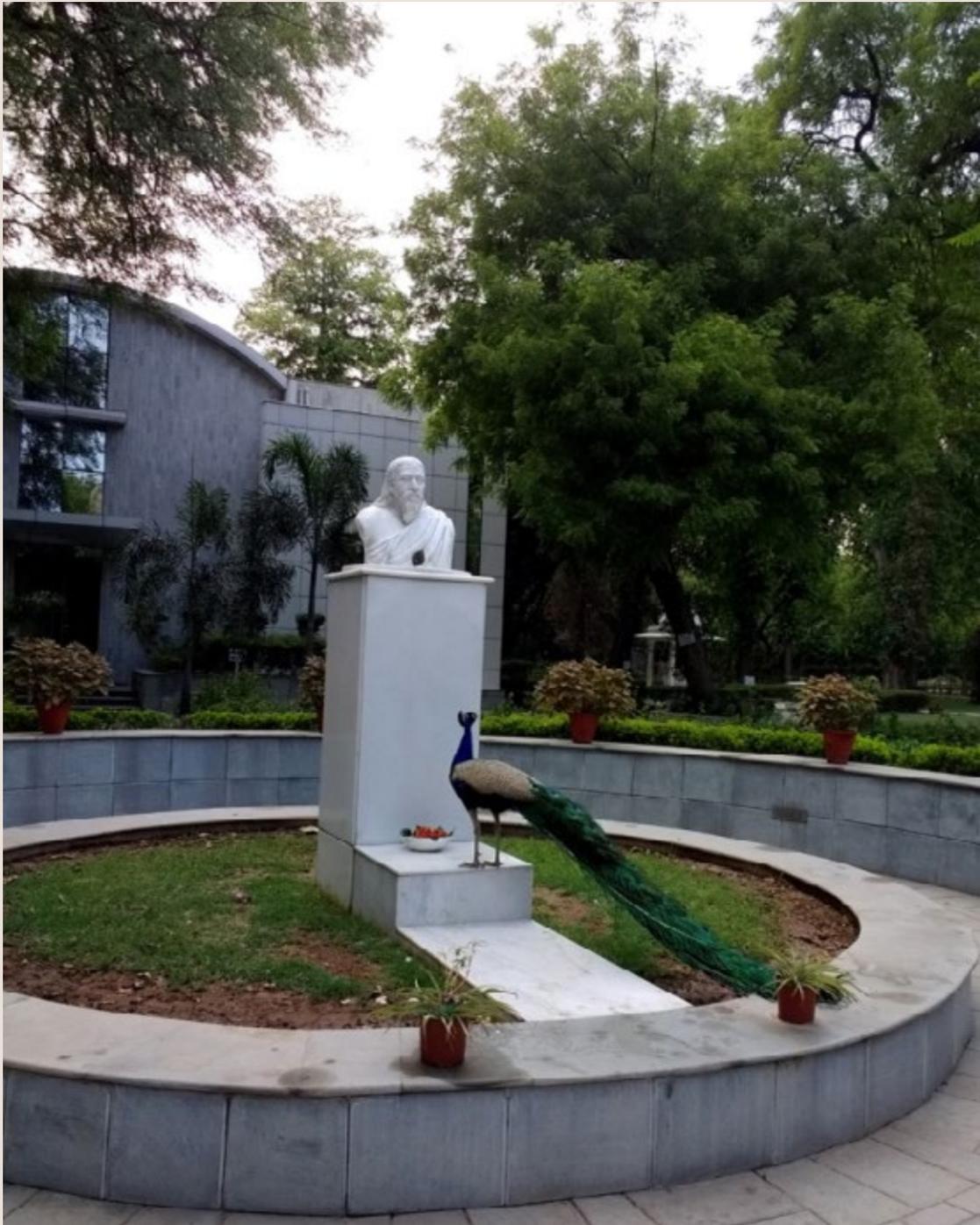


THE CALL BEYOND

VOLUME 44 NO.12

15 DECEMBER 2019



*Heaven's call is rare, rarer the heart that heeds;
The doors of light are sealed to common mind,
And earth's needs nail to earth the human mass,
Only in an uplifting hour of stress
Men answer to the touch of greater things:
Or, raised by some strong hand to breathe heaven-air...*

*-Sri Aurobindo
(Savitri, Book 11, Canto 1, p. 689)*



An Online Publication of
SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM - DELHI BRANCH
www.sriurobindoashram.net

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From Christmas to New Year is Just One Week

From Delhi to Agra is 200 km, and so is the distance from Agra to Delhi. Why then Christmas to New Year is just one week, but New Year to Christmas is almost a year? This question may be answered in at least two ways. The calendar gives us the mechanistic reason for the discrepancy. On the other hand, the teleological reason for the discrepancy is that the long gap between New Year and Christmas is to give us time for work between the celebrations. Leaving this frivolous question aside, from birth to death is just three score and ten years, how about the interval between death and being born again? Some would have it, the question is absurd because this is the only life we have. But even those who believe in rebirth may not know for sure. The interval between death and rebirth is said to be highly variable, and may range from a few days in some cases to several centuries in others. Having several lives available for completing the journey of the soul may be a good thought to relax the mind, but if we waste each life because there are many more available, the journey will never be over! Hence, no matter what we believe in, what we do with this life is itself important. The unique purpose of human life is spiritual growth, or growth of consciousness. We do not have to accept this idea just because religious and spiritual traditions say so. We are tempted to accept it because happy and fulfilled people in the world are only those who are living a life that leads to spiritual growth. The life that leads to spiritual growth is filled with choices driven by love, compassion, giving, caring and sharing. Those who are making these choices are not making them because they want to grow spiritually. They are making these choices because they respond positively to the

voice of the soul, which is higher than the voice of reason. Responding positively brings with it the clarity and courage required to do what is right. Making the right choices in life gives a sense of joy and lasting mental peace. Spiritual growth is also a by-product of making the right choices. The more we grow spiritually, the easier it becomes to make the right choices. Making the right choices leads to further spiritual growth. Thus the process of spiritual growth is self-perpetuating. It is spiritual growth that the Mother referred to when She said that the aim of life should be high and wide, generous and disinterested. That gives us plenty to do during the long gap between the New Year and Christmas.

A mutual debt binds man to the Supreme:

His nature we must put on as he put ours;

We are sons of God and must be even as he:

His human portion we must grow divine.

Our life is a paradox with God for key.

Sri Aurobindo, In: 'Savitri', Book 1, Canto 4, p.67

First posted as a blog on the Speaking Tree website on 25 December 2011. Link:
<https://www.speakingtree.in/blog/from-christmas-to-new-year-is-just-one-week>



Mental Fasting

Tarun Baveja

Apart from a very few exceptions, it is absolute silence that is put against unbridled talkativeness. Yet it is a much greater and more fruitful austerity to control one's speech than to abolish it altogether.

The Mother, on mental austerity, in 'Four Austerities and Four Liberations'

'All excess is bad,' says an age-old dictum. Being overfed is as bad as starvation. We try to compensate for feasting by fasting. For food, that is common knowledge. But it applies just as much also to the mind.

Why mental fasting?

The mind is fed by the five senses. The eyes are these days fed an overdose of screens ranging from smartphones to not so smart TVs (remember, once the TV was called the idiot box). If we move the eyes away from the screen, there is no shortage of pulp fed to us by the newspapers which are more ads than news. The ears are plugged not to keep the sound out, but to be fed on a continuous cacophony doled out by earphones. If a 'friend' makes us unplug the ears, it is not to wish us 'Hari Om' or 'Ram Ram' but to gossip about things that do no good to either of us. The nose is exposed to the smell of polluted air. The tongue has forgotten the taste of water because we get to drink anything from polluted ganga-jal to water that has gone through half a dozen treatments before it was trapped in a plastic bottle a few months ago. The skin is touched by synthetic clothing pressed against the

body by an ergonomically designed chair. Sitting in that chair has become today's *sukhasana*. And children, before they are ten, are taught to fear the bad touch. In short, our minds are being overfed with a continuous supply of sensory inputs. Further, the quality of the mental food is toxic. It is food that is difficult for the mind to digest. Hence, there is a need for periodic mental fasting.

What is mental fasting?

One way to escape the barrage of stimuli and information that poison the mind would be to go and settle in a forest or a cave. But that does not suit most of us. Further, those of us who have chosen the spiritual path shown by Sri Aurobindo and The Mother would much rather engage with the real world to transform ourselves as well as seek to raise the consciousness of the human race. Therefore, what one can do without renouncing the world and worldly life, is to observe a periodic mental fast during which there is a voluntary and conscious ruthless effort to curb sensory inputs. Some of the articles that may be turned off during the mental fast are the TV, phone and computer. One can skip the newspaper and avoid meeting people. Fasting may be made more integral by combining mental fasting with keeping away also from food.

While observing a fast is good, the spirit being fasting is even more important. The spirit behind the fast is to develop self-control, to overcome the attachment to what has been given up during the fast. If during the fast, one is not eating but is thinking of the food all the time, the purpose of the fast is defeated. Similarly, during mental fasting, if one keeps thinking of the phone, the computer and the newspaper, it is of no use. But the mind cannot tolerate a vacuum. Therefore, one may not think of food or the phone, but one needs

a substitute. The substitute should be higher, wider and deeper than what has been given up. Giving up the lower for the sake of something higher does not feel like giving up. Instead, it gives a feeling of relief and joy. That is what leads to true detachment from the lower. It is such detachment that Sri Aurobindo calls inner renunciation. What is the higher, wider and deeper substitute? The highest, widest and deepest is the Everlasting, the Eternal, the Divine. Moving towards the Divine, or Brahman, is what *Brahmcharya* actually and literally means.

How about thoughts unrelated to sensory inputs?

One may stop thinking about the phone and food, but the mind is not dependent on raw material from outside for manufacturing thoughts. It has an amazing capacity to produce thoughts out of nothing; amazing at least in quantity if not in quality, and often in quantity at the expense of quality. That being so, how effective can mental fasting really be? That is why the power of concentration is necessary. We need will power to stop the chaotic activity of the mind, to streamline it for focused and desirable activity. This will power can be developed by good company, or *satsang*. We tend to have the type of thoughts that dominate our environment. We can do it by inner work, which has may be of three types. *First*, suppression of negative thoughts and feelings. This does not generally work. It may seem to work for a while, but the suppressed tendencies return, sooner or later, with renewed vigour. *Secondly*, substitution of negative thoughts by their opposites. This works better than suppression. *Finally*, sublimation of negative tendencies to a spiritual aspiration so that the negativities lose their relevance for the person; they just fade away. This works

best. The inner work can be done during meditation. Meditation need not be a formal and rigid practice. It can be with the eyes closed or open. It can be silent repetition of a mantra. It can be a 'writing meditation,' in which a person simply copies from a scripture while also meditating on what he is writing.

In conclusion...

That we need a break is widely recognized today as something indispensable in the fast-paced, unhealthy and non-elevating environment in which we live. But the break is often a vacation from which the person returns broke and broken rather than healed and restored. Giving a thought to the type of break we really need can help in making deviation from routine a meaningful, rejuvenating and uplifting experience.

Based on a talk by Dr. Tarun Baveja in the Ashram's Meditation Hall in the Sunday Satsang series on 1 December 2019. Dr. Baveja is the medical officer in-charge of The Mother's Integral Health Centre.



Religion and True Spiritual Life



Religion exists almost exclusively in its forms, its cults, in a certain set of ideas, and it becomes great only through the spirituality of a few exceptional individuals, whereas true spiritual life, and above all what the supramental realization will be, is independent of every precise, intellectual form, every limited form of life. It embraces all possibilities and manifestations and makes them the expression, the vehicle of a higher and more

universal truth.

A new religion would not only be useless but very harmful. It is a new life which must be created; it is a new consciousness which must be expressed. This is something beyond intellectual limits and mental formulae. It is a living truth which must manifest.

Everything in its essence and its truth should be included in this realization. This realization must be an expression as total, as complete, as universal as possible of the divine reality. Only that can save humanity and the world.

The Mother ('The Great Adventure', p. 23)

A Defence of Indian Culture

India has lived and lived greatly, whatever judgment one may pass on her ideas and institutions. *What is meant after all by life and when is it that we most fully and greatly live? Life is surely nothing but the creation and active self-expression of man's spirit, powers, capacities, his will to be and think and create and love and do and achieve.* When that is wanting or, since it cannot be absolutely wanting, depressed, held under, discouraged or inert, whether by internal or external causes, then we may say that there is a lack of life. Life in its largest sense is the great web of our internal and external action, the play of Shakti, the play of Karma; it is religion and philosophy and thought and science and poetry and art, drama and song and dance and play, politics and society, industry, commerce and trade, adventure and travel, war and peace, conflict and unity, victory and defeat and aspirations and vicissitudes, the thoughts, emotions, words, deeds, joys and sorrows which make up the existence of man.

In what field indeed has not India attempted, achieved, created, and in all on a large scale and yet with much attention to completeness of detail?

Not to be as the common man, that is to say, as the crude natural, or half-baked human being, was indeed the sense of this ancient endeavour and in that sense it may be called an aristocratic culture. But it was not a vulgar outward but a spiritual nobility which was the aim of its self-discipline. Indian life, personality, art, literature must be judged in this light and appreciated or depreciated after being seen in the real sense and with the right understanding of Indian culture.

Sri Aurobindo (In the Arya, Vol. 6, No. 5, 15 December 1919, pp. 279-293)

A sophisticated hi-tech journalist raises a key question **Do You Speak Computerese?**

Dave Barry

For many of us, the first experience with computers occurs in the workplace. This was certainly true in the newspaper business. One day we reporters came to the office and discovered that our old, slow typewriters had been replaced by sleek, efficient computers with keys that said mysterious, scary things like “BREAK” and “NUM LOCK.” Fortunately, we were trained by highly skilled professional personnel. “Before you macro your ASCII, you have to format your RAM,” they advised us.

We reporters were wary at first, but after just 175 weeks of training, we discovered that, instead of writing on old fashioned paper, we could create lengthy articles entirely on the screen, and then, simply by pushing a button, send them to ... the Planet Zembar!

“Where the hell is my story!?” we would shout. But the lost texts always turned out to be our own fault. We had invariably committed some bonehead data-processing error such as failing to modem our ROM BIOS VGA megahertz cache.

But gradually we got the hang of it, and today we routinely use highly sophisticated, multimillion-dollar systems to perform a function that is vital to the survival of a free society – namely, sending personal messages to each other. Walk into a newspaper office, and you’ll see serious looking journalists clattering away on their keyboards. It seems as though they’re

writing important stories about the plight of the Kurds, but in fact they are sending each other the joke about what the male giraffe said to the female giraffe in the bar. In the old days, journalists had to transmit jokes manually.

Of course, there are a few problems. You may have read about “viruses,” which computers get when they’re left uncovered in draughty rooms. This is bad, because if you’re working on an infected machine it will periodically emit electronic sneezes – unfortunately not detectable by the naked eye. You are showered with billions of tiny electronic microbes, called “bytes,” which penetrate your body and gradually make you stupid.

This is definitely happening to me. I’ll sit down at my home computer to write a thoughtful column about, say, foreign policy, and I’ll type: “In view of the recent dramatic changes in the world geopolitical situation, it’s time to play some Solitaire.” My computer has a Solitaire-playing program on it, probably invented by the Japanese in an effort to sabotage other countries’ economies. I used to think that was a boring game, but now that my brain is clogged with computer germs, I spend hours moving the electronic cards around, staring at the screen with the same facial expression as a mullet, while the computer sneezes on me. None of this was possible just 15 years ago.

Undoubtedly, the computer is a most important invention in human history. So if you don’t already have one in your home, I strongly recommend that you get one. Without it, you will never be able to know the answers to some pertinent questions, especially: what did the male giraffe say to the female giraffe in the bar? The answer is “The higpowoifj&kjfkyO.”

Hold it, there seems to be a keyboard problem here. Let me just try plugging this cable into....

ERROR ERROR ERROR ALL FILES HAVE BEEN DESTROYED.

Sometimes I feel like pouring coffee into my computer and listening to its screams. But of course, I would never do that.

Courtesy: Reader's Digest

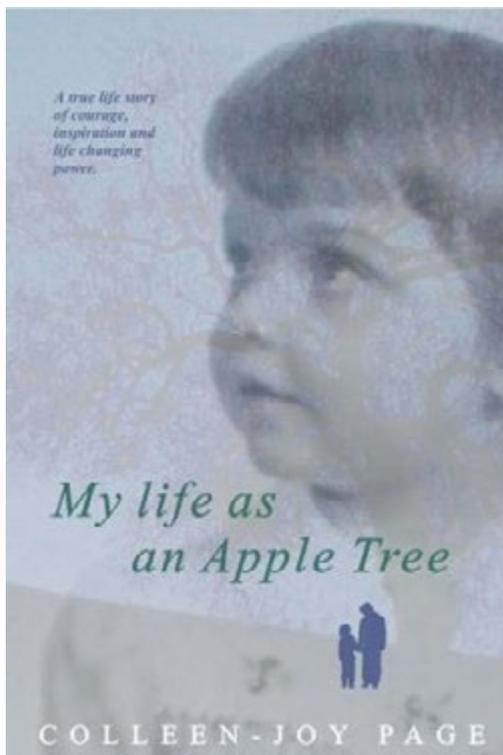
Reproduced from *The Call Beyond*, Vol. 19, No. 4, p. 46, 1994



Being Different

My Life as an Apple Tree: a true story of courage, inspiration and life-changing power by Colleen-Joy Page. Johannesburg: Red Nolan, 2002.

The book is an autobiographical work of Colleen-Joy Page, who traces the journey of her life to give the readers a taste of what belief and will can conquer.



The book opens quite dramatically, describing the intense pain and anguish of a mother (the author herself) forced to undergo the trauma of watching her little daughter, just 14-hours old, under the grip of unbearable suffering in a hospital. Lines like “freshly sprayed blood on the bed from her bleeding wrist” tells the reader how the child’s mother would be feeling. Yet when the mother mentions her daughter to be a fighter the reader finds solace and starts believing all

will be fine. Then there is a flashback from the author’s life as she reminisces about her own early life experiences as one blessed with psychic abilities. *By the age of sixteen, she had started using her intuitive abilities to make significant predictions to a growing base of clientele and people around her were duly impressed.* She also gives us a glimpse of how sometimes thoughts and visions can be misplaced and if not paid enough attention to or nurtured, can pass out

of our system like other unwanted material. The author, however, had learnt to engage with these intuitive flashes and make meaningful interpretations even as a teenager.

Further on in the book, the author reveals her own difficult childhood because of *a large tumor on her forehead*, which had to be treated surgically. She describes how her own childhood memories comprised of scenes from the hospital and what inner agony she had to go through. During her stints at the hospital, at the very young age of five years, the author realizes what is the social definition of being good. *Goodness, she feels is like wearing a mask to hide one's true feelings and pretend to be happy and not cause trouble to anyone. It has nothing to do with truly feeling happy or real.* Sometimes, one needs masks of all kinds to cover up one's lacunae. *The world is not kind to people differing starkly from the majority; a highly visible physical anomaly being the worst kind of difference.* Born in a family that took special pride in being prim, proper and picture-perfect, it was difficult for the author as a child with her tumor, to be accepted as normal. The author picked up that masks, like acting extremely good, provides one with the security of being judged less. *The world in its race for normalcy tends to reject what the abnormal have to offer.* A self-certified normalcy leads to a feeling of superiority that discourages positive change and further evolution. The Mother warns us about how a puritan notion of virtue can stall our very progress by enhancing our ego. Complexes of inferiority in a child, created by a self-obsessed world can hamper her self-confidence as she grows up. We see this effect of childhood guilt and humiliation throughout the book upon the author's conscience until she is able to finally rise above it through her spiritual strength.

The author goes on to talk about her experiences inside the hospital room, at the age of four when the tumor was removed through an operation. She mentions how being and acting good had become a part of her existence because of which she would not flinch even as a sharp needle would be inserted into her back. A sense of guilt always engulfed her for having brought this tragedy upon her parents and being obedient and good was the only compensation. These difficult circumstances for the author at a very young age, combined with her fear of losing her sight or dying during her operations, were some of the initial impetus towards finding a truer meaning in life, but she was too young to express these feelings or define them then. She describes how post her successful operation at age five, she experienced a strong inner call for something she was unsure of, a strange longing and yet she was sure it wasn't any delusion. This sense was further strengthened when the author had to go through a second wave of the same problem which required a re-operation. It was during this time, at age ten, that she once again grappled with the ideas of life and death and everything in-between with a little more maturity than at age five. This was also the time when she increasingly started realizing her psychic abilities.

The book further delves into the author's understanding of the concept of God, good, evil, recognition of various associated emotions and the seeking for her own truth. Amongst the stories of her growing up into a youth, we not only witness the various struggles of an adolescent but also the unusual ways that the author uses to deal with them and in the process understanding herself better. Her book can be a luminous guide for all adolescents who recognize their own struggles in the process of growing up and muster the courage to acknowledge and address them.

The author also narrates her experiences with psychic practices like tarot and Ouija board but later realizes these were mere tools to help her further polish her psychic abilities. But more importantly, empathizing with the suffering of her clients, the author is able to realize the universal truth behind universal human suffering. She also realizes though that the predictions that she makes are never certain and do not warrant 'caging' the minds of her clients in predictions that could 'shape or destroy' their lives. Perhaps, the author here gets a hint of the universal free-will that has been bestowed upon humanity.

However, the author eventually realized the futility of making predictions as it could make the clients over-dependent on her. Besides, as The Mother has also advised, trying to help humanity through bits and pieces with our own limited understandings is a difficult proposition since the only certain and true help that humanity can have is that from the Divine. The author slowly observed that her help was in no way improving the lives of her clients who would generally resign to fate rather than take action against it. *Further, she also realized that her constant practice of the same for her clients drew away all her energy, leaving her tired and drenched and finally she decided to stop. Finally, it was her own psychic capabilities that through a dream helped her resolve this dilemma of whether to continue helping others or look for a greater purpose in life.* Moving on with her other passion, she found a vocation in art which eventually led her to finding a job and the love of her life. The author's move from her most passionate pre-occupation to finding a job through her alternate passion, ending up marrying a colleague, also signifies how *we sometimes need to let go of something good in our lives to reach a better destiny.*

The author's detailed romantic expeditions, I feel are an amazing insight into lessons on growing in love. *The Mother* has mentioned about how love grows in stages of wanting a return to wanting acceptance to simply loving for the joy of love. In the different relations that youngsters go through, it is precisely this life lesson that they are supposed to learn rather than getting caught up in the web of right versus wrong. The author's experiences in a mature relationship, handling the proposal of marriage very intelligently at a young age as well as being cheerful and wild at different stages with different men are helpful life lessons. Eventually, she is able to navigate her way through this maze into a successful and happy marriage and goes on to have a daughter.

But, it is precisely when she settles down for a normal, regular life, that life hands her a new set of challenges, this time to take her beyond all her limits and excel with flying colors. After the birth of her first child Megan, when the author is excited for her second baby, she can get a feeling of something going wrong with the baby. Eventually, the baby is born with a congenital defect that requires several surgical operations and this is where the book had begun. The author then takes us through a trail of events that describe her intuitive openings further in a tumultuous time of fighting for the baby's health as well as a financial crisis that eventually starts affecting their married life. *But instead of falling apart, the author chose to dig out the gold of spirituality from her experiences and eventually meets with an understanding of the body and the soul. Her insights become clearer and so do her realizations.* She moves beyond tools like astrology and tarot into the soul-connect and realizes that significant life-changing answers did not come from outside, but from

inside. When the focus of intuition is shifted inwards, it starts revealing deeper truths. *Sometimes, trivial benefits of the intuitive consciousness need to be sacrificed for a true search of our psychic beings.* Eventually, she could connect with her clients at the level of their souls and this unity helped her understand their stage of personal growth and development. However, the greatest challenge to her intuitive abilities comes in the form of a test when she is faced with taking decisions about her child's health, based purely on her intuitions, which meant going against the experts in medical science. Her decisions could even mean losing her baby's life. It is in this moment of crisis that she takes a leap of faith, connecting to her child's soul, going purely by her intuitive abilities, refusing to get her child operated, taking the risk. But out of her faith in her own psychic abilities, emerges her greatest strength that not only saves her baby but also eventually prepares her for a life of purpose.

The author beautifully ends the book by revealing how every circumstance is a means to progress if you make it one. Echoing Sri Aurobindo's words in 'Savitri', "None can reach Heaven who has not passed through Hell", the author describes how her struggles to fight her own fears of facing people, communicating the hidden fears of a small four year old self, who was unable to see herself as beautiful, who felt burdened with the guilt of bringing in shame for her family rises out of the ashes to find her truth – that she is an apple tree, meant to blossom and bring forth fruits. She is finally able to recognize what *the universe* had so far been pushing her to become through all the difficulties in life – it was *a spiritual communicator*. She realizes her purpose of life was to find the unity of beings, to accept

and love herself with all the bodily flaws as well as love others and to start believing in her soul, rising above any conditional form of love. She reveals how changing one's own self is the best example for demonstrating to others what the possibilities of the body, mind and soul are.

The book has excellent lessons for spiritual seekers, replete as it is with the authentic personal experiences of an evolving soul that went from rejection to acceptance, from success to sorrow, and emerged stronger in spirit through each experience. The book would be specially educative for those who are highly enamoured of psychic abilities as well as those who reject such abilities as impossible. The book brings out that psychic intuitions are real, and yet have limitations in how far they can take a person on the spiritual path. For those who are specially gifted with such abilities, the key is to transcend them, and seek the Divine that manifests in such individuals through these gifts.

Nilanjana Moitra

Ph.D. student

National University of Educational Planning and
Administration

There is a meaning in each curve and line.

Sri Aurobindo ('Savitri', Book 6, Canto 2, p. 460)

Windows to The Soul

Jagdeep Singh

*Two windows to the soul,
One of the heart,
One of the mind,
To unleash the divine power,
That manifests everything,
The good, the bad,
The Angel, the devil,
To create, to destroy,
Here and beyond.*

*One opens to the outside,
With the impulses of logic,
Vents a rapid relief,
With intellect,
Takes away all the risks,
But puts a burden on the soul.
The window of the mind,
Is hard to close.*

*The other opens to the inside,
With the force of feelings,
In love, Takes the plunge,
In love,
Risks everything,
Restlessness at first,
But lasting peace in the end.
The window of the heart,
Is hard to open.*



Editor's note: The poet, by 'the heart' means 'the vital' or the feelings; and by 'the mind' he means 'the mental' or the intellect.

Feedback & Encouraging Words

Feedback on Workshop on Integral Education



Thirty-seven third year B.El.Ed. students from SPM College came to the Ashram for a one-day workshop on Integral Education on 16 November 2019

The session was very educative. We have learnt a number of learning theories yet, but to be able to derive some incisiveness is what happened with the help of today's session. The presentation was well-organised and it appeared to be based on the notion of proceeding from near to far, from familiar to unfamiliar, as it first permitted us to contemplate, how we as students who are on the verge of entering the job market can learn to incorporate our soul in our everyday decisions. It may mind us of our (as teachers) roles in the lives of children. Moreover, the session was interspersed with some activities to rejuvenate ourselves. Hence, it was one of my favourite educational visits so far.

Saryu Sharma

It helped me reflect upon my thoughts and actions. Hope I could go beyond memory and try to apply what I've learnt. The Yoga session was relaxing and soothing. I've never done Yoga so peacefully. Every time, I thought it is tough to practice Yoga but today was the first time. I felt relaxed and happy while doing the same. The Ashram is also very beautiful and soothing to the eye. It was really a heart-warming experience.

Pooja Thakur

The ashram was full of positive energy. In daily life hassles we forget to give something to our body and mind. But this session has made me realise how important it is to invest some time in the nourishment of our body, mind and soul. Also the yoga session has revived in me the asanas that we have performed in the second year of our course. The lunch we had was so tasty and had all nutrients and food components required for a good and healthy diet. As the saying "As we eat, so we think." The ashram food has 'Satvik value' which can have good impact on thought processes. The ashram's environment is very much spiritual and delightful. It encourages a person to believe in the oneness and togetherness of the world. I had a very great experience, enjoyed the session and that led me to mental peace and relaxation.

Ritu

Session were really interesting, I thoroughly enjoyed it. Most of the information shared by sir was new for me and I loved the way he talked about everything. Being from educational background. I got to know about lot of new teaching methodologies. I absolutely loved the environment of the ashram and the food which was served with much love.

Shivani Gupta

As I entered the Ashram, I felt like, I have come to a place of 'love and peace.' During the whole session I didn't feel bored at any time. To be very honest, I also want to be a part of this Ashram. Food given to us was best because in this running life there is no time for such healthy food, which I found here. After attending this session I feel motivated, energetic and I will try my best to be one of those teachers whose vision was developed by Shri Aurobindo and The Mother. The session was all on spirituality but it was communicated to us in such a way that I understood each and every argument, which was one of the best things about today.

Harpriya



The session was very useful for us as aspiring teachers. The food was very tasty. I liked the plants and trees here and also the peacocks around. Overall, it was great experience of my life.

Kirti

The session was planned well with different activities and appropriate duration of intervals. The food provided was very good and healthy.

Meenakshi Yadav

I found the session interactive and engaging. Overall, it was a development for us and our critical thinking. Yoga, short videos, stories, audios, songs were something which boosted energy level. Food system was quite impressive and new to me. It promotes self-discipline and the way it was offered to us was too in an order. Moreover, the maintenance of the whole place is in best way according to me.

Ruchika

It was my first visit to an ashram and I found it fascinating. The presentation was useful not only for me as an aspiring teacher but also as an individual.

Nidhi

Overall, the session was very good, interactive and different from what I expected. The yoga session, discussion about critical thinking, requirement of a primary class child, etc. was informative and enjoyable. The food was really healthy and tasty and I enjoyed it as the environment was really good with all the plants and birds. Everything is systematic and I liked it.

Mehak Sethi



Got a chance to know and learn about the integration of different aspects of learning and teaching. Some of the stories and examples would really help me in my life. I am happy for getting this opportunity. Yoga session was also good and the lunch was great.

R.Padmapriya

I found it very useful for me as well as the information could be used in the classroom to help students. I personally liked the yoga session, because I love yoga. Activities made the session more interesting and it wasn't boring. Food was very good; I liked it. Intervals between the sessions gave us time to refresh ourselves.

Thank you, for this great experience!

Gauri Tiwari

Sessions were nice and will help us in the future. The best parts were the stories and how we can help the child to reflect on their own.

Aarzoo Mathur

Today's class was highly useful and interactive. We learnt about Psychic education and its implications. Yoga was refreshing and peaceful.

Kinnu Gola

It enhanced my thinking towards becoming a teacher.

Anshika Sahni

Here I learnt some golden rules of life, which I couldn't learn from other places like my college or the society. Also, it gave me some idea about how to achieve one's goal and what is important or not in achieving the goal of life. About the food, the ashram maintains a proper diet. Towards the end, the session became tiring but sir facilitated some activity. So, it helped to regain some energy. The overall experience was good.

Sakshi Yadav

I feel internally highly motivated. Now I realise teaching is such a golden job.

Babita

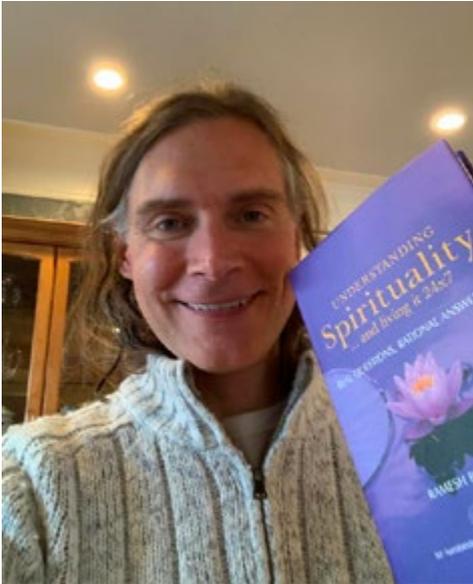
To begin with, this was my first visit to an ashram. This was a very memorable one as it was totally different from the image of ashrams I had. The Ashram was very joyful and love giving and also the way they treated us the whole day was very welcoming. I learnt about what is Integral education. The concept of a vehicle and driver had a commendable impact on me. Also, the comparing of psychic education and value education was very good.

Farheen Ahmed

I felt that the session was very soulful. It's rare to have a complete experience which includes everything that is required by a person - Mind, Body and Soul. I could myself align all the three elements here today, and it gave me a sense of satisfaction. I can imagine the way little children that come here to study must be having life – long valuable learning experiences here. I would like to meet some of them on my own in the sessions scheduled for the next few days. The ambience over here is very peaceful. I personally feel connected to such environments and I am taking back a memorable experience with me.

Shweta Bhardwaj

Gratitude from the USA



*Jeff Vander Clute,
with the book*

Dear Ramesh ji,

Warm greetings from the USA after a sacred trip to Delhi, Varanasi, and Sarnath. As today is Thanksgiving in the United States, it feels especially appropriate to thank you for the signed copy of *Understanding Spirituality and Living it 24x7*. What a delight to see the printed edition! I'm lending it to my brother – a psychotherapist – as I sense it will help him and his clients.

Jeff (Vander Clute)

(in an e-mail dated 28 November 2019)

*Editor's note: Jeff Vander Clute was provided the manuscript of the book before it was printed. His endorsement, printed in the book, reads: "**Understanding Spirituality** is a transmission of profound insight, filled with crystal-clear explanations and illustrations of how we can all deepen in our humanity and discover our divinity. Reading this book, one has the sense that Dr. Bijlani's life is itself a demonstration of the synthesis of worldly endeavour and spiritual devotion. As such he is able to communicate the essence of the divine life using contemporary language and examples, with the elegant simplicity that comes from a lifetime of experience distilled into mastery. With every page, the clarity, wisdom, and loving, supportive presence of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother can be strongly felt, and by the end of the book, every aspect of life has been brought together – integrated – into a harmonious whole. In **Understanding Spirituality**, the path of our evolution is revealed, along with the means for always making wise decisions*

and staying true to the deepest longings of our soul. This book is a joy to read, and a precious gift to everyone on the spiritual journey.

Jeff Vander Clute

*Co-founder, Sourcing The Way; Board Chair, Source of Synergy Foundation;
Member, Evolutionary Leaders Circle, Seattle WA, USA"*

Feedback on the Ashram and The Mother's International School

I am so grateful that I got the opportunity to read this wonderful book, 'Understanding Spirituality ... and living it 24x7.' It has given me clarity on so many concepts . The way the author has explained is simple and drives the idea straight to the heart.

I reside in Delhi and keep visiting the Ashram, mostly the SABDA store, and sometimes when the mind is disturbed sitting in the meditation hall in front of The Mother provides a lot of solace. My daughter studies in MIS. The school has truly contributed to her growth into becoming a sensible compassionate child... again a blessing of The Mother.

Long back I worked as a financial consultant but then decided to travel from the mind to the heart... I got myself enrolled into a 4-year course on fine arts. Now I practice in my studio at South Delhi Polytechnic for women as a painter.

Thank u once again for the book, 'Understanding Spirituality ... and living it 24x7.' it has definitely contributed to my life.

Regards always,

Sanjukta (Sinha)

(in an e-mail dated 20 November 2019)

Contact us

Our quarterly magazine in Hindi, *Sri Aravind Karmadhara*, is also available on-line now, and may be viewed on our website www.sriarobindoashram.net.

For a free subscription to *Sri Aravind Karmadhara*, please send an e-mail to sakarndhara@gmail.com

To get *The Call Beyond* online regularly, month after month, please send an e-mail to: callbeyond@arobindoonline.in

To learn about the recent and forthcoming activities through the Ashram's e-magazine, *Realization*, send an email to: callbeyond@arobindoonline.in

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1. Subject: Subscribe
2. Click on Send

If you subscribe either to *Realization*, or to *The Call Beyond*, you will start receiving, month after month, both the magazines.

For information about Auro-Mira Service Society and the Kechla project, please visit the website www.auromira.in

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Note

In view of two major events coming: the Hundredth Anniversary of the Mother's Final Arrival in Pondicherry on 24 April 2020, and the Hundred and Fiftieth Birth Anniversary of Sri Aurobindo on 15 August 2022, the Ashram is expanding its mailing list to reach out to more and more who may benefit from the teachings of the Master and the Mother. To get included in the Mailing List, please go to <http://erp.saaonline.net.in/addcontacts.cfm> to fill in a form, which will take you only a few minutes.



Feedback

Please send your feedback to
callbeyond@aurobindoonline.in

The Call Beyond is a publication of
Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch
Sri Aurobindo Marg
New Delhi 110 016
contact@aurobindoonline.in

91-11-2656-7863