

The Call Beyond





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*Cover Painting: Artist's vision of Book 4, Canto 1 of Sri Aurobindo's 'Savitri'.
Artist: Aghni, Centro Sri Aurobindo e Mère, Savignano, Italy.*



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YOGA-A Magical Word that Reveals What You Seek

Aditi Kaul

Every year The International Day of Yoga is that time of the year when the world is abuzz with the word “YOGA.” Organizations hold camps for their employees, the government organizes free sessions, and the internet starts overflowing with the dos and don'ts of the physical practices of yoga. Humanity seems to have at last taken responsibility for its health and managed to find what suits it in this era of information overload, where ‘analysis paralysis’ is at its peak due to the overwhelming influx of information from all corners of the world.

If you step back for a moment and silently repeat the word ‘YOGA’ in your heart, what does the word mean to you? Why are you interested in it? What does it bring to you? Is it something that helps you stay healthy or something that keeps you relevant in evening walk discussions or health club conversations? How connected do you feel with the personalized benefits it has brought to you? Are these benefits restricted to your physical health, or do they include your emotional and mental well-being as well?

Is yoga just a gateway to good physical and mental health, or can it be a window to our inner psychological landscape? Can it be a torch that illuminates the debris of the past and leads us to the potential delight behind the everyday entanglements we experience due to our ignorant nature and narrow view of the self and also the world around us?

“The passage from the lower to the higher is the aim of Yoga,” says Sri Aurobindo. If we ponder upon this, the line reveals to us the very purpose of life. As human beings on this journey of evolution, we hold within ourselves traces of our animal nature from the past. This often becomes a source of trouble when we become slaves to our instincts and desires, leading us

to lament that “old habits die hard.” **But the good part is, they do die.** The gift of yoga can be the ability to harness the Divine Potential within and let the Light engulf the darkness, rather than fighting an ego battle of saying “I” can do it. What the “I” can do is make way for the Inner Being to take charge.

This shift from “I” to the “Divine within,” from being governed by the ego to being guided by the voice of purity within, is the transformative power of yoga. It provides support on the path of self-discovery, offering assurance that there is something within that has our backing, and that we have the potential and the ability to rest in the Light within and gain strength from that Light to combat the darkness within and without. This realization frees us from dependency on the outer world and its multiplicities, allowing us to be seated in the unity within and build a bridge for that unity to express itself in the world of multiplicity.

Yoga is about nurturing the Light within, connecting the outer to the inner, and resting in the lap of the Divine seated within every individual, no matter what name we call it by. The key is to recognize its presence and develop the ability to build a passage to reach that place of peace and silence and bring it forward into the world. It is the peace and light that the world needs today to restore its basic nature of love and harmony. Let us resolve to build this inside-out bridge, uniting our inner and outer selves to help unite the ever-divided world. That would be truly the practice of integral yoga.



*Unless the Eternal is tired out by Time as by a load,
unless God suffers loss of memory, how can universe cease
from being?*

-Sri Aurobindo (CWSA Vol 12, ‘Essays Divine and Human’, p. 144)

India Always Has Something More to Teach Me

Chaitanya Seth

India means more than just a country to me - it is the core of my identity. It is that part of me which I am very proud of and long to explore. I love getting to know India's diverse and beautiful culture and natural landscape. But most of all, India is home to many members of my extended family, whom I thoroughly enjoy spending time with.

I consider myself very lucky to have been in India almost every year of my life so far. I have such fond memories of the times I have spent there and I deeply cherish how these times strengthen my connection to both the India within me and the place where I am at home.

Every visit to India makes me discover a little more of a vital part of my personality.

One of the goals of my forthcoming visit to India is to improve my Hindi. There are many Indian languages I would like to be able to speak, but primarily, I would like to focus on my Hindi. Though I have started learning it, I am far from fluent and the best place to improve it is, naturally, in India. **I love learning languages. Being able to speak various languages helps you to become more open-minded and accepting of different cultures.** I am very much looking forward to the immersive experience; being able to practise my Hindi in my interactions with the people around me.

And, I am truly looking forward to learning about the practice of yoga, especially the yoga of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. On all my visits to India, I spend considerable time at Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch. **One of my aspirations is to observe life in the Ashram to get an insight into a life governed by the principles of spirituality.**

While in India, I also want to learn more about kalarippayattu. Kalarippayattu is the mother of all martial arts, developed in Kerala, and later copied by the Chinese, who made it world-famous under the name of Kung Fu. From what I have understood, there are many aspects to kalari, from the spiritual school of life to a school of academia (specifically related to medicine), to a way of self-defence and physical fitness.

I wish to lead a balanced and healthy life and I dream of following the path of kalari and yoga. I have read that to tread upon the path of kalari and yoga requires dedication, discipline, commitment and years of practice, and that it is difficult to capture the complexity and depth of the concept of yoga in a short definition. Yoga can be applied to everything, whether it's as simple as tying one's own shoelaces or as complex as ensuring peace around you.

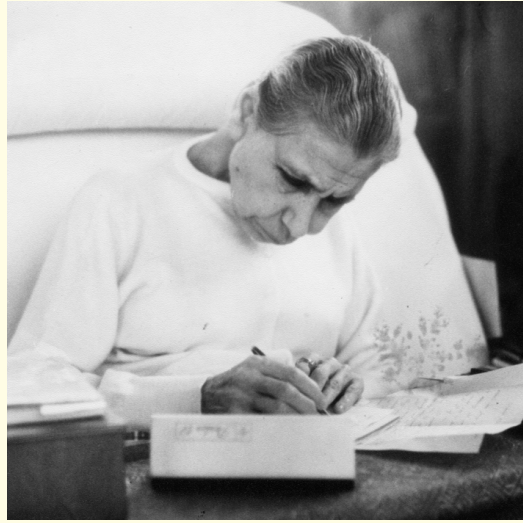
Since the age of six, I have had the privilege of being a student at the International School of Hamburg, whose mission statement is: "as an international community of learners, we nurture enquiring minds, compassionate hearts and balanced lives." I am very happy that my school has a holistic approach to education and that I am able to benefit from this. And, I can take my holistic view and way of life to another level because of the privilege of being able to repeatedly visit India, the country that has been, and continues to be, the primary source of spiritual wisdom to the world.

Chaitanya, is a young person of Indian origin, age fourteen, born and brought up in Germany.

Even behaviour that is usually healthy – exercise or meditation, for instance – can be an addiction if it is used to avoid pain or personal insight.

-Caroline Myss ('Anatomy of the Spirit', p. 230)

Begin from the Outside



All forces upon earth tend towards expressing themselves. These forces come with the object of manifesting themselves and if you place a barrier and refuse expression, they may try to beat against the barrier for a time, but in the end, they will tire themselves out and not being manifested, they will withdraw and leave you quiet.

So you must never say: "I shall first purify my thought, purify my body, purify my vital and then later I shall purify my action." That is the normal order, but it never succeeds. The effective order is to begin from the outside: the very first thing is that I do not do it, and afterwards, I desire it no longer and next I close my doors completely to all impulses: they no longer exist for me, I am now outside all that." This is the true order, the order that is effective. First, not to do it. And then you will no longer desire and after that it will go out of your consciousness completely.

The Mother ('The Great Adventure', p. 77)

All the pages of The Mother's work, 'The Great Adventure', in Tara Didi's voice, have been uploaded on the YouTube channel of Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch. The link to the playlist is: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLbJ59iL6vu-UXeufBeKQlUTwGf3GhZ9LJ>

Full Play of Life Needs Diversity



Language is the sign of the cultural life of a people, the index of its soul in thought and mind that stands behind and enriches its soul in action. Therefore it is here that the phenomena and utilities of diversity may be most readily seized, more than in mere outward things; but these truths are important because they apply equally to the thing which it expresses and symbolises and serves as an instrument. Diversity of language is worth keeping because diversity of cultures and differentiation of soul-groups are worth keeping and because without that diversity life cannot have full play; for in its absence there is a danger, almost an inevitability of decline and stagnation. The disappearance of national variation into a single uniform human unity, of which the systematic thinker dreams as an ideal and which we have seen to be a substantial possibility and even a likelihood if a certain tendency becomes dominant, might lead to political peace, economic well-being, perfect administration, the solution of a hundred material problems, as did on a lesser scale the Roman unity in old times; but to what eventual good if it leads also to an uncreative sterilisation of the mind and the stagnation of the soul of the race? In laying this stress on culture, on the things of the mind and the spirit there need be no intention of undervaluing the outward material side of life; it is not at all

my purpose to belittle that to which Nature always attaches so insistent an importance. On the contrary, the inner and the outer depend upon each other. For we see that in the life of a nation a great period of national culture and vigorous mental and soul life is always part of a general stirring and movement which has its counterpart in the outward political, economic and practical life of the nation. **The cultural brings about or increases the material progress but also it needs it that it may itself flourish with an entirely full and healthy vigour.** The peace, well-being and settled order of the human world is a thing eminently to be desired as a basis for a great world culture in which all humanity must be united; but neither of these unities, the outward or inward, ought to be devoid of an element even more important than peace, order and well-being, — freedom and vigour of life, which can only be assured by variation and by the freedom of the group and of the individual. Not then a uniform unity, not a logically simple, a scientifically rigid, a beautifully neat and mechanical sameness, but a living oneness full of healthy freedom and variation is the ideal which we should keep in view and strive to get realised in man's future.

Sri Aurobindo: 'The Ideal of Human Unity', CWSA Vol. 25, pp. 519-520.



Good and evil come in with the development of mental consciousness; they exist in their rudimentary elements in the animal and the primitive human mind, they develop with the human development. Good and evil are things which arrive in the process of the evolution; there is then the possibility that they will disappear in the process of the evolution.

-Sri Aurobindo (CWSA Vol 12, 'Essays Divine and Human', p. 149)

From 'Makhan' to 'Mirchi'

Harvinder Kaur

Yes, Krishna consciousness has finally manifested itself – even before the much dreaded, often predicted World War III. Lord Vishnu is to come down to this hallowed planet, this time disguised as Kalki avatar, riding a horse. But the horse may well be disguised too, as a high horse power supersonic, solar-charged or magnetically driven Mercedes or the sort.

Promises have been made that He's to make an appearance as the century culminates into yet another millennium, of yet another cycle, of... well – people are waiting yet.

Some folks are playing Noah to themselves and the oh! so ignorant world, and are busy building their arks based on *Vaastu shastra*. But others are sitting pretty and are looking at life through a tobacco trance (or is it a pollution trance?). They say the guy stole too much 'makhan' and chased far too many *gopis* the last time round, and dare not opt for another innings. But the pavilion doesn't please the Preserver for long and rumours are rife that he's due any time now. In fact, a good number say that Ganesha's stone forms didn't gulp milk for nothing. The cat was let out of the bag for the 'aware' ones. It's all in the eyes of the beholder, after all! So, while the entire jigsaw puzzle of the next *yuga* seems to have worked out, the piece which tells us whether he'll be coming as Kalki or anyone else remains to be seen. Meanwhile the overwhelming question continues to overwhelm, and we don't know which is the right choice that'll extract an "Aha!" from us.

Personally, staying at Sri Aurobindo Ashram, an oasis in the desert that is Delhi, moments of serendipity yet dawn. Not that one runs out of the bathroom in the pristine glory of the birthday suit shouting "Eureka!", but one gets to see in seeing moments... And guess what I saw as the *Ajna chakra* whirled and pulsated with light to reveal the Divine unto

the Divine? Who but the Preserver Himself, Vishnu, has arrived, not as Krishna or Kalki or what-you-call-them, but in a formidably formless way. He has manifested as nought else but consciousness, descending and pervading into all receptive beings. The subtle signs of subtle shifts in the subtle bodies of not so-subtle beings can be subtly observed. Adepts can spot traces of incorrigible habits in the now manifested Krishna consciousness, albeit in a changed form. He doesn't steal utterly-butterly delicious home-made *makhan* anymore. (Very few homes make it these days, anyway!) Well, at the fag-end of the 20 century, things have got to change. There's been a phenomenal evolution you see, in technology, if not in consciousness. Nevertheless, stealing goes on—and not just of hearts, and almost everyone's on the lookout. And what do they look for? Freedom? Wealth? Knowledge?

Well, it's like this. Come dinner time, and everybody in the Ashram starts emanating strange vibrations. The phenomenon can have a mysteriously chilling effect on the onlooker from outside. Students and *sadhaks* start prowling strangely. People can be seen pawing potted plants – small cactus pots placed on the tables under the moonlit sky. What do these hunters seek? Green chillies, if you please! In cactus plants? Why not, we all believe in miracles, don't we? Miracles do happen in this place. On moonlit nights if you are graced with Divine Blessings, then cactus plants will spice up your life (and dinner) with *mirch prasadam*!

One gets to hear that Krishna leaves them there for his chosen *gopis*, or perhaps the *gopis* leave them (the chillies) for who they think is Krishna! No matter who leaves them for whom, only those who go on mad hunts with a monomaniacal mind-set get a taste of *mirch-masala*. And what if you miss it every time? Don't worry, there'll be a Third Coming perhaps. Hare Krishna!

Reproduced from 'The Call Beyond', Vol. 24, No. 2, p. 38, 1999

All poetry is an inspiration, a thing breathed into the thinking organ from above; it is recorded in the mind, but is born in the higher principle of direct knowledge or ideal vision which surpasses mind.

Sri Aurobindo (CWSA Vol. 12, 'Essays Divine and Human', p. 28)

The Journey Godward

Ojasvinee Sharma

*It all begins with a step,
A step that you won't take back.*

*A step that leads a brimming head,
A step that follows the dictum, better done than said.*

*A step that walks and doesn't measure the span,
A step that trusts the Planner and His plan.*

*A step that sings in tears and sings in hope,
A step that dares hurdles and tightropes.*

*A step that kisses the holy land to which it belongs,
A step that bridges the roots withdrawn.*

*A step that you won't take back,
It all begins with that step.*



Feedback and Encouraging Words

Tributes to Nirankar ji



It was a blessing to meet Dr Nirankar and to listen to his journey.

Nataliia Gubanova

Cambridge, UK

(Received in a WhatsApp message)



The greatest act of will in which we can invest our spirits is to choose to live according to these rules:

- 1. Make no judgments.*
- 2. Have no expectations.*
- 3. Give up the need to know why things happen as they do.*
- 4. Trust that the unscheduled events of our lives are a form of spiritual direction.*
- 5. Have the courage to make the changes we need to make, accept what we cannot change, and have the wisdom to know the difference.*

-Caroline Myss ('Anatomy of the Spirit', p. 234)

So essential is confession to the health of our minds, our bodies, and our spirits that we can't stop ourselves from confessing. The need to purge our spirits of guilt-ridden memories is stronger than our need for silence.

-Caroline Myss ('Anatomy of the Spirit', p. 225)

Contact us

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

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

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

Note

In view of 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.



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