

How Swami Shaped My Life

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My humble pranams at the lotus feet of our beloved Baba. I am grateful to Swami as He has shaped my life in many ways. Being able to join SSE is the biggest way Swami continues to shape my life. Before, I was confused by my feelings of who I was, how I see others, and what I believed in.

Nearly 3-4 years ago, I used to think that being a Indian wasn't good. We have holidays, poojas, loud, noisy festivals all year long! As much as I was part of these rituals, I didn't really understand why we had them. My father has a saying, "Those who are afraid of something lack knowledge of it." Likewise, I now know that I did not have full knowledge of what it means to be Indian. I didn't know much about the culture, so I thought it was inferior to be an Indian. However, soon after becoming an SSE student, that feeling started to take a new shape. I began to feel proud of who I was. I learned to appreciate being an Indian from a religious, cultural, and spiritual way.

SSE changed not only the way I look at myself, but the way I looked at others. I started being more kind, more generous, more friendly. I became calmer, a more gentle person. There is one of Swami's quotes that always stuck in my head. "There is only one religion... the religion of love." It helped me realize that it is not "Right Conduct" to judge someone based on the way they looked and what they believed in. Why do we talk so much about helping the poor, when half of us don't even step near them because of the way they looked? Why? There is no purpose for us to not practice something we preach. Physical challenges can't even be compared

to the games the mind can play. “Mind is like a mad monkey.” ~ Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Lastly, going to SSE changed the way I thought about the Divine Force of the cosmos. Of course, I would always attend poojas and festivals, but I never really finalized who I believed in, or even if there was SOMEONE to believe in. My mind would jump from Krishna, Shiva, Lakshmi, Vishnu, but it would never stay put! After learning about Sri Sathya Sai Baba in SSE, it was easier to believe in a Higher Force because He came down in physical form, gave lectures, and has eyewitness accounts who are present today to tell the tale. Knowing that Baba himself talked and proved He was an avatar of the Divine, and produced miracles, which were even recorded, I felt certain that there was something that was guiding us all throughout our lives.

In conclusion, Swami shaped my life through SSE, which was one of the greatest blessings I could ever receive! Joining SSE helped me realize that being who I am is awesome, the outside of a person doesn't matter-only the inside does, and that there is someone who is omnipresent, holding our hand through every step of our lives! Sairam.