

Four Positive Effects from the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba
(subtitled: “A Companion Document to [‘An Autobiographical Sketch’](#)”)

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A Story Illustrating Positive Effects from the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba

As readers may discover for themselves, the document “An Autobiographical Sketch” (describing significant events and experiences in my life) does not attempt to elevate my specific life story to any level of importance; but instead provides an illustration of the positive effects on one’s interpretations of events, and on one’s goals, when the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba are the most important influence in one’s life.

Although there are many kinds of positive effects which can be considered outcomes of long association with Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, I will describe four such positive effects in this document—four which are especially relevant to my “Autobiographical Sketch”. First, I will briefly describe the four positive effects; then there will be a section where I provide some commentary for each of the positive effects listed.

Brief Descriptions of Four Positive Effects (from the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba)

1) Regardless of the immediate source of difficulties, inspiration or assistance I mention (in the document “An Autobiographical Sketch”) in relating events on my life path [my mother’s illness, the “organic” nature of my life path, the inspiration of the natural world, ancient Chinese philosophers, Baba Himself, the development of The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative, etc], I now understand all such influences as inscrutable Divine Grace, as a result of access to the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. I affirm that my innermost desires are for the Divine Story to unfold, according to the Lord’s Divine Plan; and though I do not claim to know how this might occur, I have all faith that it is happening, and it will continue to happen...regardless of what I may think of as “successes” or “failures” in my own personal life—and regardless of the unexplainable or uninterpretable events that have occurred in the Baba Avathara.

2) I believe it is possible for the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba to inspire a kind of proactive peacebuilding which—while it begins with people inspired by Divine Wisdom and Divine Compassion to adopt or accelerate efforts at sincere and sustained spiritual discipline in their personal lives—also includes careful discernment of the challenges of our times, and *significant involvement* in the development of solution-oriented activity which are appropriate to resolving such challenges.

3) I am now more hopeful that many more initiatives (besides The IPCR Initiative, which I am building), associated with many different solution-oriented fields of activity, will acknowledge the universal truths affirmed by the Sai Avathara by not requiring special allegiance to only one manifestation of Divine Grace. Adopting such an approach—and thus leading by example—has the potential to encourage a lessening of tensions between cultural entities (religious, spiritual, and moral traditions) *which have the most potential for cultivating wisdom, compassion, mercy, and forgiveness*. The document “An

Autobiographical Sketch” includes details about the development of one such initiative: The IPCR Initiative. The IPCR Initiative offers an example of how initiatives “not requiring such special allegiance” can still do much to help many people from many different spiritual and cultural “world views” to achieve highly advanced forms of wisdom and compassion. (For more specific evidence of how The IPCR Initiative provides such an example, see the [IPCR Mission Statement](#), and the IPCR Initiative document [“Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts”](#).)

4) I believe that Baba (“The Lord is Love Itself”) will “...succeed in averting the crisis that has come upon Humanity....”, that the “Dawning of a New Era” is close at hand, and that a “Golden Age” will recur. I believe such because I have faith in the assurances given by Sri Sathya Sai Baba; and I believe such because I can see with my own understanding (from reading volumes of “Sathya Sai Speaks”—specifically Vol. 1-15) that the potential for an exponential increase in highly advanced forms of wisdom and compassion; the potential for an exponential increase in resolving even the most profound challenges; the potential for an exponential increase in forgiveness and reconciliation; and the potential for an exponential increase in peace, prosperity, and happiness *now exists* (as a direct result of the outpouring of Divine Grace which is the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba). *I have therefore adjusted my perceptions, understandings, and beliefs about what is possible* [Faith helps move from “it hardly seems possible” to “it must be possible” (since faith believes Love will prevail)], and now prepare documents and resources believing not only that such exponential increases are possible, but that they *will happen*. An accumulation of such documents and resources have resulted in my efforts at building The IPCR Initiative.

Some Commentary on The Four Positive Effects

1) Regardless of the immediate source of difficulties, inspiration or assistance I mention in relating events on my life path [my mother’s illness, the “organic” nature of my life path, the inspiration of the natural world, ancient Chinese philosophers, Baba Himself, the development of The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative, etc], I now understand all such influences as inscrutable Divine Grace, as a result of access to the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. I affirm that my innermost desires are for the Divine Story to unfold, according to the Lord’s Divine Plan; and though I do not claim to know how this might occur, I have all faith that it is happening, and it will continue to happen...regardless of what I may think of as “successes” or “failures” in my own personal life—and regardless of the unexplainable or uninterpretable events that have occurred in the Baba Avathara.

Commentary--

Here is an excerpt from the document “An Autobiographical Sketch”:

“Since the time that I began to see that my life path was going to be more of an ‘organic process’ than an exercise in ‘career development’ (and that I would again and again find myself making unusual choices for employment, choices that possibly only someone else in a similar set of shoes could easily understand), knowing something of the ‘Tao’ was helpful. I did what I could do next, took the next step I could take; then, when I saw where I had arrived at, I had a better idea about what I could do next.”

There may be people who will wonder: what does knowing something about the “Tao” (an ancient Chinese philosophical concept) have to do with the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba? For people who live in India, where there has been more than one Incarnation of God (God taking on human form, and

living *as if* He was a mortal human being), there is more of a cultural foundation for incorporating Baba's Teachings into the everyday circumstances of community life. Here in the United States, I am one of a relatively small minority of people who believe in Avatharas (more than one occurrence of God taking on human form)—and one of an even smaller minority who makes writings accessible to the public about their belief in this form of Divine Intervention. Many people in the United States, if they are familiar with Baba at all, have heard only the most skeptical accounts from mass media news sources—from reporters who lack even the most basic background experience for offering an interpretation of the life of an Avathar ["Until you try out My prescription fully and sincerely, it is best you keep quiet. You do not know even a pebble; how can you evaluate a peak?" ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol 1, Chpt. 13, p79).] In this kind of cultural environment, it is difficult for people like myself to know how to proceed... therefore, I have been very grateful that the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba confirm a wide interpretation of where and how guidance and instruction may be found.

Here are some passages from "Sathya Sai Speaks" volumes 1-15 which provide evidence of a "wide interpretation of where and how guidance and instruction may be found"....

"... in the spiritual path, each one has to move forward from where he already is, according to his own pace, in the light of the lamp which each one holds in his own hand." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 6, Chpt. 7, p37)

"So, it is best to trust to the experience of the sages, who were filled with compassion and who were moved out of that compassion to illumine the path of liberation." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 3, Chpt. 1, p.8)

"You need not rely on another for success in Dhyana and Japa and await contact with some sage in order to get from him a mantra for recitation. Pray to the God within you and you will receive the needed guidance." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 10, Chpt. 30, p.183)

"Do not confine your Studies to this Circle and these Books. The whole Universe is a University for you. You can imbibe wisdom from the sky, the clouds, the mountains, the rivers, the daily phenomena of sunrise and sunset, the seasons, birds, trees, flowers, the insects-- in fact, all Beings and Things in Nature. Approach these teachers with awe, reverence and humility; they will respond with their lessons." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 12, Chpt. 30, p.168)

"Welcome inspiration from any quarter for your own improvement." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 5, Chpt. 38, p.216)

"When you are earnest about it, the Lord Himself will guide you, either from within or from without, through some one He will send, or through illumination from within." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 5, Chpt. 31, p.172)

Additional Commentary (#1)—

I strive to do what I can (adhere to personal spiritual discipline, assist others with life's struggles, contribute to the greater good of the whole) as I move along my life path; but I do not exult over "successes" or despair about "failures" in my own personal story. I believe that if He still has something for "this bubble" to do here on Earth, He will keep me alive; and if He does not have anything else for "this bubble" to do, then "this bubble" will no longer appear on the surface of the "ocean" of life. I also,

at my best, have a “Baba-inspired” understanding about “who/what” is the “Inner Motivator” of my thoughts, words, and deeds [“Merciful Divine Mother: In accordance with what Your Infinite Wisdom and Infinite Mercy decree, please bless and sanctify All the Name-Forms in All the Worlds—with Perfect Faith in Divine Omnipresence, with a Most Natural and Heartfelt Willingness to Love All and Serve All (as the Multifaceted and Perpetual Flowering of Divine Effulgence), and with no taint of desire for the fruits or consequences of Any Thought, Word, or Deed Therefrom”]. Nor do I fall victim to confusion when there are occurrences in the Divine Life Story which seem to defy any positive explanation or interpretation [such as Baba’s passing (April, 2011) from human form eight years before the time He had publicly stated as the year of His passing...[“I will be in this mortal human form for 59 years more and I shall certainly achieve the purpose of this Avathar, do not doubt it.” (from September 29, 1960 discourse) (“Sathya Sai Speaks” Vol. 1, Chpt. 31, p198).] The creation of the universe, all that is in the universe, and all life on planet Earth is God’s story, not mine; and all the twists and turns of That Story are none other than examples of an Inscrutable Divine Grace. “There is only one God; He is omnipresent” (“Sathya Sai Speaks” Vol. 11, Chpt. 54, p312). Is there anyone who can claim to explain all of the different twists and turns which have occurred in THAT Avathara (the “Cosmic Leela”... the Incarnation of God as the Universe)? [“... every act of Mine has its significance, which you cannot understand.” (“Sathya Sai Speaks” Vol. 3, Chpt. 17, p101); “In truth, you cannot understand the nature of My Reality either today, or even after a thousand years of steady austerity or ardent inquiry even if all mankind joins in that effort.” (“Sathya Sai Speaks” Vol. 8, Chpt. 19, p99)]. I am grateful that my faith has been restored and reinforced through His Teachings; I am grateful that many specific instructions for attaining advanced levels of wisdom and compassion have been given (which anyone can test to discover their merits); and (most of the time) I go about doing what I can to “connect myself with the Current of His Grace”.

[Note: the above phrase “most of the time” is an indicator of the difficulties for people like myself.... It is strange to be aware of so many valuable spiritual resources from the past—Baba’s Teachings in the present—and the potential for the growth of wisdom and compassion in the future... strange to live in such circumstances and not only have no friends or colleagues [I seem to “outside” all of the current “boxes” (as in “outside the box” thinking); and no one currently shares my belief in the value of building The IPCR Initiative]—but experience many instances during the course of daily life when I have to significantly compromise on values I would otherwise honor. To be more specific, there are times when I commune with some of the lesser inspirations in the categories of news items, music, and movies, just so I can have some common points of reference, and positive interactions, with the people I come in contact with through my “way of earning a living”; there are times when I consume food products (from convenience stores and companies I would otherwise not support) because I am a delivery driver who sometimes spends 6 hours a day driving (and I need to stay alert); there are times when my eating habits at home are greatly modified because I have limited access to the kitchen; etc. While I can appreciate these “lesser inspirations and influences” as part of the “Leela of my Tao”; I also feel, like many readers may, that sincere effort should have moved me beyond these “lesser inspirations and influences” by now. It may be so... and yet, like my unusual choices for employment, it may be something that only someone else in a similar set of shoes could easily understand.]

(Additional Note: As a “corollary Leela” of the above mentioned communing with “lesser inspirations and influences”, I have developed sympathy to the utmost degree for people who, although they sincerely and genuinely aspire to a more spiritual cultural environment, are also in adverse cultural, work and home environments, and also “have to significantly compromise on values (they) would otherwise honor”. *This sympathy has added much to my determination to provide an initiative like The IPCR Initiative, where people from a variety of cultural and spiritual backgrounds can work together to*

accelerate movement out of such adverse environments—and work together to create environments which are much more solution-oriented, and much more supportive of spiritual aspirations.)

2) I believe it is possible for the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba to inspire a kind of proactive peacebuilding which—while it begins with people inspired by Divine Wisdom and Divine Compassion to adopt or accelerate efforts at sincere and sustained spiritual discipline in their personal lives—also includes careful discernment of the challenges of our times, and *significant involvement* in the development of solution-oriented activity which are appropriate to resolving such challenges.

Commentary--

While there are many details provided about The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative in the document “An Autobiographical Sketch”, such references are not included to promote The IPCR Initiative (specifically)(here it may be helpful to read [“The IPCR Initiative Resource Sharing Policy”](#)). Details about The IPCR Initiative are naturally included, as the “Autobiographical Sketch” is about what I consider to be significant events and experiences associated with my life path. However, such details are, I believe, relevant and appropriate in the context of the work of the Sri Sathya Sai Sadhana Trust and Publications branch of the Sri Sathya Sai Organization (“...this official portal of Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust (SSSBPT) aims at fostering the five cardinal human values, namely, Truth, Right Conduct, Peace, Love and Non-violence...”). And yet... details about the work of The IPCR Initiative are relevant and appropriate to the work of the SSSBPT not simply because they illustrate how the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba foster the five cardinal human values; they are also relevant and appropriate because they illustrate how to cultivate the time-tested sources from *all the religious, spiritual, and moral traditions*, so that those sources yield the treasured wisdom. [The IPCR Initiative is an effort to apply the accumulated wisdom now accessible to us towards the general goal of integrating spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life—and towards the specific goal of generating practical responses to the challenges of our times.]

In both my work building The IPCR Initiative, and in the document “An Autobiographical Sketch”, there is much emphasis on building support for spiritual discipline in one’s personal life, and sustaining cultural environments which are supportive of spiritual values. Yes, it is true, I have all faith in the assurances made by Baba [Ex: “Let Me assure you that this Dharmaswarupa has not come in vain; It will succeed in averting the crisis that has come upon Humanity” (“Sathya Sai Speaks” Vol. 5, Chpt. 11, p. 70); more assurances in the commentary section for positive effect #4]...and yet, one of the dangers of our time is this: if the spiritual discipline in peoples’ personal life, and the cultural environments which are supportive of spiritual values, do not offer sufficient inspiration towards the resolution of critical worldly challenges, there is not only the possibility that such items will be regarded as irrelevant... there is also the possibility that an indiscriminate variety of social, cultural, environmental, economic, and political structures will deteriorate under the strain of such challenges.

True confidence—in the social, cultural, environmental, economic, and political structures of a society, (or an association of societies, like what we have now, with all its global connections and interdependencies)—is built up because people believe that the efforts of everyone working together is a greater force than the challenges they are facing. In accordance with this point of view, confidence is dissipating rather than being built up (in many of the current cultural environments), because our public discourse does not honestly and truthfully identify enough of the actual challenges we are now facing for all of us—collectively—to *know* that our efforts will be enough to overcome them. Where will an increase of people who speak honestly, truthfully, respectfully, and responsibly about the nature and

dimensions of the challenges ahead come from? While this writer acknowledges that he is far from attaining the highly advanced levels of awareness and wisdom made accessible by Baba's Teachings, he also acknowledges that there are critical challenges before us, *here and now*—and imperfect as we are, we must proceed with the work before us, regardless of the likelihood of success... as what we do now will make success more likely for those that follow.

A question: Consider the following observation—

One of the most persistent ironies in life is that with so many opportunities to provide real assistance to fellow human beings—and with the potential for such assistance to result in happiness “to those who extend help as well as to those who receive it”—there are still many, many people in this world who cannot find a “way to earn a living” providing such assistance.

Is there anyone who is a devotee of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, who would say that His Teachings [Ex: “No Avathara has done like this before, going among the people, the masses, the millions and counseling them, guiding them, consoling them, uplifting them, directing them along the path of Sathya, Dharma, Santhi, and Prema.” (“Sathya Sai Speaks” Vol. 5, Chpt. 42, p233)] do not offer enough inspiration to overcome the above challenge (...cannot find a ‘way to earn a living’ providing such assistance...)? And yet... how would Sai devotees go about overcoming the challenge described in the above observation? The IPCR Initiative offers one interpretation of how they could. There can be much very useful public discourse on how to create effective local Community Visioning Initiatives, of the kind which can succeed in turning polarizing circumstances into collaborative efforts (and thus make best use of the knowledge and skills each one of us has), and which can create, develop, and accelerate a full array of solution-oriented activity.

[Additional Note: “We are in uncharted territory, for there is no culture or society that ever existed on planet Earth who has ever had to resolve the kind of challenges the next few generations will have to resolve. In some ways, all of us are Stakeholders, and People Needing Assistance, and most of us are going to need to become Experienced Practitioners of some kind. *There can be some consolation in the fact that if most of us become Experienced Practitioners in compassion for our fellow human beings, we will all have a better chance of accomplishing what no civilization has accomplished before.*” [from [“Calling ‘the better angels of our nature’: A Multi-Angle View of the Debt Crises”](#) (January, 2012; 398 pages) (by this writer) (see Section VIII. Solutions, subsection “About the ‘Interfaith’ in Interfaith Peacebuilding”, p. 303)]

3) I am now more hopeful that many more initiatives (besides The IPCR Initiative, which I am building), associated with many different solution-oriented fields of activity, will acknowledge the universal truths affirmed by the Sai Avathara by not requiring special allegiance to only one manifestation of Divine Grace. Adopting such an approach—and thus leading by example—has the potential to encourage a lessening of tensions between cultural entities (religious, spiritual, and moral traditions) *which have the most potential for cultivating wisdom, compassion, mercy, and forgiveness*. The document “An Autobiographical Sketch” includes details about the development of one such initiative—The IPCR Initiative. The IPCR Initiative offers an example of how initiatives “not requiring such special allegiance” can still do much to help many people from many different spiritual and cultural “world views” to achieve highly advanced forms of wisdom and compassion. (For more specific evidence of how The IPCR Initiative provides such an example, see the [IPCR Mission Statement](#), and the IPCR Initiative document [“Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts”](#).)

Commentary--

An especially difficult challenge in these times is the emphasis by many religious, spiritual, and moral traditions on special allegiance to only one manifestation of Divine Grace . This is especially tragic since there is now a need for an exponential increase in compassion for our fellow human beings; and yet... so many of the sources by which compassion is cultivated seem to be undermining faith in general, by dismissing the validity of other traditions.

One important foundation for a belief in many valid manifestations of Divine Grace is Baba's declaration:

"The Lord is Love Itself" ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 4, Chpt. 45, p. 262).

(An interfaith interpretation: By His Appearance in human form, He did not negate the experience of "Love Itself" in the personal lives and everyday community life where there is no interest in the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba; and by His passing from human form, He does not negate the experience of "Love Itself" in the personal lives and everyday community life where there has been much interest in the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba.)

Since the above interpretation is the understanding of the founder of The IPCR Initiative (myself), it is possible for me to say:

"And yet... no one needs to know anything about Sri Sathya Sai Baba, or the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, to contribute resources to The IPCR Initiative, participate in workshops or other activities sponsored by The IPCR Initiative, or make use of any of the documents and resources accessible for free at the website of The IPCR Initiative (www.ipcri.net)."

Therein lies the mystery. Therein lies a special kind of faith. An unusual tribute, to assert that nothing need to be said of the Teacher or His Teachings... and yet, this is a valid interpretation of Baba's Teachings, isn't it?

Consider:

"Do not be under the impression that I will be angry with you if you do not accept Me as (your) Dhyana-rupam! I am not concerned at all; you have perfect freedom to select the Name and Form that gives you the necessary encouragement." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol 1, Chpt. 5, p30)

"Remember, there is no Name I do not bear, there is no Form which is not Mine." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 2, Chpt. 50, p280)

"... Sai wants the votaries of each religion to cultivate faith in its own excellence and realize its validity by their own intense practice. That is the Sai religion...." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 13, Chpt. 23, p131)

"Wherever sathya, dharma, shanti and prema are emphasized, in whatever religion or language, by whichever teacher wherever he may be, there we have Sanaathana Dharma." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 1, Chpt. 8, p45)

"... seek to know the Divine Energy, that is burdened with no Name and no Form. Rise higher into the empyrean heights of the Pure Attributeless Transcendent One." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 10, Chpt. 30, p184)

The challenges of our times are such that it is now critical for us to access the storehouses of wisdom and compassion which have accumulated over the many centuries of human experience, and which have been confirmed again and again as essential to individual well-being and social harmony by the saints, sages, spiritual leaders, and sincere practitioners of all religious, spiritual, and moral traditions.

But how will we know what could be accomplished by accessing ALL that there is in the accumulated storehouses of wisdom and compassion, if there are not enough initiatives willing to move beyond special allegiance to only one manifestation of Divine Grace?

This writer believes it is becoming more and more likely that an exponential increase in compassion for our fellow human beings will need to become an essential and critical element of a truly comprehensive response to the challenges of our times. In such circumstances, we cannot afford to exclude from our “tool box” the time-tested sources which have helped people learn compassion over many centuries. What we need to do instead is to learn how to cultivate the time-tested sources so that the sources yield the treasured wisdom. The IPCR Initiative is an example of an initiative dedicated to exploring how to maximize “cultivation efforts” along these lines (see the IPCR Initiative document [“Brief Descriptions of the Eight IPCR Concepts”](#) for an overview of The IPCR Initiative’s efforts to maximize such “cultivation efforts”).

From “Sathya Sai Speaks” Vol. 7, Chpt. 31, p. 165, Baba says: “‘Alas! How much is the suffering they undergo! Lord, relieve it soon.’ Pray thus will all your heart.” And, to repeat, from above: “The Lord is Love Itself”. *Love Itself, then, can relieve the suffering in the world.* A new era is waiting for the Sai Organization (or other organizations inspired by this kind of understanding) to validate and authenticate, in every variety of circumstances:

- a) that “Master-Gardeners of the Spirit” are those people who know how to encourage and support the cultivation of “Love Itself” in every variety of religious, spiritual, and moral tradition, so that those time-tested sources yield the treasured wisdom
- b) and that by such “gardening efforts” (genuine instruction and sincere effort) many people can achieve highly advanced forms of wisdom and compassion.

4) I believe that Baba (“The Lord is Love Itself”) will “...succeed in averting the crisis that has come upon Humanity...”, that the “Dawning of a New Era” is close at hand, and that a “Golden Age” will recur. I believe such because I have faith in the assurances given by Sri Sathya Sai Baba; and I believe such because I can see with my own understanding (from reading volumes of “Sathya Sai Speaks”) that the potential for an exponential increase in highly advanced forms of wisdom and compassion; the potential for an exponential increase in resolving even the most profound challenges; the potential for an exponential increase in forgiveness and reconciliation; and the potential for an exponential increase in peace, prosperity, and happiness *now exists* (as a direct result of the outpouring of Divine Grace which is the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba). *I have therefore adjusted my perceptions, understandings, and beliefs about what is possible* [Faith helps move from “it hardly seems possible” to “it must be possible” (since faith believes Love will prevail)], and now prepare documents and resources believing not only that such exponential increases are possible, but that they *will happen*. An accumulation of such documents and resources have resulted in my efforts at building The IPCR Initiative.

Commentary--

Here are some of Baba's assurances regarding the resolution of the "crisis that has come upon Humanity" (separated into sections, with "topic headings" for each section):

a) "There is nothing that Divine Power cannot accomplish."

"For, this Sai has come in order to achieve the supreme task of uniting the entire mankind, as one family through the bond of brotherhood, of affirming and illumining the Atmic Reality of each being in order to reveal the Divine which is the Basis on which the entire Cosmos rests, and of instructing all to recognize the common Divine Heritage that binds man to man, so that man can rid himself of the animal, and rise into the Divine which is his goal." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 12, Chpt. 38, p213)

"Many hesitate to believe that things will improve, that life for all will be happy and full of joy, that the Golden Age will ever recur. Let Me assure you that this Dharmaswarupa has not come in vain; It will succeed in averting the crisis that has come upon Humanity." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 5, Chpt. 11, p70)

"God can do anything...." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 10, Chpt. 39, p262)

"There is no task which I cannot accomplish...." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 2, Chpt. 19, p98)

"There is nothing that Divine Power cannot accomplish. It can transmute earth into sky and sky into earth. To doubt this is to prove that you are too weak to grasp the grandeur of the Universal." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 4, Chpt. 49, p286)

b) "My Mission will succeed."

"I have come to illumine the human heart with the Light Divine and to rid man of the delusion that drags him away from the path of Santhi, the perfect equanimity of Realization." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 1, Chpt. 16, p93)

"Whenever Niraakaara (formless) becomes Sakaara (one with form), it has to fulfil the Mission and it does so in various ways. But the one purpose, the re-education of Man persists, whatever the yuga (the era)." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 1, Chpt. 1, p2)

"There are duties to oneself, one's family, and one's society which must be carried out intelligently and joyfully. Then only can life be harmonious and fruitful. I declare that this task of renovating and recasting education is a part of My Mission...." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 1, Chpt. 16, p96)

"The only guarantor of peace for the individual and for society is spiritual progress and spiritual discipline." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 6, Chpt. 13, p69)

"My mission is 'Loka samastha sukhino bhavanthu'-- May all the worlds be happy and prosperous." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 14, Chpt. 14, p92)

My sankalpa (resolve) must prevail; My task must be accomplished. My mission will succeed." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 1, Chpt. 16, p93)

c) "So, attach yourself to Me and the current will flow through you...."

"The Lord is Love Itself" ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 4, Chpt. 45, p. 262).

"... I am the current that flows into every bulb and illumines it...." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 11, Chpt. 43, p255)

"You must realize that the divine current that flows and functions in every living being is the One Universal Entity." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol 13, Chpt. 27, p157)

"God is there as Love and you are only drawing on Him, when you are sharing Love with others." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 11, Chpt. 7, p42)

"So, attach yourself to Me and the current will flow through you and get things done for your good." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 2, Chpt. 6, p25)

"Let not the bulb think that it is shining through its own will; let it be humble, that it is but an instrument, used by the current, to shed light." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 7, Chpt. 38, p195)

"... if you sincerely, unhesitatingly, constantly, gladly, lovingly, offer all your skill and strength to the service of others, God will melt and move and manifest Himself in you, before you, with spontaneous Grace." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 7, Chpt. 21, p122)

d) "If you win the Grace of the Lord, even the decrees of Destiny can be overcome."

"... to say that I will respond only if I am called or that I will save only if I am thought of is wrong." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 3, Chpt. 22, p133)

"My Grace is showered wherever you are through My infinite Love, without even calculating or measuring the readiness of your sub-conscious to receive it and benefit by it." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 11, Chpt. 14, p86)

"There is nothing that cannot be achieved by yearning and continual practice." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 14, Chpt. 56, p318)

"When you are earnest about it, the Lord Himself will guide you, either from within or from without, through some one He will send, or through illumination from within." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 5, Chpt. 31, p172)

"If you win the Grace of the Lord, even the decrees of Destiny can be overcome." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 2, Chpt. 14, p65)

e) "Let the will of the Lord prevail; one's duty is but to connect oneself to the current of His Grace."

"... in no previous Yuga did the people get so many clear intimations of the nature of Avathaar as now...." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 2, Chpt. 22, p113)

"God, out of His infinite Grace, assumes the Form that the devotee yearns for." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 14, Chpt. 59, p.343)

"Love is My highest miracle." ("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 13, Chpt. 21, p116)

"Let the will of the Lord prevail; one's duty is but to connect oneself to the current of His Grace."
("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 1, Chpt. 3, p18-19)

Moving into an Era of Greater Collaboration to Overcome Critical Challenges

Here are three excerpts from the document "An Autobiographical Sketch":

a) A central focus of The IPCR Initiative is its advocacy for a combination Community Visioning Initiatives, "Community Teaching and Learning Centers" with ongoing workshops, and "sister community" relationships as a way of generating an exponential increase in our collective capacity to overcome the challenges of our times.

b) I hereby attribute the inspiration for the approach and substance of The IPCR Initiative, my personal capacity to see good in the efforts of people from many different faith communities and cultural traditions, and my personal faith in a positive outcome regarding the challenges of our times to close contact, over many years, with the wisdom and compassion in the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

c) (repeated for emphasis) And yet... no one needs to know anything about Sri Sathya Sai Baba, or the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, to contribute resources to The IPCR Initiative, participate in workshops or other activities sponsored by The IPCR Initiative, or make use of any of the documents and resources accessible for free at the website of The IPCR Initiative (www.ipcri.net). Therein lies the mystery. Therein lies a special kind of faith. An unusual tribute, to assert that nothing need to be said of the Teacher or His Teachings... and yet, this is valid interpretation of the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, isn't it?

Moving beyond the "special allegiance to only one" nature of faith-based initiatives is an inspiration from Baba's Avathara which is far from being fully realized, *and at a time when the challenges are so critical that a Triple-Avathara was deemed necessary*. I believe there is a need for devotees of Baba's Teachings to seriously consider how meetings, groups, and other entities associated with the International Sai Organization might be modified to provide a more inspiring example of having moved beyond the "special allegiance to only one" model. The document "An Autobiographical Sketch" can be a means of facilitating such a dialogue. I also believe there is a need for devotees of Baba's Teachings to seriously consider how meetings, groups, and other entities associated with the International Sai Organization might be modified to accelerate efforts to resolve critical worldly challenges, as the dangers such challenges pose could undermine the building of cultural environments supportive of spiritual values. (To repeat, for emphasis—one of the dangers of our time is this: if the spiritual discipline in peoples' personal life, and the cultural environments which are supportive of spiritual

values, do not offer sufficient inspiration towards the resolution of critical worldly challenges, there is not only the possibility that such items will be regarded as irrelevant... there is also the possibility that an indiscriminate variety of social, cultural, environmental, economic, and political structures will deteriorate under the strain of such challenges.) The document “An Autobiographical Sketch” (and also this “companion document”) can serve as a means of facilitating dialogue on both of the above topics (moving beyond the “special allegiance to only one” model, and accelerating efforts to resolve critical worldly challenges).

Baba has said: “... in the spiritual path, each one has to move forward from where he already is, according to his own pace, in the light of the lamp which each one holds in his own hand.” (“Sathya Sai Speaks” Vol. 6, Chpt. 7, p37).

The great majority of people who are trying to live in accordance with the religious, spiritual, or moral tradition which inspires them the most are not “master gardeners” (myself included). Sincere efforts are being made, but often in adverse conditions, and often with insufficient guidance. Much more can be done.

(repeated for emphasis) The challenges of our times are such that it is now critical for us to access the storehouses of wisdom and compassion which have accumulated over the many centuries of human experience, and which have been confirmed again and again as essential to individual well-being and social harmony by the saints, sages, spiritual leaders, and sincere practitioners of all religious, spiritual, and moral traditions.

How many of us would say that we are fully aware of what is possible along the lines of wisdom and compassion? What would the everyday circumstances of our community life be like if many of us were fully aware of what is possible along the lines of wisdom and compassion? Many of us could be much more familiar with what is possible... unfortunately, much of the real treasured wisdom of religious, spiritual, and moral traditions now seems to be hidden—and thus in need of being re-discovered. These “hidden” resources include teachings which inspire and encourage people to:

- a) place a high priority on the development of truth, virtue, love, and peace—and live disciplined lives for the purpose of adhering to truth, cultivating virtue and love, and maintaining the pathways to enduring peace
- b) sacrifice personal desires for the greater good of the whole
- c) find contentment and quality of life while consuming less material goods and ecological services
- d) prefer peacebuilding which supports and actualizes mutually beneficial understandings, forgiveness, and reconciliation—and *which abstains from violent conflict resolution*—as a way of bringing cycles of violence to an end
- e) use resources carefully, so that there is surplus available for emergency assistance
- f) support community life and cultural traditions which “... bring to the fore what is often hidden: how many good people there are, how many ways there are to do good, and how much happiness comes to those who extend help, as well as to those who receive it.

This writer believes that human morality is not a constant—it is not something which is the same throughout the centuries of human existence; and thus it is something which can become degraded or raised up, depending on the leanings of human aspirations.

Many people may think it is naïve to imagine that people from so many diverse religious, spiritual, moral, and cultural traditions can decide to come together in such a way as to not only encourage, but participate in, a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action in response to the difficult challenges ahead (as in the high levels of participation encouraged by comprehensive Community Visioning Initiatives). From this writer's point of view, such skepticism and cynicism depend for their existence on doubts as to whether it is possible for people to achieve highly advanced forms of wisdom and compassion through genuine instruction and sincere effort. *Thus it is that there is a great responsibility on those people who are in any way representatives of religious, spiritual, and/or moral traditions—to demonstrate what is possible along the lines of wisdom and compassion, to provide genuine instruction when sincere efforts are being made, to contribute to the greater good of the whole, and to help restore confidence in the higher values of life.*

I believe that the most advanced societies are the ones which have been successful at integrating spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life.

My work building The IPCR Initiative is an effort to contribute to the process of integrating spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life.

The document "An Autobiographical Sketch", and The IPCR Initiative, are efforts to facilitate discussion and action which will assist the process of integrating spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life. I believe that if the document "An Autobiographical Sketch" (and possibly this companion document also) were shared through the auspices of Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust, it would encourage the kind of discussion and action which will increase in the effectiveness of other people's efforts at integrating spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life—whether they are Sai devotees, or not. Again: *Love Itself can relieve the suffering in the world.* A new era is waiting for the International Sai Organization (or other organizations inspired by this kind of understanding) to validate and authenticate, in every variety of circumstances:

- a) that "master-gardeners" know how to cultivate every variety of religious, spiritual, and moral tradition so that those time-tested sources yield the treasured wisdom
- b) and that by such "gardening efforts" (genuine instruction and sincere effort) many people can achieve highly advanced forms of wisdom and compassion.

Concluding Comments

This document "Four Positive Effects from the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba" is the result of an effort to describe the spirit and intentions which have influenced me to share the document "An Autobiographical Sketch" with the Sri Sathya Sai Sadhana Book and Publications Trust (SSSBPT) branch of the Sri Sathya Sai Organization.

I believe it is possible that there are many Sai devotees (and also many people with spiritual aspirations associated with other religious, spiritual, and moral traditions) who would find something in the document "An Autobiographical Sketch" (and in this companion document) which will re-inspire and/or re-invigorate their personal spiritual discipline efforts and their community service efforts.

May the will of the Lord prevail; one's duty is but to connect oneself to the Current of His Grace."
("Sathya Sai Speaks" Vol. 1, Chpt. 3, p. 18-19)