

THE CALL BEYOND

Volume 41 // No. 8 // 15 Aug 2016



*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.sriaurobindoashram.net

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THE CALL BEYOND // AUG 2016

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Sri Aurobindo as an Educationist

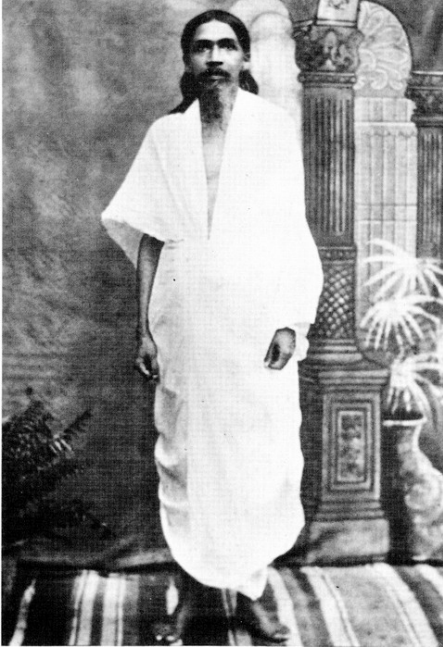
Sri Aurobindo was a multifaceted personality, and one of those facets was that of an educationist. Although he has written extensively about education, let us start with his three principles of teaching. The first principle of teaching, according to him, is that “nothing can be taught”. This statement, if taken literally, would render all teachers jobless! But its spirit is to emphasize the active role played by the student in the process of learning. Thus, just because the teacher has taught, it does not necessarily mean that the student has learnt; the student learns only if he wants to. That is why, all the students in a class do not learn equally well, although they have all attended the same class. Therefore, one of the important functions of a teacher is to awaken the student’s love for learning. The second principle is that “the mind has to be consulted in its own growth”. This principle appreciates the diversity among students. Each student has unique talents as well as weaknesses. A healthy system of education encourages the student to focus on an area in which she can excel. The third principle of teaching is “to work from the near to the far, from that which is to that which shall be”. The teacher should know her students well, and starting with what they already know go on to what they do not. The teacher should guide the students from what they are already familiar with towards the unfamiliar. The students should understand and evaluate critically what is deeply ingrained in their blood before exploring new horizons. That is how the learner travels from where she is towards what she could, and should, become.

Sri Aurobindo’s philosophy is known as integral philosophy. Integral means total, and the integral philosophy looks at the totality of the person. Integral philosophy forms the basis of the system of education known as integral education. This system looks upon the body, emotions and the intellect as instruments. Integral education not only seeks to educate these instruments for optimal function but also aims at inculcating in the student the habit of using them in light of our divine essence, the soul. This idea is absolutely fundamental because an instrument is like a knife. With the same sharp knife, one may chop fruits and vegetables, or stab somebody. Therefore, along with sharpening the instrument, it is also important to know how to use the instrument. It is our inner voice originating in the soul that provides us infallible authentic guidance on how to use our body, mind and intellect. It is this aspect of education, which awakens the student to discover and identify reliably this voice, and equips the student with the will to let this voice prevail, that is called psychic education.

As a tail piece, here is a light-hearted but very emphatic and effective passage on the necessity of linking education to real life. Sri Aurobindo says, “It would hardly be a good technical education for a carpenter to be taught how to fell trees so as to provide himself with wood and never to learn how to prepare tables and chairs ... the University says to him, ‘We now declare you a Bachelor of Carpentry, ... Go on, my son, the world is full of forests and, provided the Forest Officer does not object, you can cut down trees and provide yourself with wood to your heart’s content.’ Now the student who goes forth thus equipped, may become a great timber merchant but, unless he is an exceptional genius, he will never be even a moderate carpenter”.

August 15 is not only the Independence Day of India but also the birthday of Sri Aurobindo.

First published as a blog on <http://www.speakingtree.in/blog/sri-aurobindo-as-an-educationist> on 14 August 2015



The article is ninth in a series on Sri Aurobindo's 'The Secret of the Veda'

*"The human individual is an organised unit of existence which reflects the constitution of the universe. It repeats in itself the same arrangement of states and play of forces. Man, subjectively, contains in himself all the worlds in which, objectively, he is contained."*¹

- Sri Aurobindo, The Secret of the Veda

The spiritual progress of the Rishis towards Truth-consciousness is represented through a complex system of symbols and imagery in the Veda. Many aspects of the physical, natural world are utilized to represent psychological phenomena because they are, in essence, quite the same. One such key Vedic representation is the imagery of Dawn and the rising Sun.

In the physical world, dawn is the gentle daylight which precedes the arrival of a bright, shining sun. In the Veda, too, Dawn precedes the advent of Sun or *Surya*. But it is not merely the description of the everyday physical dawn but the rarest of rare dawns of the supramental or Truth-consciousness.

Sri Aurobindo calls *Surya* the Master of Truth². The word 'surya' means illuminator and it is a symbol for the luminous Truth-consciousness. Regarding *Surya*, Sri Aurobindo writes:

*"His rays in their own nature are supramental activities of revelation, inspiration, intuition, luminous discernment, and they constitute the action of that transcendent principle which the Vedanta calls Vijnana, the perfect knowledge, the Veda Ritam, the Truth. But these rays descend also into the human mentality and form at its summit the world of luminous intelligence, Swar"*³

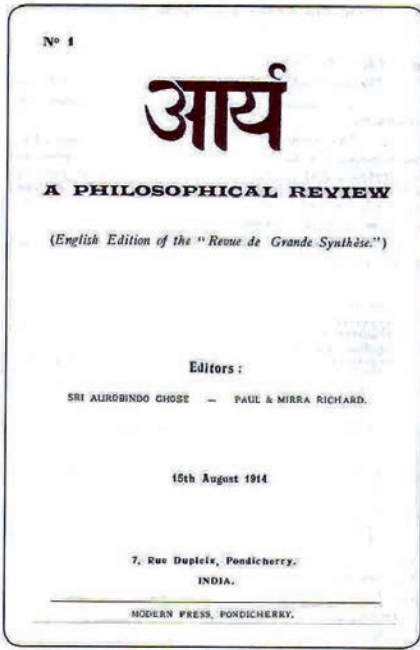
Swar is the summit of Vedic heaven and the realm of *Surya* which is nothing but that luminous plane of consciousness where only Truth is seen. Dawn or *Usha* is the medium for this luminous awakening. She represents the perceptive vision of the mind which is capable of seeing the Truth clearly.

vi nūnamuchādasati para ketu - R.V. I.124.11

Now perceptive vision has broken out into its wide dawn where nought was before⁴

Sri Aurobindo explains the role of *Usha* in great detail: *"By her increasing illumination the whole*

1 The Secret of the Veda – Pg. 288, Line no.1
 2 The Secret of the Veda – Pg. 287, Line no.2
 3 The Secret of the Veda – Pg. 287, Line no.3
 4 The Secret of the Veda – Pg. 134, Line no.19



nature of man is clarified; through her he arrives at the Truth, through her he enjoys the Beatitude.”⁵

The following hymns will help us appreciate these ideas better:

dyutad-yāmānam br̥hatīm ṛtena ṛtāvarīm... svar āvahantīm
- R.V. V.80.1

“of a luminous movement, vast with the Truth, supreme in (or possessed of) the Truth, bringing with her (the luminous world of) Swar”⁶

yā vahasi puruspārhaṃ vananvati ratnaṃ na dāśuṣe
mayah - R.V. VII.81.3

“thou who bearest to the giver the beatitude as a manifold and desirable ecstasy.”⁷

One may find it strange that the same Usha is also described in the Veda as *gomatī aśvavati*. Literal translation of these epithets would be ‘cowful’ and ‘horsed’, which seems bizarre. However, Sri Aurobindo shows that actually these words, *go* and *aśva*, which generally mean cow and horse, are actually symbols congruent with the overall schema of Vedic symbolism.

Cows are a symbol of Light, they represent the luminous rays of Surya, and this is proved by Sri Aurobindo by referring to numerous Vedic hymns:

prati bhadṛā adṛkṣata gavām sargā na raśmayah - R.V. IV.52.5

“her happy rays come into sight like cows released into movement.”⁸

saṃ te gāvas tama ā vartayanti jyotir yachanti - R.V. VII.79.2

“Thy cows (rays) remove the darkness and extend the Light”⁹

These and many other mentions of cows indicate towards the sense of Light. Similarly, it is shown that horse is the symbol for Prana or nervous energy.

“A study of the Vedic horse led me to the conclusion that go and aśva represent the two companion ideas of Light and Energy, Consciousness and Force, which to the Vedic and Vedantic mind were the double or twin aspect of all the activities of existence.”¹⁰

Thus, the bounty that Usha brings is not merely material wealth but that rich state of being which turns towards the Truth-consciousness.

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- 5 The Secret of the Veda – Pg. 295, Line no.4
 - 6 The Secret of the Veda – Pg. 132, Line no.23
 - 7 The Secret of the Veda – Pg. 133, Line no.18
 - 8 The Secret of the Veda – Pg. 126, Line no.19
 - 9 The Secret of the Veda – Pg. 126, Line no.22
 - 10 The Secret of the Veda, Pg 44, Line no. 20

Sri Aurobindo summarily describes Usha as: *“the inner dawn which brings to man all the varied fullnesses of his widest being, force, consciousness, joy; it is radiant with its illuminations, it is accompanied by all possible powers and energies, it gives man the full force of vitality so that he can enjoy the infinite delight of that vaster existence.”*¹¹

Dawn is thus a Vedic symbol for the initial glimpses of Truth-consciousness, the glimpses that give the hope and assurance that Truth-consciousness will eventually illumine the rishi, just as dawn brings the hope and assurance that the Sun will eventually brighten the day.

11 The Secret of the Veda – Pg. 136, Line no.15

“Yoga is the union of that which has become separated in the play of the universe with its own true self, origin and universality”.

SRI AUROBINDO (In The Synthesis of Yoga, p. 27)

“The passage from the lower to the higher is the aim of Yoga; and this passage may effect itself by the rejection of the lower and escape into the higher; – the ordinary viewpoint, – or by the transformation of the lower and its elevation to the higher Nature. It is this, rather, that must be the aim of an integral Yoga.

SRI AUROBINDO (In The Synthesis of Yoga, p. 39-40)

“In the integral Yoga, the integral life down even to the smallest detail has to be transformed, to be divinised”.

THE MOTHER (In The Great Adventure, p.42)

hundred years ago

The Synthesis of Yoga

THE RELEASE FROM THE EGO

The formation of the conscious ego is the first great labour of the cosmic Life in its progressive evolution; the loosening of the knot of the ego is the condition on which alone that Life can arrive at its divine fruition. ... Broadly all thought falls into two opposite schools, one mundane and pragmatic, which regards the fulfilment and satisfaction of the mental, vital and physical ego-sense, individual or collective, as the object of life and looks no farther; the other spiritual and philosophic or religious, which regards the conquest of the ego in the interests of the soul, spirit or whatever be the ultimate entity, as the one thing supremely worth doing.

Between these various and conflicting opinions the seeker of the Truth has to decide for himself which he shall take as his starting-point or, practically, which is to be for him the Knowledge. For whom aim and orientation of Yoga depend upon that, since its quest in the path of Knowledge is that of the true state of being, the true foundation of consciousness, the right relation of things on which man can found himself so as to be free from ignorance, evil and suffering and live in the being of the Highest and in the harmony with the Highest. It is evident that in human egoism and its satisfaction there can be no such divine culmination and deliverance; purification from egoism is the condition not only for ethical progress and elevation but for inner peace, purity and joy. Experience shows that in proportion as we deliver ourselves from the ego, we rise into a wider life, a larger existence, a higher consciousness, a happier soul-state and even to a greater knowledge, power and scope. Therefore even the aim which the most mundane philosophy pursues, the fulfilment, perfection, satisfaction of the individual is best assured not by satisfying the ego but by rising beyond it to a higher principle of Self....

...There can therefore be no greater service to humanity nor any surer foundation for its true progress, happiness and perfection than to prepare the way for the individual and the collective man to transcend the ego and find and live in the true self....

...In the larger play of the Divine the joy of the relations of divine love also is possible without the lapse of the ego-sense, – just as the supreme state of human likewise described as the unity of one soul in two bodies. The ego-sense is not indispensable to the world-play in which it is so active and so falsifies the truth of things; the truth is always the One at work on itself, at play with itself, infinite in unity, infinite in multiplicity. When the individualised consciousness rises to and lives in that truth of the cosmic play, then even in full action, even in possession of the lower being the *Jiva* remains still one with the Lord, and there is no bondage and no delusion. He is in possession of Self and released from the ego.

SRI AUROBINDO

(In the Arya, Vol. 3, No.1, 15 August 1916)

hundred years ago

*The Marvellous Occupant of the Corporeal Abode**



Lord, I could in truth say that I have neither Yoga nor any virtues, for I am completely divested of that which constitutes the glory of all those who want to serve Thee. Apparently my life is as ordinary and banal as can be; and inwardly what is it? Nothing but a clam tranquility without any variation or surprises; the calm of a something which has realized and no longer seeks itself, which no longer expects anything from life and things, which acts without reckoning upon any profit, knowing perfectly that this action does not belong to it in any way, either in its impulsion or in its result; which wills, being aware that the supreme Will alone wills in it; a calm all made of an incontestable certitude, an objectless knowledge, a causeless joy, a self-existent state of consciousness which no longer belongs to time. It is an immobility moving in the domain of external life, yet without belonging to it or seeking to escape from it. I hope for nothing, expect nothing, desire nothing, aspire for nothing and, above all, I am nothing; and yet happiness, a calm, unmixed happiness, a happiness unaware of itself, which does not need to look at

its own being, has come to dwell in the house of this body. This happiness is Thou, O Lord, and this calm is Thou, Lord, for these are not human faculties and men's senses can neither appreciate nor enjoy them. Thus it is Thou, O Lord, who dwellest in this body, and that is why this corporeal abode seems so poor and drab for so marvelous an occupant.

THE MOTHER

(In Prayers and Meditations, prayer dated 7 December 1916)

**Title given by the editor*

The collection Prayers and Meditations consists of extracts from the Mother's spiritual diaries. Most of them are from the period 1912 to 1917

Plato, in his *Republic* has dwelt with extraordinary emphasis on the importance of music in education; as is the music to which a people is accustomed, so he says in effect, is the character of that people. The importance of painting and sculpture is hardly less. The mind is profoundly influenced by what it sees and, if the eye is trained from the days of childhood to the contemplation and understanding of beauty, harmony and just arrangement in line and colour, the tastes, habits and character will be insensibly trained to follow a similar law of beauty, harmony and just arrangement in the life of the adult man. ...

A similar result is produced on the emotions by the study of beautiful or noble art. We have spoken of the purification of the heart, the cittasuddhi, which Aristotle assigned as the essential office of poetry, and have pointed out that it is done in poetry by the detached and disinterested enjoyment of the eight rasas or forms of emotional aestheticism which make up life unalloyed by the disturbance of the lower self-regarding passions. Painting and sculpture work in the same direction by different means. Art sometimes uses the same means as poetry but cannot do it to the same extent because it has not the movement of poetry; it is fixed, still, it expresses only a given point in space and cannot move freely through time and region. But it is precisely this stillness, this calm, this fixity which gives its separate value to Art. Poetry raises the emotions and gives each its separate delight. Art stills the emotions and teaches them the delight of a restrained and limited satisfaction, – this indeed was the characteristic that the Greeks, a nation of artists far more artistic than poetic, tried to bring into their poetry. Music deepens the emotions and harmonises them with each other. Between them music, art and poetry are a perfect education for the soul; they make and keep its movements purified, self-controlled, deep and harmonious. These, therefore, are agents which cannot profitably be neglected by humanity on its onward march or degraded to the mere satisfaction of sensuous pleasure which will disintegrate rather than build the character. They are, when properly used, great educating, edifying and civilising forces.

... but the immense educative force of music, painting and sculpture has not been duly recognised. They have been thought to be bypaths of the human mind, beautiful and interesting, but not necessary, therefore intended for the few. Yet the universal impulse to enjoy the beauty and attractiveness of sound, to look at the live among pictures, colours, forms ought to have warned mankind of the superficiality and ignorance of such a view of these eternal and important occupations of human mind. The impulse, denied proper training and self-purification, has spent itself on the trivial, gaudy, sensuous, cheap or vulgar instead of helping man upward by its powerful aid in the evocation of what is best and highest in intellect as well as in character, emotion and aesthetic enjoyment and regulation of life and manners. It is difficult to appreciate the waste and detriment involved in the low and debased level of enjoyment to which the artistic impulses are condemned in the majority of mankind.

*Reproduced from The Call Beyond,
Vol. 16, No. 3, 1991, p. 31.*

inspiration



Nishant (left) and Anand.

Two young boys, Anand Chowdhary, 18, and Nishant Gadihoke, 15, both students of The Mother's International School (MIS), had been working on projects as part of the school's computer club MNET, and had been designing and developing websites and apps for numerous organizations, including Google, and the government. One day Anand thought that he had been designing websites which looked pretty, but how about those with learning disabilities and visual impairment. To these, the websites remained inaccessible. And, they are not a small number: at least one-tenth of the population has been estimated to have dyslexia, a learning disability that would make the words in a normal website look as if they were jumping on the screen. It is unrealistic to expect that all the websites would try to make their designs user-friendly for such people. Why not have an App that would convert the font of any website and introduce

into it some features that would make the website accessible to those having dyslexia, thought Anand. He shared this idea with Nishant. A few days later, the two of them participated in AngelHack, a large hackathon competition for web developers and entrepreneurs. The AngelHack competition was for 36 hours, which meant a weekend without sleep, supported by coffee and stimulated by creative activity. At 7:00 am on Sunday, 12 June 2016, Anand and Nishant came up with their App, which they named Oswald. Oswald was published on the Chrome Web Store, and won them the Code4Impact Challenge in the competition.

This Is an
example of
the Open Dyslexic
Typeface

WHAT DOES THE APP DO?

The App converts any font into 'Open Dyslexic', a bottom heavy font resembling 'Arial'. Open Dyslexic font is easier for the dyslexics to read. The App also converts the colour of the background to yellow, and that of the letters to black. That makes it still easier for the Dyslexics. Perhaps that is why airports almost everywhere have signs in black Arial font on a yellow background. The app can also change the font size to a desired size. Finally, the App can also read out the printed text on a website

in any of a large number of languages.

WHO CAN THE APP HELP?

Besides dyslexics, the App can help senior citizens see the material on a website in a bigger font. It can also help the visually impaired listen to the website instead of having to read it. It can also help anybody else, because it enables the person to style the webpage around his preference. For example, the 'night mode' helps make the webpage less of a strain when bedtime is close.

Once a person has chosen certain characteristics for a paragraph using Oswald, the App makes all websites acquire those characteristics on the person's computer automatically. In short, all users of the internet can use Oswald to customize their experience. They can change the font size, colour, etc., or go to the reading mode, as they like.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

The App can be downloaded free. "We are now taking steps to encourage all our previous clients to include accessibility features on their websites. We also plan to go to hospitals that cater to dyslexic people and install Oswald as their go-to-solution on all computers," says Anand (who finished his class XII from MIS this year), adding that the duo never wants to convert Oswald into a business. They want the extension to be free so that everyone around the world can use it. That is only to be expected from the Mother's children.

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If you would like to see what a webpage looks like to someone having dyslexia, please visit:

<http://www.wired.com/2016/03/internet-looks-like-someone-dyslexia/>

While collecting material for this column, the editor also discovered a link on the best way to teach a child to read, even a two-year old. Some readers may find the link interesting:

<http://www.childrenlearningreading.org/?gclid=CPKWiYeQr84CFdGFaAodiZMCNA>

We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.

WINSTON CHURCHILL

Happiness is a mysterious thing, to be found somewhere between too little and too much. But it is as elusive as a butterfly, and we must never pursue it. If we stay very still, it may come and settle on our hand. But only briefly. We must savour those moments, for they will not come our way very often.

RUSKIN BOND

Recurrent, Persistent, and Evolving*

TARA MUSAFIR-CHAZOT

(2001-2014)



*We were children of creation and invention,
We made our paths,
and gave direction to our youngers,
We also gave freedom and happiness.
And we fought for our land, generations past
For the noise of our freedom ... and our happiness.
The joy of having a human beside you,
no matter what, is love.
Even if the person is no longer...*

Tara's mother, Anju Musafir-Chazot, says:

In the above poem, Tara links human history and evolution in a universal sense, taking it beyond the specifics of location, space and time. She covers several themes here: birth, creation, inter-generational responsibility, the quest for freedom and happiness. She brings together our ancestors and our children, reminding us not to view ourselves as individual egos but as a part of a collective continuous consciousness.

Tara takes poetic liberty in coining the word 'youngers'. I really like it. I also find her expression 'The noise of our freedom' very beautiful and intriguing. Finally, the last lines are poignant. Love is the joy of our relationships with fellow humans that continues even 'if the person is no longer...'

Editor's note:

The child has made many important points in her poem, which is far from childish. It reminded me of Sri Aurobindo's expression about Maya: "an eternal recurrence if not an eternal persistence".

*Title given by the editor.

A school teacher recently asked, "A child, age 7, cries a lot when he loses a match or is defeated in a race. How should the situation be tackled?" Here are a few tips for dealing with the situation from our team of mental health professionals.

The root of this problem, like that of most behavioural problems in children, is likely to reside in the child's environment, which is primarily the home and the school. If the parents and teachers put too much value on winning, the child feels that it is under pressure not only to do its best, to perform well, but also to win. The child does it because the child starts associating love and security with performance.

The solution, therefore, also is in the hands of the teachers and parents. The teacher and parents should:

Acknowledge the child's feelings of disappointment, which may make the child feel understood. As a result the child would be more receptive to the other strategies.

Make the children realize the joy of effort and participation, in academics as much as in sports or music.

When it is clear that the child has tried its best, it should be praised even if the child has lost. The praise should be specific, thoughtful and genuine, rather than general, vague and superficial. For example, it should not be "you are a good boy", or "you have done a good job". It should rather be something like, "your reasoning is remarkable" (in academics), "your movements are so well coordinated/harmonious" (in sports), or "you are so creative/innovative" (in arts or music).

Sometimes talk about what we get from losing. We learn to be humble. We learn what mistakes we made that led to losing; that is how we learn what not to do the next time in a similar competition. We learn to empathize with losers, because we now know how it feels.

Tell the child, "Just as you want to win, the other child also wants to win. Is it fair that you feel good all the time, and the other child feels bad all the time? So, if you do not let him win sometimes why would the other child play with you?"

Talk about inspirational stories in which a person sure to win a race chose to stop to help an injured participant in the race knowing very well that then all hope of winning is gone.

Start a story involving a game, and let each child complete it in its own way. It fosters creativity, as well as makes the child enter the mind of the character that wins, and the character that loses. This type of exercise is also good for teaching the child conflict resolution.

Make the children understand the difference between losing and being a loser. Losing is a process; losing is an event; losing is inevitable in a competition because everybody cannot win. But being a loser is a label. The label is seldom correct because a loser today might win tomorrow. A loser in one field may be a winner in another field. A loser in material life may be a winner in spiritual life.

In addition, the parents should:

Play with the child, and sometimes let the child win. Then they should show the child, through

example, how to lose gracefully.

Introduce at home board games such as ‘snakes and ladders’ or carom for the child to understand the concept of winning and losing. ‘Snakes and ladders’ is a good way to make the child realize that winning and losing may depend on ‘luck’, over which we have no control. Further, the equanimity of the parent whether the parent reaches a ‘snake’ or a ‘ladder’ will provide a good role model to child. Finally, the joy of the parent when the child reaches a ‘ladder’ or wins the game will show the child that we can rejoice in somebody else’s happiness.

Let the child draw to vent out feelings.

Give the child some unfinished puzzles which he has to complete, so that his mind learns to appreciate the joy of finishing the race more than winning it.

(Answers contributed by Ms Vatsala Sivasubramanian, Dr Monalisa Palit, Dr Vani Jain and Dr Arpita Lal)

*Fear is anticipation of future suffering.
Hope is anticipation of future happiness.
What we 'anticipate' seldom happens,
but it is better to hope than to fear.
RON KRUMPOS*

*“People who know how to creatively break the rules also know why the rules were there in the first place.”
RICHARD ROHR, *Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life**

*O my Lord if I worship thee from fear of hell, burn me in hell, and if I worship thee from hope of Paradise, exclude me thence; but if I worship thee for thine own sake, then withhold not from me thine eternal beauty.
RABI'A AL-ADAWIYYA*

Feedback from participants of a Study Camp at Madhuban, 13-18 June 2016

The ashram is beautiful and well managed, the rooms were clean and comfortable. The sessions with Dr. Bijlani were insightful and helped me understand more about myself. The knowledge he shared in a short span of time was soulful. His presence brings joy to my heart and motivates me to do good for others.

The food was served on time on all days and was well prepared. The servers were friendly and helpful. Subhashji, our guide for trekking was very friendly and gave us the opportunity to enjoy the activity.

Sameer Mehta

The ashram is very picturesque, well maintained, neat and clean, and has good airy rooms with all facilities. The garden is full of various kinds of flowers which makes the environment beautiful. It has a neat and clean dining hall serving healthy, tasty, natural and home-made food with ashram-baked biscuits and bread served with motherly affection and attitude. Washing our own utensils was a nice experience. I would like to pay my humble thanks and gratitude to the staff members of the ashram and specially Subhashji for the trekking experience.

Now I would like to pay my sincere thanks and regards to our spiritual and yogic counsellor-cum-in-charge of our camp, Dr. Ramesh Bijlani. A humble and very knowledgeable person, he imparted the goodness of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo to us. He is a true disciple and I too wish to become like him.

I shall be leaving this place with a new personality and as a changed man wanting to become more polite and humble and with an aim to grow more spiritually.

Ashok Kumar Sethi

This camp was long overdue - this was the feeling I got on entering the ashram. A major milestone in the journey of Soul. A space and time that facilitates to realize – the space and time within and to help in the pursuits of the absolute reality that transcends space and time! What an irony – using the time to perceive the One that transcends time! Using the space to perceive the One that transcends space ☺.

It is said that 'where there's a will there's a way'. And here, it is the 'way' that wills you to follow. To have Dr. Bijlani lead and show the way is making the intriguing journey more interesting. The 'way' enriched by frugal but delicious food of the ashram with a smile...! The 'way' enriched by tweets of birds and chirps of insects that makes you listen to the silence within. The 'way' coloured by flowers and fruits that dispel the darkness within to see the 'infinite light'.

It is difficult to express in words what is felt. An infinite expansiveness felt in a point? A cosmic melody heard in silence? The journey of quest continues...

H Madhavan

The knowledge was given to us in a clear and simple manner, clearing all doubts in our mind.

We also had first-hand experience of the same by the way of doing yogasanas, pranayamas, meditation, trekking etc. in a heavenly atmosphere. Our mind also needed a healthy body and this was done by providing us with fresh, healthy, nutritious and tasty food at proper time to achieve a mind-body combination.

We also had comfortable stay in the rooms which met all essential requirements, based on self service module. We also had extremely good company of like-minded friends turning us into a spiritual family.

To sum up the experience in one line – ‘a heavenly experience worth remembering for a lifetime’.

Arun Kumar Khanna

Happy Birthday, Tara Didi

Dear All,

We are very much happy to receive your warm invitation to be at Madhuban. Unfortunately we have been travelling many places as scheduled earlier. It will be painful not to be there on 5th July but our heart will be with all of you.

We shall pray to God for our living mother's (Tara didi's) sound health and peaceful days on her auspicious happy birth day on 5th July.

Let all of us be inspired by her indomitable spirit and path of silent karma yoga.

Love and regards to all of you.

Sincerely yours,

Prasanta

(Prasanta Tarafdar, in an e-mail dated 4 July 2016)

Thank you, Madhuban

Dear Aurocamps team,

Hope all of you are doing well. :)

This is quite late in the day but nevertheless all of us from the Mumbai camp in March would like to thank you for giving us the opportunity to learn and laugh in The Mother's beautiful abode, Madhuban!

Please do convey our gratitude to all the inmates of Madhuban who made it a meaningful experience for us. A special thank you to Subhash bhaiya from all the kids and mums for making us overcome our outdoor fears and showing us how to enjoy the elements.

Thank you each and everyone who helped us with the Camp, including Tipu. :)

Gratefully,

Menaka Deorah

(in an e-mail dated 8 July 2016)

Sweet Memories of Delhi Ashram

If you really need some change in your life and when you want to explore your life in a different way, this place will always welcome you. In the busiest part of south Delhi, where noise of vehicles can hijack your mind, this place will give you peace, and nature will welcome you with her beauty.

How beautifully everything is organised... peacocks will walk with you. You will find a change in yourself ...I am really missing the place ... I have visited this place with my parents when i was 13. Since 2002 i have

never lost any opportunity to visit the place ...

Thanks a lot, the whole ashram family, specially Vijaya didi for appreciation and encouragement, and Tara didi – saw her always from a distance as a visitor, it was dream fulfilled to meet and talk to her , tried to learn from her lots of things...

Thanks to sweet matajee for your love & blessings... Thanks to Sri Aurobindo...

Really feeling like a blessed child of The Mother and Sri Aurobindo.

Govinda Mishra

(in an e-mail dated 19 July 2016)

Thank you

Sir,

My name is Ashank Khaitan and I was one of the students you addressed in your talk to MBBS freshers at your alma mater today. I regret that I could not thank you in person after the talk; however I have taken this form of expressing my gratitude and appreciation.

You spoke to us simply today, but your words cloaked a deeper meaning, and revealed a profound depth of thought and philosophy. You stated plain truths, but they had a greater import than the obvious. I do not exaggerate when I say your ideas made me re-evaluate my goals and priorities, and see them in an entirely new light.

But more importantly, I enjoyed your talk particularly since it seemed to come from a very tranquil person, happy with his lot and at peace with life. You seemed to diffuse a general air of geniality and placidity around you. You seemed a contented man, and contented men are rare in this world.

Ashank Khaitan

1st Semester MBBS Student at AIIMS, New Delhi

(In an e-mail dated 20 July 2016)

Faith Heals

Dear Dr. Ramesh Bijlani,

When I was listening to you at the AIIMS Mentoring seminar on 'Spirituality and Medicine', I felt a calmness that can't be described. I had been wondering all these years about why my prayers always proved helpful in curing minor ailments. I remembered the cerebral stroke I had in 2003 and the way I came out of the ICU in almost a day because of my autosuggestion and the firm belief that God will help me get out of it.

Thank you for clearing the doubts I had in linking science and spirituality.

Bala

(Balachandran Gopinath)

(in an e-mail dated 2 August 2016)

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