

1. Power of Thought

One bad thought is more potent and damaging than a hundred good ones. It is like putting one drop of poison in a glass of pure water. So watch your thoughts and your actions. Never forget that you are the creator of your destiny and God is the witness.

Never underestimate the power of thought. The fact that people can pick up your thoughts on the other side of the ocean speaks for itself. In the same way, loving thoughts can heal people in far away places. Your thoughts and thoughts of others fill the universe. Every thought is known to God and recorded for eternity.

You will never get a clearer picture of the power of thoughts, and you should share this knowledge with others. The world is sick, poisoned by man himself. But all is not lost, and the day of awakening will come and lead to the golden age. All of you should play a part in bringing about that transformation; the instrument you should use is love.

*Let the world be filled with love, loving thoughts pouring out from a million sources. This is the way to cleanse the earth and overcome the evil that has tarnished the very atmosphere. **Sathya Sai Baba***

Our mental environment is as important as our physical environment, and indeed it has a big effect on our physical environment. Swami has said that the way to cleanse the earth is to let the world be filled with loving thoughts pouring from a million sources. So, we help the earth not only by changing our physical habits but also by changing our mental ones.

After studying Swami's words on thoughts, let's put them into action. Let's cleanse our thoughts and thereby cleanse the environment.

Excerpted from Swami's Discourse, 18 June 1989 (in *Sathya Sai Newsletter, Fall 1995*)

"All wrong thoughts come because of bad environment. The air we breathe is everywhere, and a lot of bad words are mixed in the air. When we breathe such air, bad thoughts come to our minds. The kind of smoke we get depends upon the fire. Smoke is responsible for the clouds, and the rain depends on the clouds. From the rain come the crops, and food comes from the crops. The mind is made up of food. Thus, our thoughts are spoiled by polluted air. So too, there are radio frequencies and sound waves all around us broadcasting from radio stations. All the useless songs and sounds merge in the air. With the exception of marriage, people play the radio's useless songs. That causes pollution of the air. Repetition of the Lord's name (*Namasmarana*) is a way to purify the air. By singing or saying the name of the Lord, you can become purified. Meaningless songs are also played on tape recorders. However, if you chant the names of Rama, Krishna, Govinda, you will have sacred thoughts.

"Don't ignore the divine name; have faith. Many atrocities nowadays are caused by lack of purity. There are educated people in the world, but they don't have purity and sense control.

"If you want to enjoy life, fill yourself with good thoughts. Develop love. You can develop love by giving and forgiving. Getting and forgetting enhances selfishness. Ingratitude makes you selfish. If you want to develop love, develop forbearance and charitable giving.

"There are so many things to learn in life, but take care not to have any dirt in the mind. Drive away all bad thoughts from your mind. Dakshinamurthi, a great sage, conveyed spirituality by his looks, without any words. While traveling, he came to the ocean's shore and heard Omkar (the sound of Om) in the sound of the sea. Dakshinamurthi learned a great lesson from the ocean. He noticed that as soon as rubbish fell on the ocean, it threw the rubbish onto the shore by a series of waves without retaining the rubbish even for a moment. Dakshinamurthi spoke to the ocean, 'How selfish you are. You are boundless and fathomless, so can't you make some space for this poor stuff? Because of your vastness, it is highly selfish on your part not to tolerate these things.' The ocean gave a nice reply. 'Lord, there is nothing that is not known to you. If today I allow this piece of dirt to remain with me, before long I will be filled with it, and my entire form will be changed. I can maintain my purity by throwing off any dirt and polluted objects from the very beginning.'

"Likewise, every person should throw off even the smallest bad thought the moment it seeks to enter the mind. To consider it as small or trivial would mean allowing such things to enter the mind and, in due course, fill it entirely. In

that process, the entire nature of a person is changed. His human essence is undermined. Hence, every effort must be made to keep out all bad thoughts and feelings and to promote human qualities as much as possible.

“Everybody wants peace and happiness, but how do you get peace and happiness? You get these only by controlling the mind. You get this by close proximity to the Divine. A beautiful answer was given in the *Bhaagavad Geetha*, when the seeker wanted to know how to get peace, happiness, and victory. The answer was, “Wherever Lord Krishna and Partha (son of Prithvi, Earth) live together, there you get peace, happiness, victory.” Thus, when a person lives close to God, they attain everything. Establish God in your heart.

“You should realize that whatever Swami wills and plans to do has a lot of significance behind it. You may not understand this now, but gradually, with time, you will understand.”