What is EDUCARE?

This selected explanation of Educare is taken from an original publication

Produced by
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INTRODUCTION

We live in an age of increasing technological wonder and scientific discovery, but none of this has solved the problems of the world. Half of humanity still lives in abject poverty, while others enjoy a lifestyle undreamed of in past centuries, yet peace and contentment eludes even these privileged sections of society. What is wrong? Taken as a whole, those who have, and those who have not are both experiencing poverty of spirit. Life has lost purpose, meaning and an intangible inner quality that can give it a sense of fulfilment. True happiness is becoming an extremely rare commodity.

There has probably never been a period in recorded history, when it has been more important for mankind to rediscover those moral values that distinguish a human from a beast, and make him more worthy of his rightful place as lord of creation. Nor has there been any time when it has been more important to establish lasting world peace. Mankind now has the power to destroy all life as we know it. This beautiful and generous Mother Earth on which we all depend for sustenance is at risk because of our own, unbridled greed and callous selfishness. As thinking beings, we have a responsibility towards society and towards the planet itself.

The problem is that mankind’s fund of knowledge and technical ability has far outstripped the moral fibre of those using that knowledge. Education today concentrates on the acquisition of degrees, but fails to equip our youth with the necessary discernment to face the challenges of life, and neglects to develop in them those values that are the foundation for nobility of character and a sense of responsibility. Educare is designed to fulfil that vacuum.

“Education should aim at making a full human being.
It should go further and make an ideal human being.”
Sathya Sai Baba

THE SATHYA SAI EDUCARE PHILOSOPHY

Sathya Sai Baba who is Chancellor of the Institute of Higher Learning, a university of worldwide repute, situated in India, is the founder of this system of education.

The word ‘education’ comes from the Latin word, ‘educare’, and its original meaning was to ‘draw out from within’, in other words, to help the innate qualities of the child to blossom; this is exactly what the Educare programme aims at doing. Education as it is practised today, crams information into the child, but does nothing towards developing the moral stamina and strength of character needed for using that knowledge wisely. As a result, our children are equipped for earning a living but not for facing the complexities of life. It is strength of character -moral fibre- that enables us to face life with fortitude and integrity.

Educare does not work on the old principle of ‘Do this, and don’t do that’, with threats of the dire consequences of transgressing the rules. It is based on the fact that the spirit, or soul, of a human being is basically good, and that this innate goodness needs to be brought out. All children are basically loving. All children have an inherent concept of justice, of what is right and wrong.

Concept such as love, truth righteousness, peace and non-violence are innate in us, which is why we referred to them as ‘human values’. They form what is often spoken of as the ‘eternal philosophy’. Practising them is the recipe for happiness in life, for they enable us to live in harmony with others. By fostering the inherent goodness in children, the Educare method of education enables these qualities to blossom in them. The children are helped to grow into well-balanced, integrated men and women, who are able to face the challenges of life with self-confidence and moral stamina. In other words, Educare aims at developing character- and the method works!

What is character? It is that which raises human beings to their highest level, and enables them to tackle problems in a balanced way. Character is based on love, patience, courage, forbearance, steadfastness and compassion. It is often thought that wealth or knowledge is what confers
power, but Sathya Sai says that this is not so: Character is power, and character is the result of steadfastly adhering to values. Those people, whom the world holds in high esteem, are those who have exhibited good and noble qualities in their lives, based on the values they hold.

Human values are necessary for all, and the practical application of them is the measure of the level of development that an individual has achieved as a human being. Outstanding leaders, and those whose lives are an inspiration to others, have always demonstrated one or more of these values to a remarkable degree.

Sathya Sai Educare is a programme that aims at the all-round development of the child, resulting in the child achieving excellence in his or her particular field. It does this by drawing out the inherent goodness and associated Human Values from whatever subject is being taught. In this way the child learns to discriminate between what is constructive and what is destructive in their own life and in society as a whole. There are human values in every aspect of the curriculum; the art of the educare teacher is in bringing them to the fore in the subject being taught.

The programme can also be taught as a ‘Values Class’ held once a week, or in smaller segments held over the week. In this case, five teaching techniques are used. They are: Silent sitting (quietening the mind), Quotations (which develop memory and act as signposts at times of important decision making in the life of the student), Story-telling (which fires the imagination and provides role models), and Group Activities (which develop co-operation and self-confidence). These five methods of approach are designed to reach the various levels of the child’s psyche, and are all therefore, of primary importance in the child’s holistic development.

Institutes of Sathya Sai Education are now established in many countries, 39 of which operate Sathya Sai schools, which provide excellent examples of the benefits of values education.

“Education without character, wealth without charity, science without humanity, and commerce without morality, are useless and dangerous.”
Sathya Sai Baba

THE FIVE SENSES, AND THE ELEMENTAL STATES OF MATTER

We all know that children explore the world through their five senses, but we do not always realise how important it is to foster and expand this exploration. It has recently been found that the blossoming of a child’s understanding is directly related to the opportunities he or she has for experiencing the sensations produced by a number of different substances. Becoming aware that feeling wind on their face is evidence of the movement of air, that fire gives out heat, that water cannot be grasped and that earth has a smell – cognising these different ‘states of matter’ expands their understanding.

As science has revealed to us, air, fire, water, and earth are nothing but the same energy manifesting in different combinations and different states of density. Because their characteristics and behaviour of each are so different, they are often spoken of as ‘elements’. However, some people can find this slightly confusing, as the word ‘element’ technically refers to what are normally considered to be different substances – oxygen, carbon, iron and so on-though, in truth, these are all just one basic substance, energy, manifesting differently. The different states of density in which the universal energy manifests itself should probably be called ‘elemental states of matter’ but, for simplicity, we refer to them as ‘elements’.

Actually, in addition to air, fire (free energy), water and earth (or the solid state) there another very important ‘element’: space. Space is an essential component of all atoms. It is said that, without the space in atoms, our Planet Earth would shrink to the size of an orange! All these ‘states of matter’ are fundamental to the world as we know it, and becoming familiar with the way they function is of prime importance to the child’s mental development. A child’s interest is awakened when he finds that water can be poured and that it also always finds its own level. Smelling and locating the origin of a scent fascinates a child. That sound is a vibration was interestingly demonstrated to a class by letting the children feel the vibrating in the pipes of an organ while it was being played. A child’s urge to investigate should be awakened in every way possible The world is a beautiful place.
Interestingly, it has been found that the five senses are directly related to the various ‘elements’ or ‘states of matter’, for it is the variation in density that makes each sense possible. Space, the most subtle of these, is all-pervasive, for it is the major component of all atoms. It is connected to sound and our ability to hear, for it is the space within atoms that allows sound vibrations to travel and register on our eardrum. With air comes the sense of touch – indeed, in hurricanes it can make itself felt very strongly! We need air to breathe, to live, and the space it provides allows us to move about and handle things.

Without light we cannot see. From the ‘ball of fire’ we call the ‘sun’ we get light and warmth. It is also the energy that plants use and that we take in with the food we eat. Water is essential to all life and our bodies are in great part water. It also brings us the ability to taste. All liquids have taste. The last of the five senses, smell, is connected with earth. A bad smell means that there are particles of that bad thing in the air we are breathing. A child needs to be made aware of this.

As each state of matter become denser, it also has more attributes. Air, when it moves, has both sound and touch. Fire can be seen, felt and heard. Sound travels in water and water can be seen, felt and tasted. Being still very subtle, it is present in nearly everything. Earth - the solid state - is the densest of all and has the least movement, but it has all the attributes, as all the other ‘elements’ are present in it – space, air, fire (as energy) and water. All five of these ‘states of matter’ are also present in our bodies and manifest in our functions and actions. Diagrammatically, it could be expressed like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘Element’</th>
<th>Proactive Power</th>
<th>Resulting ability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Space</td>
<td>Hearing</td>
<td>Speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air</td>
<td>Touching</td>
<td>Handling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire</td>
<td>Seeing</td>
<td>Locomotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Tasting</td>
<td>Blood circulation &amp; ureto-genital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth</td>
<td>Smelling</td>
<td>Defecation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE MIND**

Scientist are steadily awakening to the fact that energy of which the universe is composed is also conscious – a consciousness akin to thought. The more one examines creation, the more one becomes aware of an underlying orderliness. As Einstein put it, “The laws of nature reveal a mind so superior that all the intelligence poured by man into his thoughts is, when compared to this mind, nothing but a reflection of absolute nothingness,” and he said that his research was devoted to “Understand how the ‘Old One’ thinks.” This consciousness permeates all things.

The human mind is – as Einstein said – ‘nothing’ compared to the thought embodied in the laws of the universe, but it, too, is a reflection of that universal consciousness. As it is our mind that determines our actions, it is important that we understand the way in which it functions, especially when we are dealing with children.

The following diagram describes ‘in a nutshell’, the processes that determine our behaviour.

Our contact with the outside world is through our five senses, and this gives rise to thoughts, which lead to feelings. These, in turn, lead to actions, which if repeated lead to habits. Habits harden to form character, and our character governs our behaviour and our attitude to life.

The mind can be described as having five aspects:

- **Discursive Mind** – this receives the impressions of the world through the five senses. It also brings in ideas when used for decision-making or solving problems

- **The Discriminating Mind** - which is sometimes called intellect. This sorts the impressions received by the discursive mind into those that are
A BRIEF EXPLANATION OF THE FIVE VALUES

TRUTH
In essence, Truth is that which is in perfect accord with reality, and it is the life-principle within each of us. The natural laws are that Truth in action. In the ethical sense, it manifests as truthfulness of speech and harmony between our thoughts, words and deeds. Speaking the truth is an indispensable ethical discipline, which should be regarded as a social obligation and a necessity. Untruthfulness corrupts the mind, destroys its tranquility, and pollutes the environment and society.

The yearning to know that Truth is what is at the root of all research, and can therefore be seen as one of the driving forces of human existence. Ultimately, it leads us to inquire not only into the wonders of the world around us, but also into the secret of who we are. What makes us tick and what is the purpose of our life?

RIGHT CONDUCT
Truth in action is Right Conduct. Sathya Sai Baba explains that it is “the disciplining of the human will to do right action always.” All actions take place in the physical domain, but every action is a response to an inner prompting – a response to a thought. We may merely act in response to some sensual impression or desire – “I see, I want, I must have…” Or it can be undertaken in the light of knowledge and for the wellbeing of all. If the action is appropriate, it will hurt no one and appears to be for the general good, then it is right conduct.

Right conduct is an indispensable component of an integrated personality, and it is that which maintains the harmony in creation. In essence, it is the “Rightness” of things – that which is in accord with their true nature. Just as cancer is the result of cells ceasing to conduct themselves in conformity with their nature, so is social chaos the result of neglecting to regulate our lives according to the norms of right conduct.

PEACE
Peace is the end purpose of all human endeavour. Whether a person makes right decisions or wrongs, the motivation is always for achieving peace and happiness. However, this goal would be much more easily achieved if one were to understand more clearly which domain of the
personality is involved. It is only when there is emotional equilibrium that one experiences peace. It is when we allow our internal emotional system to become disturbed, that we become subject to anxiety and confusion. Peace of mind is, in effect, a state of equilibrium.

Life is not plain sailing, but it is the attitude of mind with which we face the ups-and-downs that makes all the difference. With a little detachment – a stepping back from the problem – we soon find that things don’t look so bad. In fact, peace is always there, as a substratum of our being; we need to find the way to access it. Learning to control the mind is the secret, and this is best learned right from a very young age. In today’s world, more and more people are becoming the victims of stress. This is not a natural state, and it is not a necessary state; we need to equip our children with the means to deal with it.

LOVE

Love is often thought of as emotion, but it is not, itself an emotion. It can produce an emotion. Love is actually a form of energy, which affects all forms of life. It is psychic force, which each individual transmits and receives. Children need love; so do animals – even plants respond to love. The absence of love inhibits, and can even kill. At each sub-atomic level, it is a force that bonds the universe. In people, it manifests as selflessness. Sathya Sai Baba says, “Love lives by giving and forgiving, selfishness by getting and forgetting.” Love grows with sharing. Children need to develop in a loving environment. Eventually, it should make a person realise the universal brotherhood of Man and one’s kinship with all life.

NON-VIOLENCE

Non-Violence is not merely refraining from doing harm. Non-Violence manifests when love enters the deeper levels of one’s consciousness. At that level, it permeates all one’s thoughts, words and deeds. It leads to an all-encompassing sense of oneness with all beings and all things. It manifests as respect for all life, as care for the environment and the recognition of he rights of others. A non-violent person is a peaceful person, a loving person, and a person who will refrain from wrongdoing, because unrighteous behaviour destroys harmony and hurts others. They practise non-violence in thought, word and deed.

HOW THE VALUES MANIFEST IN DAILY LIFE

Below are some examples of the various ways in which the values express themselves in everyday life, for they will manifest differently according to the circumstances. For example, Truth can manifest as truthfulness in speech or as hunger for knowledge, according to the need and focus of attention. These specific manifestations of the ‘parent’ values have also been referred to as ‘sub-values’, but this tends to imply that they are lesser, or only a part of the value under which they fall. In fact this is not so. Love, in its entirety, can manifest as devotion to God, as compassion for a suffering human being or as heart-felt forgiveness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRUTH</th>
<th>PEACE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaking the truth</td>
<td>Gentleness and politeness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quest for knowledge</td>
<td>Control of anger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unity of thought word and deed</td>
<td>Control of greed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-honesty and self-analysis</td>
<td>Contentment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect for all religions</td>
<td>Concentration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discriminate between right &amp; wrong</td>
<td>Patience and Humility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with commitment</td>
<td>Self-respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality – human rights</td>
<td>Purity and self-control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimism</td>
<td>Tolerance and understanding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RIGHT CONDUCT</th>
<th>LOVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not stealing</td>
<td>Sympathy and Friendship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping your promise</td>
<td>Compassion and Forgiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not speaking ill of others</td>
<td>Concern for others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleanliness and personal hygiene</td>
<td>Willingness to serve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regularity and punctuality</td>
<td>Dedication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justice and respect for others</td>
<td>Kindness to animals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-confidence and Courage</td>
<td>Sharing and Helpfulness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social responsibility</td>
<td>Sincerity and Generosity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courage to speak what is right</td>
<td>Cheerfulness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NON-VIOLENCE</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caring for the environment</td>
<td>Putting a ceiling on desires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect for public property</td>
<td>Not doing or watching bad things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern for the welfare of all</td>
<td>Not using bad language</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VALUES SHOULD BE PRACTICED IN CHILDHOOD

Habits and attitudes are formed early in life. It has been established that the age group of 5 to 15 years is the one in which the most significant part of habit and attitude formation takes place. This has been further corroborated by scientific evidence on the study of the formation of the synaptic system in the brain. These years correspond more or less to the Primary and Intermediate stages of education, and it is therefore important that a child should start practicing the values right from these ages. It is even better if they start at the preschool level.

While human values are applicable to all, and it can be said that it is never too late to study and practice them, yet it is in the young that they will germinate best and flower quickest. Later in life, we tend to develop a husk formed of preconceived ideas and habits of thought that take much longer to change. It has been said that, to change the attitudes and habits of a ten year-old, takes two and a half months; of a twenty year-old, five and a half months; of a forty year-old, twenty four months; of a fifty year-old, 50 months or 4.17 years; and of a sixty year-old, 8.35 years or 100 months. Over 70 years, changing attitudes and habits is very difficult.

HOW IS THE PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTED?

Ideally, the programme ‘breathes through’ all the subjects of the curriculum. Once the teacher appreciates the importance of ‘values based teaching’, he or she can link any subject to a particular value and draw that value from the subject. It is really just a matter of a change of focus from one that is solely subject focussed to one that is subject and values focussed. Examples of teaching values in the curriculum are available from the Institute of Sathya Sai Education.

The other way of implementing the programme is in a ‘Direct Values Class’ using the five effective techniques set out below:

(1) SILENT SITTING or quietening of the mind. This is a simple technique by which the children are taught to allow the agitations of the mind to fall away, to become still in body and mind, and become aware of the sounds of the present moment. This can be practised for up to two minutes. It leads to improved memory and ability to concentrate, a sense of peace, and develops the intuitive faculty.

(2) QUOTATIONS: or dynamic thoughts that relate to the value being focussed on in that particular session. In the short term, learning quotations improves memory and, in the long term, these value-oriented thoughts come to mind in later life and provide a useful life-line in times of trouble.

(3) GROUP SINGING: Children love to sing. Simple harmonious tunes are chosen, with words related to values. Not only does this give the children the enjoyment of singing together, but it also instils in their hearts the value contained in the words.

Many experiments have shown the influence of music on human behaviour, on rates of productivity, and even on plant growth. This is perhaps not surprising when one considers that every element in creation has its own vibration and that sound, too, is a vibration. According to H.A. Lingerman, author of the book, “The Healing Powers of Music”, music has the ability to: “Increase physical vitality, relieve fatigue, and inertia. Pierce through moods, calm anxiety and tensions, uplift feelings, focus thinking, clarify goals, foster courage, stimulate creativity, and sensitivity. It Strengthens character and constructive behaviour and expands consciousness and spiritual attunement.”
Of course, it has to be good music, uplifting music. Much of today’s music is destructive rather than constructive. Experiments have shown that Hard Rock can even kill plants and can decrease muscle-strength in humans by as much as 75%.

(4) STORY TELLING: There are many, many stories that relate to human values. A story generates interest, captures the attention and imagination, and illustrates values without effort and without putting the child on the defensive. The story should not have to spell-out that value in so many words. Told well, and with suitable animation, stories have a lasting effect on the children, and give them examples of good conduct to which they can relate in later life.

(5) GROUP ACTIVITIES: Human Values can be promoted through group activities such as role-plays, motivation games, quiz games, drama and creative work. All of these develop co-operation, self-confidence, and creativity in children. Attitude tests are also an important activity, both as a means by which the teacher can gauge how the children are progressing, and for the children themselves as it prompts them to self-inquiry.

EACH OF THE TECHNIQUES IS EQUALLY IMPORTANT:

In the Direct Values Class, it is important to structure the lesson using the five techniques above and in the class situation, to carry the particular theme of the lesson and the quotation on through the week.

Though values are actually innate, in order to be operative in daily life, they need to be recognised by the heart and accepted by the mind. It has been wisely said that something that is not intellectually accepted cannot be emotionally fulfilling, and it is, therefore, in this respect that value oriented stories are particularly effective. Practice is another, perhaps even more important aspect. When the child begins to see how useful it is to adhere to these principles in his or her relationship with other children, then the values become rooted at the level of personal experience. For this to happen successfully, it is important that the general atmosphere of the teaching environment be value oriented, and the teachers need to rigorously practice the values themselves.

THE AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME AND THE GREAT ROLE OF THE TEACHER

The concepts embodied in Sathya Sai Educare are revolutionising the whole approach to education in many countries throughout the world.

Educare is the result of a profound insight into the psychology of the child and the techniques used are carefully devised to appeal to the child at the various levels of his or her personality. By emphasising the values inherent in the subject of the curriculum, and by bringing the children’s attention to these in their projects and extra curriculum activities, the child’s innate goodness is slowly guided and made to blossom.

Educare does not try to achieve results through a series of “Do’s and Don’ts”, but rather by giving the children ideas to emulate and, through stories and role-plays, presenting them with situations to which they can easily relate. The child’s own, inherent powers of discrimination are thus gently guided and developed. This leads to self-confidence and the ability to think for oneself. It is observable that children soon become able to decide for themselves what is right or wrong, instead of blindly following the dictates of peer-pressure.

Sathya Sai points out that “Education is one thing and discrimination quite another. Discrimination is the faculty that enables us to distinguish good from bad and confers upon us the ability to decide when, and how much importance is to be given to various aspects in a given situation. Discrimination is a component of wisdom. Without discrimination one cannot pursue the right path. It is a mark of sagacity to display discrimination in all one’s actions. A person endowed with wisdom and discrimination will be honoured even though he or she may have neither wealth nor position. A person devoid of wisdom and discrimination can never blossom spiritually even though that person may be an eminent educationalist, a prominent scientist or a multi-millionaire.”

The ability to use one’s powers of discrimination, leads to self-confidence. It is said that fear grows in proportion to how much one doubts one’s own ability. Today’s world is difficult for all of us, but is especially complex and unnerving for he young. It is our duty to equip
our children to meet that world face to face, hence the need to develop in them the necessary self-confidence.

Teachers should regard it as their privilege to be assisting in the development of the rising generation, helping those in their care to become self-confident, self-reliant men and women, whose actions will be based on sound moral values. The teacher, therefore, should not only be equipped with the knowledge and skills to inform, but should also have the vision and insight needed to inspire and transform. The teacher can therefore be said to be the architect of happy homes, prosperous communities and peaceful nations.

It must also be realised that values are ‘caught’ rather than ‘taught’. Children are profoundly perceptive – and imitative! To place before the class a virtue that one is not prepared to practice oneself is a waste of time. For the Educare techniques to be 100% successful, the teachers need to practice the values themselves. One may be able to fool oneself, but one can never fool a child! And this remark applies to parent too!

Children growing up in today’s world are exposed to countless influences. It is no longer just the teacher and the parents whose influences affect the child, but also the surroundings which include television, films, videos, and the like. Most students are also under tremendous pressure to ‘succeed’ and to pass exams. Through Educare, they can be helped and shown how to handle these various conflicting influences. The constant conflict of values and goals can be very stressful – they are stressful for adults, but often even more distressingly so for children and young people. Children need to be given understanding, yet, at the same time be shown through example that the qualities of integrity and self-reliance confer greater inner strength, and can enable them to deal effectively with the complexities of life.

From the biographies of countless people, we can see how often the direction of a person’s life has been changed, way back in childhood, through the influence of some teacher who found a way to give the child understanding and inspiration. Teachers should never under-estimate the influence for good that their position affords them. The youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow, so it can be said that the future of the nation is in the hands of the teachers and parents.

**LOVE IS THE BASIS FOR ALL THE VALUES**

It manifests differently at the various levels of a person’s psyche

- Psychic level (Love) = Love
- Mental + Love = Truth
- Emotional + Love = Peace
- Physical + Love = Right Conduct

Love at the level of Understanding manifests as Non-violence which includes all the values

“From slings and arrows, from canon balls to bombs, from fusion to fission, mankind has progressed in the art of killing and entered the darkest age in history. The greed for wealth and power has overwhelmed the creed of compassion. The law of self-aggrandisement reigns; the law of self-abnegation has receded.

To enumerate the human values – Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love and Non-violence – and think of them as separate is not correct. They are all facets of one another and the very foundation of humanness. They grow together and are interdependent. They cannot be separated. Right-conduct is love in action. Love thrives on inner peace, on the absence of inner conflict. How can one have peace when one revels in viol?”

Sathya Sai Baba
HOW THE PROGRAMME CAN BE IMPLEMENTED

The Educare Programme can either be integrated into the normal school curriculum, or – if circumstances do not permit this – it can be taught as an extra-curricular activity. Obviously, the ideal is when it is able to be integrated into the curriculum and co-curricula activities, for it is then allowed to permeate the whole of the child’s learning environment; but Educare sessions, either as a special class or outside school hours, can still have a very valuable impact on a child’s development.

The institute of Sathya Sai Education is happy to give advice on how such classes can be started, and much is available on how it can be successfully integrated into the national curriculum for use in schools. Geography and social studies can be excellent vehicles, and history can be used to discuss the value implications of the events being taught. Famous historical figures whose actions have reflected human values can be presented as edifying examples, and much can be learned from even the negative connotations of much that history has recorded. In mathematics, problems can be set incorporating the need to share; the use of balance can be used to demonstrate the need for a balanced life and outlook (too much of one thing will tip the scales in the wrong direction). The possibilities, actually, are limitless.

This well-tested and informed programme does work, and the results have been impressive. After only a few weeks of the programme, street-kids in Bangkok returned shoes that they had previously been stealing. Nobody had commented on the fact that the shoes had been stolen, yet they were unobtrusively returned. In every place where the programme has been running, the results have been more than encouraging. More and more countries throughout the world are becoming interested in Educare and are trying to put it into effect.

The programme has immense potential. In New Zealand, where this booklet was prepared, it is being used to great effect in the Sathya Sai Preschool – Rongomai, based in Otara, Manukau City, as is evidenced in the ERO (Education Review Office) Review. Several primary schools are also using the programme with positive results. No one can deny that there is a need for values to be understood by today’s youth, and for them to gain the self-confidence that is born of integrity.

A FEW NOTES ON THE PRESENTING OF EDUCARE

With special reference to when it is introduced as a separate subject, outside the school curriculum

Because the concept of Educare is to draw out, to foster the goodness that is already inherent in the child, the approach needs to be adapted to the needs of the particular children in one’s care. This may at first seem a daunting prospect, but an ever-growing resource-bank is available, containing stories, tuneful value songs (both words and audio-cassettes), etc. In this way, teachers can readily put together plans suitable for the particular needs of the children entrusted to them.

Teacher workshops and seminars are also being held regularly, and it is strongly recommended that would-be teachers of Educare make every effort to attend these. These provide instructions on how to put together useful lesson plans, give practice in inspirational story telling, and much else besides. More can be learned in a weekend seminar than can be assimilated through reading of textbooks – though textbooks are also available and have their uses. Certificates are issued to teachers who have successfully completed these Sai Educare courses, and a more extensive diploma course is also available.

Of course, when one first decides to begin an Educare class, it often happens that one is presented with children of quite a range of ages, and one may not yet have sufficient numbers to be able to divide them up. Don’t worry. It is usually possible to simplify things a bit for the younger ones and insert something a little more challenging for the older ones, while still dealing with them together. As the class grows – which it will, the necessary sub-divisions can be made.

It is also important to keep up the children’s interest and, above all that the time spent in the class should be ENJOYABLE. A child who is not enjoying what he or she is learning, tends to put up barriers which make the whole exercise counter-productive.

SILENT SITTING: Time-wise, this constitutes a very small portion the total session, but we should never under-estimate the importance of this practice. It is an invaluable technique for stilling the agitations of the mind and it also allows access to the deeper level of mind, wherein is
locked the intuitive faculty. Most major scientific breakthroughs have
been the result of a flash of intuition. The technique of silent-sitting has
also been shown to greatly improve the child’s ability to concentrate, to
absorb the information provided and, above all, it allows the mind to
contact its inherent level of inner peace.

**QUOTATIONS:** Do we not find that poems learned in childhood are
still remembered long after all else has been forgotten? It may not be the
whole poem that we remember, but certainly the first stanza. Frequent
repetition has firmly imprinted it on the subconscious mind. It is there
that all knowledge is stored, but we do not always realise to what an
extent the subconscious also acts as the motivating force behind our daily
activities. It is the area of the psyche in which our beliefs are stored, and
we tend to act according to our beliefs. Everyone has beliefs. We may
believe that money is the be all and end all in life, and this will motivate
us to become greedy, avaricious, and often unscrupulous. There is a
whole gamut of beliefs that people unconsciously hold, some good, some
bad. Quotations help to fix useful, value-oriented beliefs in the mind.

**GROUP SINGING:** This actually ‘speaks’ to much the same level of the
psyche as do quotations. Music has been said to be the language of the
soul. Some music has been found to have the ability to heal, while other
sorts are actually destructive. Different forms of music produce different
moods in us. It is not through our intellect that we are affected – the mood
arises from a much deeper level, for it is that deeper level that connects
with the music. Actually singing the tune oneself (instead of merely
hearing it) has an even more far-reaching effect. Singing songs containing
positive, elevating thoughts, can produce fundamental changes in attitude.
If the tune is melodious and ‘catchy’, the song will continue to play
through the mind long after the class is over.

There are also other benefits to be derived from Group Singing: When
one sings as a group, there is a need to keep in unison – to merge one’s
identity with that of the others. It becomes a sharing. One becomes
exhilarated and elevated, too, by the energy generated by those singing
with one. It is noticeable that singing helps to generate self-confidence;
many shy children will forget themselves and sing joyfully and loudly as
a group.

**STORY TELLING:** To be able to tell a good story is an art, and one
which all dedicated Educare teachers should try to acquire. A story well
told, can fire the imagination and awaken the desire to emulate. We
should never under-estimate the power for good contained in a story. – or
for bad! The media has a responsibility that they little recognise in the
values and examples that they beam into the homes of the nation. In order
to combat all this negativity, we need to do our task very well. When we
come to story telling, we must give it our very best.

There are many good stories that one can use. If we are to capture the full
attention of the children, it is important that we tell the story, not just read
it. It should be told as colourfully as possible. Use the voice
imaginatively, varying the pitch, the tone and the expression, so as to
bring the story to life; hands, arms and sometimes puppets, can all help to
intensify the effect and convey meaning. The story we choose should be
relevant to us: if we, ourselves, find the story pointless or boring, then we
will never be able to get it across to the children, and using it will then
have been a waste of time.

**GROUP ACTIVITIES:** This is also a vital aspect of the Programme for
it gives children an opportunity to express themselves while, at the same
time, learning to interact pleasantly with each other. Many children have
never learned the art of enjoying themselves together; their lack of self-
confidence tends to hide itself behind aggressiveness, or else in a clinging
‘pallyness’ with one or two friends to the exclusion of all the rest.
Knowing how to get on together is a social art that needs to be learned
young. Role-play can be particularly useful. By getting the children to
act-out various imaginary situations, they begin to think what their
reactions would be in real life. There are also many other activities
(suggestions for these are available from the Resource Bank) and they all
encourage the children to think for themselves and make decisions.
Developing self-confidence is very important.

**FINAL COMMENTS:** The few explanations of the teaching techniques
contained in this booklet, are not intended to be a complete guide-book
for teachers. There are more comprehensive guide-books available, and
even these can never replace the immense advantage of attending a
seminar or of an actual presentation held at your school.
CHILDREN

And a woman who held a babe against her bosom said, Speak to us of children

Your children are not your children.

They are the sons and daughters of Life’s longing for itself.

They come through you but not from you,

And though they are with you yet they belong not to you.

You may give them your love but not your thoughts,

For they have their own thoughts. You may house their bodies but not their souls,

For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit even in dreams.

You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you,

For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.

You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth.

From “The Prophet” by Kahlil Gibran

“Education Should be for Life, Not just for a Living”

“Unless knowledge is transformed into wisdom, and wisdom is expressed in character, education is a wasteful process. If education confers this gift of transformation, then surely life will become peaceful, happy and full of mutual help and co-operation.”

“When Love illumines thought, Truth is revealed. When Love motivates action, it is transformed into Right Conduct. When Love saturates feelings, it becomes calm and serene and ensures Peace. When anger, envy, greed, and hatred are cast away, Love dawns as understanding and Non-violence reigns supreme. This is the reason why man is told, ‘Love thy neighbour as thyself’.”

Some quotes from Sathya Sai Baba