

SATHYA SAI INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION-USA



SAI SPIRITUAL EDUCATION- NATIONAL REFRESHER AND ENRICHMENT

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Child Development- Creating a New Mindset

SSE Group 2-Workbook

“In the tender hearts of the children, there is much potentiality of devotion and attachment to higher ideals and objectives; this can be developed and cultivated by you. Do not think that they do not know anything; that you can divert them any way you wish; this is a mistake. Recognize the great potentials of the child; adopt such methods as the child himself might suggest or indicate, Help the child to reach Godliness and become aware of its high destiny.” Sathya Sai Baba [July 10, 1974]

TOPIC INTRODUCTION

Slide # 4: *What the world needs today is neither a new order nor a new education nor a new system nor a new religion. The remedy lies in a new mind.* - SS 12:81, 274.

Key learnings

Slide # 5: *A New Mind?*

Key learnings

Slide # 6: *To bring out from within. The atma is our innermost reality. And that is what EDUCARE should bring out.* - Sri Sathya Sai Baba Discourse, July 4, 2001

Key learnings

Slide # 7: Mind-CARE

- **C**- Creating patterns and behaviors
- **A**- Accepting student development/need (including special needs children)
- **R**- Responding appropriately
- **E**- Encouraging Discipline and Elevating Consciousness (meditation)

Key learnings

Slide # 8: How Can I Be Responsive?

1. Be aware of developmental milestones.
2. W.A.T.C.H. yourself.

Key learnings

Slide # 9: How Can I Be Responsive?

- **W** – What am I observing without judgement?
- **A** – Are my children telling me something?
- **T** – Think of the reason behind their words/ actions/ emotions?
- **C** – Check your words/ actions/ emotions.
- **H** – How can I help following my heart?

Key learnings

Slide # 10: How Can I Be Responsive?

Keep the balance between love and law. A good teacher can control his/ her students with just one look - a firm look. - Puttaparthi, 22 February 1987.

Key learnings

Slide # 11: How Can I Be Responsive?

When you tell them not to do something, you must also tell them what you would like them to do instead. - Brindavan, 8 April 1989

Key learnings

BREAKOUT SESSION

Introduction

Description of the activity and your task

1. Read through the following lesson plan that was designed for Group 4.
2. Discuss how you would change it into a lesson suitable for Group 2. Keep the spiritual objective the same. Everything else can change or maybe just how you present the various elements changes. Do not give us a completed lesson plan (since that takes more time). Rather, discuss amongst yourselves how you will change the lesson for Group 2. This is an exercise for you to reflect upon who your students are; what your focus is; and what you want to convey through your lesson.

Ask yourself, "Am I presenting this lesson in a way that my students understand what the focus of the lesson is and have I constructed the 5 elements of the lesson plan (story, quote, life application, prayer, and affirmation) in an age-relevant manner?"

Helpful tips:

1. Keep your focus lasered in on the spiritual objective.
2. Refer to the developmental milestones.

Think about the diverse backgrounds and personalities of your students and be sure it is inclusive.

SAI SPIRITUAL EDUCATION LESSON PLAN - Group 4

SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE: Students learn that you can choose your perspective/lens and therefore create your reality.

VALUE: Truth

SUBVALUES: Goodness

PRAYER:

O God! Be in my mind and in my thinking.
Be in my eyes and in my seeing.
Be in my ears and in my hearing.
Be in my body and in my doing.

QUOTE: "The type of colored glasses you put on, you will see the world in the same color." - Sathya Sai Baba (See attached discourse)

AFFIRMATION: I determine the color of the lenses I use daily.

STORY: -

DISCOURSE: Sanctify Your Vision

The universe is the very form of Vishnu. You look at the universe with a worldly outlook, not with divine feelings. If you look at it with divine feelings, you will understand the all-pervading divine principle of Vishnu. When you keep in view the divine form of Vishnu, you do not think of the universe. When you look at the universe with worldly feelings, you cannot think of Vishnu, the Lord. Therefore, understanding Divinity lies in the sanctity of your vision.

The eye is verily the scripture. When you change your vision, the entire creation changes. The type of colored glasses you put on, you will see the world in the same color. Therefore, first and foremost, change your vision. You ask the question, "Where is God?" Wherever the mind dwells and moves about, there is God. There is no place in this world where the mind cannot go. That is why it is said: The mind is the basis of the entire world. The entire world is just a creation of the mind.

A human sees the universe, but they say they have not seen Vishnu, the Lord. One is a fool who sees yet does not recognise the reality. The universe is the very form of God. So, change your feelings. Here is an idol of Krishna. There are two aspects of the idol. One is the form and the other is its nature. When you keep the form of Krishna in view, you do not think of the metal from which it is made. When you think of the metal, you cannot visualise the form of Krishna.

Grief commences when you focus your feelings on the world. When you think of Vishnu, the Lord, you will be happy. For pleasure or pain, your feelings are responsible. The mind is the cause of bondage and liberation of humans. The mind is responsible for bondage and liberation. So, direct the mind on the right path. If the mind is directed on the right path, the mind itself will change into the divine principle. If the mind is focused on selfishness, you follow the narrow path. Make use of the mind to have broad feelings of love.

There should be expansion of love, not contraction of love. But people today lead lives in contraction of love. Selfishness, selfishness everywhere. Whatever you do, behind that there is selfishness. Whomsoever you love, you don't love them for their sake, you love them for your own sake. Similarly, whatever object you love, you don't love for the object's sake, you love it for your sake. People today have become playthings in the hands of selfishness. One does not take even one step forward without selfishness. You can understand the divine Atmic principle only when you get rid of selfishness and tread the path of Divinity.

- Divine Discourse (excerpt) - April 9, 1993, Kodaikanal

DISCUSSION:

We talked about how when we casually say to friends, "OMG, I'm so stressed!" our ears hear "stress, stress, stress" repeatedly. Our brain processes "stress, stress, stress." And it sends signals of "stress, stress, stress" to our body, which begin to affect us gradually on a physical level. Also, saying "I'm not stressed." doesn't help either, because your ears & brain still hear the word "stress" (and don't understand the word "not"). So, you HAVE to change your words to the positive perspective. "I'm

calm. I'm patient." When your ears & brain keep hearing "calm" and "patient," your body will gradually change to believe it.

GROUP ACTIVITY:

Intro - Show 2 cactus photos & 2 bedroom photos. Discuss about the power of changing your perspective.

Cactus photos: In the 1st cactus photo, the focus is on the thorny cactus. In the 2nd photo, the cactus is still there, but the perspective focuses on the field of flowers.

Lesson: We can learn to change our perspective to not focus on the negative. Doesn't mean the negative goes away, but when there's more positive, it diminishes the negative into almost nothingness.

Bedroom photos: In the 1st bedroom photo, the wall with pictures looks like an art gallery wall. The second photo is a wider angle that shows the clutter in the bedroom and the wall is not the focal point.

Lesson: We see beauty in the first photo, but then see there's more to the "reality" of the situation in the second photo. But we thought the first photo was beautiful, so why not make that our reality? Keep the distractions/negativity/clutter out of our reality.

Activity: Go outside and take a photo on your camera of a mundane object. Then, review your shot and take another of the same object to change your perspective, angle, focus to make it more meaningful & beautiful. Discuss.

GROUP SONG: Play Beatles "All You Need Is Love"

MEDITATION: Jyothi

LIFE APPLICATION: When talking with others, catch yourself before saying things like, "I'm so stressed." And say it with a positive spin, like, "I need to work harder on managing my time." Or... "I need to breathe a little bit." Come up with your own phrases.

Child Development (from pre-reading material)

SSE GROUP 2 (Grades 4 - 6) (you will see wider range of changes)

Cognitive:

- They have better communication skills
- They are fluent readers and writers
- Independent and responsible for actions
- Still value adults and authority but begins to see imperfections in them
- Less interested in fantasy and more interested in real world
- Mostly interested in the present more than the future
- Ideals begin to develop, and they begin selected role models
- Even if students learn abstractions, they prefer hands on activities
- Personal values and opinions begin to develop

- Can compare present with past

Social/Emotional:

- Can independently resolve interpersonal conflicts
- They are beginning to develop a strong sense of self.
- Some begin their adolescence journey
- They can begin to form cliques based on interests, clothes etc
- Slowly you start seeing movement away from family towards friends.
- Needs help managing confusing feelings
- Older students in this age group experiment with roles, appearance and self image
- Focus on the self- alternates between high self-esteem and low self-image
- Begins to worry about fairness and justice, especially with themselves.
- May become moody, experience extreme emotions
- Older children can demand privileges and avoid responsibilities.
- Age of negatives: 'this is boring', 'I can't'...
- Girls sometimes tend to be more mature than boys at this age as they mature faster.
- Girls and boys begin to segregate.
- The older, more mature ones may begin to seem to be dropping off their scales of childhood as they begin to understand adults are fallible and that we make mistakes. They still take to positive role models and like consistency.

Here is what you can do:

1. As children this age are very sensitive, speak sweetly and lovingly without making personal comments even for jest.
2. Set the bar really high and pick the best role models from around the world, various cultures and religions, to talk to them about.
3. Make Affirmations part of every class. They always begin with "I am..."
4. Pick material and subject that does not cause confusion in their minds (Swami has mentioned this in His discourse)
5. Match the sub values/topic to the children's needs in life.
6. Encourage children to give positive family member examples in class
7. Consider families as an integral part of SSE. Keep in touch with the parents so you help create an environment that Swami calls "Divine Atmosphere".

Once children finish Group 2, you will slowly begin to see most are entering adolescence. The next few years is not a phase of raging hormones but a period of most growth in all areas. The brain has started its remodeling phase. So, view the child from this angle to our responses match their needs.

Discussion

WRAP-UP

Slide # 13: Reflection and Commitment:

- SSE Group 1
- SSE Group 2

Key learnings

Slide # 13: Reflection and Commitment:

- SSE Group 3
- SSE Group 4

Key learnings

Slide # 14: Conclusion

Key learnings

Guest speaker

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REVIEW

A) Something new I learnt from the workshop and B) Concepts that were reinforced and deepened.

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COMMIT TO PRACTICE

After review and reflection, commit to bring one new concept/best practice that you learned into regular practice. This is a personal commitment you are making to Swami.

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