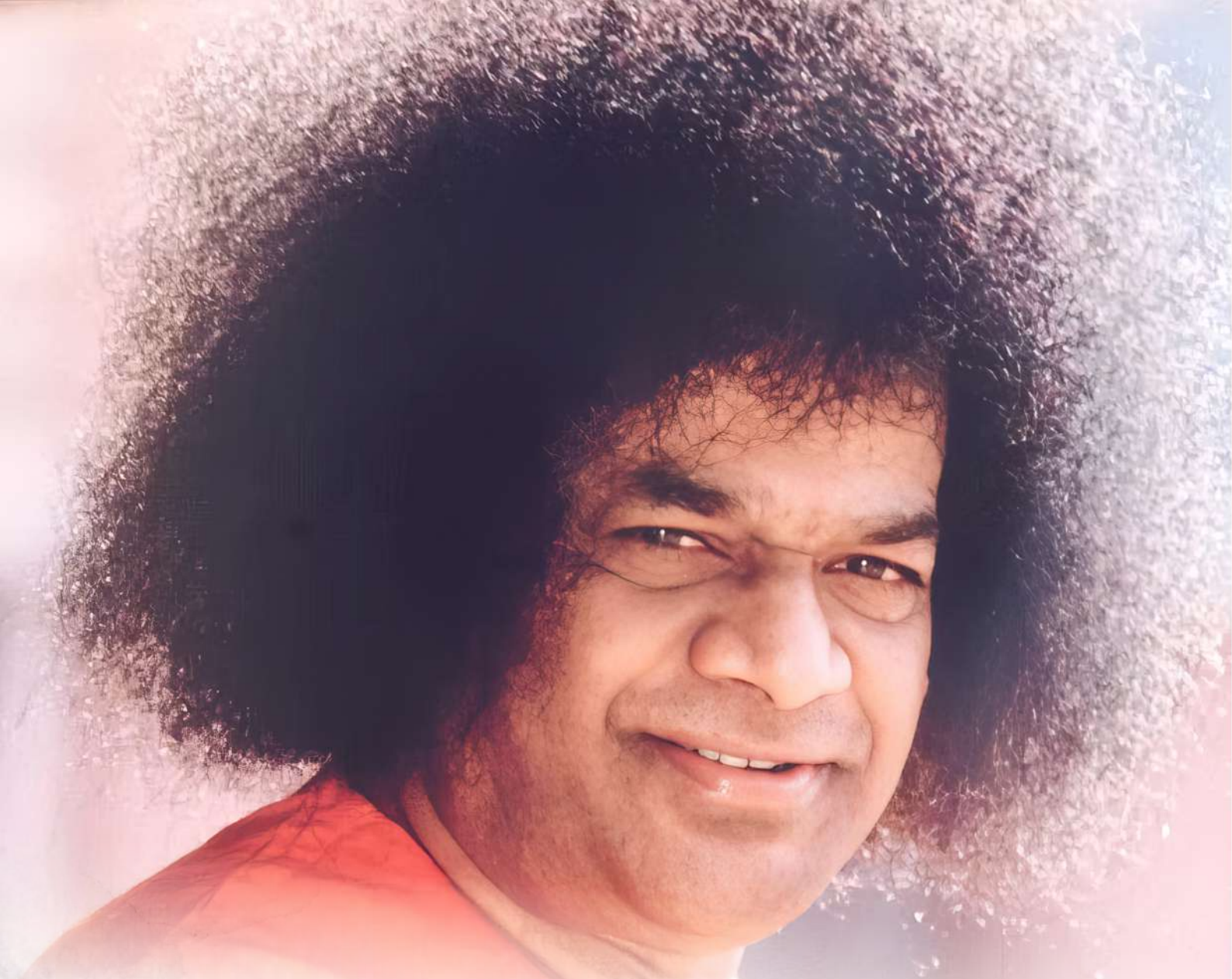
My husband and I moved from Delhi to Hyderabad in 2003. After experiencing the rigor of corporate life for a few years, I consciously decided to move out of it. Swami guided me on my career shift to teaching children gradually. Though love for children came to me naturally, teaching was something I had never imagined doing in my life. Even though I excelled at my newfound career of teaching, there was a void in my heart that was waiting to be filled by something greater and more meaningful. On

one of my visits to Puttaparthi during Shivaratri, I was seated in the Sai Kulwant Hall with a prayerful heart. When Swami arrived, He came towards where I was seated and looked at me. With my eyes filled with tears, I held his chair and said, ***“Swami, I want to transform (myself)!”*** He continued to look at me and my tears refused to stop. Within a month, I was holding Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas books in my hands from Dharmakshetra, Mumbai, oblivious to the fact that my journey of transformation was about to begin.

Sharing spiritual knowledge with the young minds and living up to the exalted title of a Bal Vikas Guru bestowed by Swami was something I was unsure of. Before beginning the Bal Vikas class at our home, I told my husband out of skepticism that this would not last more than 2 weeks. From 2 weeks to 20 years now, we both are on this journey following the guidance of our beloved Master consistently. To any individual who desires to walk this path, remember these words of Swami, ***“I do not want your ability, I want your availability. If you are available, I will make you able.”*** I experienced the truth of these words on my journey.

Bal Vikas has been a journey of self-transformation in answer to my prayer to Swami. The transformation has been slow, subtle but sure and steady. The journey taught me to dive deep within my inner world to explore, discover, feel, appreciate, and bring out the latent Godself residing within. It made me connect to my inner Swami who is always there as a silent witness and is ever ready to guide. I experienced that the Master is not the Deha but the Dehi -The Indweller.





Bal Vikas helped me gain deep insight into the scriptural knowledge of our land, and into Bharatiya culture and tradition. It made me value and respect my motherland much more. It helped me know and understand the universal teachings of Swami and the 5 human values deeply. Beyond this, it helped me realize the truth that practising these teachings is much more important than just knowing them. I remember reading that Swami had once told a devotee, ***“The only way to ensure that you get complete grace and my poorna krupa (complete grace) is by holding on to My teachings.”*** He continued, ***“I am not important, what is important are My teachings.”*** My constant endeavor on this journey is to live by the thought that, ***“The only way to value the Master is to Master His values.”*** I am doing this one step at a time, one value at a time and it has made me more loving, kind, calm, joyful, and understanding.

Swami says that a person who does Seva is the first beneficiary of that Seva. **Through this noble Seva of Bal Vikas for young children, I have been the primary**

beneficiary. Through me Swami has been inspiring the young minds to lead a life that is God loving, value centered, and with a purpose and meaning. They carry discrimination between right and wrong in their heads, love for all in their hearts, and willingness to serve through their hands.

With deep gratitude to my Divine Master for choosing me to be His instrument, I close with a prayer given to Dr. John Hislop by Bhagawan Himself:

“O Lord, take my love, and let it flow in fullness of devotion to Thee”

“O Lord, take my hands, and let them work incessantly for Thee”

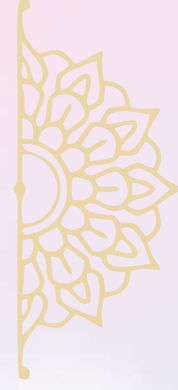
“O Lord, take my mind and thoughts, and let them be in tune with Thee” ***“O Lord, take my soul, and let it be merged in One with Thee”***

“O Lord, take my everything, and let me be an instrument to work for Thee”



Sreeprabha Sivaswamy

Tamil Nadu North



Mother Sai –

The Divine Engine

Whenever I enter the realms of pensive mood, the fountain of bliss gets unplugged in me, and am reminded of the omniscience and unfathomable love of our Divine mother.

As part of seventy fifth birthday celebrations of our Lord, a mass marriage for seventy-five couples were conducted in Sundaram, Chennai. After the grand event, those who desired to have darshan of Swami, were taken to Parthi in a convoy of chartered buses. As we entered Puttaparthi to the welcome music of chirping birds, little did we know what our Mother had planned for us!

All of us had a wonderful darshan. After darshan, Swami announced that He would give Padanamaskar to all the devotees gathered in Sai Kulwant Hall at that point of time. Immediately volunteers flung into action, and all of us were seated for Padanamaskar in rows facing each other.

My Group 3 girl came with me. She had told me it was her birthday. I got her some chocolates and a plate and asked her to offer them to Swami if He came near. Swami glided between the rows, and in that “Sai Sarovar”, at that point of time, several faces bloomed like lotuses with devotion. That girl was lucky in that her mother sent her happily to have Lord's darshan. The daughter was her only solace after her widow hood. It was the girl's birthday. She gave lot of importance to Bal Vikas as the connecting bridge between her daughter and the universal mother.

Suddenly there was an exclamation of joy and a rain of chocolates at the far end of the row facing me. I knew that Swami had blessed some body, though not sure if it was her. She was also seated there. **Then He slowly came**

near me and dropped two chocolates on my lap saying, “This is for you” in Tamil. As I took Padanamaskar, He asked “when are you going?”. I replied “You tell me Swami, as you say”. He smiled beautifully, and softly said, “you want me to tell, good, good”, and moved on.

My student came running to me with tears of joy streaming down her eyes, said that Swami blessed her, took the chocolate from the plate and threw them to the devotees and took 2 chocolates, closed His palm and left. I showed the two He had given. She kept wondering about the connection He made. He had in a subtle manner shown His Omniscience.

As I ponder over this, I feel that the child is like the front wheel of a three-wheeler, while parents and Guru are the rear wheels, if we compare Bal Vikas to a vehicle. The vehicle is made dynamic and vibrant, and the carrier of peace and joy to the world, by the engine. Connecting dots, I felt that He is always present in all our classes, and knows all about us.

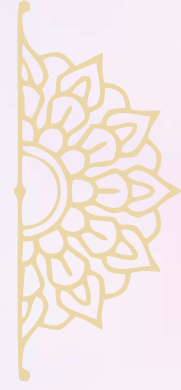
When we realise the omniscience of Swami, then with purity, patience, and perseverance, we will discharge the divinely ordained duty, the moulding of the architects of the future world, with love and devotion. Swami wants us first to “Be, do and then tell”. This requires disciplined life from parents and gurus. Children learn more by seeing than by our telling. So, with determination we have to always discriminate between ephemeral and permanent.

Bal Vikas time is our appointment with Him. Conducting the classes with commitment is the best puja and seva that we can offer our Lord. Such a commitment from the trio will ensure a peaceful world for the posterity. By being a Bal Vikas guru we do individual sadhana and also selfless seva to society.



Sanchita Bose

West Bengal One



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas -

Gateway to Experiential Wisdom

Words are inadequate to express my gratitude to the Purna Brahma Avatar for descending in this Kali Yuga and blessing me with a place at His Divine Feet. I am especially grateful for the sacred opportunity He has blessed me with, to serve as a Guru in His Divine Mission. I pray for His constant guidance to be able to fulfil this duty in the best way possible.

Along with my Lord, I am eternally grateful to my parents, who nurtured me from a very young age with the invaluable gift of Bal Vikas education.

From childhood, I was extremely shy and hesitant, and I struggled with a deep lack of self-confidence. It was Bal Vikas that transformed me by instilling confidence and inner strength. After completing my Bal Vikas education, I began serving as an Assistant Guru during my Pre-Sevadal years. At that time, I did not fully comprehend the profound significance of this service. Over the years, however, I came to realize that the true fulfilment of my life lies in carrying out the noble responsibility that God has bestowed upon me.

The role of a Bal Vikas Guru extends far beyond teaching lessons; it is, in essence, the sacred art of character-building. I came to understand that I can never ask children to practise values that I do not embody myself. Bal Vikas is not merely a teaching assignment - it is a powerful Sadhana (spiritual discipline) for every Guru. Through this Sadhana, my personality and character have been shaped and refined.

By striving to live according to Swami's message of "Love All, Serve All," a Guru naturally develops compassion, a spirit of service, and respect for all forms of diversity. Nothing can be achieved without Sadhana, and the very

foundation of Sadhana is Love. By sincerely practising the "Five Ds" prescribed by Swami, I endeavour to balance my responsibilities towards my family with my duties to the Organization.

This sacred service has become a profound spiritual practice that helps me in every step of my daily life. It helps me purify my mind. It has blessed me with Anubhav Jnana - experiential wisdom. Through this wisdom, my patience, endurance, and capacity for forgiveness have grown significantly. Worldly thoughts have reduced, and I have learned to practice 'Ceiling on Desires'. As a result, I have been able to turn my mind inward to some extent.

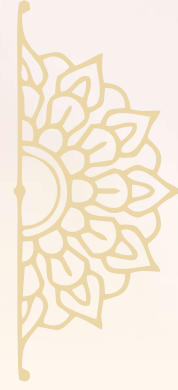
I firmly believe that the peace and harmony in my family life are rooted in this education. To become the pillar of a family, one must first awaken and embody values within oneself. When we become living examples of these values, our family members naturally follow, and those values gradually spread throughout society.

As a Guru, if I do not strive to be an ideal example, my students will not truly accept the teachings I impart. Therefore, I endeavour to regard Swami's instructions to Gurus as His precious Ratnamala - a Garland of Gems gifted to Gurus. I practise these teachings as my Sadhana and humbly offer them at His Lotus Feet.



Chitra Mohan

Maharashtra West 1



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas -

My Conscience Keeper

My Bal Vikas story began when I was nine years old. My parents had visited Bhagawan in the 1960s where He had assured my mother, “I know you have two children. I will take care of them.” They were so happy when Bal Vikas and Sai bhajans began in our colony a few years later.

Bal Vikas was that magical portal which brought me face to face with Divinity itself! Swami would visit Dharmakshetra in Mumbai at least two or three times every year and I fondly remember those times as among the happiest days in my childhood. God was not just a Being in the photograph anymore. He became intimately personal and tangible. Infinitely compassionate, all-knowing and always available, He was just a call away.

Many years later, when I started taking Bal Vikas, the understanding dawned that Bal Vikas is about walking with the children towards God. Like in the 'Om Sahana vavatu' prayer, both the Guru and the student are co-travellers in this sacred journey, learning and growing together. When I look back at what I have learnt from Bal Vikas and my children in Bal Vikas, I realise that the learning has been endless.

I remember Rishabh, who seemed primed for Bal Vikas, always eager to listen and absorb. When I met his mother once, I felt touched when she told me that both of them practised Jyoti meditation together every day because Rishabh had taught her what he had learnt in Bal Vikas. She also spoke of how he would stop his little friends from quarrelling and fighting. “Come, let's talk things out”, he would plead with them. It didn't matter to him that they teased him 'Guruji'! A reminder that sometimes, all we need is a quiet, honest conversation to become centred again. It's interesting to see how the same virtues

stay with us. When Rishabh entered engineering college, one day, his classmates decided to mass-bunk and the entire class quickly left the classroom. When the professor walked in, Rishabh was the lone student in class. “Sir”, he said, “You would have prepared for the lecture. Please teach me. I want to learn.” He told his mother later that no matter where he went, he'd carry the values he learnt in Bal Vikas with him.

When we speak of peer pressure, even amongst us adults, and our desperate need to seek approval, Rishabh's courage to stand alone by his conviction was an inspiration. He had allowed himself to be guided by the moral compass within.

We have had a few kids with special needs in our Bal Vikas class – mildly autistic, with speech and learning deficits, and the lesson for me has been to open my heart to embrace every child alike. I noticed that when as Gurus, we are loving and respectful, the other kids catch on so beautifully. When I see them support and cheer one another, I am witness to the unifying power of Love.

Bal Vikas is a bond between the Guru and child that extends far beyond the weekly classes, sadhana camps, and trips to Prasanthi Nilayam. How surprised I was when I received a short message from one of our girls, Deepika, years after she had left Bal Vikas and was studying medicine. “Sai Ram aunty”, it read. “I learnt in Bal Vikas what no school or college ever taught me.”. The beautiful saying, 'Trust the seeds you are planting' came to mind. We can be sure that Swami will always nurture what has been planted in His name. At times, even when we might be doing our sincere best, the children might seem distracted or bored. Sometimes, the





numbers in our Bal Vikas class might be small. Some children might even quit. But, without getting disheartened, the wisdom is in the conviction that every child is precious for the Divine Parent. Swami has a plan for every one of us, isn't it?

I am filled with gratitude when I realise that over the years, some lessons have deepened. Sometimes, prayers have become less mechanical, stories and Swami's teachings have become more meaningful, Bhajans and songs often tune me in to Swami in a very special way. Bal Vikas has been my conscience-keeper. Swami's words, "*Cheppinatu Chesthara?*" (Do you do as you say?), the voice chimes, and then I am reminded to become more

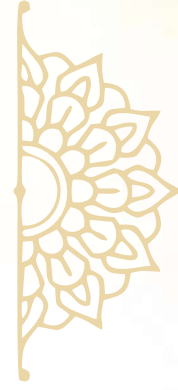
mindful and conscious. Were it not for my children in Bal Vikas, I would never have stepped out of my laziness to read up, prepare and try to give my best to Bal Vikas. **But I have also realised that Bal Vikas is far more than prayers, songs, stories, games and activities.** "How best can I as a Bal Vikas teacher help the child and myself build an intimate and beautiful relationship with the Lord within?", is a question I ask myself.

I am still a work in progress. But, for the sacred opportunity to be part of the Bal Vikas legacy which continues to correct and mould me, I shall forever be indebted to Swami.



Akriti Pradhan

West Bengal- II



The Divine Cycle:

Steering with Love, Moving with Faith

As we approach the momentous Centenary of our Beloved Bhagavan, reflecting on the journey of Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas feels less like reviewing a curriculum and more like witnessing the unfolding of a divine tapestry. For decades, this movement has served as the spiritual bedrock for millions, centered on the profound analogy Bhagavan often shared regarding the bicycle of life. In this divine transport, we as Gurus represent the front wheel, tasked with providing direction and steering the child away from the detours of worldly distraction. However, as Bhagavan emphasized, a front wheel alone—no matter how perfectly aligned—cannot create momentum; it can only point the way. The parents, serving as the rear wheel, provide the essential motive power. For the child to develop a steady character, these two wheels must be in perfect alignment, ensuring that the lessons of the classroom are mirrored by the atmosphere of the home.

In the Bal Vikas classroom, we plant the seeds of Satya and Dharma, watching children's faces light up as they embrace the philosophy of "Help Ever, Hurt Never." Yet, the true test of these lessons occurs when the child returns home. **If a Guru teaches the importance of soft speech but the parent's "rear wheel" provides a motive power of harshness, the bicycle of the child's life begins to wobble. Character is not built in a vacuum; it is forged in the harmony between what is taught and what is lived. When parents move in sync with the Guru's guidance, reinforcing the five human values through their own daily conduct, the child experiences a seamless transition from spiritual theory to lived reality. This unity of purpose ensures that the "central**

hub"—the child—rotates smoothly, developing a character that is resilient and grounded in divinity.

One of the most beautiful revelations of being a Bal Vikas Guru is realizing that while we steer the children, the process fundamentally transforms us. To be a reliable "front wheel," a Guru must personally embody the values we preach; we cannot guide a child toward Peace if our own minds remain a battlefield. Over the years, I have seen shy, uncertain seedlings blossom into Alumni who are now stalwarts of society—professionals who carry the fragrance of Sai into every corner of the world. This success is never the result of the Guru's efforts in isolation, but rather the fruit of a disciplined partnership where parents took Bhagavan's message to heart, ensuring the home was a sanctuary of love and Vedic values. Their commitment provides the "push" that allows the child to navigate the uphill climbs of modern life without losing their spiritual balance.

As we prepare this special Centenary Issue, we are celebrating much more than a milestone in time; we are honouring the millions of lives that have been set on the right path through this triple partnership. To my fellow Gurus, let us continue to sharpen our spiritual direction with renewed dedication, and to the parents, we urge you to keep the motive power of your homes fuelled by prayer and consistent character. To the Alumni who stand as the hubs of these great wheels, your lives are the living testimony of this partnership's success. Let us collectively pray that as we march towards the 100th year of the Advent, every child in Bal Vikas finds their wheels in perfect alignment, pedalling steadily towards the ultimate goal of a life dedicated to the selfless service of God and humanity.





ALUMNI

“Students have to cultivate gratitude, compassion and tolerance.
Sympathy with the distressed is a fundamental human quality.
Show your gratitude to your parents, to those who have
nourished and cherished you”.

- Baba





Lt Gen Madhuri Kanitkar (Retd)

PVSM, AVSM, VSM
Maharashtra West



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas Class and Me

The year was 1973. I must have been a young pre-teen girl eager to enter adolescence. My parents were posted to Lucknow. Dad had been in Japan for almost five years. Initially, my sister Nilima and me lived in Japan for two years, but then came back to India and studied in a boarding school. You will agree that this was probably the most unstable and impressionable phase of my life. My mother was keen that we have some guidance and mentoring to equip us with life education and a road map for our future. Luckily, her aunt had introduced her and brought her into Baba's fold in the early 70s. Thus, in Lucknow she found her bearings and we started attending Thursday Bhajans. That's where we got to know about Bal Vikas classes. We also knew that they start classes from 5- or 6-year-old children, and we were fairly grown up, but my mother was convinced that it's never too late. She therefore enrolled all her three daughters: me, the eldest, two years younger was Nilima, and the youngest sister was just five years old.

Every Sunday morning, we looked forward to getting dressed, picking up our notebooks and off we went for Bal Vikas class. **The morning was spent learning about values, scriptures, and singing bhajans. At that time, it was probably just an activity, little realizing that this would impact our future life so deeply. I remember being told lovely stories, writing down bhajans in our notebooks and singing them together.** There was always some little prasad, which was the highlight. Aunt who guided us, was always so loving and warm.

It was in these classes that we learnt about religion being a way of life. Sayings like "Work is worship, duty is devotion", "Love all, serve all" were some of the mantras we learned. We also learnt to take part in

Nagar Sang kirtan in the morning as well as Narayana Seva. These were simple philosophy and life lessons to reach out to help one another, and that life is not about I, me, and myself.

Little did I realize that they were the formative years, a foundation on which I would build my life based on these virtues which were ingrained in me. **I think the importance of Bal Vikas class and the transformation it brings on little minds is even more important in this day and age. With increasing screen times, access to mobile phones, iPads, and now the recent threat of artificial intelligence what is needed is a human connect, a simple elder teaching you the virtues, some good habits, good practices, and a comradeship with all the other children.** This Program needs to be evaluated for its impact over the years and the lasting effect on so many children who are adults and elders today.

On my last visit to Prasanthi Nilayam I was so happy to learn that this is happening and the Program is being evaluated from the educational point of view. It cannot be a more appropriate time where society needs good citizens and good human beings. **If we are looking towards a Viksit Bharat, it cannot be without investing in children who are going to be the future citizens of the country. It is said that you need a whole village to bring up a child, but before that, we can easily have Bal Vikas classes nurturing children for all-round development.**



Narayan Sethuramon

Vice Chairman, Sanmar
Matrix Metals Ltd, Tamil Nadu



Living the Sai Way –

Start Early through Joining Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas

It is indeed a privilege to be able to contribute an article for the special edition of the Bal Vikas magazine being offered at Our Divine Lord's Lotus feet on the occasion of the global Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas Gurus conference. I thank the organizers for this opportunity!

I joined Bal Vikas at an early age in Group 1 and continued till the end of Group 3. I used to attend the classes being held in Alwarpet, Chennai at the residence of the late Shri Easwar. He and his entire family were staunch devotees of Bhagavan and Swami has blessed him, his family and his residence through his visits several times. Entering the residence itself those Sundays for Bal Vikas, one could feel the blessing of Swami and there was definitely an aura there. The classes were on Sundays between 3.30 pm to 5 pm. It was afternoon outing as post Bal Vikas classes, we used to have a game of cricket also there and then only leave!!

I have the deepest regard and respect for my Guru. He was a gentleman and a fantastic teacher. He had a unique way of getting the attention of all the children and developing in all of us an interest in our ancient scriptures and Value based education. Thanks to his engaging method of teaching, all the children were in rapt attention through the class and we never realised the time go by. I was delighted to recently meet his son and share wonderful memories with him of his father.

Joining Bal Vikas at an early age when one's absorption abilities are at the maximum helped me to learn many shlokas, our Lord's Suprabatham, Ashtotram and more. Even today, if I am able to remember and chant many of these, the credit purely goes to the Bal Vikas classes.

Bal Vikas – a must for every child

Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas is much more than a weekly class for children. It is a gentle and joyful journey that helps a child blossom into a good, disciplined, confident, and compassionate human being following the Human Values laid down by our Lord and Master. The word “**Bal Vikas**” means “**Blossoming of the child**”, and the programme was founded by Swami with the aim of instilling the right human values within every child so that the right foundation is laid and one grows up into an adult with the right moral compass. **In a world where education is often understood only as marks, ranks, and careers, Bal Vikas reminds students that true education must also build character, kindness, humility, and service-mindedness.**

Bal Vikas exposes every child to the five basic human values: Sathya (Truth), Dharma (Righteousness), Shanti (Peace), Prema (Love), and Ahimsa (Non-violence). These values are introduced through stories, prayers, games, group activities, role plays, and examples from daily life. As a result, children grow up understanding that speaking the truth, respecting elders, helping friends, controlling anger, and being kind to all are the foundation of a meaningful life. Bal Vikas does not replace school education; it strengthens it by adding values, purpose, and balance.

Another important benefit is that Bal Vikas connects students with India's rich cultural and spiritual heritage. Students are introduced to inspiring stories from the scriptures, epics, saints, sages, national leaders, and noble personalities. At the same time, Bal Vikas encourages respect for all religions and faiths. Bal





Vikas emphasises that God may be worshipped in many names and forms, but love, goodness, and service are common to all paths. This broad outlook helps children grow with tolerance, respect, and unity.

Bal Vikas provides a strong foundation for one to continue participating in the Sai mission following Swami's teaching of "Love All, Serve All;". The lessons learnt in childhood remain as guiding lights during teenage years and adulthood. **Students understand that success without character is incomplete, and knowledge without compassion is empty. A Bal Vikas student becomes truthful in thought, loving in speech, noble in action, and useful to society. Such students are the hope of the nation, for they carry within them the light of character, the strength of faith, and the joy of selfless love.**

Blessings from the Lord Himself

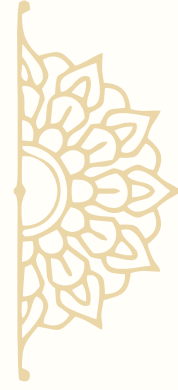
I was blessed, by virtue of being a Bal Vikas student to perform in the rallies held in front of our Lord every year, either during his visit to Chennai or in Puttaparthi. I also had the opportunity to act in the annual dance drama that the Bal Vikas children used to perform in Puttaparthi in front of Swami. For all of us, performing in front of Swami was a dream. Even more was at the end of the performance, Swami would bless all of us and take a picture with all the performers. We were all in Heaven at that time. The icing on the cake was definitely being privileged to receive the rank certificate from our Divine Master himself in Sundaram.

In conclusion, I can definitely attest that Bal Vikas played a key role in helping me develop the right values, imbibe the learning from all our scriptures, lead live as per Swami's teaching and firmly rooted my faith in Swami.



Geetanjali P Shetty

MD, JP Morgan Chase
Maharashtra West 1



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas –

My Beacon Light

I vividly recall my first day at Bal Vikas. I was barely seven years old when I first walked into my Bal Vikas teacher's house for a Saturday evening class, with no idea that those simple lessons I learned here would end up shaping every aspect of my life.

My Guru spoke to us lovingly and patiently about truth and righteousness. **To make those lessons stick, we, as Bal Vikas students, had to fill a little spiritual diary every day, a checklist of things like whether we had spoken the truth, said our prayers, or had not wasted food on our plate. Honestly, it did feel like homework those days. But looking back, those small daily habits quietly became part of who I am, and I still find myself living by them today.**

Those years also instilled in me a healthy competitive spirit. The bhajan and elocution competitions we took part in were never really about winning. They taught me to prepare sincerely, give my best effort, and get up on that stage even when I was nervous. What stayed with me was a simple idea: don't give up without a fight. I still carry that with me, decades later.

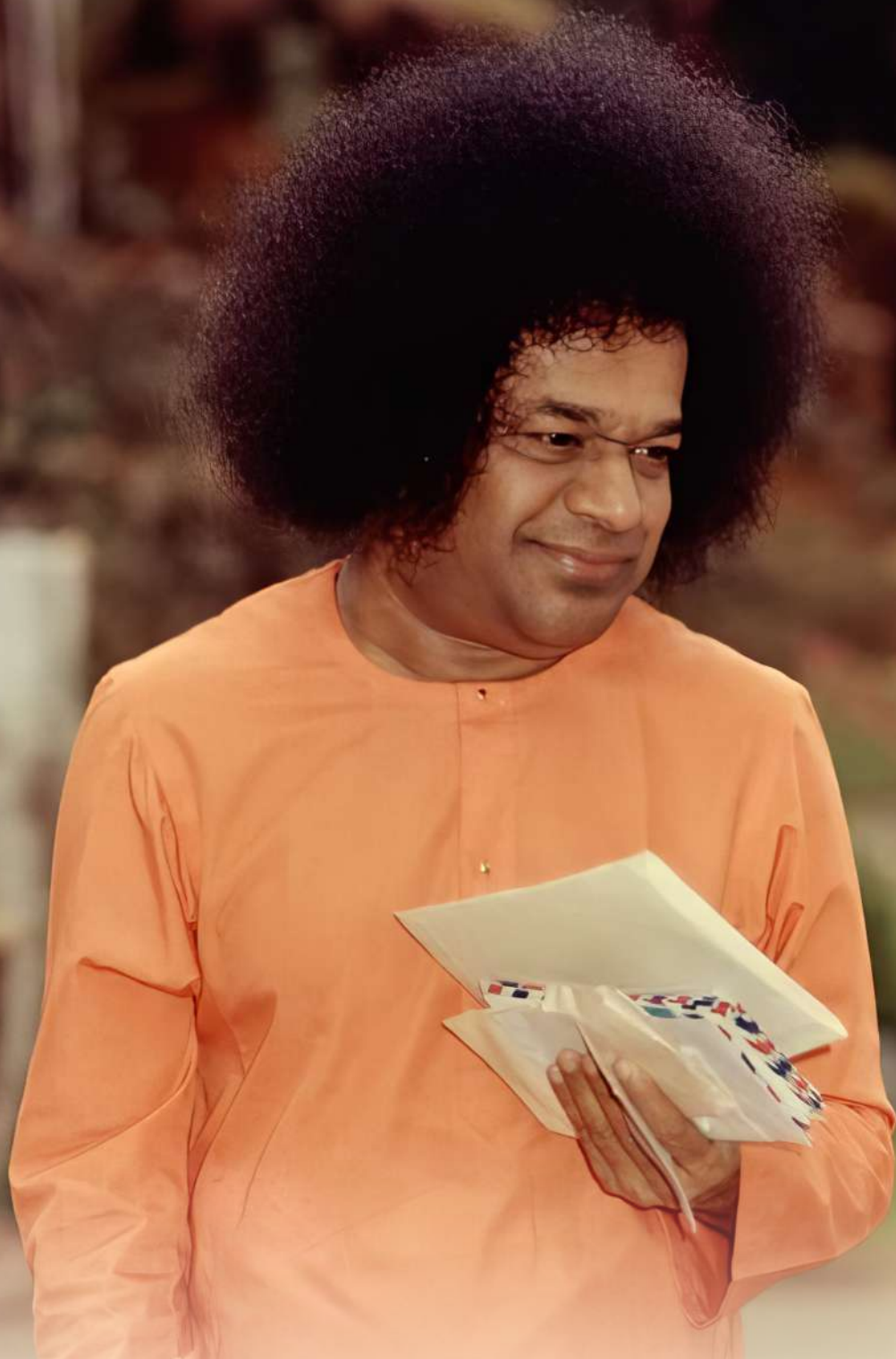
Bal Vikas always emphasised Swami's teaching, "Serve your parents, Serve God." This stuck with me. Taking care of them was one of the most important duties I had, not something extra I fit in around my life. They lived with me, and I am grateful for every single day I had of that. I often think of the comfort of having them close, seeing them every day, sharing a meal, and being there for the small things as much as the big ones.

Life, of course, did not move in a straight line. There were real struggles, both professionally and personally, with setbacks, losses, and stretches when nothing went as planned. Through all of this, it was the faith in Swami instilled in me as a child that kept me going. **I will admit that even today, I get anxious when life throws something hard at me. But what Bal Vikas taught me is to turn to Him when that happens, every single time, and not to anything else.**

Here's a small example of what that looked like in practice. Several years ago, there was a phase at work when a client simply despised me, for no reason I could ever figure out. No matter what I did, he remained unreasonable, and I dreaded an upcoming review meeting with him more than I can describe. The weekend before the meeting, I went to Shirdi, fully leaning on the idea of complete surrender. My prayer was simple. I leave it to you, Swami, to take care of this meeting. I sat there and prayed, and I cannot fully explain what I felt. I came back home with a quiet hope that things would be fine. What happened at the review meeting was nothing short of a miracle. The same client, who had never had a kind word for me, was suddenly very appreciative of my work and asked my manager to give me all the support I needed, leaving my manager rather confused. I have no other way to explain this except as Swami's grace.

This same faith has shaped how I think about my work. **Bal Vikas taught me that work is worship, that whatever I do should be done with sincerity and devotion, not just to get something out of it. I try to live by this in every project and responsibility I take on. Bal Vikas gave me the idea of servant leadership before I ever heard the term, that real leadership is about service and humility, not authority or position.**





There have been smaller, everyday moments, too, when I have felt Swami's hand at work. As a Bal Vikas student, bhajans and seva activities became so dear to me that they shaped how I structured my life around them. When I had to relocate outside Mumbai, the one thing that worried me most was missing my Dharmakshetra bhajans and the seva I had grown so attached to. But within less than a week, I was introduced to a Sai centre in my new city, with bhajans every Sunday and plenty of seva to be part of. I see this too as His doing, fulfilling almost instantly my wish to stay connected to Him and to bhajans, which give me real joy. Even today, every Sunday evening, I sit at home and sing bhajans, a practice that goes all the way back to my Bal Vikas days.

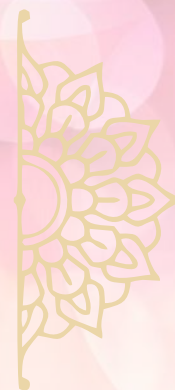
As I write this, what I feel most is gratitude. I am not the same person I would have been without those early years of Bal Vikas. I owe so much to this program, to my Gurus and above all, to Swami, who I feel is with me every day.

If I could offer one prayer, it would simply be this. Thank you, Swami, for finding me as a child and never letting go. For teaching me that truth, service, and love are not ideals to chase but a way to live. And for the quiet faith that no matter how hard life gets, You are always watching over me and my family.



Sai Prasant Das

Jharkhand



From Bal Vikas to Beyond:

A Journey of Values and Service

I was blessed to be born into a family devoted to Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. From childhood, bhajans, shlokas, and Sai teachings were not something separate from life, but a natural part of our home environment. My formal Bal Vikas journey began in the Sri Sathya Sai Samithi at Sakchi, Jharkhand, where I spent nearly nine years learning values that would later shape both my personal and professional life in ways I could not fully understand as a child.

During those years, Bal Vikas was much more than weekly classes. It was a space where spirituality was practised through discipline, devotion, service, and human values. Some of my strongest memories are of Narayana Seva activities and various service initiatives that taught us to look beyond ourselves and become sensitive to the needs of others. Those experiences quietly shaped my understanding of humility and responsibility.

I was also fortunate to learn under respected gurus, whose guidance and affection left a lasting impression on me. More than teaching lessons from books, our gurus demonstrated values through their own conduct, patience, and dedication. **Looking back today, I realize that many of the principles they taught us were preparing us not only for spiritual growth, but also for life itself.**

One of the biggest transformations Bal Vikas brought in me was confidence and ethical clarity. As children, we may not fully understand the importance of values like truth, discipline, self-control, and compassion. However, as adulthood brings pressure, competition, and

responsibility, those teachings begin to reveal their real meaning.

Today, I work as a Technical Lead in the software domain within the semiconductor industry at Applied Materials. **Over the years, I have realized that technical skills alone do not define a person's success. Work ethic, reliability, leadership, teamwork, and integrity matter equally, and these are qualities Bal Vikas silently cultivated within me from an early age.**

In the corporate world, there are moments when ethics are tested and pressure becomes intense. During such situations, Sai teachings stopped being theoretical ideals and became practical guidance. **Bal Vikas taught me that character is not built during comfortable moments, but during difficult decisions.** It also taught me that leadership is not about authority alone, but about responsibility, compassion, and setting the right example for others.

One lesson that continues to stay with me is the importance of sincerity in work. Even today, many colleagues know me as someone who remains committed to deadlines and responsibilities. Simple lifestyle choices such as being a vegetarian and teetotaler often become points of discussion in professional environments, but they also reflect the values that were deeply rooted through Sai education.

At the same time, Bal Vikas did not make me flawless. Life continues to be a process of learning and self-improvement. Even now, controlling anger in everyday situations such as road traffic remains a conscious effort. But perhaps that itself is the true value of Sai teachings





not becoming perfect overnight, but continuously striving to become better human beings.

As my understanding evolved from childhood to adulthood, my relationship with Swami also became more mature. Earlier, devotion was largely emotional and ritualistic. Over time, it became quieter and deeper. In many moments of life, especially during uncertainty and important turning points, I have felt Swami's unseen guidance shaping my direction in ways I only understood later.

To today's Bal Vikas students, I would simply say this: never underestimate the value of what you are learning now. As children, we often see Bal Vikas as just classes,

bhajans, or activities. But later in life, when facing pressure, failures, ethical dilemmas, and responsibilities, these teachings become an inner compass that provides strength and clarity.

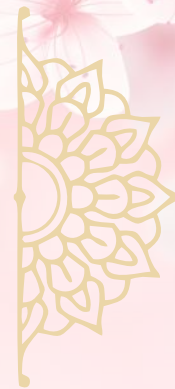
In a rapidly changing world, professional success alone cannot bring lasting peace or fulfilment. Bal Vikas gives something far more valuable, the foundation to remain grounded, disciplined, compassionate, and spiritually aware while pursuing worldly responsibilities.

I remain deeply grateful to Bhagawan, my parents, gurus, and the Sri Sathya Sai Organization for shaping my life through the invaluable gift of Bal Vikas.



Dr Aniruddh Khare

Madhya Pradesh



From Bal Vikas to Life -

My Journey with Swami

In today's fast-paced world, success is often measured through achievements, titles, and material progress. However, for me, the values and teachings imparted through Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas have been far more important in shaping my life and personality. Being a Bal Vikas student was not just a childhood activity or a weekly class; it became the foundation of my character, influencing the way I think, treat people, and approach my responsibilities even today.

My journey with Bal Vikas began at a young age. At that time, I may not have fully understood the depth behind the bhajans, stories, and lessons taught during classes. But as I grew older, I realised that these teachings had quietly become a part of my everyday life. Bal Vikas taught me values such as humility, compassion, discipline, respect, and selfless service. More importantly, it taught me that spirituality is not limited to prayers or rituals alone, but is reflected in the way we conduct ourselves and interact with others.

One of the strongest influences Bal Vikas had on me was in shaping the way I treat people. The teachings of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba emphasised love, kindness, and seeing humanity as one family. Swami's message of "Love All, Serve All" has been one of the most beautiful guiding principles in my journey through medicine. The medical profession can often be stressful and emotionally exhausting, but **the lessons I learned through Bal Vikas helped me remain compassionate and grounded during difficult situations. I understood that while medical knowledge and surgical skill are important, empathy and kindness towards patients are equally valuable.**

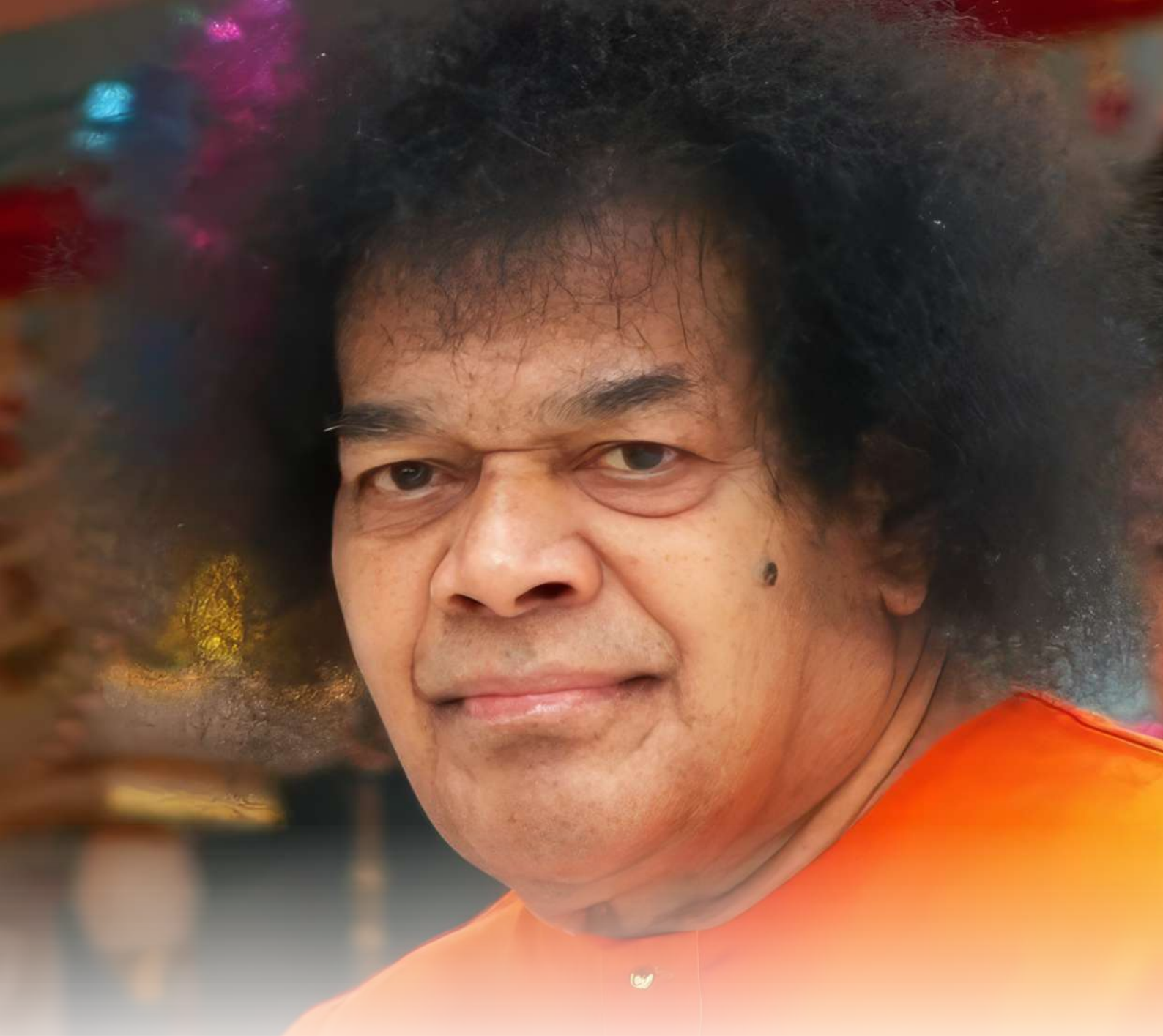
A deeply personal experience during my internship strengthened my faith in Swami's teachings in a way I can never forget. Since childhood, we were taught to chant "Om Sri Sai Ram" as a greeting among devotees and as a reminder of Swami's presence. At that age, it felt like a small spiritual practice, but during one difficult moment in my medical training, I understood its true significance.

During the third month of my internship, I was asked to accompany a critically ill two-year-old child suffering from severe respiratory distress to a higher centre for further management. At that stage, I had very little experience in independently handling emergencies, especially involving a young child. Although I tried to appear calm on the outside, internally I was panicking. The child was in her mother's arms, struggling to breathe, and I constantly feared what I would do if her condition worsened during the journey.

As I watched the child becoming more distressed, I felt helpless. In that moment, without consciously thinking about it, I started silently chanting "Om Sri Sai Ram." I kept repeating it continuously, almost as a source of comfort and strength. Gradually, to my immense relief, I noticed the child becoming calmer. Her breathing appeared more comfortable, and both her respiratory rate and heart rate started improving. The panic that had consumed me slowly gave way to peace and composure.

That experience left a permanent impact on me. For me, it was not merely about clinical improvement, but about realising the strength that faith can provide during moments of fear and uncertainty. The chanting gave me calmness when I felt overwhelmed. It





reminded me that while medicine teaches us how to treat patients scientifically, faith gives us the inner strength to face situations beyond our control.

From that day onward, I made a conscious effort to remember Swami in everything I do. Whether during challenging moments in training, difficult surgeries, times of uncertainty, or even in everyday life, remembering Him has always given me strength, clarity, and peace of mind. Even during the busiest phases of residency and super speciality training, I somehow found ways to stay connected to His teachings through prayer, bhajans, service, and quiet moments of introspection.

Bal Vikas also taught me the importance of discipline, responsibility, and selfless service. These lessons

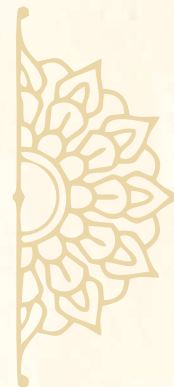
became invaluable during medical training, which often demands patience, resilience, and emotional endurance. More importantly, it shaped my understanding that true success does not lie only in personal accomplishments, but in being able to serve and positively impact the lives of others.

As I reflect today, I realise that Bal Vikas has influenced every aspect of my life. It shaped my values, strengthened my faith, and taught me to approach life with compassion and humility. The teachings of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba continue to guide me in my personal as well as professional journey. No matter where life takes me, the lessons learned through Bal Vikas and the constant remembrance of Swami will always remain an inseparable part of who I am.



Gayatri Rattan

Delhi



Roots of Grace :

A Bal Vikas Journey That Shaped a Life

Some journeys begin quietly, almost unnoticeably. Mine began as a toddler, walking into a Bal Vikas classroom, unaware that I was stepping into a space that would shape my values, my faith, and the way I would eventually understand life itself. At that age, it was simply routine—my mother leaving me for class, trusting the process. What I realize now is that those few hours each week were laying the foundation for a lifetime anchored in spirituality and service.

Bal Vikas was far more than a childhood activity. It was a sacred environment where learning flowed gently from stories, bhajans, slokas, and lived examples. Among the many activities we engaged in, drama captivated me the most. There was an inexplicable joy in expression—bringing stories to life, communicating emotion, and offering creativity as devotion. What felt like innocent fun then would later reveal itself as a powerful medium for self-discovery and confidence.

The most defining moment of that phase came during preparations for a Bal Vikas play performed on the occasion of Swami's 75th birthday. It was here that I learned voice modulation and the fundamentals of dramatics for the very first time. That day stands timeless, etched deep within my heart. When Swami came and stood beside me during the aarti, the moment transcended words. There was a stillness—rare and complete—as though the universe itself had paused.

I remember the twinkle in His eyes, filled with compassion and an indescribable warmth. In that instant, everything faded except His presence. He truly is *Kamal*

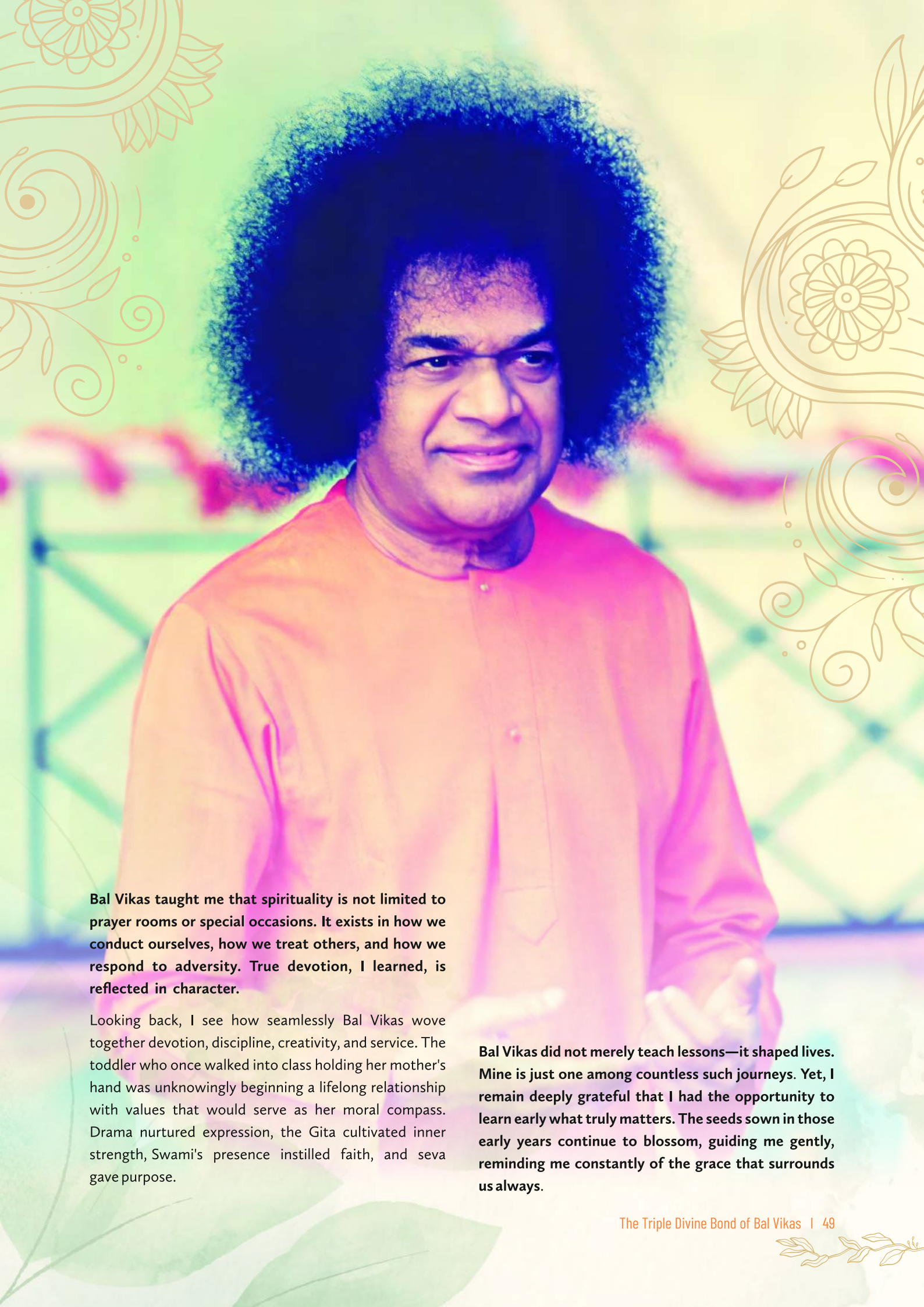
Nayan Sai Ram. That experience became more than a cherished memory; it became an inner anchor, one I would return to time and again as life unfolded.

As years passed, life moved forward with its inevitable transitions—new roles, responsibilities, challenges, and moments of uncertainty. **Yet, the essence of Bal Vikas never left me. The values taught there stayed gently but firmly rooted. Learning verses from the Bhagavad Gita during those formative years gave me tools to navigate life's complexities with patience and clarity. Those teachings were not theoretical; they came alive during moments of real decision-making, emotional turbulence, and personal trials.**

Bal Vikas taught me to pause, reflect, and respond thoughtfully rather than react impulsively. The Gita's wisdom helped me understand duty, detachment, and resilience—not as lofty ideals, but as practical guides for everyday life. Even today, when circumstances feel overwhelming, I close my eyes and return to His words. In those quiet moments, there is reassurance. A deep sense of being protected takes over, and I am reminded that I am never alone.

One of the most profound principles Bal Vikas instilled in me is Seva. Selfless service is not merely an action; it is a way of expressing gratitude for all that life offers. It is the conscious choice to think beyond oneself and to act with humility and compassion. I strive, in whatever capacity I can, to embed seva into my daily life - not as an obligation, but as a joyful offering.





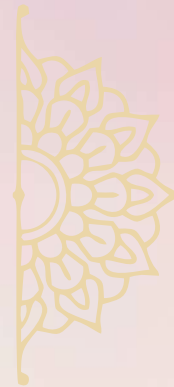
Bal Vikas taught me that spirituality is not limited to prayer rooms or special occasions. It exists in how we conduct ourselves, how we treat others, and how we respond to adversity. True devotion, I learned, is reflected in character.

Looking back, I see how seamlessly Bal Vikas wove together devotion, discipline, creativity, and service. The toddler who once walked into class holding her mother's hand was unknowingly beginning a lifelong relationship with values that would serve as her moral compass. Drama nurtured expression, the Gita cultivated inner strength, Swami's presence instilled faith, and seva gave purpose.

Bal Vikas did not merely teach lessons—it shaped lives. Mine is just one among countless such journeys. Yet, I remain deeply grateful that I had the opportunity to learn early what truly matters. The seeds sown in those early years continue to blossom, guiding me gently, reminding me constantly of the grace that surrounds us always.

Dr Saipavitra Murali Manohar

Tamil Nadu South



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas -

The Seed for Unshakeable Faith

Sundays, throughout my childhood were always Swami's Day. I was fortunate to be born into a family already in Swami's fold. My mother conducted regular Bal Vikas classes at home, and I grew up attending them. By 9:30 each Sunday morning, Swami's chair would be set, and soon after, my Bal Vikas classmates would begin to arrive. At exactly 10:00 a.m., the class commenced with three Omkars. In that moment, my mother transitioned into the role of an impartial and steadfast Guru. I was given no special privileges - a quiet but powerful lesson in **equality**. Later in the day, **my father would take me along for Samithi seva activities, instilling in me the value of selfless service**. Evenings concluded with soulful bhajans at the Sai Center, bringing the day full circle in devotion. The **three Ds** of my childhood Sundays became a way of life: **discipline** through Bal Vikas, a sense of **duty** through seva, and **devotion** through bhajans.

I grew up watching my parents gracefully juggle a multitude of responsibilities: professional commitments; their roles in the Sri Sathya Sai organization; household duties; and being present as my parents. Yet, **they approached each role with remarkable discipline and timeliness, often reminding me that one should never make Swami wait. They never fell short in their commitments because every action was an offering to Swami. Witnessing this balance instilled in me a deep sense of responsibility and respect for punctuality.** Today, I embrace responsibilities without hesitation and commit to every task I undertake. These values have shaped my journey.

My Bal Vikas lessons extended far beyond weekly classes. I was constantly guided by my Guru at home. At times when I wouldn't listen to my mother, as children often do, Swami would step in as my Guru through subtle reminders. I recall an instance when a temple priest, unprompted, told me, "It is Matru Devo Bhava, not Friend Devo Bhava" and made me repeat it. It came at a time when I had spoken hurtfully to my mother, justifying it to myself by thinking she was my friend. That moment stayed with me as a firm yet compassionate correction. Swami guides every second of a Bal Vikas child's life.

A core value that remains with me every day is Daiva Preethi, Papa Bheethi, Sanga Neethi - love for God, fear of sin, and morality in society. This principle became my inner compass, guiding not only my actions but also my thoughts and intentions. Love for Swami grew listening to experiences with Swami during Bal Vikas and it deepened my yearning to experience His **darshan, sparshan, and sambhashan**. My mother often shared her first darshan on a Guru Purnima day, describing her padanamskar as feeling like touching a bed of rose petals, and how that profound moment moved her to tears. As a child, I wondered why such an experience would bring tears.

Years later, during a visit to Prashanti Nilayam, I found my answer. The moment I caught my first glimpse of Swami, I cried uncontrollably. It was an unexplainable feeling - a profound sense of fulfillment, protection, and the realization of having reached the very goal of life. I understood then why my mother had cried. I had received His darshan, yet my heart still yearned for sparshan and sambhashan.





That yearning led me to apply to Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School. Initially I was not selected. **Yet, Bal Vikas had instilled in me unshakeable faith in Swami that He knows the best for me and has the best in store. Even amidst disappointment around me, I remained certain that He has a plan.** A month into the academic year, I received a call asking if I would still be willing to join if offered a place. My answer was an immediate yes. When I was finally blessed with padanamskar during our Gratitude program, I wrote to my mother saying that she was indeed right - it did feel like touching a bed of rose petals. At that moment, Swami had fulfilled my yearnings.

As life grew busier, weekends filled up, and for a time, Sundays were no longer Swami's Day. This left an emptiness, as my childhood Sundays had always been His. Now, I find myself returning to those roots through bhajans at the Sai Center and Sri Sathya Sai Alumni activities. As I write this, I have enrolled in the Sri Sathya Sai Education Gurus training, hoping to pass the torch forward. Once again, my weekends are filling up with Swami's work helping me find inner Prashanti.

I remain forever grateful to Swami for taking me under His wing, blessing me with such profound experiences, and instilling in me values that guide my life. The lessons from Bal Vikas, the example set by my parents in a Sai family, and Swami's constant guidance have shaped not just my childhood, but the very foundation of who I am today.



Amishi Seth

Maharashtra West - 1



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas -

A Doorway to Seva

My first memory of Bal Vikas was my elder sister Sudha who had just undergone a three-day Guru's training course, taking me aside very formally one day at home and teaching me these beautiful, powerful Sanskrit Shlokas. I remember feeling a bit puzzled, important and very, very pleased. The following Saturday, Sudha and I were walking to a Bal Vikas class. Little did I know that this innocent trip was leading me to the most powerful place on Earth. A place that would write the destiny of my life.

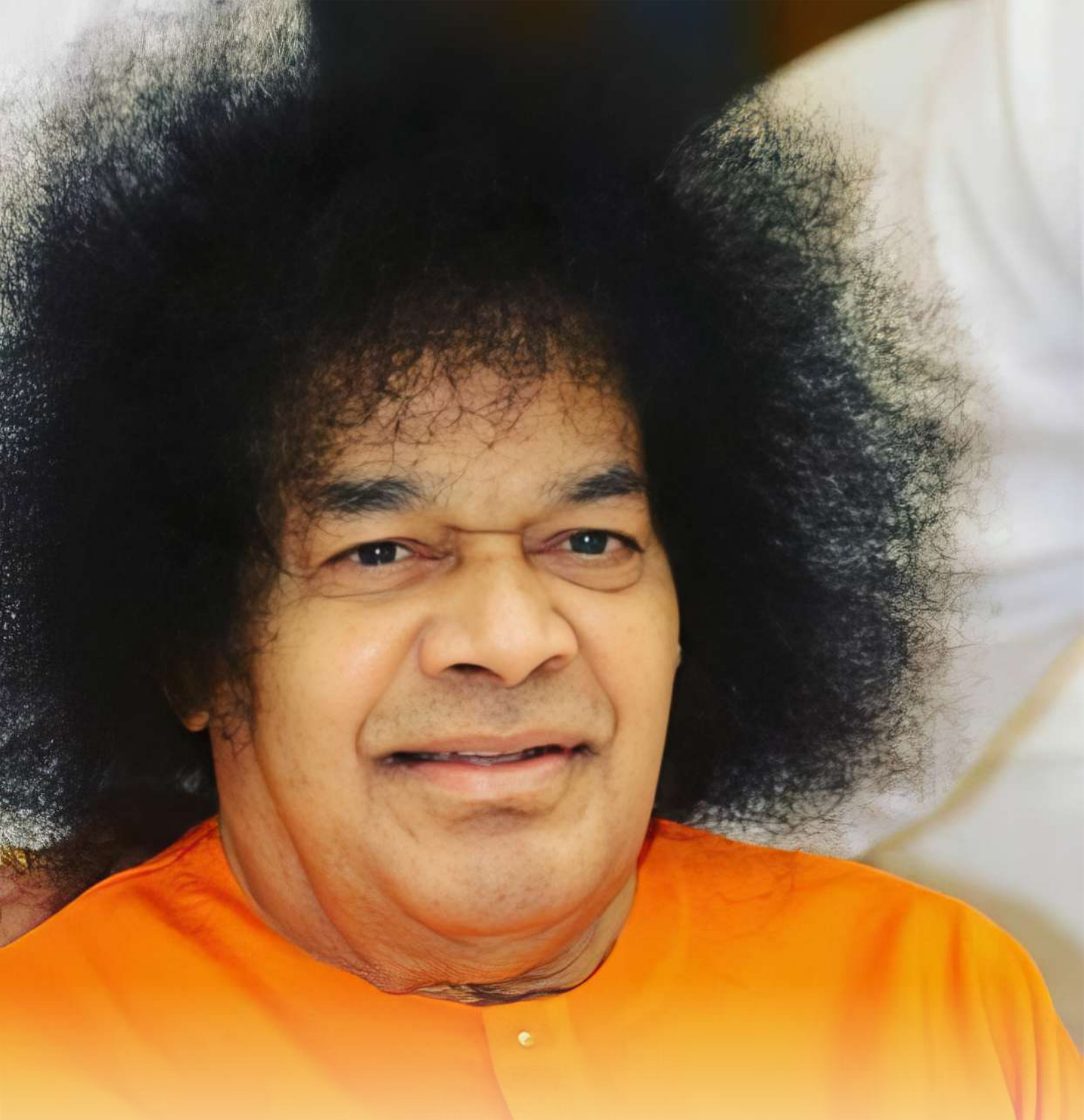
At first, it was the stories, the games, the fun and before I knew it, my Guru had become my friend, confidante who I could share anything with and who would never let me stray. But the most beautiful aspect of this relationship was that she never presented herself as an anchor, the anchor was Baba. I grew up convinced that God is the only Master of my destiny and I cannot emphasize enough how important this one conviction has been in my life. I have seen corporate politics at its worst, people trying to steal my intellectual property, threatening me with grave consequences, trying to manipulate me into giving up and throughout all of this one voice kept resounding in the core of my being, "God is the only master of my destiny. There is nothing anyone else can do to me." All I had to do was to stand firm with my Truth. And miracles happened. The situations that blustered my life eased up on their own as though my Lord had picked me up from the eye of the storm and placed me in safety.

Another beautiful aspect of Bal Vikas that has shaped my life were the competitions, particularly the elocutions. Here, I must share credit with my

wonderful family who never wrote my speeches for me. It was only after I had churned the topic in my head, written what I thought and felt, that they offered further suggestions and support. These topics created a deep, inner conversation within me. What did it really mean when one said, "Dust if you think, dust you are, God if you think, God you are. As you think so you become." Or the deep profoundness of 'Help Ever, Hurt Never; Love All, Serve All.' These topics became my connections to the 'Inner-net', my relentless chatters with Bhagawan. My most delightful opportunities were when I was asked to write almost a dozen scripts to be performed for Ashadi Ekadashi and Maharashtra State Parthi Yatras, all in the physical Presence of Bhagwan. It was as though Swami Himself had shaped my life for today I am an Author, playwright, director and screenwriter.

Bal Vikas is not just a collection of stories and values imparted in the sixty minutes of a class, it is a doorway to Seva, practical spirituality and friends. Youth activities were a natural extension of Bal Vikas and they gave me the most important anchor any teenager can hope to have; like-minded friends who believe in the same values that one does with adults one respects, cheering one on the path of right living. Because of my beautiful Sathya Sai Friends, uncles and aunties I never fell prey to the regular 'peer-pressure' of college and no one could ever make me feel 'uncool' For us Seva was cool, sticking with Sai values was trendy. Youth activities honed leadership skills, the sense of responsibility and accountability within us. All of these learnings have been invaluable in every aspect of life.





Bal Vikas is like a cocoon that Swami has built around the little soul that has still to evolve. Bal Vikas is protection, it is nourishment, it is LOVE. Like Bhagawan Himself who packs the most sublime teachings of the highest scriptures in just one word, one sentence, one story, Bal Vikas packs the knowledge of very purpose of existence in its games and stories. Even today whenever life puts out its most painful lessons, the understanding that this is all Maya and eventually our purpose is to go back to being

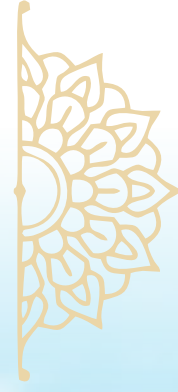
ourselves, go back to being God and that everything in life is a lesson we must learn; is a rudder that sets us free – free to love, free to deal with whatever life throws our way, free to let God take over and perform His miracles. The learnings from Bal Vikas have the potential to turn every moment of life into a Divine Conversation, a miracle of learning, healing and joy.

I wish the Blessing of Bal Vikas on every child, every person of this world! Thank you, Swami!



Dr. Aiswarya R Nair

Kerala



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas -

A Beautiful Lens of Love

As a six-year-old frequenting our neighbour's house in a new neighbourhood, I remember asking questions about the photos of a "man" kept in many rooms of their house. I think it was the love and devotion in auntie's voice that made an overactive naughty girl stop, slow down and attend her first Bal Vikas class to learn about Swami. As the classes became dearer and a central part of my life, so did the "man" in the photo.

As a child who loves stories, the classes took me into a world of values which would define my heroes. Lord Sree Rama and the good children in the stories became my heroes, for the values they embodied. Doing the right thing meant Swami's approval, and doing the wrong? Why would I? I was Swami's child, his Bal Vikas student.

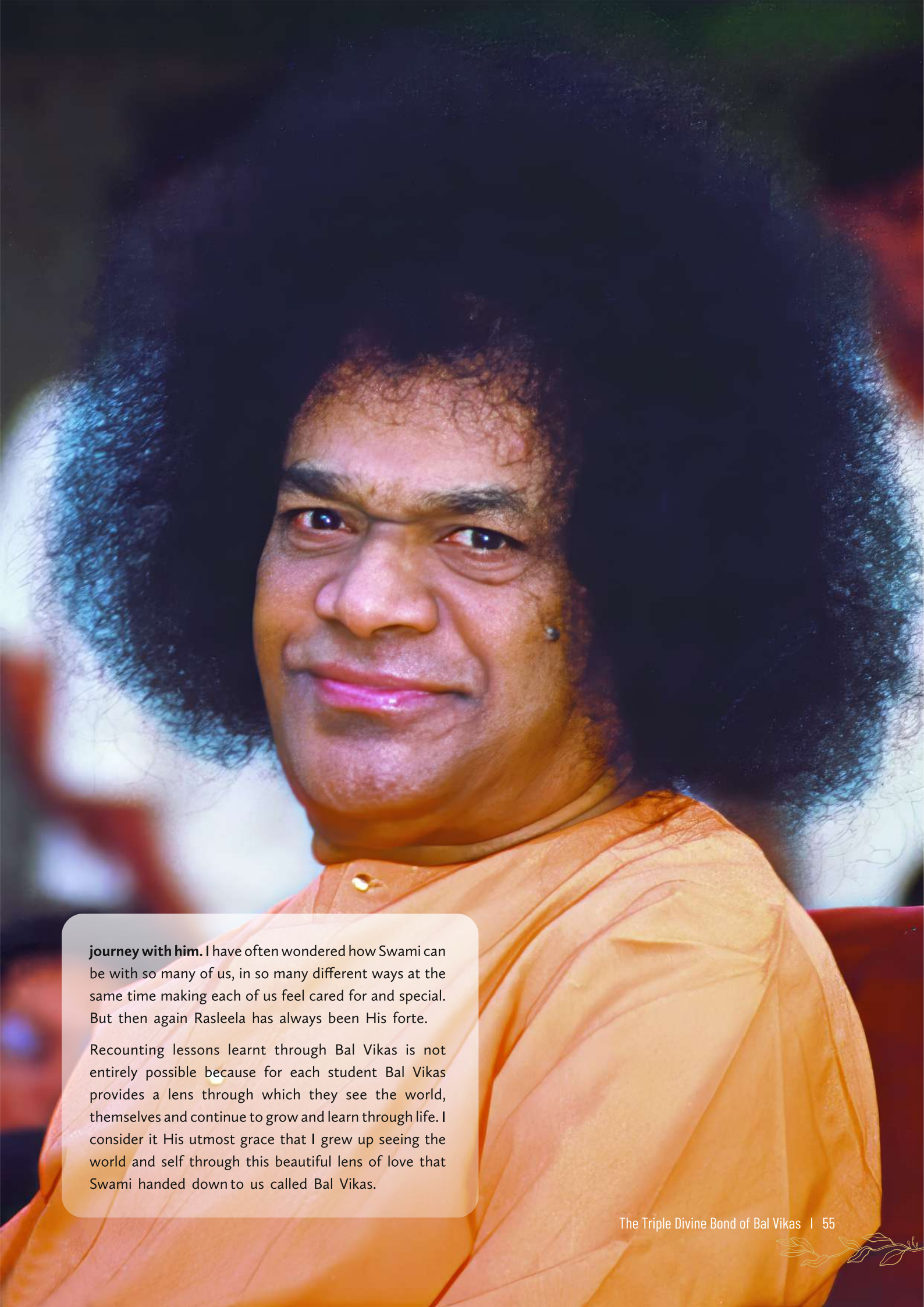
Adolescence was a time of transitions, including moving towns. Swami's grace opened the door for me to join Bal Vikas classes again in the new town. But this time as an adolescent, I found myself not exactly accepting stories and messages as before. This was the age and time when lot was said over movies and books about following our "wants". **The young me was a curious cat and had questions, too many, during our classes. Our gurus would channel the discussions to Swami and we were taught to reflect, listen and perceive the voice within. Silent sitting, Japa, Dhyana were all taught not just as topics but as exercises which would take us closer to our beloved Swami.** I had visited Puttaparthi and Whitefield only a couple of times during my childhood. It was through my Bal Vikas classes that I have experienced Swami's 'samipya' the most. We could enjoy the darshan, sparshan and sambhashan of the Lord in our classes.

Adolescence and early adult hood brings with it, its set of challenges and opportunities for personal and professional growth. A strong foundation in Swami through Bal Vikas gives us the ethos and energy needed for this journey. The journey of course will have its share of ups and downs.

Initially as a student of Psychiatry as I learnt about stages of cognitive and moral development in children, later as a mother and now as a Bal Vikas guru, I am filled with awe and gratitude as I see how the master creator has curated this course with utmost care to bring up his little ones.

As a Bal Vikas student, mother and Bal Vikas Guru I have been blessed with the opportunity to see swami's love embracing others around me as I watched him enter the lives of my parents, family members, spouse and children. Before the first house bhajan in our house, as a responsible 8-year-old I explained all that I knew with authority to my father, because he had not attended any bhajans before and was anxious about offering flowers at the lotus feet during ashtotharam. I can recollect the joy which I experienced when the garland on Swami's photo snapped and fell down while my father continued the ashtotharam with full focus lest he made any mistake. I felt the same joy recently watching a Bal Vikas student that we trained for a program on stage perform beyond expectations reinforcing that Swami is the director of this divine play. **One thing that I have realized is that the full picture is always more than the sum of its parts when Swami is part of it. Everything and everyone that He touches is 'poornam'. Our role is to submit and be grateful as he takes each of us through our own special**





journey with him. I have often wondered how Swami can be with so many of us, in so many different ways at the same time making each of us feel cared for and special. But then again Rasleela has always been His forte.

Recounting lessons learnt through Bal Vikas is not entirely possible because for each student Bal Vikas provides a lens through which they see the world, themselves and continue to grow and learn through life. I consider it His utmost grace that I grew up seeing the world and self through this beautiful lens of love that Swami handed down to us called Bal Vikas.



Sanya Ahuja

Himachal Pradesh



सा विद्या या विमुक्तये |

“Education is the one which liberates!”

I have often heard this divine dictum in spiritual conferences and perhaps, owing to the spiritual ambience in which I was brought up, I always associated it with Bal Vikas. A beautiful Gita verse, “शनैः शनैरुपरमेत् बुद्ध्या धृतिगृहीतया”, which translates to “Let the mind be guided inward gradually, with a steady intellect”, in my view, captures and encapsulates the guiding principle of Bal Vikas. Like a Potter, Bal Vikas has shaped so many budding vessels into purpose. Those buds are now spreading the fragrance of Bhagwan's teachings across the length and breadth of this country and abroad. I attest to this fact, because I have myself been a beneficiary of this program.

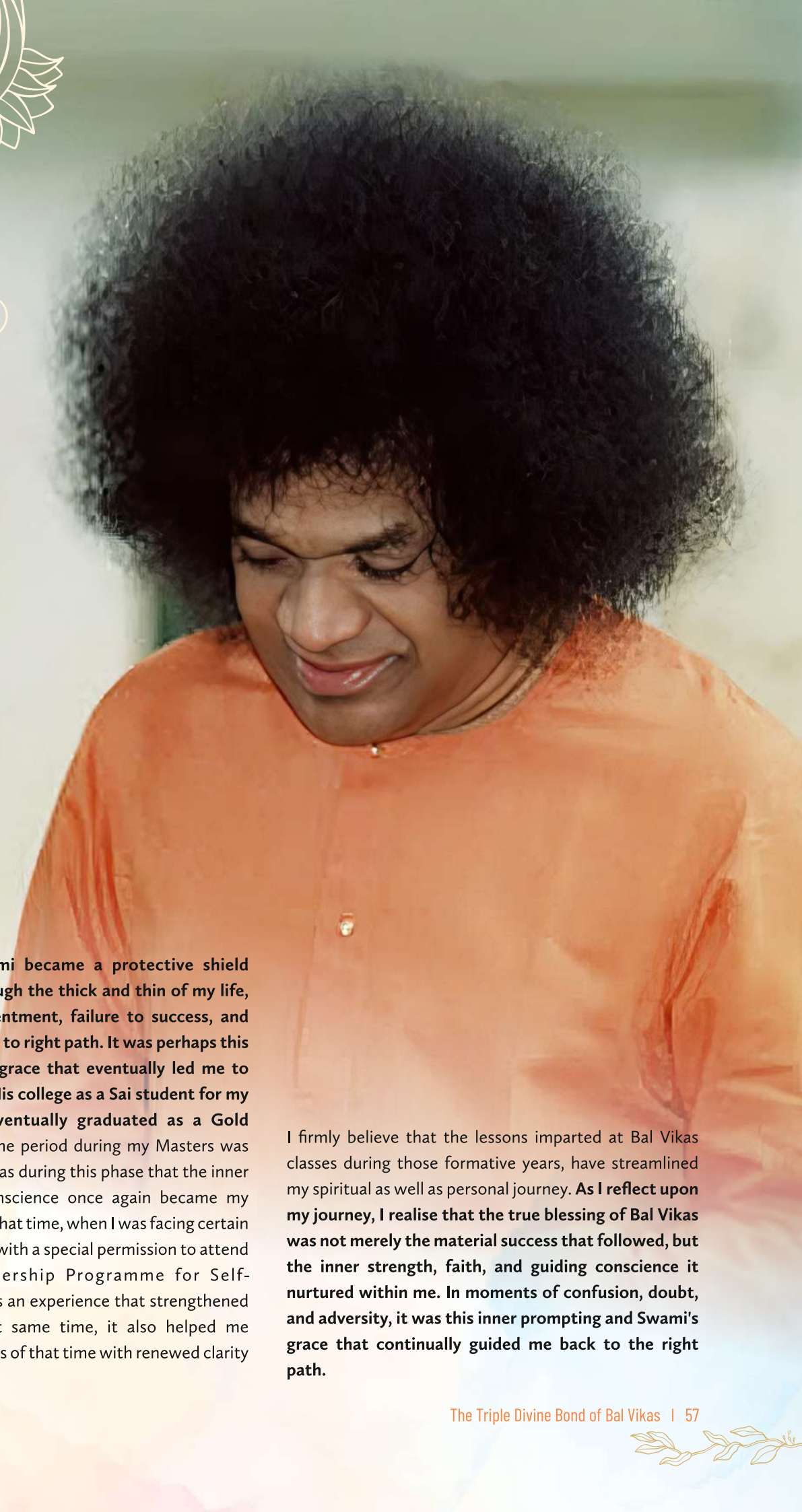
Going down the memory lane and reflecting those cherished days of yore, I feel incredibly blessed to have embarked the journey of my life with Bal Vikas. Little did I realise then, that those innocent moments of learning, prayers, bhajans, and values would one day become the guiding light that would shape my identity and anchor me through the journey of life.

It all began, at the tender age of three, when, while trying to emulate my father, I unexpectedly started chanting Ganapati Prarthna at my home. My parents and Samiti members were flabbergasted. Thereafter, I began accompanying my father to Group III Bal Vikas classes, that he conducted. I vividly remember how I used to request him, to teach me whatever was written on the edge of the pages, when he used to chant mantras or teach his Bal Vikas students. This was my Sunday routine, long before I officially joined Group I. Over time, this spiritual inquisitiveness shaped my spiritual trajectory, and fostered a natural connection with Swami. With

each passing year, this bond deepened through bhajans, Bal Vikas classes, and participation in various spiritual activities.

It had a ripple effect on my academic life as well. However, there also came a phase in 8th standard, when I began questioning my faith in Swami, after being influenced by the worldview of my classmates at school. I started finding excuses to skip bhajans and other activities as well, fearing the tag of 'overtly spiritual'. I was so enamoured by the hedonistic view of life, that I began distancing myself from spirituality altogether. Yet the seeds of spirituality that had been sown within me, couldn't be uprooted that easily. **The inner prompting of my conscience, perhaps the most tangible gift that I received from my Bal Vikas classes, came to my rescue along with the persistent efforts from my parents. Although, it took me some time to move away from cynical outlook towards God that I absorbed from my peers, I eventually rediscovered the faith and spiritual grounding that had always been there, with me. And this time, the bond with Bhagwan deepened further.** So much so that, in my 12th standard, I fully immersed myself in the week-long birthday celebration of Bhagwan at my Samiti, despite knowing well that the demanding non-medical stream hardly allowed such a significant pause in studies. When my results were declared, we were immeasurably astonished to discover that I had emerged as the topper of my school with a score of 95.6%. At first glance, it may have appeared to be my personal achievement; however, truthfully, I felt that it was Bhagwan Himself who had bestowed upon me this material success as well, something I had once doubted during my 8th standard.





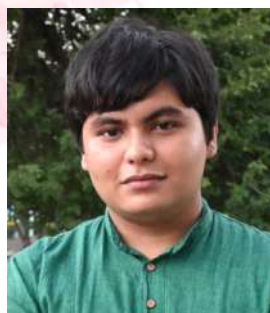
At every turn, Swami became a protective shield guiding my way through the thick and thin of my life, from chaos to contentment, failure to success, and from wrong decisions to right path. It was perhaps this divine guidance and grace that eventually led me to secure admission in His college as a Sai student for my Masters, where I eventually graduated as a Gold Medalist. However, the period during my Masters was far from easy, and it was during this phase that the inner prompting of my conscience once again became my guiding force. During that time, when I was facing certain ordeals, I was blessed with a special permission to attend the National Leadership Programme for Self-Transformation. It was an experience that strengthened me spiritually and at same time, it also helped me navigate the challenges of that time with renewed clarity and resilience.

I firmly believe that the lessons imparted at Bal Vikas classes during those formative years, have streamlined my spiritual as well as personal journey. **As I reflect upon my journey, I realise that the true blessing of Bal Vikas was not merely the material success that followed, but the inner strength, faith, and guiding conscience it nurtured within me. In moments of confusion, doubt, and adversity, it was this inner prompting and Swami's grace that continually guided me back to the right path.**



Abitaha Roy

West Bengal One



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas :

The Engine, The Wheels, and the Grace

My journey with Bal Vikas did not begin with devotion. In fact, it began with resistance—an inner reluctance that I would not explicitly articulate, yet one that was very much present. But as it is often said in Sai circles, you do not choose Swami; Swami chooses you. You may try to resist, to hold your ground and say, “I will not let you into my heart.” And yet, He responds in His own silent, assured way: “I am entering - stop me if you can.”

That is how He enters one's life - not by force, but by an inevitability that feels almost divine in its design.

For me, that moment came in 2018, in Puttaparthi itself. It was not dramatic, nor was it something I consciously orchestrated. It was an automatic process, something that unfolded within me towards the very end of my nine-year Bal Vikas journey. Exactly one year later, I graduated from the curriculum. And looking back, it feels almost poetic - that the transformation came just when the formal journey was reaching its conclusion, as if to tell me that Bal Vikas was never meant to end with graduation.

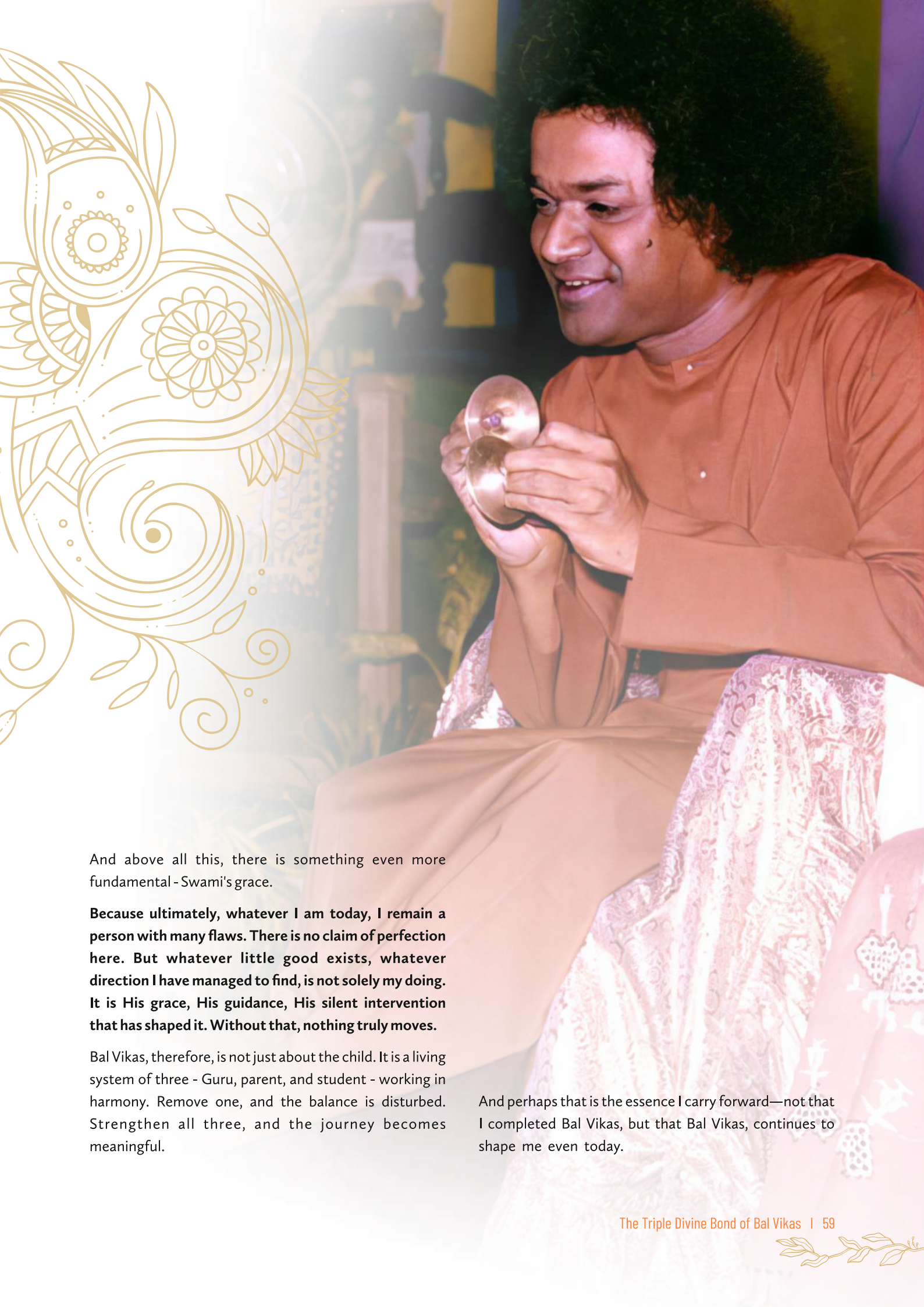
If I reflect upon my Bal Vikas years, they were not merely about lessons in a classroom. They were about subtle, everyday acts of learning and implementation. Some teachings stayed with me naturally - simple yet profound ideas that shaped my behaviour and outlook. Others, I must admit honestly, did not resonate in the way they ideally should have. And I would rather acknowledge that truth than claim a perfection that never existed. But beyond structured teachings, what truly defined my Bal Vikas journey was the environment that nurtured it.

My parents—especially my mother—played a crucial role. She did not impose values upon me as rigid instructions to be followed. Instead, she cultivated them in a way that made them feel natural, even enjoyable. Whether it was learning to be compassionate, to show empathy, or to contribute in whatever small ways I could, she ensured that these actions did not feel like burdens, but rather like expressions of who I was becoming.

And then comes the role of the Guru - the Bal Vikas Guruma - who, in the metaphor I wish to use, is the front wheel of this journey. She provided direction. She navigated. She ensured that the path was clear and meaningful. To her, I (and my fellow Bal Vikas students) were like her own children. From connecting the lessons with us through a combination of techniques like music, quizzes, games and real-life examples, she ensured at each step that the curriculum was never something to be memorized but realized. It was through her that both I and my mother understood the deeper intent of Bal Vikas. In fact, the impact of her guidance is evident even today - my mother herself has become a guru and an office bearer within the organization, now training other children and carrying forward the same values.

If I am to place myself within this framework, I would call myself the engine. But an engine, by itself, is nothing. It requires fuel, guidance, and support. The fuel comes in the form of knowledge and values that must be imbibed and, more importantly, applied. The front wheel - the Guru - provides direction. The rear wheel - the parent - provides stability and support, ensuring that the journey does not collapse midway.





And above all this, there is something even more fundamental - Swami's grace.

Because ultimately, whatever I am today, I remain a person with many flaws. There is no claim of perfection here. But whatever little good exists, whatever direction I have managed to find, is not solely my doing. It is His grace, His guidance, His silent intervention that has shaped it. Without that, nothing truly moves.

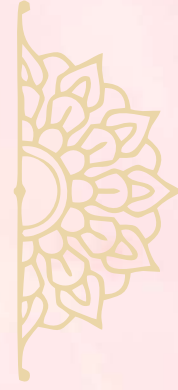
Bal Vikas, therefore, is not just about the child. It is a living system of three - Guru, parent, and student - working in harmony. Remove one, and the balance is disturbed. Strengthen all three, and the journey becomes meaningful.

And perhaps that is the essence I carry forward—not that I completed Bal Vikas, but that Bal Vikas, continues to shape me even today.



Geetali Vohra

Delhi



A Journey of Love, Faith and Quiet Miracles

My grandmother and mother have been ardent devotees of Sri Sathya Sai Baba for over five decades. For them, devotion was never limited to rituals, it lives in their everyday actions.

Growing up in such an atmosphere, **I did not learn about Swami; I experienced him. His presence was not something distant or abstract, it was intimate, constant, and quietly reassuring.**

As a child, I did not fully understand this connection, but I felt it in the soft echo of bhajans at home, in the calm that filled the space when His name was spoken. Even today, His bhajans bring me back to stillness. As a bhajan singer, I have realized that devotion lies not in perfect notes, but in pure intent. Each time I sing, I learn to surrender and connect beyond words.

One of my greatest blessings has been my journey in Bal Vikas since the age of four. Those Sunday classes shaped my inner world. Guided by my Guru's warmth, we sat together not just as students, but as a community. Chanting Om, reciting shlokas, and listening to stories of Swami felt deeply personal. Even games carried meaning, creating joy and connection. Among these memories, the small box of vibhuti stands out, a simple pinch that felt like a quiet assurance of His presence.

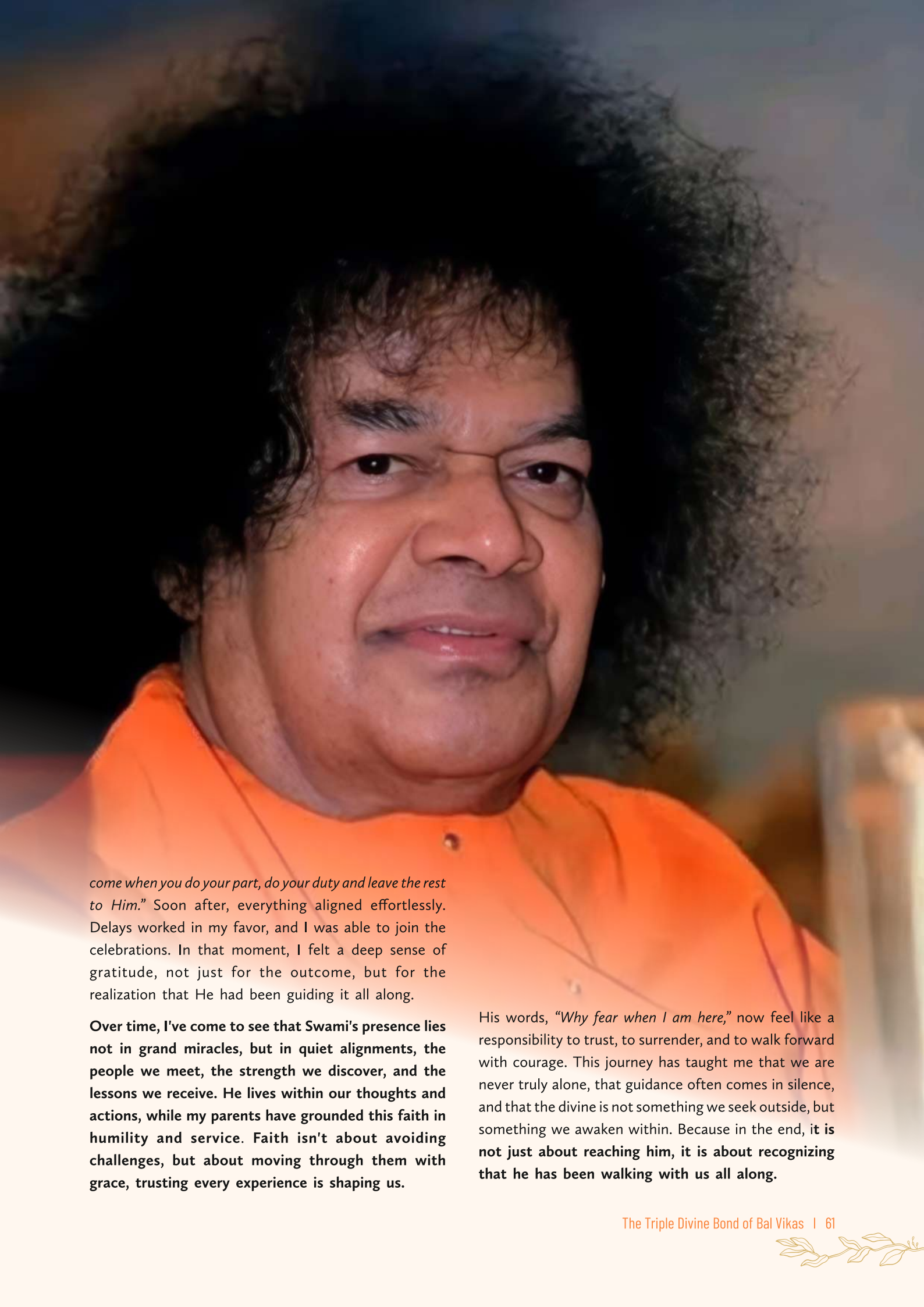
As life unfolded, challenges tested this foundation, I remember a particularly difficult phase when my grandmother fell critically ill. She, who had spent her life in prayer, was suddenly faced with physical limitations we were told might never improve. In a moment of helplessness, I stood before Swami in the mandir and questioned him. Not with anger alone, but with pain,

confusion, and an unfiltered honesty. I asked Him how such suffering could touch someone who had loved Him so deeply. Perhaps, from the outside, it may seem audacious to question the divine. But in that moment, I was not speaking to a distant God; I was speaking to someone I believed would listen. Suddenly something quiet yet profound happened, the scarf placed on Swami's chair slipped and fell gently onto my lap, it was a small moment, almost insignificant to an observer. But to me, it felt like an answer, not in words but in presence, *"I am here, you may not understand now, but trust me."* **That moment did not erase the situation, but it transformed my response to it. I began to understand that faith is not the absence of questions, but the courage to trust despite them.**

Years later, during my first job, the demands of work consumed me, long hours, and a constant sense of being stretched too thin. I was achieving, progressing, and being recognized, yet somewhere within, I felt disconnected from myself. In the midst of this, my only anchor

remained my connection to Swami especially through bhajans. On Swami's birthday, I had planned to travel with my music guru for the celebrations. Everything was in place, but I was asked to stay back for an important work commitment. I felt torn between my responsibilities and my devotion. Remembering Swami's teaching, *"Never leave work incomplete"*, I chose to stay back and fulfill my duty but internally, I struggled. In that moment of vulnerability, I paused and prayed, *"Swami, I will do my part, the rest, I leave to You."* Almost immediately, I came across a message, *"God's help will*





come when you do your part, do your duty and leave the rest to Him.” Soon after, everything aligned effortlessly. Delays worked in my favor, and I was able to join the celebrations. In that moment, I felt a deep sense of gratitude, not just for the outcome, but for the realization that He had been guiding it all along.

Over time, I've come to see that Swami's presence lies not in grand miracles, but in quiet alignments, the people we meet, the strength we discover, and the lessons we receive. He lives within our thoughts and actions, while my parents have grounded this faith in humility and service. Faith isn't about avoiding challenges, but about moving through them with grace, trusting every experience is shaping us.

His words, *“Why fear when I am here,”* now feel like a responsibility to trust, to surrender, and to walk forward with courage. This journey has taught me that we are never truly alone, that guidance often comes in silence, and that the divine is not something we seek outside, but something we awaken within. Because in the end, **it is not just about reaching him, it is about recognizing that he has been walking with us all along.**



Anuz Subba

Sikkim



My Journey with Swami –

A Constant Reflection

Some of the most meaningful stories of our lives begin even before we are born. Mine certainly does. My mother often narrates a story that never fails to move me. It was during the sacred days of Navratri. A friend had invited her to accompany her for bhajans. My grandfather (her father-in-law) was a little unsure about letting her go, but my mother's gentle insistence eventually made it possible. That evening, she was assigned Bhajan Number 2 to sing. But when the moment came, nervousness took over her. Instead of Bhajan Number 2, she accidentally sang the bhajan meant for Number 9. Despite the mix-up, she sang with her whole heart. When she finished, everyone praised her and said she had sung beautifully.

What makes this story special is that I was in my mother's womb at that time. Every time she narrates this incident, something shifts within me. I feel as though my connection with Swami did not begin after birth—it began even before I entered this world. I never had to go searching for Swami. In many ways, I feel He had already found me, guiding and nurturing me silently from the very beginning.

In 2013, I was formally enrolled in Bal Vikas, where I was blessed to be guided by my Guru. I cherished every single session. For me, Bal Vikas never felt like a class—it felt like a space filled with warmth, values, and Divine presence.

Since childhood, I had grown up listening to chants and mantras at home. Their sound had become a natural part of my life. Because of this, when the time came for the first stage of Bal Vikas, I found it quite easy—I already knew most of the mantras by heart. Looking back today, I cannot fathom how quickly time has passed. Yet one thing has remained constant, my deep inclination towards Swami.

People often search far and wide for peace. Some spend their entire lives trying to find it. For me, peace has always been simple. All I need to do is think of Swami and play His bhajans. Instantly, something within me becomes calm and joyful. Bhajans and I share a very special bond. After all, I was already listening to them even before I was born—quietly absorbing their sweetness while still in my mother's womb.

Like many journeys, mine too had its moments of distance. During the COVID period, I slowly drifted away from Bal Vikas as a whole and eventually did not appear for my final exams. Though I remained active within the Samithi, the thought of appearing for the exam always made me look the other way.

Then college life began, bringing new experiences and responsibilities.

Today, I express my deepest gratitude to my second Bal Vikas teacher. With her constant encouragement and insistence, I finally appeared for the examination I had been avoiding for so long. It is because of her that I can write this article today as a Bal Vikas alumnus. For that, I will always remain grateful.

There was another lesson Swami taught me years earlier.

When I was in Class 10, there was an opportunity for me to visit Prasanthi Nilayam. At that time, I decided not to go. I told myself that my board exams were approaching and I should focus on studying instead. Later, I learned that one of my friends had gone for the trip - and when the results came, he scored higher marks than I did.

That moment quietly taught me something profound.





Fast forward to March 2024. A notification appeared announcing the Global Young Adults Conference to be held in Prasanthi Nilayam in July. There was one vacancy from the Pakyong Samithi. Without a second thought—and remembering my past experience—I immediately enrolled. Soon enough, I was confirmed as a participant. But there was a complication. I was in the final semester of my college, and July was also the time when our examinations were expected to be held. The dates for neither were confirmed yet. Still, I placed my trust in Swami. And Swami listened.

My exams concluded on the 5th of July, and the conference took place from 12th to 14th July. Everything aligned perfectly, as if it had been arranged long before I even worried about it.

After all—does even a leaf move without His will?

For the very first time in my life, I reached Prasanthi Nilayam.

My mother had visited there in 1999 and had the immense blessing of being in Swami's physical presence. Growing up, I was endlessly curious about what Swami looked like. I would ask my mother again and again.

Her answer was always the same, yet always magical.

“Have you ever seen cotton floating gently in the breeze?”

“Yes,” I would reply.

“That is exactly how Swami moved,” she would say. “He didn't walk... he floated.”

Those words stayed with me forever.

Standing in Prasanthi Nilayam for the first time felt like stepping into a place that my heart had always known. It truly lives up to the name given by Swami—the Abode of Supreme Peace.

Since then, Swami has continued to shower His grace upon me. I received the opportunity to be an Alumni of the National Leadership Programme for Self-Transformation, and I also had the blessing of performing my first Prasanthi Seva.

By His grace, I have been able to visit Prasanthi Nilayam for three consecutive years—2024, 2025, and 2026.

I hope and pray that I may continue visiting this sacred place throughout my life. For me, Prasanthi Nilayam stands higher than even the four sacred dhams. It is truly the Abode of the Highest Peace.

Swami, words can never fully express the love and gratitude I feel for You.

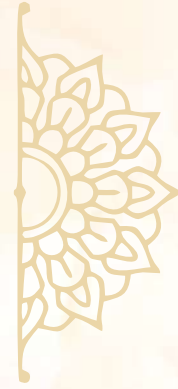
All I ask is this:

Allow me to remain Your faithful friend and devoted bhakta always.



Devrani Sahoo

Assam



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas -

An Inclusive Approach

Life offers many opportunities to learn, grow, and evolve, but only few experiences leave a permanent imprint on the soul. For me, “Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas” has been an extraordinary blessing. As an alumnus of this noble institution, **I look back upon my Bal Vikas journey not merely as a phase of childhood learning, but as the very foundation upon which my character, values, and outlook towards life were built. The lessons I received there continue to guide me even today, shaping my thoughts, actions, and aspirations in profound ways. “Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas” was far more than a weekly gathering or a moral education class. It was a sacred environment where young minds were nurtured with love, discipline, spirituality, and wisdom.**

In an age where education is often limited to academic achievement, Bal Vikas imparted something infinitely more valuable – the art of living a meaningful and righteous life. It taught us that true education transforms both the heart and the intellect. Looking back at myself as a child, I remember that attending Bal Vikas classes was always a source of joy and enthusiasm. The melodious Bhajans, inspiring Prayers, Storytelling sessions, value-based discussions, and interactive activities created an atmosphere filled with peace. These classes were not confined to theoretical teachings; these encouraged me to practice values in my daily lives.

Through stories from the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagavad Gita, and the lives of Saints and spiritual leaders, I learned timeless lessons on truth, righteousness, peace, love, and non-violence. Simple yet powerful values such as honesty, respect for parents and teachers, kindness towards others, and

self-discipline were deeply instilled in our mind from an early age. The contribution of Bal Vikas Gurus in this transformative journey cannot be expressed adequately in words. They are not merely instructors; they are mentors who taught with immense patience and dedication. Their unwavering commitment in shaping young minds reflects the true essence of selfless service taught by the Bhagawan Baba. Bal Vikas also played a significant role in developing my confidence and communication skills. As a child, I was often hesitant to speak in public or express my thoughts openly. However, the opportunities provided through speeches, storytelling competitions, group discussions, cultural programs, and devotional activities helped me overcome my fears. “Bal Vikas” became a platform where I discovered my strengths, gained confidence and learned to believe in myself.

Another unforgettable dimension of my Bal Vikas journey was the emphasis on service to society. We were encouraged to participate in various service activities such as helping the underprivileged, visiting villages, maintaining cleanliness, distributing food, and assisting those in need. These experiences taught us that service is not an obligation but an expression of love and humanity. That helped us understand the suffering of others and inspired us to become more compassionate and responsible individuals. Through these activities, we learned one of the most beautiful teachings of Sai Baba: “Hands that help are holier than lips that pray.”

What makes Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas truly exceptional is its inclusive approach. It never confined spirituality to





rituals or religious boundaries. Instead, it emphasized the unity of all religions and the brotherhood in the society. We learned to respect every faith and appreciate the common values present in all spiritual traditions. **As I matured, I gradually began to understand the deeper significance of the teachings imparted during Bal Vikas. The values we learnt were not merely ideals for childhood but guiding principles for life itself. In moments of confusion, stress, the lessons of patience, faith, truthfulness, and self-control provided me inner strength and clarity. Bal Vikas silently prepared us to face life's challenges with courage and dignity. It taught me that real success lies not in wealth, fame, or power, but in becoming a good human being who contributes positively to society.**

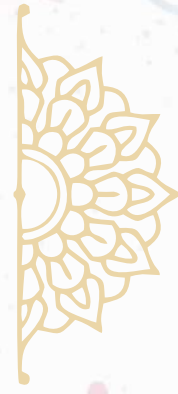
In a rapidly changing world where moral values are often overshadowed by material pursuits, Sri Sathya Sai Bal

Vikas stands as a beacon of hope. It shapes individuals who are not only intellectually capable but also emotionally balanced, spiritually aware, and socially responsible. Looking at my Bal Vikas journey, my heart fills with gratitude towards Baba, my revered Gurus, and everyone who contributed in this invaluable experience. **Bal Vikas was not merely a part of my childhood; it became the guiding light of my life. The memories, teachings, and values I received there remain among the greatest treasures I possess. In conclusion, my experience in Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas has been nothing short of transformative; It moulded my personality, strengthened my character, and inspired me to lead a life rooted with love, service, and righteousness.** I shall forever remain grateful for this divine journey that transformed me from an ordinary student into a responsible human being.



SVS Anjaneyulu

Telangana



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas -

The Architect of Character

How Bal Vikas Foundations Shape a Lifetime of Excellence.

The formative years of an individual's life are akin to the foundation of a skyscraper. While the world sees the shimmering glass and steel of professional titles and personal achievements, the structural integrity is determined by what was laid deep underground years prior. I was fortunate to have undergone this training until my 12th standard. This foundation is uniquely reinforced with some precise snippets of wisdom from the Gita, the Vedas, and a pluralistic understanding of world religions. These snippets have been my strength through my life's journey till now and into the future too.

This holistic education does more than impart knowledge; it crafts a "human value system" that acts as a silent engine for professional success, personal fulfilment, and profound spiritual growth.

1. The Character Competence

In the modern corporate world, technical skills (hard skills) are often a baseline. The true differentiator is "Character Competence." As a Bal Vikas alumnus my entry into the workforce was differentiated on day one with time discipline, preparedness, honest participation and a positive outlook to the organisation's expectations. Intense discussions around 'What I bring to the table' and no question around 'What's in it for me?' caught eerie attention of my bosses. Perhaps it is the Gita grooming - the philosophy of focusing on the excellence of action rather than being paralyzed by the anxiety of the result.

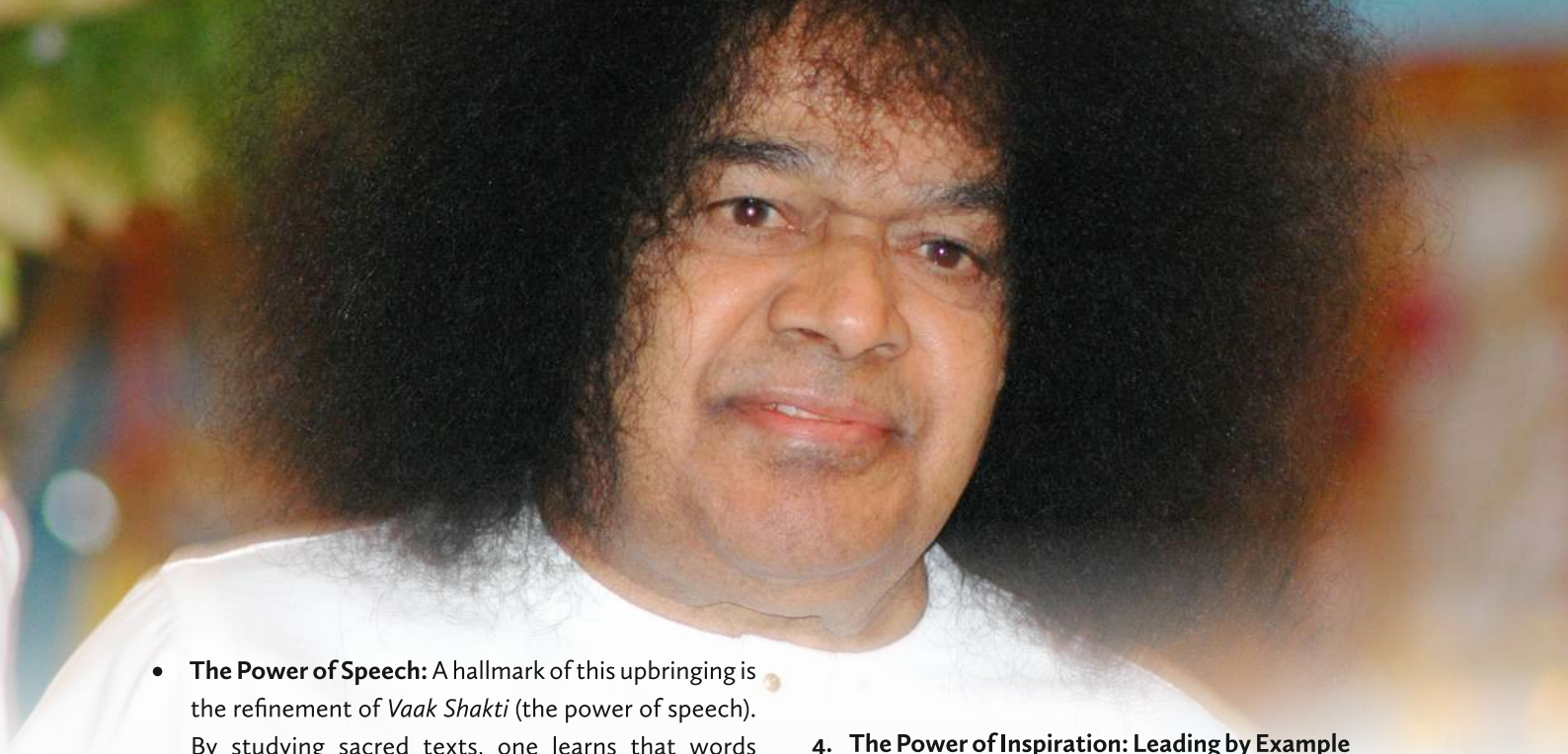
- **Integrity as a Default:** When the Vedas teach *Satyam Vada, Dharmam Chara*, it translates into a professional reputation for unwavering integrity. In leadership, this creates "high-trust environments" where teams feel secure because their leader's word is their bond.
- **Inclusive Global Mindset:** The "Sarva Dharma" approach provides a significant advantage in today's globalized economy. By learning the core tenets of various faiths, an individual develops high **Cultural Intelligence (CQ)**. This helped me navigate diverse boardrooms with a genuine respect that transcends tolerance, fostering collaboration across countries.
- **Decision-making under Pressure:** The *Bhagavad Gita* is in many ways a manual for crisis management. It teaches us to remain equanimous during market crashes or organizational restructuring, viewing challenges as "Kurukshetra" that demand duty over emotion.

2. Personal Success: The Art of Balanced Living

Personal success is often defined by the quality of one's relationships and mental well-being. The Bal Vikas curriculum emphasizes the "Five Human Values": Truth, Right Conduct, Peace, Love, and Non-violence.

- **Emotional Regulation:** The discipline of learning Slokas and Vedam is a form of cognitive training. The rhythmic chanting harmonizes the nervous system, providing the adult with a "built-in" tool for stress management. This leads to an ability to handle personal setbacks with resilience rather than despair.





- **The Power of Speech:** A hallmark of this upbringing is the refinement of *Vaak Shakti* (the power of speech). By studying sacred texts, one learns that words should be "Truthful, Pleasing, and Beneficial." In personal life, this results in a person who heals rather than hurts, making them a magnet for deep, lasting friendships and a pillar of support within their family.
- **Holistic Discipline:** The habit of a structured "Bal Vikas Sunday" or daily prayer translates into adult habits of time management and self-regulation. This discipline ensures a balance between physical health, family commitments, and intellectual pursuits.

3. Spiritual Growth: The Quest for the Universal Self

While many discover spirituality in the twilight of their lives, a Bal Vikas student is introduced to the "Big Questions" early. This early exposure prevents the "spiritual mid-life crisis" common in the modern age.

- **A Personal Relationship with the Divine:** The sense of "Cosmic Security"—the feeling that one is never truly alone or unprotected is the truest gift of Bal Vikas.
- **Unity of Thought, Word, and Deed:** The curriculum's focus on matching one's thoughts with their words and actions leads to an "Integrated Personality." This integration is the highest form of spiritual achievement in daily life.
- **Expansion of Love:** The transition from "I" to "We" is the spiritual trajectory of a Bal Vikas student. They begin to see the same purpose in a colleague, a stranger, or even an adversary, leading to a life defined by empathy and understanding which leads to less confrontations and more productivity.

4. The Power of Inspiration: Leading by Example

The most profound impact of this curriculum is the creation of an **Inspirational Presence**. Such an individual does not need to "try" to lead; they lead by the sheer gravity of their character.

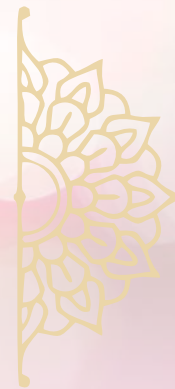
- **Behavioural Modelling:** Because their values are deeply rooted, their behaviour is consistent. They don't have a "work persona" and a "home persona." This authenticity is rare and deeply attractive to others. People follow them not because of their authority, but because of their purity.
- **The Gift of Guidance:** When this individual speaks, their guidance is often a synthesis of modern logic which can be traced to the scriptural wisdom too. They might quote a management principle and a Vedic sutra in the same breath, providing a holistic perspective that helps others see the "bigger picture."
- **Choice of Words:** Their vocabulary is devoid of malice and ego. They use language to elevate the listener. In a world of cynical communication, their words act as a "Satsang" (good company), naturally drawing people towards a higher goal.

The Bal Vikas curriculum is not a religious education; it is a Life Education. It prepares a student to be a courageous, disciplined, and compassionate individual. In adulthood, this manifests as a person who succeeds in the boardroom, thrives in the living room, attains 'Turiya' state in the bedroom and remains anchored in the prayer room. They become a living bridge between the scriptural wisdom and the dynamic needs of the future, inspiring everyone they touch to strive for their own highest potential.



Sai Sneha Das

Odisha



Swami - My Sole Protector and Guide

When I was five years old, I had got a sense that I am an average student, I was not my teacher's pet and I did not excel at co-curricular activities like few students in my class.

My mother got worried, when all of a sudden, my exams score started dropping below 90%. She already knew about Bal Vikas, but this is when she decided, it is time to get me admitted to the nearby Bal Vikas Centre.

Around the year 2003, I become a Group-I student at Sriram Nagar Bal Vikas Centre. My Sunday then become busier than before. I would attend Bal Vikas, Dance Class and Music Class. But Bal Vikas was not scary or taxing like other classes and school. It nurtured within me, the realisation of the omnipresence of God.

After I was promoted to Group-II Class, I was selected to participate in Easwaramma Day Competition. My mother, being my Bal Vikas Guru prepared all my competition materials and trained me.

The tricky part was, these competition dates and my school picnic dates were always close to each other. Again, since I was a slow learner, I had to sacrifice enjoying those picnics and focus on my elocution topics. It did pinch me then, thinking about all the fun am missing out on.

But I fondly remember that in one of the Easwaramma Day Competition, I won my first prize. The prizes were some books, but it meant much more than that. It was the first time; I had won something. This planted a seed of self-confidence in a child, who believed she was just an average student.

However, as years passed, I completed my Bal Vikas course and went to a national level college, and started to undervalue the role of Bal Vikas in my life. I thought all these teachings are not practical, I should have socialized more with school friends and become street smart.

However, after college, when I had moved away from home for a long time now, I was forced into many challenges in social life. **But at that time the teachings of Bal Vikas reminded me that God is omnipresent and always watching our every action silently. This thought has helped me stay mindful and remember Him in my life. I always remember Him as my almighty father, and whenever I tried and cried and prayed, believe me, His help always arrived. He always fished me out of troubled waters.**

I was not still very strong academically, and I was unsure about my professional future. After graduation, a college senior of mine mentioned to me about a masters course in Cyber Security Programme. It caught my interest and I cracked the entrance exam and got a seat, which was another miracle, but that lead me to a job at a very prestigious consulting firm. Most of my classmates were still in shock, how had I cracked this corporate job. It was a well-known fact that corporate jobs are not easy to sail through, but my colleagues and seniors always told me - "You are a special and genuine person. You do not use calculation to get our attention, you genuinely care". I think, the values imbibed in Bal Vikas started making sense now.





Recently, I was gearing up at full speed for my work trip to Middle East. While coordinating, we were told in the last minute all the tickets for 28th February 2026, 4 a.m. were sold out and we were supposed to meet the clients on 01st March, 2026. So, then we had to modify all our booking for 01st March, 2026 4 a.m. flight. While I was preparing to leave for my flight, the news of disturbance at Middle East came. Had I left a day early i.e. on 28th February, 2026, I would have been stuck in the Middle East with no way to come back. I sat down and connected the dots. It was He, who had delayed my flight, it was He, who protected His little girl from this major mishap.

Yes, I was an average student, but I am a special child of Sai.



Mayur Kumar K N

Karnataka South



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas -

A Way of Life

Everyone will be given a chance by God to go and grow closer to the Divine. That is everyone's destiny. How close we actually go is in our hands. That is our effort. These profound words of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba beautifully reflect my own journey with Swami and Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas. I joined Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas in 2011 at the age of seven with the simple curiosity and innocence of a child, unable to truly comprehend who or what Swami is. I saw HIM as a divine figure who could manifest objects out of thin air. To a child's mind, this felt to be extraordinary and perhaps became my first doorway into the enquiry for truth.

As I continued attending Bal Vikas classes regularly, my understanding gradually deepened. I slowly began to realize that Swami is not merely a divine personality to be admired, but a guiding force, a silent presence, and the very source of values that shape one's life. I understood that Swami's greatest miracle is not the materialization of objects, but the transformation of individuals through His unconditional love and guidance.

In a world where people are often recognized for academic brilliance and intellectual capability, Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas nurtured in me far deeper values like humility, compassion, discipline, devotion and selflessness. These values shaped my personality and outlook towards life from a very young age and they continue to guide me in every aspect of my journey even today.

For many people, there may be a defining moment when they feel Swami entered their lives. But for me, I do not feel there has ever been a moment when Swami was absent from my life. HIS presence has always been

quietly woven into my everyday existence whether I am chanting Vedam, singing HIS glory through bhajans or listening to satang.

Over the years, Swami has revealed Himself to me through countless small yet deeply meaningful experiences. They may appear insignificant to others, but to me, each one serves as a reminder that He is always with us. Even the smallest incidents leave me amazed, reinforcing the beautiful truth that Swami is above us, below us, beside us and within us.

I am currently pursuing my college education and I truly feel that even this opportunity is by HIS grace alone. My college is located in Kengeri and what would normally have been a long and exhausting commute became remarkably easier with the metro service being extended till my college gate now. What may seem like a practical convenience to others feels like Divine grace to me. Moments like these constantly remind me that life unfolds not merely through planning or effort alone but through HIS unseen blessings and perfect timing.

The various activities I have been blessed to participate in through the SSSIHMS Samithi-whether chanting Vedam, singing bhajans, participating in seva or interacting with Bal Vikas children, have shaped me in ways that influenced not only my spiritual life but also every aspect of my personal and academic growth. These experiences have nurtured in me, the confidence, clarity of thought, effective communication skills and the ability to connect with people naturally and effortlessly.

Never once in college have, I felt nervous or hesitant while presenting before an audience or interacting with new people. What may outwardly appear as confidence





is, in truth, Swami's grace silently working through me. Every opportunity to learn, serve and grow under HIS guidance continues to shape me into a better individual.

Perhaps the happiest and most meaningful part of my journey today is the opportunity to give back what I once received through Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas. What began as learning in Bal Vikas has gradually blossomed into a way of life, inspiring me to preserve and share Swami's teachings through my actions and active involvement in Samithi activities.

While interacting with children, I strive to reflect the same love, patience and care that was once showered upon me by my Gurus. Through seva, I continue to learn humility, empathy and the joy of selfless service. Vedam has brought discipline and focus into my life while bhajans have deepened my devotion and strengthened my emotional connection with Swami. Serving currently as the Youth Coordinator of SSSIHMS, Whitefield has further nurtured within me a deep sense of responsibility, gratitude and dedication.

Over time, I have come to realize that Swami's teachings are not meant to remain confined to prayer halls or spiritual gatherings alone. They naturally find expression in the way we think, speak, learn, serve and live each day. The values instilled through Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas continue to guide me at every step, shaping not only my spiritual journey but also the person I aspire to become.

As I continue through this phase of college life with its responsibilities, ambitions, and uncertainties, one thing remains constant, my gratitude for Swami's presence in my life. It is only through HIS blessings that I am able to remember HIS name amidst the distractions and fast pace of everyday life.

In every opportunity, every learning experience, every moment of strength and every small miracle of daily life, I continue to feel HIS grace. For all that HE has given me, both seen and unseen, I remain deeply and eternally grateful.

Wahengbam Tilorama

Manipur



The Journey That Gave Me Wings

There are journeys that begin with a destination in mind, and then there are journeys that quietly transform the traveller without them ever realizing it. Mine began with the tiny footsteps of a four-year-old child, unaware that a single visit would become the foundation of an entire lifetime.

At that age, I was full of curiosity and innocence, with no idea what awaited me behind those doors. Yet, looking back now, I realize that it was one of the most defining moments of my life.

After my very first class, something within me awakened. The bhajans echoed in my heart long after the sessions ended, and the slokas found a permanent place on my lips. The stories narrated by my Guru deeply influenced me, and every Sunday I returned home happier than before. Even as a child, I eagerly looked forward to every class because each session filled me with joy, inspiration, and a sense of belonging.

As the years unfolded, Bal Vikas became more than a part of my routine; it became a part of my identity. Every bhajan, every story, and every Vahini Satsang quietly engraved values into my heart that no textbook could ever teach. While schools taught me how to make a living, Bal Vikas taught me how to live. It taught me that nothing is greater than love and devotion, and that true success lies in becoming a good human being.

One of the greatest blessings of my life came when I was given the opportunity to perform our beautiful Manipuri traditional dance, *Khamba Thoibi Jagoi*, and the legendary *Ras Lila* on the sacred stage of Prasanthi Nilayam.

Standing beneath those divine lights, I felt the privilege of offering my culture at the Lotus Feet of Bhagawan. Every movement became an expression of gratitude rather than a performance. That sacred stage taught me that devotion has a language beyond words.

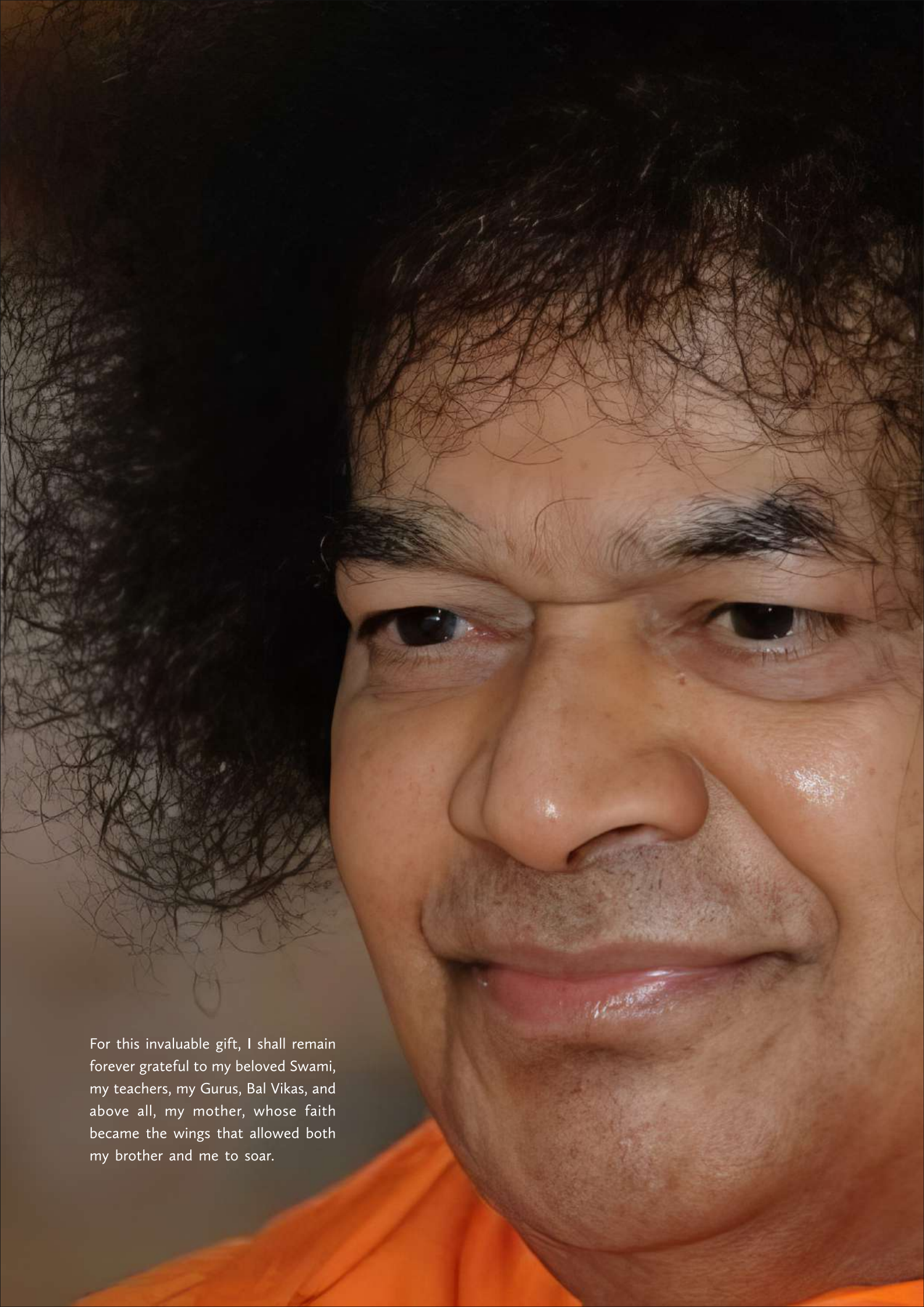
When I was in the eighth grade, I was chosen to represent my state by singing a bhajan in the Prasanthi Nilayam Mandir. The news filled me with immense joy and gratitude. To offer my voice in such a sacred place was never something I had dared to dream of. Some blessings are simply too profound for words; they can only be treasured in silence. Those sacred opportunities strengthened my faith and inspired me to dedicate myself more sincerely to Swami's teachings.

It taught me that kindness is strength, humility is beauty, and service is worship. It taught me that the true measure of education is not how much we know but how deeply we love, how gently we speak, and how willingly we serve. Swami's words, "**Love Ever, Hurt Never**," have remained my guiding principle.

This journey became even more meaningful because I was not alone. My younger brother also grew up in Bal Vikas. Watching him embrace the same values has been one of life's greatest blessings. He possesses an extraordinary talent for singing bhajans, and whenever he sings, every note feels like a heartfelt prayer. His devotion touches everyone who listens.

As I reflect upon this beautiful journey, I realize that Bal Vikas did not simply teach me lessons—it transformed my life. It nurtured my character, deepened my faith in God, strengthened my family, and gave me a purpose greater than myself.





For this invaluable gift, I shall remain forever grateful to my beloved Swami, my teachers, my Gurus, Bal Vikas, and above all, my mother, whose faith became the wings that allowed both my brother and me to soar.



PARENTS

“Discipline, Rigorous control of the senses and behaviour must be administered by the parents. Then the children become sacred souls, holy, sanctified individuals”

- Baba



Resmi S Natesan

Karnataka South



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas -

The Sacred Bond

One of the greatest joys in my life is experiencing the unconditional love and blessings that Our Divine mother showers upon HIS children. My daughter has been truly fortunate to receive the loving grace of Bhagawan from the very beginning of her life. Her early years were filled with sweet interactions and Divine grace that laid the foundation for her lifelong bond with Swami.

Swami, in HIS infinite compassion, blessed our home with HIS Divine visits. During one of those precious visits, He performed the Namakaranam and Vidyarambham for her. It was HE who lovingly named her Suparna, explaining that it meant “Good Gold”. These were profound moments of grace that wrapped her childhood in a cocoon of Divine love.

Her interactions with Swami were delightfully playful. With the innocence of a child, she would hand Swami little notes and simple messages scribbled in her own words. Swami would patiently listen, smile and respond in ways only HE could—sometimes with a glance or a soft pat on her cheeks or a kind word. These personal exchanges were more than mere moments; they were seeds of faith and intimacy sown deeply in her.

Growing up under Swami's loving gaze, she joined the Bal Vikas program. Though just a little girl, she absorbed HIS messages in her own innocent way. Her actions and words often reflected the gentle influence of her Divine Friend.

One particular memory stands out as a testimony to Swami's omnipresence. When she began school, her

route passed by Sai Darshan, Swami's Mandir. Knowing the sacredness of the space, I would remind her to offer pranams at the mandir each morning. **One day, Swami mentioned to me, “You know, your daughter smiles at ME every day.” This took me by surprise. On enquiring, she shyly explained, “Amma, the car goes by so fast, I don't have enough time to lift my hands and pray. So I just bend forward and smile at Swami's picture.” That simple smile was her prayer and it had reached the Lord.**

This moment was a beautiful reminder that the Lord sees and treasures even the smallest acts of love. While her childhood was adorned by Swami's physical proximity, this incident gave us something more profound, Love in the purest form, even the simplest gesture, reaches HIM.

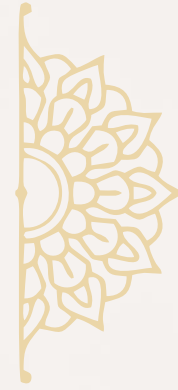
Today, though she lives far away, navigating life with its joys and challenges, one thing remains constant: her faith. In moments of uncertainty or joy, she says with conviction, “Amma, Swami knows everything. HE will give me what is best at the right time.” This unwavering trust is not merely learnt-it is lived. Swami nurtures this in HIS own unique, loving way in every Bal Vikas child.

As a mother and a Bal Vikas Guru, I find immense comfort in learning that all HIS children are enveloped in HIS invisible grace. He held her tiny fingers then; now, HE holds her heart. I remain ever grateful for this sacred bond—one that transcends time, space and distance.



Brijesh Bamatwa

West Bengal One



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas -

Bhagawan's Gift to the Child, Parent and Home

A Question for the Parents: Is This Enough?

Parenthood is a life-changing moment. With the birth of a child, a mother and a father are also born, unannounced, and along with them is born an ocean of aspirations.

We all want our children to be well educated, successful and capable of standing in the world with dignity. But amidst all these aspirations and our constant exploration of possibilities, there is one question that each parent must pause and ask.

Is this enough?

A child today grows up with the world in the palm of the hand. With one touch, there is information, entertainment, influence, comparison, distraction and now even artificial intelligence ready to answer almost anything. Technology and social media quietly shape our children's habits, choices and even their thinking.

Along with the age-old concern of keeping them rooted in values, parents today face newer worries which include emotional fragility, loss of attention, restlessness of mind, weakening of patience, and the possibility that our children may become very capable outside, but remain frail within.

Unfortunately, unlike in the past, modern education, however important and necessary, is not designed or equipped to address these deeper concerns. Its focus is increasingly on information, performance, competition, examinations, careers and livelihood. It concentrates only on the head, and totally ignores the heart, which is central to a child's true blossoming

The question, therefore, is, what is the solution?

Bal Vikas: More Than a Weekly Class

This is where Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas becomes not only relevant, but absolutely essential. **It is not just another activity in a child's busy schedule, nor merely a weekly class of stories, stotras, bhajans and good activities. All this certainly happens, but to see it only this way is to miss its deeper role in shaping the child. It is a vital foundation that prepares the child for life, shapes character and gives meaning, purpose and direction to all other learning.**

A Personal Reflection: From Alumnus to Parent

I say this both as a Bal Vikas alumnus and as a parent. To me, as a child, those classes simply felt enjoyable. But today I realise that they quietly laid the foundation of a way of life. Their invisible lessons still guide my choices, give me strength in difficult moments, and bring inner calm.

Today, I see my children being nurtured by the same sacred process. Interestingly, when I once asked my daughter, who is in Group III, "What do you feel you have gained from Bal Vikas?", her reply was instant: "The power of discrimination, the ability to choose between right and wrong."

Another visible impact I noticed was during a recent vacation. I offered to buy her a few things, but she refused. Her simple response was, "I do not need it." To me, this was not a small thing. In an age where children are constantly exposed to attraction, comparison and



desire, this small response reflected contentment, restraint and the ability to make a choice.

My son in Group II when asked once said that Bal Vikas teaches us “to always try to be good.” When I asked what being good meant, he replied, “Not harming others in any way.”

These values and lessons, in my view, form some of the strongest foundations that Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas lays in the life of a child.

The Inner Voice: The Real Armour of Bal Vikas

When our children grow up, we may not be beside them when they face temptation, pressure, failure, loneliness or moral conflict. At such moments, what will guide them? **When the mind pulls one way and the heart whispers another, when peer pressure tempts them to compromise, or when the easy path appears attractive but wrong, what will give them strength? Will it be the voice repeatedly shouted from outside, or the voice awakened within? This inner voice is the real armour that Bal Vikas gives to a child.**

Technology can give speed, but not direction. Artificial Intelligence can give answers, but not conscience. **Bhagawan Baba said, “The ideal of the Bal Vikas is to raise a generation of boys and girls who have a clean and clear conscience.” To me, this contains the entire purpose of Bal Vikas.** It connects the 3Hs: Head, Heart and Hands, so that every impulse of the head (mind) is examined by the heart before being expressed through the hands in action.

Having a clean and clear conscience is not merely knowing what is right and what is wrong. Many people know what is right. The real question is whether one has the courage to do what is right when it is difficult.

Modern education prepares children for careers, but Bal Vikas prepares them for life. It gives them an inner compass and immunity against wrong influences. In that sense, Bal Vikas is like a lifetime vaccine, protecting not the body, but the character.

And who administers this vaccine? The Bal Vikas Guru. With love and dedication, the Guru nurtures young hearts during their formative years. With Swami's love, the Guru fulfils this sacred responsibility without seeking any credit.

The Home: Where the Seed Must Be Nurtured

Merely sending our child to Bal Vikas, however, is not enough. **The Guru may plant the seed, but the home must nurture it. Parenting is not just about providing comfort and education; it is about creating an environment where character can blossom.**

Children learn more from what we do than what we say. They watch how we speak, react, use our phones, treat elders, handle anger, face difficulties, practise devotion, and whether our actions match our words. Bal Vikas therefore reminds us as parents to lead by example. Our own sadhana as parents is not only prayer or bhajan, but the sincere effort to become a living example of the values that we want our children to imbibe, amidst trials, compulsions and temptations of daily life.

Bal Vikas: A Gift to the Child, Parent, Family and Humanity

Today, when I see my children attending Bal Vikas, I see it as Swami's grace quietly shaping their hearts and minds. They may not fully appreciate its value today, just as I did not when I was a child. But I am confident that when life brings its challenges and difficult choices, the values and lessons imbibed through Bal Vikas will guide them from within.

Bal Vikas is truly Bhagawan's gift for every child. **But the more I reflect, the more I feel that it is also His gift to every parent, to every family, and to humanity as a whole.**

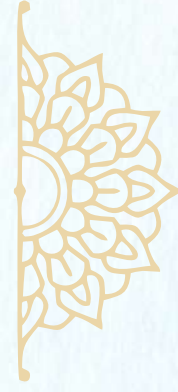
As a Bal Vikas alumnus, I express my gratitude to Swami for giving me the opportunity to become a Bal Vikas student and my gratefulness to the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, which gave the platform to practise what Bal Vikas teaches. **Bhagawan has said that knowledge not put into practice is like undigested food. If Bal Vikas lays the foundation, the Organisation becomes the training ground where those values are strengthened through practice and woven into daily life.**

I sincerely pray for His continued Grace and Blessings upon everyone, and for the light of Bal Vikas to illumine every home with love, devotion, values and the strength to live as His true children.



Sai Gunaranjan

Telangana



When Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas Enters a Home...

For the last one and a half years, my two children, Bharadwaj and Gayatri, have been attending the Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas programme at Bhagyanagar Samithi, Kukatpally Housing Board (KPHB), Hyderabad, Telangana.

As a parent, I had expected them to learn prayers, bhajans, stories from Indian culture, and the basic values that Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba taught. They have certainly learnt all of that. They chant Stotra's, sing Sai bhajans, remember stories of our culture, and participate with enthusiasm in Samithi activities. But ***what has touched me most is not only what they have learnt. It is what they are becoming.***

Bal Vikas does not change a child in a dramatic, overnight manner. Its beauty lies in the *quiet, almost invisible transformation that begins to show up in small actions, small expressions, and small choices.* As parents, we notice these micro-changes first: the way a child folds hands a little more sincerely, the way he listens a little more attentively, the way she approaches a task with more focus, the way both children begin to feel that prayer, discipline, and goodness are not separate from daily life.

My son Bharadwaj is eight years old. Over the past few months, ***I have seen a new layer of confidence emerge in him. He has begun to come forward to lead singing, including in the Samithi.*** For a small child to stand in front of elders, brothers, sisters, and other children, and sing with devotion, is not a small thing. The ***love and encouragement shown by the Samithi members gave him the space to try, to lead, and to grow. That loving***

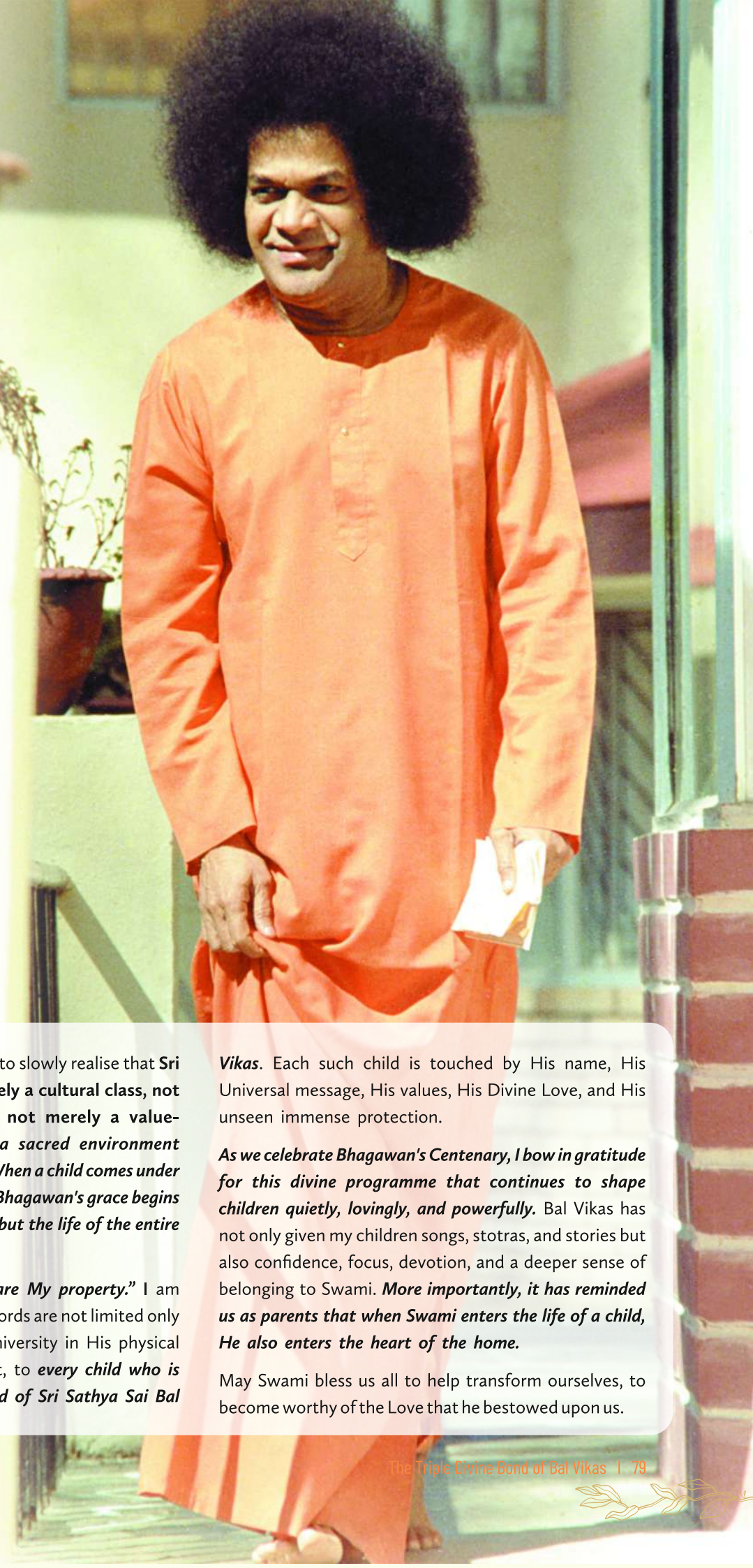
acceptance itself is Bal Vikas in action.

This confidence has also started reflecting outside the Samithi. During Sri Rama Navami celebrations held across the city, Bharadwaj participated in shloka chanting and won the first prize amongst hundreds of students across the city of Hyderabad. As a parent, the prize definitely gave us happiness, but the deeper joy was seeing him stand with steadiness, clarity, and faith. The seeds planted in Bal Vikas had begun to sprout....

My daughter Gayatri is six years old. She has taken to the focusing practices and positive environment of the Samithi like a fish to water. The slow focusing of attention, the To-Do list that she makes everyday to plan her day, the way she folds her hands in front of Swami's photo and prays with sincerity seem to have slowly entered her naturally. She recently won gold medals in her Olympiad at UKG level. While many factors may contribute to such achievements, I cannot separate them from the atmosphere that now surrounds her: ***Swami's message at home, the reinforcement of values in the Samithi, and the blessings of Bhagawan guiding her from within.***

For us as a family, ***Bal Vikas has created a beautiful 360-degree circle of reinforcement.*** What is taught in the Samithi, we try to practise at home. What is spoken at home about Swami, seva, prayer, and discipline is strengthened again in the Samithi. ***The child does not experience two separate worlds. Slowly - Home, Samithi, Daily Prayer, Micro-Learning, SSSLST discussions at home - all begin to belong to the same orbit. That, to me, is one of the greatest gifts of Bal Vikas.***





On a personal note, I have come to slowly realise that **Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas is not merely a cultural class, not merely a spiritual class, and not merely a value-education programme. It is a sacred environment chiselled by Bhagawan Himself. When a child comes under the loving umbrella of Bal Vikas, Bhagawan's grace begins to enter not only the child's life, but the life of the entire family.**

Bhagawan said, "My students are My property." I am beginning to realise that those words are not limited only to those who studied in His university in His physical presence. They extend, in spirit, to **every child who is lovingly brought under the fold of Sri Sathya Sai Bal**

Vikas. Each such child is touched by His name, His Universal message, His values, His Divine Love, and His unseen immense protection.

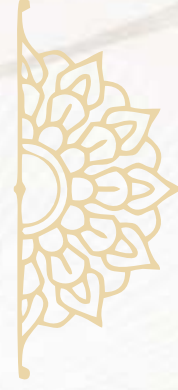
As we celebrate Bhagawan's Centenary, I bow in gratitude for this divine programme that continues to shape children quietly, lovingly, and powerfully. Bal Vikas has not only given my children songs, stotras, and stories but also confidence, focus, devotion, and a deeper sense of belonging to Swami. **More importantly, it has reminded us as parents that when Swami enters the life of a child, He also enters the heart of the home.**

May Swami bless us all to help transform ourselves, to become worthy of the Love that he bestowed upon us.



Kanchana Jayasankar

Maharashtra West 1



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas -

The Royal Pathway to Him

Satsangatve Nissangatvam

Nissangatve Nirmohatvam

Nirmohatve Nischalatatvam

Nischalatatve Jeevan Mukti

Says Jagadguru Adi Sankara laying the roadmap to Liberation

Likewise, our most Beloved Bhagawan gave Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas, as the pathway towards a higher purpose, to our girls and through them to the entire family. 'Jantunaam Nara Janma Durlabham' meaning among all living beings, human birth is rare and difficult to attain, which is why we celebrate a newborn as verily a gift from God. Like any other parent we too wished for our children to imbibe good values along with imparting them the best possible education for their happy and secure future.

Swami Says both spiritual and worldly education are essential to attain the goal of life just like two wings are needed for a bird to soar high in the sky. Blessed to have been devotees of Bhagawan, we as parents, were only too eager to enroll them into the Bal Vikas classes once they turned 5 years of age.

I have seen God. He lives in Parthi

One of the first lessons my children learnt were that God is neither distant nor one to be feared. 'In fact, He is your best and closest friend at all times!', assured their Bal Vikas grp 1 Gurus. Small stories and cute visualisation exercises further created a strong conviction in their impressionable minds.

An amusing yet profound incident comes to my mind here. During an innocent discussion about God amongst her friends, **our little girl would quote her Bal Vikas Guru saying, 'God is Here and He lives in Puttaparthi!' Doesn't this not remind you all of the famous interaction of Shri Ramakrishna and young Narendra? Such is the dedication and compassion of all the Bal Vikas Gurus to our little Narendras.**

Simple slokas soon gave them the good habit of praying daily both at the start and end of the day as well as chanting food prayers before every meal. A practice that is still regular at our homes. Group Singing gave them the joy of togetherness and group activities taught them to work as a team.

Thus, baby steps into integrating the 5 Human Values in their everyday lives began.

Parents were encouraged to sit at the back of the classes, and I was only thrilled to be learning along with them.

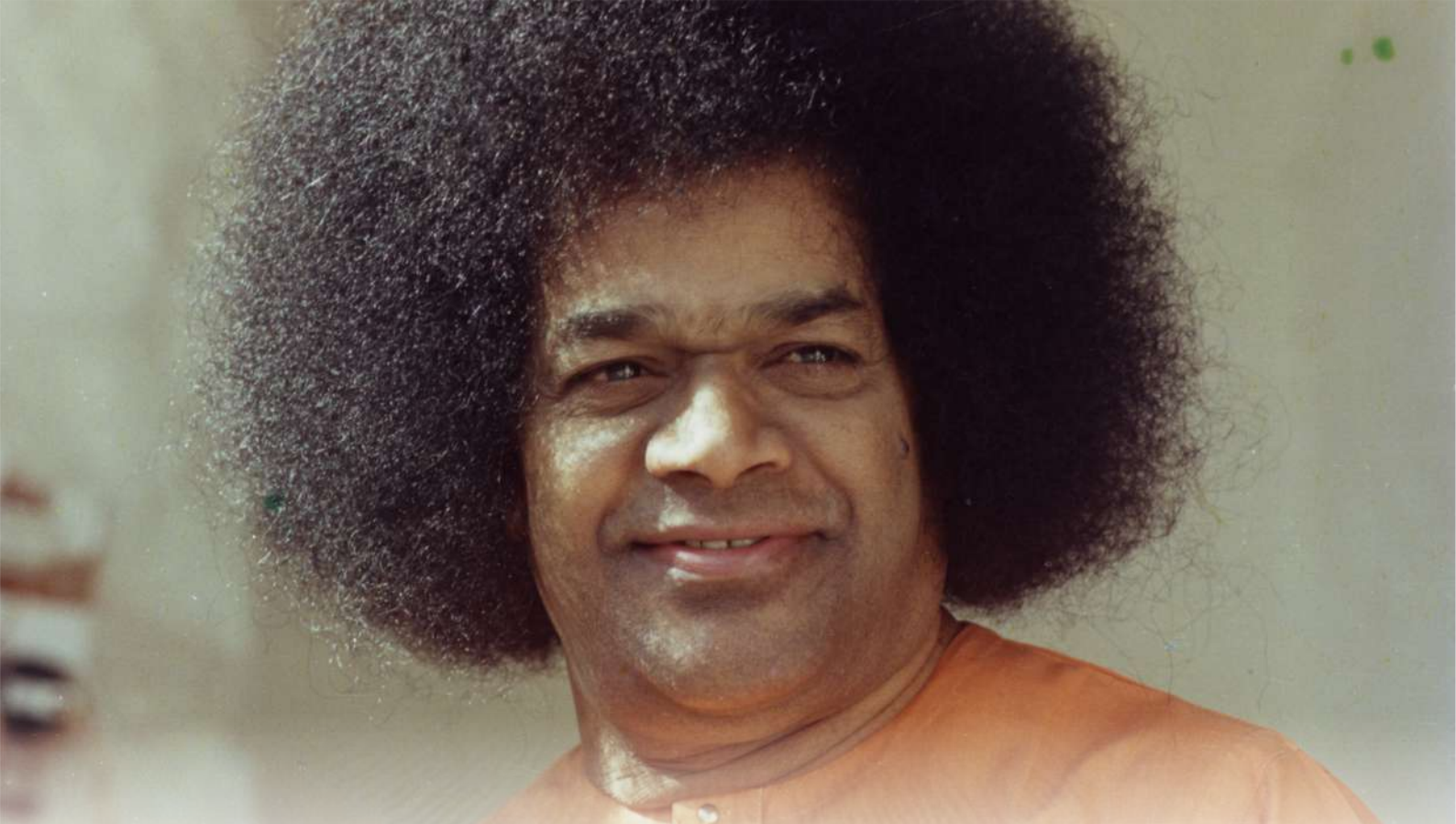
Nissangatve Nirmohatvam

Typical of any preadolescent child, there were numerous questions at home posed by our girls too to us.

'Why cannot i buy what I want like my friends? Why should there be a limit to what I want?'

We as parents often struggle to answer due to our attachment to our children.





The group 2 classes equipped my children with the answers to their numerous queries of why, who, when what etc., through Gita slokas, stories of saints and epics, Life of Swami, meaning and practice of Japa and Dhyana daily, **and the most important of all - ceiling on desires. This came as a boon to our young wards and of course the family in streamlining their wandering senses to a great extent.**

During one annual Ashadi celebrations at Puttaparthi, after the conclusion of a devotional offering by the children, some students rushed to the stage for Swami's Paduka Blessings. Seeing this from a distance, I was overjoyed that my daughter too was one of the recipients. So when I came to know from her later that she had missed the opportunity, i was disappointed. I questioned her earnestness in seeking Swami's padanamaskar. She replied calmly, 'Swami would actually be happy with me for obeying my Bal Vikas Guru!' Apparently, the wise Guru, had advised them to adhere to discipline and refrained them from rushing to the stage, unless they were called by Bhagawan.

Nirmohatve Nischalatatvam

Meanwhile as a parent who had been attending classes along with my children, I was encouraged by our Bal Vikas Guru to undergo training to become a future Guru. **As a family we were very thankful to Swami to start Grp1 classes at our residence and now the environment of the house became so Divine with His constant**

Presence and Blessings. My husband too was regular in Narayan seva which was held on first sundays of every month. The entire family used to be involved in preparing and packing while my husband would distribute the food to the Narayanas.

Adolescence is a delicate age that required the support and guidance of right-minded people. The group 3 Bal Vikas classes came to our rescue with its training in Character Development, through the wisdom of Bhaja Govindam, 5D's, the lives of Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Vivekananda and Glory of Bharat and its culture. Jyothi meditation and Self audit further gave them clarity in seeking the right goals. The 9 yrs of a wonderful journey concluded with the most memorable Gift from Swami to the daughter who missed her chance in the incident I quoted earlier.

During that year's Ashadi celebrations, our Beloved Swami blessed her with Darshan, Sparshan and Sambashan that she had so long yearned for. Swami, the greatest Guru, taught her as well as the entire family that delays were not denials and that implicit obedience to Guru is what makes Him most Happy

Nischalatatve Jeevan Mukti

Bal Vikas classes may have been only for 9 yrs, but its teachings and learnings are a pathway to ponder, ruminate and practice for a lifetime.

Yes indeed, Bal Vikas is our family's royal pathway to seek the Divinity within.



Nandini B.S.

Karnataka North



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas and Character Building

Living now in the United States, far from our cultural roots, it is often a concern for parents to ensure that their children remain connected to values, traditions, and spirituality. As a Bal Vikas mother, I feel deeply blessed and grateful for the seeds of Bal Vikas sown in her from an early age and the profound impact that the Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas program has had on our entire family.

My daughter has imbibed the teachings of Bal Vikas in her daily life with sincerity and devotion. Despite being raised in a different cultural environment now, she faithfully practices Nitya Shlokas every day. More importantly, she understands and lives the true essence behind these teachings. She consciously avoids hurting others, refrains from gossip, and even gently reminds our family members not to engage in unnecessary discussions about others. This reflects her deep understanding of the value of right conduct and right speech.

One of the most beautiful transformations I have witnessed is her practice of the principle, “Helping hands are holier than praying lips.” Every time we go grocery shopping, she insists on setting aside something for the needy. With great humility and joy, she personally offers food to those in need. **This act of selfless service has become a natural part of her life, not something taught, but something she truly believes in.**

In her school as well, her character shines brightly. She consistently receives recognition such as the Citizenship Award, which honours students who excel not only academically but also demonstrate kindness, discipline, and a helping nature. She is known to be quiet, respectful,

and compassionate towards her peers and teachers. These qualities are a direct reflection of the values instilled through Bal Vikas.

This strong foundation did not begin with her alone—it is deeply rooted in our family's spiritual journey. I had the privilege of studying in a Sri Sathya Sai institution from kindergarten through 10th standard, where values-based education shaped my character. The lessons learned there have stayed with me for life and are now being passed on to the next generation.

My parents have been devoted followers of Swami for over five to six decades. Their unwavering devotion and selfless service within the Sai organization created a strong spiritual environment at home. They were blessed with opportunities for Swami's Darshan, sparshan and sambhashan, experiences that deeply strengthened our family's faith and values.

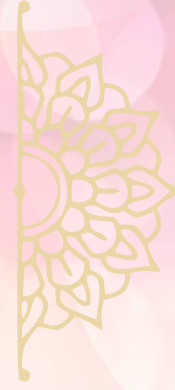
While the current generation may not have the same physical proximity to Swami, His presence continues to guide us through His teachings, values, and service activities. Through Bal Vikas, children today are receiving His blessings in the form of character building, discipline, and a sense of social responsibility.

As a parent, I see Bal Vikas not just as a class, but as a life-transforming movement. It shapes children into responsible, compassionate, and spiritually grounded individuals who carry forward universal human values in their thoughts, words, and actions. I offer my heartfelt gratitude for this divine opportunity to be part of the Bal Vikas family and to witness its beautiful impact on my child and our family.



Dr Satyam Shah

Gujarat



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas -

A Sacred Institution

Since becoming parents, one thought has constantly remained in our hearts — how can we nurture and guide our child in the best possible way? This is a question that almost every parent faces as they begin their beautiful journey of parenthood.

For me, nothing is more important than raising my child to become a kind, honest, and compassionate human being. **Titles such as officer, doctor, or engineer may define professional success, but true greatness lies in possessing a pure heart, strong values, humility, and humanity. I would feel truly blessed to see my child grow into a person who respects others, helps those in need, and spreads kindness wherever he goes.**

At times, this responsibility feels like one of the most challenging journeys in life. However, with the divine blessings and guidance of our beloved Swami through Bal Vikas, the path becomes far more peaceful, meaningful, and fulfilling.

The Bal Vikas classes and Bal Vikas Gurus have played a significant role in shaping my child's character and values. Through their loving guidance and teachings, he has learned the importance of love, cooperation, truthfulness, courage, compassion, gratitude, and respect for others. These classes have helped him grow into a caring, confident, disciplined, and respectful individual.

As a musician and flutist, he requires immense patience, dedication, and concentration while practicing, performing, and composing music. The discipline and human values he has imbibed through **Bal Vikas have**

helped him remain calm, focused, and composed during his performances. These teachings have strengthened his positive mindset, enhanced his concentration, and enabled him to face challenges with peace and confidence.

He has always enthusiastically shared his learnings in Bal Vikas with our family, friends, and cousins. His humble nature, respectful speech, and disciplined lifestyle have inspired many people around him. Simply by observing him, several of our relatives and friends felt encouraged to enroll their own children in Bal Vikas classes.

In fact, we ourselves continue to learn so much from him every single day. From practicing joint prayers and sharing meals together as a family to maintaining discipline and positive values in our daily lives, he has brought a beautiful transformation into our home. His influence has created a deep and meaningful impact on our family life, filling our home with love, unity, devotion, and good values.

Bal Vikas is not merely a learning center, it is a sacred institution dedicated to nurturing children into virtuous, disciplined, and responsible individuals. Through value-based education and proper guidance, Bal Vikas inspires children to lead meaningful lives and become noble human beings who contribute positively to society.

Thank you, my beloved Swami, for blessing our child with the opportunity to walk on the right path through Bal Vikas. We remain deeply grateful for this divine gift.



Rajagopal Pullanoor Karumampurath

Kerala



The Transformative Power of Bal Vikas

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba often reminds us that while providing water and manure is essential for a plant's growth, erecting a protective fence is equally vital. It is my firm belief that the Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas program is that divine protective shield envisioned by Swami. It guards our children—God's greatest gifts—from the vices of the world, nurturing them into virtuous citizens who bring honor to their homes and the nation.

Our journey with Bal Vikas is rooted in personal experience. Like most parents, our initial focus was solely on our son's formal education and academic excellence. Although we belonged to a family that respected traditional values, we hadn't made a systematic effort to instill them in our child, beyond routine temple visits, narrating parables, or chanting prayers during twilight.

The transformation began almost immediately after our son joined Bal Vikas. **We were amazed to see him develop a sense of discipline in his daily routine and a focused approach to his studies. His interest in Bhajans and Samithi activities blossomed. He learned the nuances of etiquette - how to respect elders and welcome guests with warmth. Bal Vikas became the cornerstone of his holistic development.**

This foundation paved the way for his future. He went on to study at the Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School and later earned his B.Com and MBA from the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. **It was the values ingrained up to Group 3 Bal Vikas that helped him earn the prestigious title of an "Ideal Sai Student" from his**

teachers. Today, as he serves with the "Young Messengers" (Youth Wing) and receives the Bal Vikas Alumni Excellence Award, we recognize that the seeds were sown in those early Bal Vikas classes.

The impact was not limited to our son. Every day, he would enthusiastically share what he learned in class, which gradually shifted our own perspectives on life. **Evenings once reserved for movies or casual entertainment were now dedicated to Sai Bhajans. We became active members of the Sai family, distancing ourselves from idle gossip and unwholesome company. We embraced a Sathwic lifestyle, eventually giving up non-vegetarian food entirely.**

Perhaps the greatest blessing was for my wife. Initially accompanying our son to class, she became an Assistant Guru and, after formal training, a Bal Vikas Guru herself. For 24 years now, these classes have been held uninterrupted at our home. Even after the COVID - 19 pandemic, when many classes remained online, we chose to return to offline sessions. We believe nothing can replace the "Guru-Shishya" bond and the experience of learning in person. In this divine mission, I find fulfillment in my humble role as a Seva Dal, managing the logistics and household duties while the classes are in session.

While the world often follows rules like discipline or honesty out of fear - much like following traffic laws to avoid a fine - Bal Vikas teaches a student why these values matter and the inner joy they bring.





The change in one child radiates through the whole family. When a child begins the daily practice of seeking blessings from parents, it prompts the parents to reflect on their own worthiness, leading them towards a more virtuous life. We have seen instances where parents have abandoned habits like alcohol or gambling, inspired by the purity of their Bal Vikas child. Furthermore, younger siblings naturally emulate the positive traits of their elder brothers or sisters, ensuring the entire household moves in the right direction.

A true Bal Vikas student—selfless, punctual, disciplined, and ever-ready to help, becomes a role model in the neighborhood. Neighbours often point to such a child as an example for their own children, thus sowing seeds of goodness in the wider community. **To be the parents of**

a Bal Vikas student is a profound blessing. There is a shift in identity; instead of the child being known through the parents, the parents become known and respected through the virtues of the child.

We are all like oysters created by the Divine. When the raindrops of Grace fall at the right moment, the oyster, through its own effort, transforms that drop into a shimmering pearl. Our children are those pearls, destined to shine with the light of human values. Nurturing them in this manner is the Sadhana dearest to Bhagawan.

Let us all become active participants in this sacred movement and render ourselves worthy of Sai's Grace.



Mrs & Mr Anil Bhatnagar

Himachal Pradesh



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas -

The Divine Connect

As parents of Paramveer Bhatnagar, a student of the second group of Anand Nilayam Bal Vikas, the journey has been truly transformative. Beginning at the tender age of three, his association with Bal Vikas has played a remarkable role in nurturing his personality, strengthening his character, and guiding him towards a disciplined and compassionate way of life.

One of the most profound influences in Paramveer's journey has been his Bal Vikas Guru - a mentor of exceptional dedication, warmth, and wisdom. Under her loving guidance, Paramveer was introduced to bhajans and sacred chants from a very young age. What began as a gentle spiritual practice gradually blossomed into a deep inner discipline, laying the foundation for patience, focus, and emotional resilience in his everyday life.

Paramveer's daily routine reflects a level of discipline rare for his age. Waking up as early as 5 AM for chanting sessions, he has developed an extraordinary sense of consistency, mindfulness, and inner calm. We often observe with amazement that even in sleep, he softly chants bhajans - a beautiful testament to how deeply the Bal Vikas teachings have touched his soul.

Beyond spiritual growth, Bal Vikas has shaped Paramveer's overall personality through group activities, storytelling sessions, and creative exercises. He has developed essential life skills - teamwork, clear communication, and genuine respect for others. These qualities have helped him grow into an empathetic, socially conscious, and well-rounded child who

approaches every interaction with kindness and understanding.

Bal Vikas has also profoundly shaped his moral compass. Through inspiring stories and sacred teachings, Paramveer has internalized values of honesty, humility, compassion, and responsibility. His empathy extends to all living beings — he is a firm believer in kindness toward animals and morally supports vegetarianism, reflecting a thoughtful and reverent relationship with the natural world.

Today, Paramveer stands as a disciplined, compassionate, and spiritually grounded child. He wakes up with purpose, chants with devotion, and faces life's challenges with patience and grace. His journey is a living example of how structured value-based learning and consistent mentorship can transform a child, not just academically, but in heart and character.

The impact of Bal Vikas has extended beyond Paramveer, touching our family. Our home has been filled with a new energy - one of positivity, harmony, and quiet joy. His respect for elders, disciplined routine, and calm behaviour has inspired every family member. Together, we now practice chanting, engage in spiritual discussions, and encourage kindness and gratitude as daily habits.

For us, Bal Vikas has become far more than a children's program - it has evolved into a shared source of unity, learning, and spiritual growth. Values once unknown to us have become an integral part of family life. Our home is now a more peaceful, balanced, and grateful





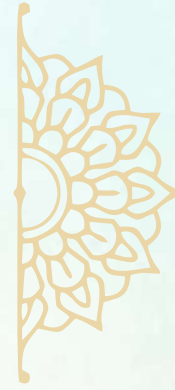
space, a true reflection of the spirit Bal Vikas instills in all it touches.

In conclusion, Paramveer Bhatnagar's Bal Vikas journey is a heartwarming testament to the transformative power of value-based, spiritually rooted education. **His story beautifully demonstrates how Bal Vikas nurtures not only the mind but also the heart and soul - planting seeds of discipline, compassion, and inner strength that will bloom throughout a lifetime.**



Nisha Saikumar

Maharashtra West 1



Growing with Grace:

How Bal Vikas Shaped Our Children and Our Family

There are certain influences in life that quietly shape a child, not through force, but through love, repetition, and gentle guidance. For our family, Bal Vikas has been that silent, steady force. Watching my children, Adhrit and Aarya, grow through this journey has been nothing short of transformative—not just for them, but for everyone around them.

When we first enrolled them in Bal Vikas, like many parents, we hoped they would learn prayers, stories from our scriptures, and perhaps develop a sense of discipline. What we did not anticipate was how deeply these teachings would take root in their everyday lives.

Today, what stands out most is not what they *know*, but who they are becoming.

There is a certain calmness about them, a quiet awareness that reflects in their words and actions. Whether it is the way they greet elders with respect, offer help without being asked, or pause before reacting, there is a visible difference. It is not something taught through instruction alone—it is something they have imbibed.

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba says, “*End of education is character.*” In Adhrit and Aarya, we are beginning to see what that truly means.

One of the simplest yet most profound habits they have developed is saying “*Harir Daata, Harir Bhokta...*” before every meal. What began as a line they learned in class has now become a sacred pause in our home - a moment of gratitude, of acknowledging that the giver, the receiver, and the offering are all one.

It is fascinating how such a small act has created a ripple effect.

There was an incident during a recent family gathering that truly brought this to life. We had invited our extended family over for dinner - a lively evening filled with conversations, laughter, and the usual chaos of children running around. As everyone settled down to eat, Adhrit and Aarya instinctively folded their hands and began the prayer.

At first, it went unnoticed.

But within seconds, the chatter softened. A few curious glances turned into attentive silence. By the time they finished, there was a stillness in the room that felt almost sacred.

My cousin, who had been watching closely, turned to me and said, almost in disbelief, “They actually *mean* it, don't they?”

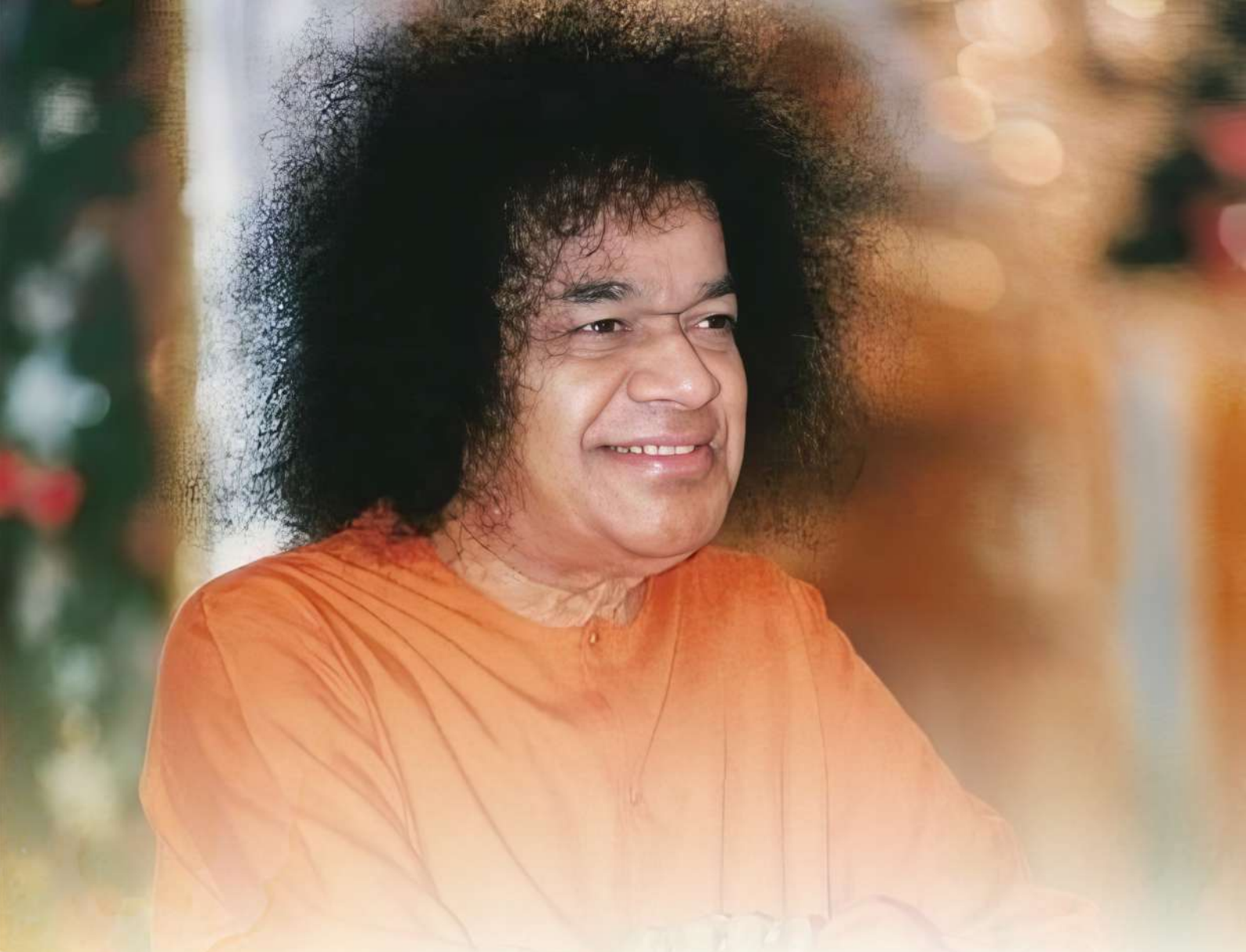
That one moment sparked a deeper conversation that evening. Questions followed—about Bal Vikas, about what they are taught, about how children so young could carry such awareness.

What struck everyone was not just the prayer itself, but the sincerity behind it.

Since then, we have noticed a shift in how our extended family perceives them. They often describe Adhrit and Aarya as “different”, but in the most beautiful way. More grounded. More respectful. More connected to something beyond themselves.

There have been moments when relatives have shared how interacting with them has made their own children





more curious. One of my nieces, after spending a weekend with them, went back home and asked her parents why they don't say a prayer before eating. Another cousin recently reached out, wanting to know how they could enroll their child in Bal Vikas.

This, to me, is the true power of Bal Vikas.

It does not just shape the child. It influences families, inspires communities, and quietly spreads values through lived example.

Bhagawan reminds us, “Your life is My message.” When children begin to embody these teachings, they become messengers in the purest sense, without preaching, without effort, simply by being who they are.

As parents, this journey has also been deeply introspective for us. There have been times when our children have gently reminded *us* of the very values we wish to instill in them, be it patience, honesty, or gratitude. In those moments, the roles reverse, and we find ourselves learning from them.

Bal Vikas has created a space where spirituality is not separate from daily life. It is in the way they speak, the way they think, and the way they choose to act, even in the smallest situations.

And perhaps that is its greatest gift.

In a world that often measures success through achievements and outcomes, Bal Vikas brings the focus back to character, compassion, and consciousness. It nurtures not just good students, but good human beings.

For our family, it has been a blessing beyond words.

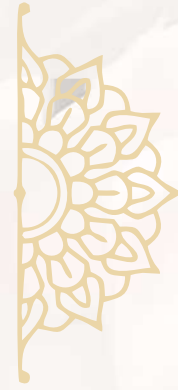
Because when we see Adhrit and Aarya grow - not just in age, but in awareness - we are reminded that the seeds being sown today will shape not just their future, but the world they will one day contribute to.

And in that quiet transformation, we see the true essence of Bal Vikas come alive.



G Anitha

Jharkhand



Blossoming of the Soul -

My Child's Transformation

As parents, we always dream of seeing our children grow into good human beings with strong values, discipline, and kindness. In today's busy and competitive world, it is not easy for children to stay connected to moral and spiritual values. Like many parents, I was also worried about how to guide my child towards a balanced and meaningful life. However, after my child started attending Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas classes inspired by the teachings of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, I began noticing many positive changes that brought great happiness and satisfaction to our family.

Initially, I joined my child in Bal Vikas with simple expectations. I wanted my child to learn good values, respect elders, and stay connected to our culture and traditions. **But over time, I realized that Bal Vikas was giving much more than I had imagined. The changes I observed were not only in behaviour but also in attitude, confidence, discipline, and emotional maturity.**

One of the first changes I noticed was improvement in respect and manners. Earlier, like many children of today's generation, my child was sometimes impatient and careless while speaking to elders. After attending Bal Vikas regularly, I saw a gradual transformation. My child started speaking more politely, listening carefully, and showing greater respect towards parents, grandparents, and teachers. **Small gestures such as greeting elders, helping at home, and expressing gratitude became part of daily life. These simple changes created a more peaceful and loving atmosphere in our family.** Another positive change I found was improved discipline and responsibility. **Bal Vikas teaches the importance of**

good habits and right conduct. Slowly, my child became more organized and sincere in daily activities. Whether it was completing homework on time, maintaining cleanliness, or following routines properly, I could clearly see a sense of responsibility developing. As parents, this gave us confidence that our child was learning values that would help throughout life.

One of the most beautiful changes was the inculcation of kindness and compassion. Through stories, bhajans, and service activities conducted in Bal Vikas, my child began understanding the importance of helping others. I noticed more caring behaviour towards family members, friends, and even strangers. **My child became more willing to share things, support classmates, and show concern for people in need. These qualities cannot be taught only through textbooks; they develop through value-based education and positive guidance.** I also found that Bal Vikas greatly improved my child's confidence and communication skills. Earlier, my child was shy in public speaking and hesitant to participate in group activities. But through storytelling, singing bhajans, speeches, and cultural programs in Bal Vikas, confidence slowly increased. Today, my child participates more actively in school and social activities without fear. This confidence is not only helping academically but is also shaping a stronger personality.

Another major improvement I noticed was emotional balance and patience. Children today face pressure from studies, gadgets, and competition, which sometimes leads to stress and anger. Bal Vikas teaches prayer, positive thinking, meditation, and self-control. **I observed that my child became calmer and more**





patient in difficult situations. Instead of reacting with frustration or anger, there was more understanding and maturity. This emotional stability has helped create a healthier and happier mindset. **Bal Vikas also helped my child develop spiritual awareness in a simple and practical way.** Earlier, prayers and spiritual practices were mostly routine activities. But now my child understands the deeper meaning of love, truth, peace, and non-violence. Listening to stories and teachings from Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba inspired my child to practice good values in daily life. I feel happy seeing genuine interest in prayers, bhajans, and cultural traditions. It has strengthened our family's spiritual connection as well.

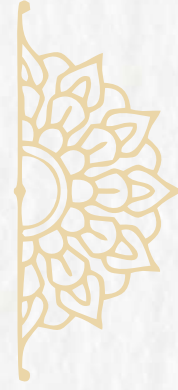
Academically too, I found positive changes. Although Bal Vikas is mainly focused on character building, the discipline and concentration developed there helped my child become more focused on studies. **Better time management, improved concentration, and a positive**

attitude gradually reflected in school performance. More importantly, my child now understands that education is not only about marks but also about becoming a good human being. As a parent, one of the greatest joys is seeing your child grow with good character and values. Bal Vikas has played an important role in shaping my child into a more respectful, confident, disciplined, and compassionate individual. The teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba have positively influenced not only my child but our entire family environment. In conclusion, sending my child to Bal Vikas has been one of the best decisions. The positive changes I have witnessed are truly meaningful and lasting. **In a world where moral values are slowly declining, Bal Vikas provides children with the right guidance to become responsible and loving human beings.** I sincerely feel grateful for the beautiful transformation I have seen in my child after joining Bal Vikas.



Lalitha K

Tamil Nadu South



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas -

A Transformative Experience

As a parent, one of my deepest concerns had been about what my child will grow to be, in today's world. In an age where influences are many and often conflicting, how and where will she learn values? Bal Vikas was my answer. Bal Vikas has helped shape my daughter, Laya, from a tender age - in terms of character, values and inner strength. She has been undertaking Bal Vikas since the young age of 5, and I have witnessed a huge transformation it has brought about in her. Through Bal Vikas, **I have seen beautiful values being inculcated in my child - respect for elders, compassion for all living things, and a deep sense of gratitude. These are not just taught as ideas, but followed and practiced in daily life. She has learnt discipline, honesty, passion and to maintain a deep faith and connection with God. She has learnt to be kind to all living beings and to not discriminate based on any factors.**

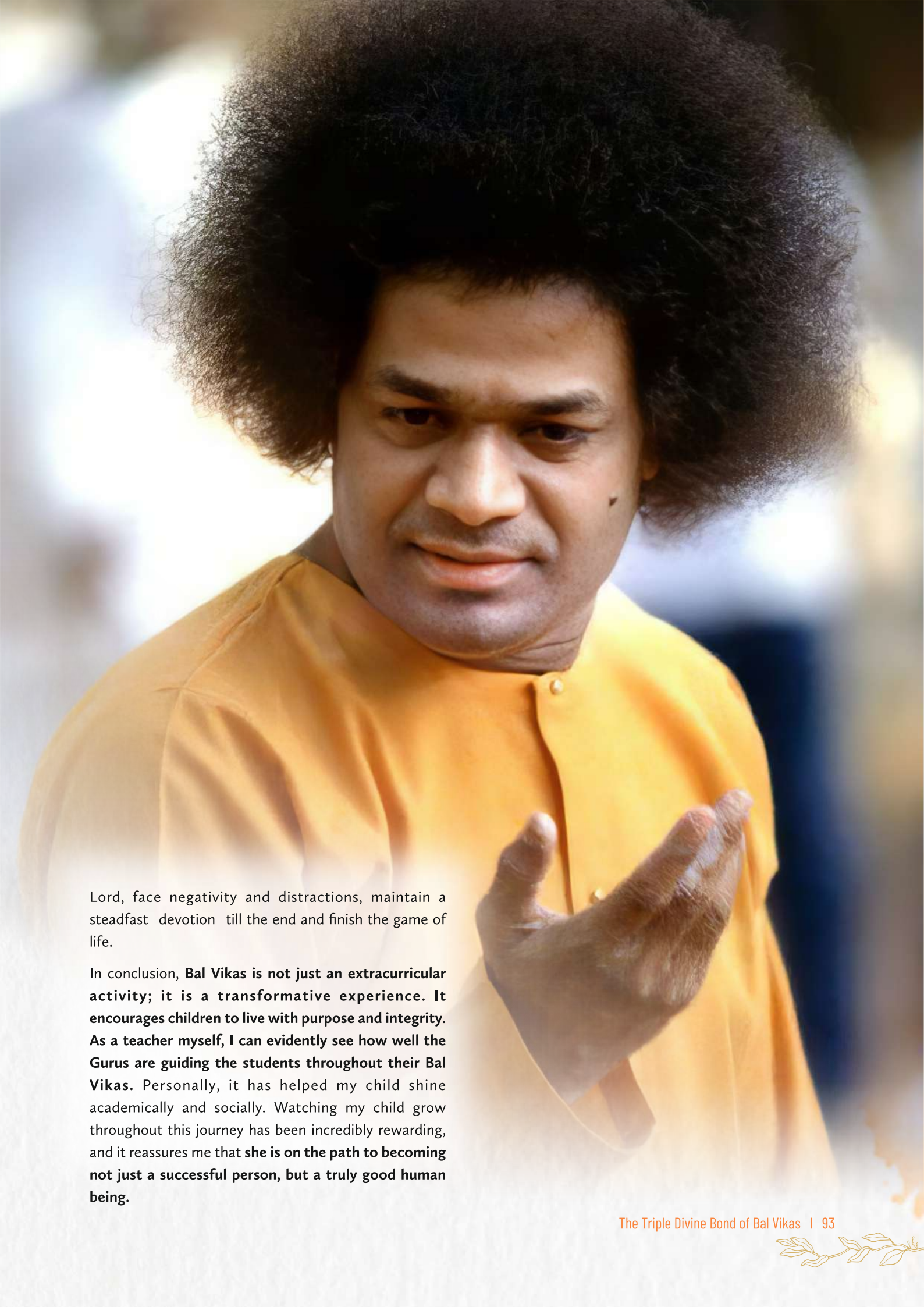
The children are introduced to Slokas, Bhajans, and stories from epics, along with spiritual practices like Pranayama and different forms of Dhyanam. These not only connect them to their cultural roots but also help them develop focus, inner calm, and a personal relationship with God. Bal Vikas also fosters a deep respect for all religions by introducing children to diverse faiths such as Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, and Jainism. Two of Swami's most known sayings are "Love All, Serve All" and "Help Ever, Hurt Never". These two sayings are taught to the children from the beginning, and the Bal Vikas students eventually maintain this as the foundation and fundamental base of their lives. **One of the most meaningful aspects, from a parent's perspective, is the emphasis on selfless service. In a**

world that often prioritizes individual success, Bal Vikas gently encourages children to think beyond themselves. They learn that service lies in small, consistent acts of kindness—helping others, sharing, and being mindful of those around them.

I would like to share a personal experience that beautifully reflects the impact of Bal Vikas. When we were in the UK, Laya was just 5 years old. I am a regular reader of Sai Tapovanam, and she once expressed a desire to read it as well. I told her she was too young and suggested that she pray to Swami if she truly wished to read it. Quite remarkably, in the very next online Bal Vikas session, her Guru, asked all the students to begin reading Young Sai (History published by the Media Centre) and assigned chapters to each of them. Laya was overjoyed and confidently told me that Swami had answered her prayer. At such a young age, her unwavering faith left me amazed.

There have also been moments when, as parents, we have received gentle "ghyan" from her—wisdom she has absorbed from her Bal Vikas lessons. These instances are a true testament to how deeply the teachings are internalized by the children. **Overall, Bal Vikas has been instrumental in nurturing not just my child's spiritual growth, but also her character and outlook on life, helping her grow into a kind, confident, and thoughtful individual.**

As a parent, I feel a deep sense of gratitude for the role Bal Vikas plays in my child's life. Swami has said, "Follow the Master, face the devil, fight to the end, finish the game". This saying teaches the children to follow the



Lord, face negativity and distractions, maintain a steadfast devotion till the end and finish the game of life.

In conclusion, **Bal Vikas is not just an extracurricular activity; it is a transformative experience. It encourages children to live with purpose and integrity. As a teacher myself, I can evidently see how well the Gurus are guiding the students throughout their Bal Vikas.** Personally, it has helped my child shine academically and socially. Watching my child grow throughout this journey has been incredibly rewarding, and it reassures me that **she is on the path to becoming not just a successful person, but a truly good human being.**



Dr Rupali N Patil

Maharashtra West



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas -

Aligning with Divine Rhythm

I feel truly blessed to have been married into a family of ardent devotees of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. My husband, an alumnus of Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas, and my mother-in-law, who served as a Bal Vikas Guru, introduced me to Swami not merely as a divine figure in pictures, but as a living God who can be experienced by all. With complete faith, I accepted Him wholeheartedly.

As I became acquainted with the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, I met many individuals of my age who stood out for their strong moral values, deep spirituality, compassion, discipline, and sense of social responsibility. I later realized that they were all Bal Vikas alumni, which left a lasting impression on me.

Although the thought of understanding Bal Vikas remained in my mind, it became a priority when I began searching for the right path for my children.

When I learned that the goal of the Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas programme is to nurture ideal citizens—individuals aware of their divinity and committed to serving society—I made a firm decision to enroll my children in Bal Vikas classes.

There is a well-known saying, “Catch them young.” When children are guided early, they grow into responsible and virtuous individuals. In today's world, where patience and inner peace are often lacking, instilling these values early becomes even more important. Bal Vikas Gurus play a vital role in shaping young minds and guiding children to become respectful and responsible members of society.

My elder daughter has successfully completed her nine-year Bal Vikas curriculum in 2026, and my younger son is currently in Group 2. **As a mother, I feel deeply grateful for the positive influence Bal Vikas Gurus have had on my children's lives. Their guidance has helped cultivate good habits and laid a strong foundation of character and values.**

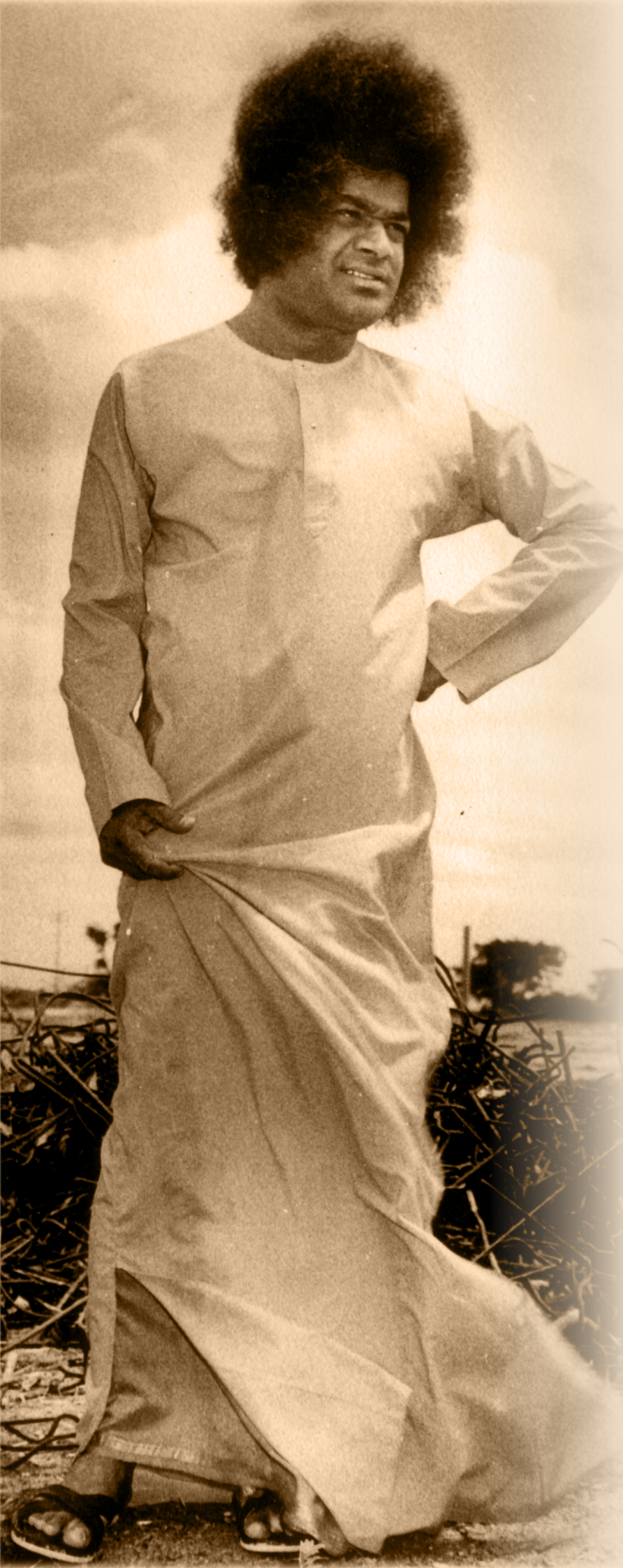
One of the most important lessons they have imbibed is the value of daily prayer. Through regular practice, they have developed discipline, inner peace, and a deeper connection with the Divine. Alongside this, they are learning values such as honesty, kindness, and respect, which are becoming an integral part of their personalities.

Bal Vikas has also encouraged them to grow into independent individuals. They are learning to take responsibility for their actions, make thoughtful decisions, and carry themselves with confidence. Equally important is the emphasis on social etiquette—being polite, speaking respectfully, and showing consideration for others.

I have observed how these teachings reflect in their behavior during interactions with friends and family. Their humility, warmth, and good manners are often noticed and appreciated, which fills me with pride as a parent.

The teachings of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba are clearly visible in their daily lives. At school and in society, they strive to practice these values. Along with their academic efforts, they show respect towards teachers,





kindness towards classmates, and gratitude towards supporting staff. These qualities are often appreciated by others.

Teachings such as “Help ever, hurt never,” “Love all, serve all,” and “Be good, do good, see good” are not just words to them—they sincerely try to live by them. They strongly believe that Swami is always with them, guiding their thoughts, words, and actions.

All of this has helped shape them into better human beings. As a parent, this gives me immense peace and reassurance. I feel less worried about their behavior, knowing they are growing with the right values and a compassionate heart.

In today's world, where selfishness can sometimes affect relationships, **I feel blessed to see how Swami's teachings are shaping my children differently. His message of love and selflessness has helped them build relationships filled with warmth and understanding.**

In their daily interactions, I notice that they try to be non-judgmental and accepting. Instead of reacting with anger, they are learning forgiveness and patience. These values are reflected in their actions both at home and outside.

They are also becoming more helpful in everyday life—assisting with household chores and being attentive to others' needs. What touches me most is the love, respect, and care they show towards their grandparents. In these simple acts, Swami's teachings truly come alive.

As a parent, it brings me immense joy to see them grow into individuals who value love over selfishness, service over convenience, and understanding over judgment.

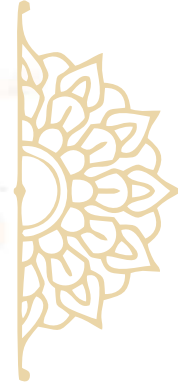
Along with my children, my own journey as a Bal Vikas parent continues to be one of constant learning and growth.

I offer my heartfelt gratitude to Swami for blessing me with this opportunity and for guiding me through this beautiful journey as a Bal Vikas parent. I remain ever thankful for His love, grace, and constant presence in our lives.



Suraj Tamang

Sikkim



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas -

The Divine Path

Offering my pranams at the Lotus feet of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, today, with deep gratitude and emotion in my heart, I would like to share my personal experience and feelings about Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas.

As parents, we all dream of giving our children the best education, a bright future, and a good life. But in today's fast-moving world, where children are surrounded by distractions, pressure, competition, and negative influences, **one of the greatest concerns of every parent is not only academic success but also good character, discipline, respect, compassion, and spiritual values. We want our children to become not only successful individuals but also good human beings.**

For me and my family, Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas has become a divine blessing and a guiding light in fulfilling this dream. My child has been attending Bal Vikas continuously for almost eight years and is currently studying in the Third Group, Second Year. Looking back at this beautiful journey, I can truly say that Bal Vikas has played a major role in shaping my child's personality, character, and way of life.

From a very young age, my child has been learning beautiful teachings, moral stories, bhajans, prayers, discipline, respect for elders, love for humanity, and the importance of truth, right conduct, peace, love, and non-violence — the Human Values taught by Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. These are not just lessons taught in a classroom; they are values that slowly become part of the child's thinking, behavior, and daily life.

As a parent, there is no greater joy than seeing positive transformation in your child. Over the years, I have

noticed many beautiful changes in my child's behavior, attitude, and understanding. He has become more respectful, caring, responsible, disciplined, and spiritually aware. He has learned to pray with devotion, speak politely, help others, and understand the importance of kindness and humility.

Whenever I see these changes, my heart fills with happiness and gratitude. **In today's world, where many children are slowly moving away from moral and spiritual values, Bal Vikas is helping children stay connected to goodness, humanity, and divinity. It is giving them a strong foundation not only for education but for life itself.**

One of the most touching and inspiring aspects of Bal Vikas is the selfless service and dedication of the gurus. These gurus are not teaching for personal gain or recognition. They are serving with pure love, patience, sacrifice, and commitment. They guide the children like their own family members and inspire them with noble thoughts and values. Their sincere efforts and loving guidance create a positive and divine environment where children feel safe, happy, and spiritually uplifted.

I sincerely bow down with respect and gratitude to all the Bal Vikas gurus who are tirelessly serving society by shaping the future generation with love and values. Their contribution is priceless.

Another beautiful blessing of Bal Vikas is that children grow under the Divine shelter and grace of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. In this modern twenty-first century, where technology and materialism are growing rapidly, children need spiritual guidance more than ever before.





Bal Vikas provides that divine path. It teaches children how to balance modern life with spirituality, morality, and humanity.

The teachings of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba are universal and timeless. They teach us to love all, serve all, and help ever, hurt never. When children learn these values from an early age, they naturally become better human beings and responsible citizens of society.

As a parent, I feel truly blessed that my child is receiving such divine guidance and opportunities through Bal Vikas. **I strongly believe that the values and lessons learned here will remain with him throughout his life and help him face every challenge with courage, wisdom, and goodness.**

Today, from the bottom of my heart, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organization for conducting such a noble and life-transforming program for children. **This organization is not only educating children but also building character, spreading love, and creating a better society for the future.**

I would also like to humbly request all parents and guardians to encourage their children to attend Bal Vikas regularly and support this wonderful program wholeheartedly. In today's time, giving children only academic education is not enough. Along with knowledge, children need values, discipline, compassion, spirituality, and inner strength. Bal Vikas provides all these precious gifts.

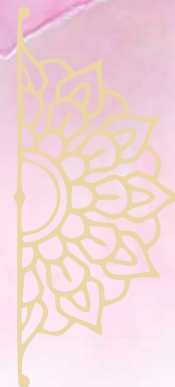
Let us all come together and support this Divine Mission so that more and more children can walk on the path of truth, love, peace, and righteousness. By nurturing children with good values today, we are creating a brighter, safer, and more compassionate world for tomorrow.

Finally, on the sacred and joyous occasion of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's Centenary Birthday Celebrations, I would like to offer my heartfelt congratulations, gratitude, and prayers to the entire Sri Sathya Sai Organization. May Bhagawan continue to bless and guide all the gurus, volunteers, parents, and children who are part of this beautiful mission of love and service.



Prashanti Rai

West Bengal II



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas -

A Guide to Karma Yoga

Born in a Sai family myself, Bal Vikas and Bhagawan's teachings and discipline were a part of my day to day routine and sending my own children to Bal Vikas was never even a question. It felt like passing on the very values, love, and guidance that shaped my own life and amid the rush of school schedules, homework, gadgets, and the endless demands of daily life, **Bal Vikas became the sacred pause in our family's routine that filled our home with prayer, values, discipline, and peace.**

But along the way it felt different and surreal because now I stand as a parent of a Bal Vikas child, understanding the love, faith, dedication, and silent prayers that my own parents must have once carried in their hearts.

Swami often says "The end of wisdom is freedom. The end of culture is perfection. The end of knowledge is love. The end of education is character." And in my personal experience Bal Vikas does not provide only worldly knowledge but makes the child transcend the material and worldly knowledge and teaches what true education is. I have seen many gentle changes in my child in the most beautiful ways after she started attending Bal Vikas. They may not always be very big things, but it is the small changes that touch our hearts the most. Simple things that we might have ignored or let slide earlier, she now gently reminds us about, through her subtle actions and words, often leaving us surprised and happy. In this busy world, where we as parents get caught up in work, responsibilities, and daily pressures, we sometimes forget to inculcate and follow certain values and discipline that once formed an important part of our lives. **But through my child, I feel inspired and reminded**

once again of those very values in many ways. Bal Vikas has not only shaped her character but has also encouraged us as parents to become better human beings for them and for Swami.

I would like to narrate an incident that deeply touched me. It was particularly one of those stressful evenings at home. We were all busy with our own work and responsibilities and some guests had arrived unexpectedly, and in the midst of attending to everything, we had become a little late in lighting the evening lamp and saying our prayers. While all of us were occupied with our own work, my daughter quietly went and lit the lamp herself and gently reminded us that prayer time had passed. It was such a small act, yet it reflected a sense of responsibility, discipline, and awareness beyond her age.

Moments like these make me realize how beautifully **Bal Vikas shapes children, not only spiritually but also morally and socially. It has taught them that responsibility begins with small everyday actions, being disciplined, caring for others, respecting elders, helping at home, and remaining aware of one's duties. These values have slowly become a part of their character and Bal Vikas is preparing them to grow into responsible citizens of the nation and compassionate members of society.** In a world where children are easily influenced by distractions and materialism, Bal Vikas gives them a strong foundation rooted in values, humanity, and selflessness. As a parent, seeing these qualities develop in my child fills me with immense hope and gratitude for the future.





Another instance which I have noticed in my child after attending Bal Vikas is the understanding of 'Ceiling on Desires' and gratitude for what we have. Earlier, like most children, she would sometimes waste food or ask for things without realizing their true value. But today, she consciously avoids wasting food and unnecessary spendings reminding us of the importance of needs and want, and this awareness at such a young age truly amazes me.

These may appear to be very small changes, but as parents, we understand how meaningful they really are. Values like avoiding wastage, being content, sharing with others, and thinking about society are qualities that help shape children into responsible and compassionate individuals. Bhagawan always taught us that there is enough in the world for everyone's need, but not for everyone's greed. Seeing my child slowly practice these teachings in daily life fills my heart with happiness and gratitude.

Looking back at this journey, I feel truly blessed and deeply grateful to Bhagawan for allowing my children to grow under the guidance of Bal Vikas. Today, when I see my elder daughter, who was also a Bal Vikas student, studying at the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher

Learning, Anantapur Campus, I realize how deeply Bal Vikas has shaped her personality and values. Moving to a completely new place, adjusting to different food and surroundings and a completely new way of life can often be difficult for many children, yet she adapted with remarkable ease and positivity compared to many others around her. As a parent, I truly feel that this strength, simplicity, and adaptability come from the values and discipline instilled through Bal Vikas from a young age.

Bal Vikas has taught my children simplicity, discipline, devotion, compassion, and responsibility, and these are values that will stay with them throughout life. As a mother, nothing gives me greater joy than seeing my children walk on the path shown by Swami. I am utterly grateful to Bhagawan for choosing my children as His instruments, and I sincerely pray that one day they may become worthy enough to carry forward His teachings through their thoughts, words, and deeds. **Bhagawan always said, 'My life is My Message,' and I hope my children too will grow to spread love, selflessness, and goodness wherever they go.** Swami has also taught us that our lives should become His message, and I pray that my children will be able to portray His teachings through practice of karma yoga. This, to me, is the greatest blessing and the true gift of Bal Vikas.



G Lakshmi Priya

Telangana



Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas -

A Divine Blessing

My children joined Bal Vikas in the year 2015. The children were greatly inspired by the motivation and teachings of their Guru in Bal Vikas Group 1. Because of her guidance, they progressed to Group 2. For many parents, sending their children to Bal Vikas is not just about attending classes—it is an emotional and meaningful journey that brings about positive changes in their lives. After my children joined Bal Vikas, I noticed many positive transformations in their behavior, attitude, and values. With their help, I also started learning more about Swami and Bal Vikas, which motivated me further to encourage my children to continue their spiritual journey.

One of the first feeling parents experience is joy. They see their children adopting good values such as respect, discipline, kindness, and honesty. **When a child begins greeting elders politely, helping others, or speaking positively at home, it fills parents with pride and happiness. This is the difference that Bal Vikas makes in the life of a child and the family.** Through stories, prayers, and activities, children understand the difference between right and wrong and learn to behave in a constructive manner.

In 2018, we visited **Prashanti Nilayam** and **Radio Sai** for the first time. During this visit, I had the opportunity to offer a letter to Swami. My daughter was also given a chance to participate in Radio Sai. There was a particular incident during this trip that I will never forget in my lifetime. My husband and daughter missed the train and we accidentally boarded the wrong one. A stranger approached us and asked where we were headed. When we told him Kachiguda Railway Station, he informed us

that we were on the wrong train. He then kindly accompanied us and helped us get into the correct train. If he had not been there, we would have missed this important opportunity.

Bal Vikas brought significant changes in their life style and education. With the help of Bal Vikas, my children have become true followers of Swami's teachings—they now embody Swami's values as if they are His children.

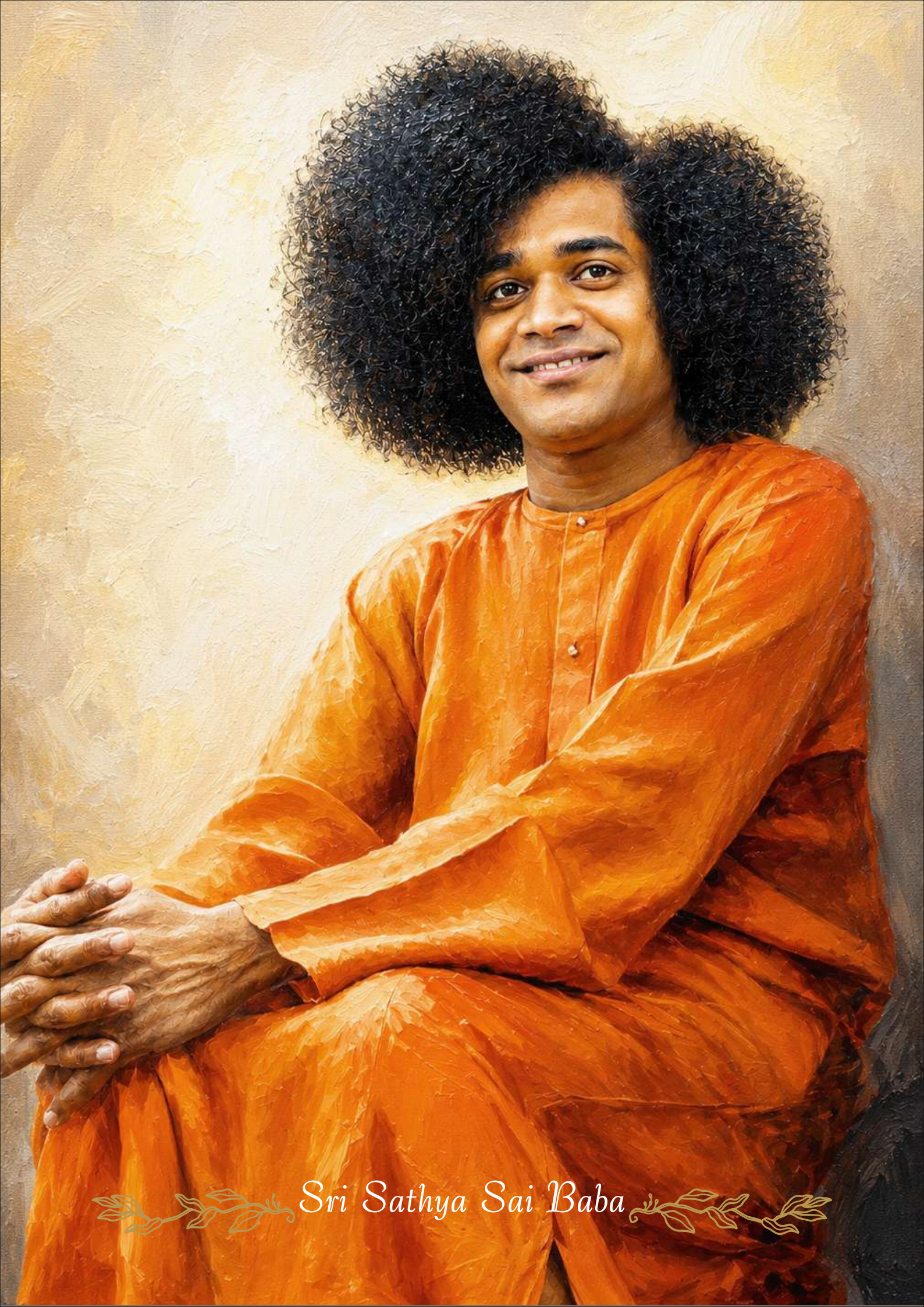
They are a great source of inspiration for the parents also.

Watching their children practice good habits encourages parents to consciously adopt those values in their own lives. Another meaningful experience is the sense of connection. Parents often notice that their children begin sharing what they have learned—Stories, Bhajan's, or small life lessons. It creates a meaningful conversation at home and strengthens the bond between parents and children.

Most importantly, parents should feel gratitude. We are thankful for a platform like Bal Vikas that nurtures not just the intellect but also the heart and soul of a child.

Thank you, Swami, for making my children Bal Vikas students. For parents, Bal Vikas is not just a class—it is a divine blessing. It helps shape children into responsible, caring, and value-driven individuals, which is every parent's heartfelt desire.





 Sri Sathya Sai Baba 

To Bal Vikas Students....

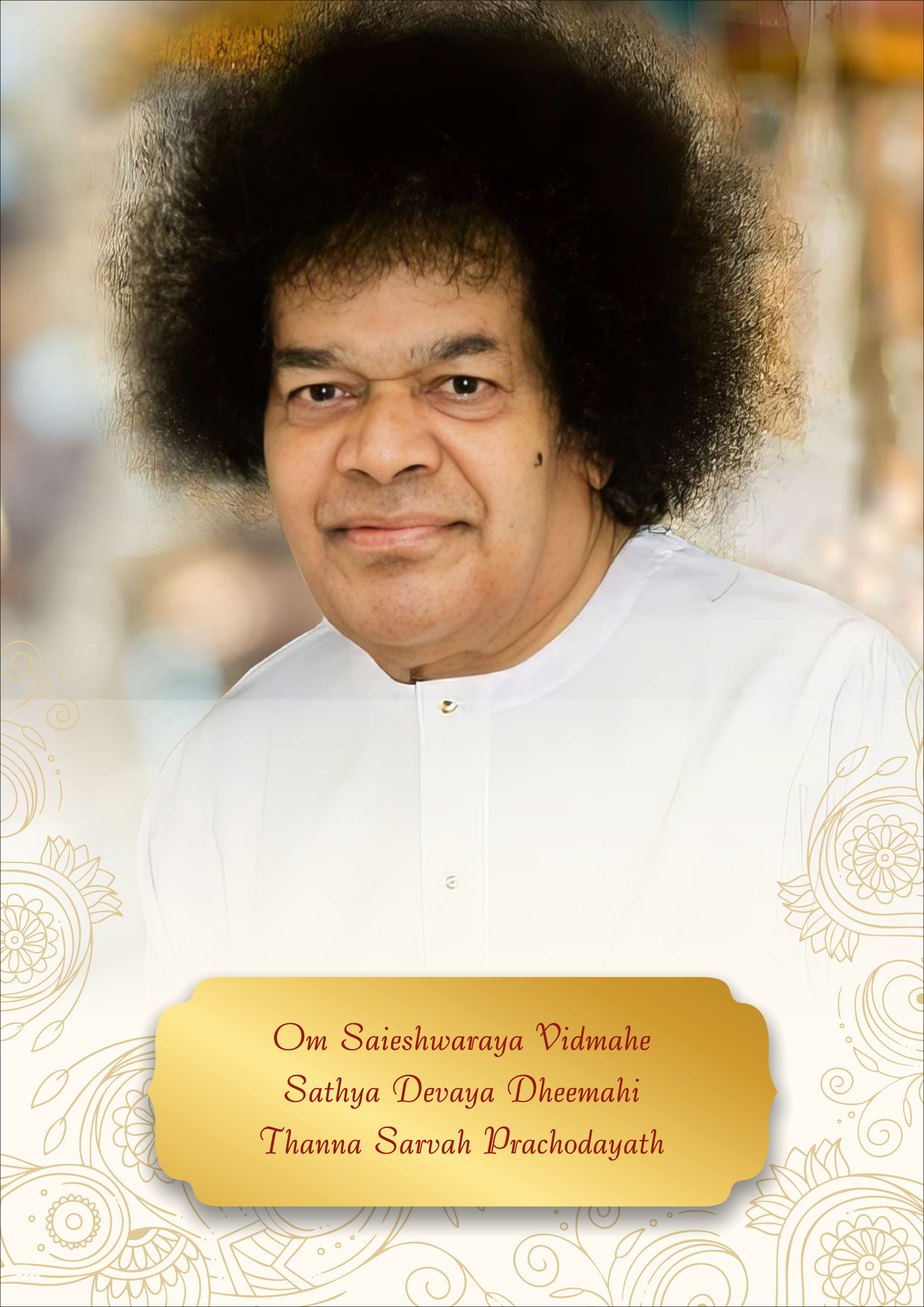
Dear Children

Accept my love and blessings. Blessings also for your brothers and sisters, your parents and teachers. Your classes are named Bal Vikas. Vikas means blooming, the blooming of the flower. The flower pleases us for, it is beautiful, fragrant and fresh. Every child is a flower in the garden of Sai. The tenderness, simplicity and innocence make the child charming; it is so loving that all people love it in return. The child is not selfish. It plays freely with other children. The child always speaks truth. It shares what it likes with its playmates. This sharing gives it great joy and adds to the joy of others. Children! Cultivate these virtues. Also, help other children whenever you can. And, help your parents when they need it. Make them happy. Make them proud of you and your goodness. Learn well the lessons that your Guru teaches and try to practice the do's and don't's they advise you to follow.

You are now in the first stage of the long journey of life. You have many great tasks before you. You have many duties to discharge in order to make your Motherland happy and prosperous. The boys and girls of today must be the doctors, the engineers, the administrators, the farmers, the traders of tomorrow - developing and defending this vast country and bringing joy to millions of homes. India and the world have huge material resources, but your hand and hearts have to supply the will and the skill to use those resources for the good of the people. Prepare yourselves and get ready for the role.

I bless you that you grow into strong, brave and selfless servants of the people. Sai will be with you always. Sai loves children very much, for they are disciplined and devoted, always doing their duties joyfully.

With love and Blessings
Sri - Sri. Sai



*Om Saieshwaraya Vidmahe
Sathya Devaya Dheemahi
Thanna Sarvah Prachodayath*

“Children's minds are innocent and pure.
Each child is a white marble for the teacher
and the parents to mould into an image of God,
a bud to be helped to blossom in all its divine
glory so that it becomes a worthy offering
to God”.

-Baba

104



Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations - India