

# THE CALL BEYOND

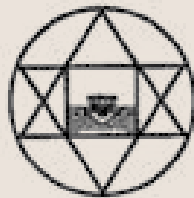
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*Heaven's call is rare, rarer the heart that heeds;  
The doors of light are sealed to common mind,  
And earth's needs nail to earth the human mass,  
Only in an uplifting hour of stress  
Men answer to the touch of greater things:  
Or, raised by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

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



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## Why Spiritualize Education?

*Education to be complete must have five principal aspects relating to the five principal activities of the human being: the physical, the vital, the mental, the psychic and the spiritual.*

*The Mother*

It is widely accepted, at least in principle, that education should address not just the mind but also the body. In practice, however, the body is generally neglected because 'time is not enough to cover the syllabus', and we do a rather poor job of educating even the mind. But even the best education of the body and the mind is still incomplete education. Complete education, or integral education, should address all parts of the being – not just the body and the mind, but also the spirit. This raises at least three questions: why that is necessary, how it can be done, and whether it has been done.

### Why is it necessary?

Perfect education of the child's body and the mind, if successful, will give us an adult who is physically fit, emotionally stable, and intellectually agile. Such an individual has the basic equipment necessary for becoming a good teacher, a good doctor, a good engineer, a good scientist, a good farmer, or a good

manager. But it is exactly the same attributes that are necessary also for becoming a 'good' terrorist. Unless the terrorist is physically fit, emotionally stable, and intellectually agile, he will not be able to plan or execute a successful attack. After **all, the body and the mind are mere instruments**. Perfecting an instrument is never enough. A sharp knife can be used for cutting a fruit or for stabbing somebody. Therefore our system of education should be designed not only to sharpen the body and the mind, but also to help the child learn how to put these sharpened instruments to good use. That is why education is incomplete if it addresses only the body and the mind; what completes it is the spiritual element.

### **How can it be done?**

One way in which schools sometimes try to address the spiritual element is by including moral education as a subject. This is not the best approach for a variety of reasons. *First*, nobody, not even a child, likes to be told what to do, or what not to do. *Secondly*, any set of dos and don'ts is somewhat arbitrary – it cannot be valid for all times and at all places. *Thirdly*, even a comprehensive set of dos and don'ts is always incomplete because it cannot anticipate all the situations in which a person might have to take moral decisions. *Finally*, once moral education becomes a subject in the curriculum, the focus shifts from morality to clearing an examination. One of the



best approaches is not to treat this aspect of education as an add-on, but as something that is woven into the system. Using the body-mind complex appropriately involves making choices. The best choice is based on the guidance that emanates from the deepest part of the being: Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have called it the psychic being. Making a choice based on the voice of the psychic being gives a sense of joy, and leads to lasting mental peace. Making a choice that is in conflict with this voice leads to a sense of guilt, a recurrent sense of uneasiness. Thus the psychic being is an in-built reward and punishment system. Making the child conscious of this in-built system is the crux of addressing 'the spirit' in school education. This is in marked contrast to the prevalent tendency to reward the child for doing the right thing, and even more commonly, to punish the child for doing the wrong thing. The message that this tendency sends is that the purpose of not doing what is wrong is to escape getting punished by the teacher or the parent, and in later life, by the law-enforcing agencies. In other words, one may do anything so long as nobody is watching. Even when nobody is watching, God is. The all-seeing God is within us, and that is why the person feels uneasy after doing something wrong. This is what the child has to learn to appreciate. And it is easy for the child to appreciate it because the psychic being is wide open in children. All it needs is the right environment. The right environment has a few

components. *First*, everything good that the child does should be encouraged, be it lifting up a friend who has fallen in the playground, or sharing food with a classmate who has forgotten her lunchbox at home, or putting the right way up a struggling upside-down insect. *Secondly*, when a child has done something wrong – be it unintentional, accidental or deliberate – the child should be able to summon the courage to confess the mistake. This will happen only if the child is sure that confession will not invite punishment. An environment in which a fault confessed is not punished builds up the habit of speaking the truth. The aim in such a situation should be a reflective exercise that leads the child towards appreciating the burden that the child felt till she had confessed, and the relief and joy that the confession brought. *Last*, but most important, the children should also see the teacher doing what she expects from them. What the teacher does has a much greater influence on the children than what she says.

### **Has it been done?**

Doing what has been outlined above is an ideal that has been translated into reality. The Mother took charge of running Sri Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry in 1926, but at that time there were hardly any children in the Ashram. But in the early 1940s, enough children had entered to prompt the Mother to open a school for children in 1943. The school

brought out the educationist in the Mother, and the above discussion gives a mere glimpse of the system of integral education that she established there. The school was named 'Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education' by the Mother in 1959. Having reached the milestone of its seventy-fifth year, the Centre has grown into an institution that provides education from kindergarten to college level. The Centre has not only given a practical shape to the concept of integral education visualized by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, but has also inspired a very large number of institutions all over the world.

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*First posted as a blog on 24 April 2012 on [www.speakingtree.in](http://www.speakingtree.in)  
Link: <https://www.speakingtree.in/blog/why-spiritualize-education>*

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*Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education, Puducherry*



## We Love to Hear From You

We are slowly progressing with some articles of 'The Call Beyond' into Spanish and Portuguese. As I told you in India this is just for a private distribution to those who are really interested in receiving it. Please find attached to this email the Spanish translation of the Editorial of the September issue of 'The Call Beyond'. Besides all that, I must sincerely say I strongly feel the need to be more and more in tune with Sri Aurobindo Ashram, till the point that I wish one day we can share the teachings and yoga teachers' course here in south America in the same way you do there at the ashram.

With love,

Marcelo (de Aquino Vicente)

*An exponent of Indian music and nada yoga from Argentina*  
(in an e-mail dated 1 November 2018)

I like very much this monthly magazine.

Sanjay Tanwar

(in an e-mail dated 19 October 2018)

It's an enriching experience to read 'The Call Beyond'. Thank you for sending me the issues regularly.

Veena R

(in an e-mail dated 24 October 2018)

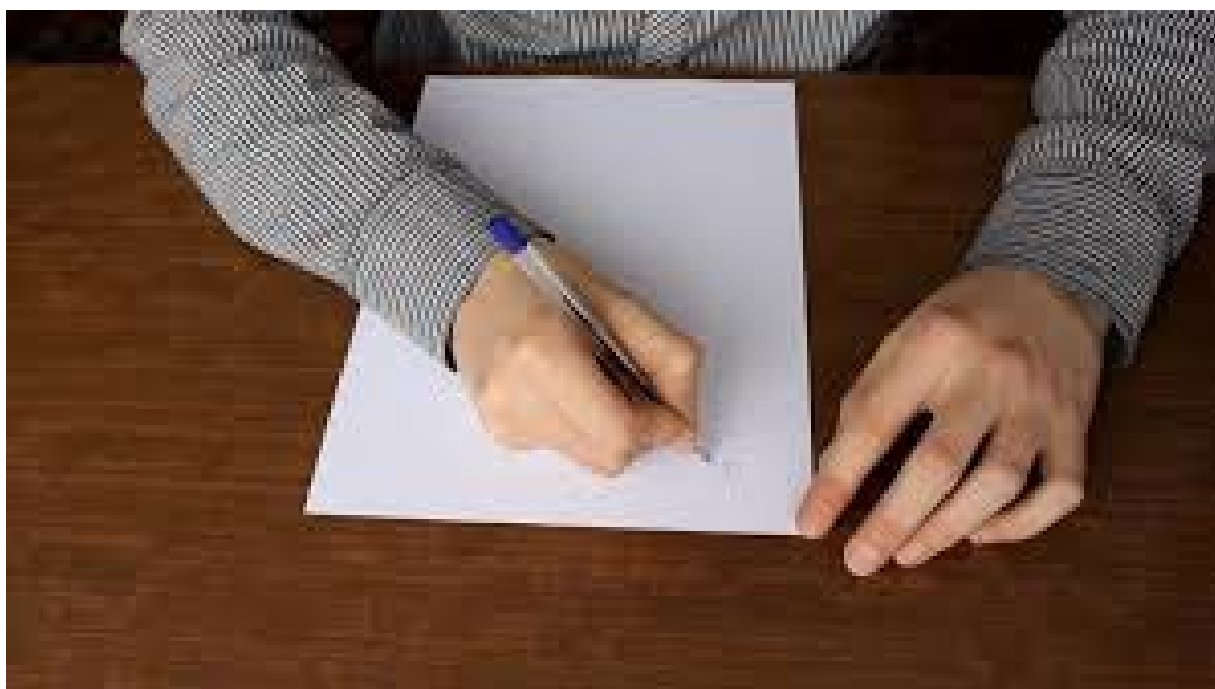
The editorial titled 'How Deep Is Beauty If Not Skin Deep?' in 'The Call Beyond' October issue is very beautifully written!

The opening statement of John Keats' 'Endymion' complements your views on Beauty... 'A thing of beauty is a joy forever'. It is through beauty that the Divine manifests in the physical, as said The Mother.

The poem and the write-up on 'Why God Made Mothers' are simply outstanding.

*"As a rudderless boat in a stormy sea,  
Promptly saved by a sailor apt,  
All confusion fades, wisdom pervades,  
For The Mother Loves Me and I am The Mother's!"*

Giti Tyagi  
(in an e-mail dated 26 October 2018)



## Why Has Human Unity Remained an Elusive Goal?

Shishu

*The ego is not the true circle of the self; the law of mutuality which meets it at every turn and which it misuses, arises from the truth that there is a secret unity between our self and the self of others and therefore between our own lives and the lives of others.*

*Sri Aurobindo*

In general, people want to live in peace. Peace implies absence of conflict. **Conflict needs at least two.** If there is only one, who will have conflict with whom? Thus, oneness leads to absence of conflict; and absence of conflict leads to peace. Hence, the aspiration for human unity reflects the quest for peace. The quest for peace is intensified by war, because the absence of peace makes us want it even more. Writing during the first World War (1914-1918), Sri Aurobindo observed in the Arya, "Today the ideal of human unity is more or less vaguely making its way to the front of our consciousness." (1)

### Attempts at Human Unity

There has been no dearth of attempts at human unity, but so far they have all failed. Before going into the root of the failure, let us examine some of the attempts.

*Empires*

Idealists have often looked at man-made boundaries between nations as the root of all wars, and have therefore dreamt that one-day the world will be just one nation with one government. Short of having a world government, the world has had many empires: Roman, Arabian, and recently the British. But all empires rose, and eventually fell, without coming anywhere close to the ideal of human unity. This happened because empires were built by military conquest. The collective ego of the conquerors made them believe in their own superiority. Therefore, they tried to impose their language and culture on those who had been conquered. Even if they had been more successful in doing so than they actually were, all that would have been achieved was uniformity. Uniformity is not the same as unity. The unity of white light does not depend upon wiping out the seven colours of the rainbow. The difficulty lies in achieving human unity without wiping out the inevitable diversity of the human race. Further, the conquerors treated the conquered nations as their temporary possessions, not as members of a larger family. Therefore, they exploited them economically. They tried to hold on to them through legalized injustice and repression as long as possible. And, during the period that they held on to them, they tried to bleed the colonies dry. Finally, the conquerors found it difficult to hold on to the colonies, and the empires fell. No human aggregates based on a mechanical, political

or administrative unity can achieve human unity. True unity can only be a psychological unity based on a spiritual sense of oneness.

## Democracy and Communism

In theory, democracy and communism are both rational, and well-intentioned. But apart from the dilution that every idea suffers when given a form, the basic flaw has been the level of human consciousness. The present level of human consciousness is essentially ego-driven. Whether it be democracy or communism or any other form of government, in all governments there is concentration of power in a few hands. The ego-driven consciousness of those who have the power perpetuates social inequality, which in turn leads to injustice, cruelty, misery and suffering. That leads to the brewing of moral centres of revolt. But those who come to power as a result of a successful revolution are soon driven by their own egos to repeat the flaws of those whom they overthrow. That is why revolutions have a way of repeating themselves in a cyclic fashion, as described beautifully in Sri Aurobindo's Savitri (Book 10, Canto 4):

*The rolling cycles passed and came again,  
Brought the same toils and the same barren end,  
Forms ever new and ever old, the long  
Appalling revolutions of the world.*

It is perhaps because of their cyclic character that they are called revolutions!

Sri Aurobindo has made a very perceptive comment on the three ideals of the French Revolution: Liberty, Equality and Fraternity (2). At the present level of human consciousness, giving even a semblance of liberty makes it impossible to achieve equality, as happens in democracies. On the other hand, to achieve even a semblance of equality, liberties have to be taken away, as happens in communist regimes. **Thus there is an internal contradiction between Liberty and Equality.** The key word is Fraternity, or universal brotherhood and sisterhood. If there is fraternity, I cannot be free and keep my brother in chains; thus liberty is ensured. If there is fraternity, I cannot remain well-fed while my brother is starving; thus equality is ensured. Hence, if there is fraternity, liberty and equality would follow automatically. But fraternity requires a level of consciousness significantly higher than the present average human consciousness. Fraternity requires a love-driven rather than ego-driven personality.

### **Rationalistic Humanism**

During the European renaissance, in the conflict between religion and science, science emerged as the dominant force. The tool that helped in the growth of science and technology was 'reason'. Therefore, the same tool was pressed into service to solve the basic problems of human existence, i.e. injustice, misery and suffering. Democracy and Communism



were also the products of the application of reason to human problems. But the best product of the rational approach was a system of ethics, humanism. But even that failed, because the key to solving the problems of human existence is love, and love goes beyond reason. *Although love can be rationalized, at the present level of human consciousness, withholding love can be rationalized even better.* Sri Aurobindo has called humanism ‘the religion of humanity’. Like the conventional religions, ‘the religion of humanity’ also failed to achieve the ideal of human unity.

### **League of Nations**

League of Nations was the brainchild of the then President of USA, Woodrow Wilson. The US entered the first World War rather late – in 1917. Wilson was an idealist, a peace-loving person, but his duty demanded that the US join the war in 1917, for which he received overwhelming support from the Congress. He looked upon the war as a necessity for lasting peace for the world. Some of the assertions he made in his speech, which was aimed at securing the approval of the Congress for the US joining the war, seem straight from the Gita: “We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make. ... .. *we fight without rancor*, and without selfish object, seeking nothing for ourselves but what we shall wish to share with all free peoples ...” By the time the war ended in

November 1918, Wilson was ready with a 14-point plan for world peace. He succeeded in making the victors and vanquished sit across the table to consider his 14-points as the basis of international cooperation for lasting peace, but failed to convince the victors to be generous towards the vanquished. The 14-points were diluted, and England and France used the opportunity to humiliate Germany, and to extract from it as much reparations as possible. Thus the League of Nations was doomed to failure from the word go. Further his own country did not want to join the League because the Congress, which had applauded him when he asked them to join the war, was in an isolationist mood. The world was not ready for the type of peace that Wilson had visualized. He got the Nobel Peace Prize in 1919, but died a broken man in 1924. However, the very fact that he succeeded in making the participants in the war sit across the table and talk peace was an achievement. Institutionalization of international relations was a new and good beginning for resolving conflicts. Although the second World War happened in 1939 in spite of the League of Nations, when the war ended in 1944, the world knew what to do. The League of Nations was wound up in 1946, and replaced by the United Nations Organization (UNO), which avoided some of the mistakes made in 1919.

### **United Nations Organization**

The United Nations Organization, now generally called just the UN, has indeed been more successful

than its predecessor, the League of Nations. Although it has also had many failures, the number of people dying in conflicts has declined rapidly since 1945. Worldwide, fewer people died in conflict in the first decade of the twenty-first century than in any decade of the twentieth. In the twentieth century, more than 70 million died from famine. While millions still suffer from malnutrition, famines have become something of the past, for which intervention by the UN's World Food Programme, Food and Agriculture Organisation and UN-sponsored emergency aid management can take some of the credit.

### **Closing Thoughts**

The failure of the attempts at human unity is rooted in the average level of the human consciousness. But that does not mean that all the future attempts will also continue to fail. Evolution is an on-going process, and Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have visualized that the next leap in evolution is round the corner. The next leap will be a leap in consciousness, taking the average level to a significantly higher level. Further, the next leap will not depend solely on the slow natural process because man can grow in consciousness during his lifetime. Every individual working towards a rise in consciousness is also making a contribution, however small, to the upward shift in the average consciousness of the human race. The shift will change human nature. The present ego-driven personality will be transformed into a

love-driven personality, and thereby the world will become a better place to live in.

The failures of the past have also taught us at least what it is that does not work. The world, particularly the West, has learnt that 'reason', which has proven a valuable tool in the development of science and technology is inadequate for solving the basic problems of human existence. Having exhausted the possibilities of reason, the West is now poised to enter the supra-rational age. For using the supra-rational approach to solve human problems, the best guidance is available in ancient Indian spiritual wisdom. That is why the West today is looking up to India for the treasure that this country gave birth to five thousand years ago.

Are there any signs that the world is actually getting better? Plenty, in fact. Apart from better access to food, schooling, knowledge and healthcare at global level than ever before in history, the frequency of armed conflicts has gone down (3). Through much of history, clans and tribes were at war with each other, and peace was a precious interlude. Now peace is taken for granted as the norm, and war is an unfortunate interlude. The world is moving away from religions towards spirituality. Evil, which could be and was hushed up in the past, now gets wide publicity, evoking a reaction at the global level. Efficient modes of communication and transport have shrunk the world. Although world government remains a utopian dream, empires built through military conquest have

also become impossible. Instead, there are several free groupings of nations, such as SAARC, ASEAN and the European Community, guided by economic and cultural considerations. When Sri Aurobindo and the Mother talked about the rise in the consciousness of the human race hundred years ago, it was a revolutionary idea. But today so many spiritual leaders and thinkers are talking about it (4-8). Hence there is no longer the question whether human unity will one day be achieved; the question only is when. Man is impatient; Nature is not.

*Even the multitude shall hear the Voice  
And turn to commune with the Spirit within  
And strive to obey the high spiritual law:  
This earth shall stir with impulses sublime,  
Humanity awake to deepest self,  
Nature the hidden godhead recognize.*

*(Savitri, Book 11, Canto 1)*

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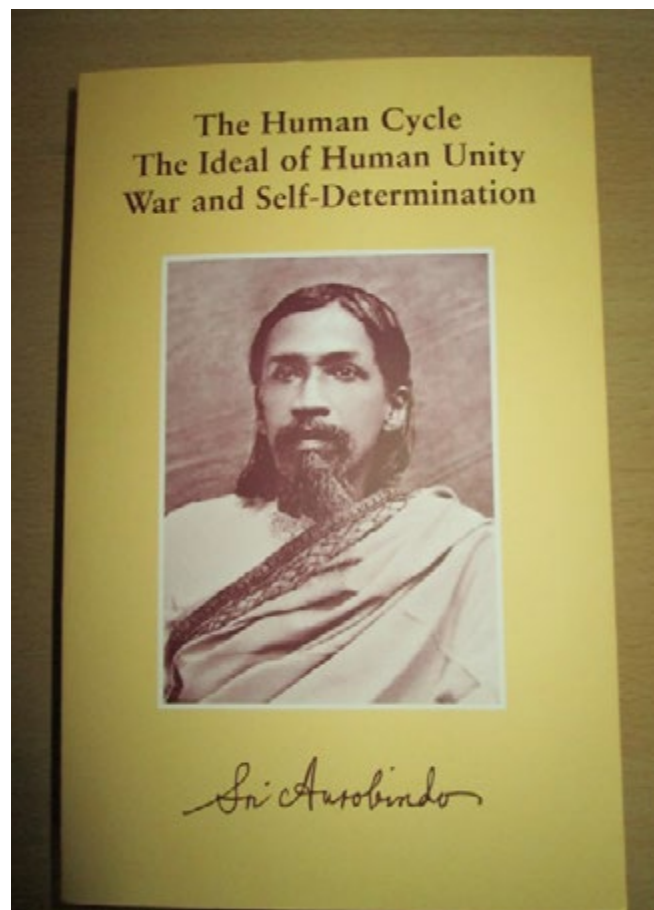
1. Sri Aurobindo: *The Human Cycle. The Ideal of Human Unity. War and Self-Determination*. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, second edition, 1970, p. 262.
2. Ibid, p. 546.
3. Steven Pinker & Andrew Mack. *The World is Not Falling Apart. Reader's Digest (India)*, January 2016, p. 74.
4. Gary Zukav. *The Seat of the Soul*. New York: Simon & Schuster (A Fireside Book), 1989, pp. 13-21.

5. David Hawkins. *Power Versus Force: An Anatomy of Consciousness. The Hidden Determinants of Human Behaviour*. Sedona Arizona: Veritas Publishing, Second Edition, 1998, p.67.
6. Nikki de Carteret. *Soul Power: the Transformation that Happens When You Know*. O Books, Hants, UK, 2003, pp. 100, 282.
7. Partho. The emerging consciousness paradigm. *The Awakening Ray*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 29 February 2016, pp. 21-23.
8. Duane Elgin & Coleen LeDrew. Global consciousness change: indicators of an emerging paradigm. *The Awakening Ray*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 29 February 2016, pp. 15-16.

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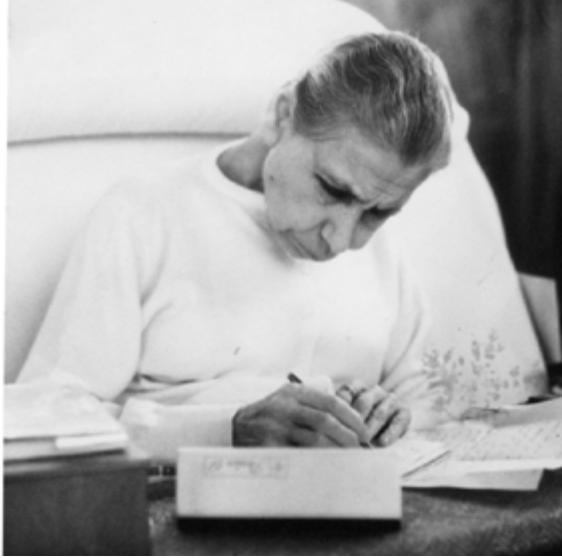
*The world recently observed the hundredth anniversary of the formal declaration of the end of World War I on 11 November 1918.*

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## Organise With the Help of Reason

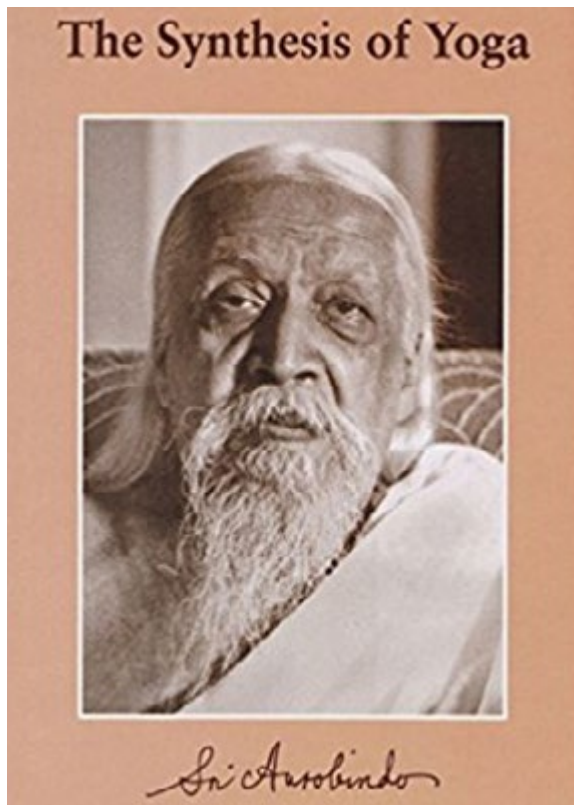


In order to set out on these paths [towards the higher realities] without fear and without any danger, one must have organised his being with the help of reason around the highest centre he consciously possesses, and organised it in such a way that it is inwardly in his control and he has not to say at every moment, “Ah! I have done this, I don’t know why. Ah! That’s happened to me, I don’t know why” – and always it is “I don’t know, I don’t know, I don’t know”, and as long as it is like that, the path is somewhat dangerous. Only when one does what he wants, knows what he wants, does what he wants and is able to direct himself with certitude, without being tossed about by the hazards of life, then one can go forward on the suprarational paths fearlessly, unhesitatingly and with the least danger. But one need not be very old for this to happen.... But one must not set out on this road with a baggage of impulses and desires, for that brings along all kinds of serious disturbances.

*The Mother* (‘Great Adventure’, p. 10)

## The Synthesis of Yoga

### *The Ananda Brahman*



The Divine is a Being and not an abstract existence or a status of pure timeless infinity; the original and universal existence is He, but that existence is inseparable from consciousness and bliss of being, and an existence conscious of its own being and its own bliss is what we may well call a divine infinite Person,-Purusha. Moreover all consciousness implies

power, Shakti; where there is infinite consciousness of being, there is infinite power of being, and by that power all exists in the universe. All beings exist by this Being; all things are the faces of God; all thought and action and feeling and love proceed from him and return to him, all their results have him for source and support and secret goal. It is to this Godhead, this Being that the Bhakti of an integral Yoga will be poured out and uplifted. Transcendent, it will seek him in the ecstasy of an absolute union; universal, it will seek him in infinite quality and every aspect and in all beings with a universal delight and love; individual, it

will enter into all human relations with him that love creates between person and person.

God meets us first in different limited affirmations of his divine qualities and nature; he presents himself to the seeker as an absolute of the things he can understand and to which his will and heart can respond; he discloses some name and aspect of his Godhead. *This is what is called in Yoga the ishta-devata, the name and form elected by our nature for its worship.* In order that the human being may embrace this Godhead with every part of himself, it is represented with a form that answers to its aspects and qualities and which becomes the living body of God to the adorer. These are those forms of Vishnu, Shiva, Krishna, Kali, Durga, Christ, Buddha, which the mind of man seizes on for adoration. Even the monotheist who worships a formless Godhead, yet gives to him some form of quality, some mental form or form of Nature by which he envisages and approaches him. *But to be able to see a living form, a mental body, as it were, of the Divine gives to the approach a greater closeness and sweetness.*

Manana and darshana, a constant thinking of him in all things and seeing of him always and everywhere is essential to this way of devotion. When we look on the things of physical Nature, in them we have to see the divine object of our love; when we look upon men and beings, we have to see him in them and in our relation with them to see that we are entering into relations with forms of him; when breaking beyond the limitation of the material world we know or have

relations with the beings of other planes, still the same thought and vision has to be made real to our minds.

He is the teacher and guide and leads us to knowledge; at every step of the developing inner light and vision, we feel his touch like that of the artist moulding our clay of mind, his voice revealing the truth and its word, the thought he gives us to which we respond, the flashing of his spheres of lightning which chase the darkness of our ignorance.

He is the Master; but in this way of approach all distance and separation, all awe and fear and mere obedience disappear, because we become too close and united with him for these things to endure and it is the lover of our being who takes it up and occupies and uses and does with it whatever he wills. Obedience is the sign of the servant, but that is the lowest stage of this relation, *dasya*. Afterwards we do not obey, but move to his will as the string replies to the finger of the musician. To be the instrument of this higher stage of self-surrender and submission.

He is the friend, the advisor, helper, saviour in trouble and distress, the defender from enemies, the hero who fights our battles for us or under whose shield we fight, the charioteer, the pilot of our ways. And here we come at once to a closer intimacy; he is the comrade and eternal companion, the playmate of the game of living. He is the father and mother too of our being, its source and protector and its indulgent cherisher

and giver of our desires. He is the child born to our desire whom we cherish and rear.

Love comes to us in many ways; it may come as an awakening to the beauty of the Lover, by the sight of an ideal face and image of him, by his mysterious hints to us of himself behind the thousand faces of things in the world, by a slow or sudden need of the heart, by a vague thirst in the soul, by the sense of someone near us drawing us or pursuing us with love or of someone blissful and beautiful whom we must discover...Love and Ananda are the last word of being, the secret of secrets, the mystery of mysteries.

This universalised, personalised, raised to its intensities, made all-occupying, all-embracing, all-fulfilling, the way of love and delight gives the supreme liberation. Its highest crest is a supracosmic union. But for love complete union is mukti. We have the absolute union of the divine with the human spirit, sayujya; in that reveals itself a content of all that depends here upon difference,-but there the difference is only a form of oneness,-ananda too of nearness and contact and mutual presence, samipya, salokya, ananda of mutual reflection, the thing that we call likeness, sadricya, and other wonderful things too for which language has yet not name. There is nothing which is beyond the reach of the Godlover or denied to him; for he is the favourite of the divine Lover and the self of the Beloved.

*Sri Aurobindo (In the Arya, Vol. 5, No.4, 15 Nov 1918)*



## Madhav Pandit Passes Away

K.D. Sethna



*Shri Madhav Pandit*

When I went for a last look at the body of my friend Madhav Pandit, who had passed away on March 14 [1993] at the age of 75, I could not help putting my hand upon his forehead at the moment I arrived by his side and again at the moment I left it. At this touch of affection, happy memories surged up.

What I most remembered in general about Madhav was his combination of spiritual self-discipline, wide mental scope, spontaneous non-ritualistic devotion to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, varied learning and yet humble desire to be taught, warm cheerful temperament and laughing superiority to adverse circumstance.

He who had made a detailed study of the ancient scriptures was still quite ready to admit a mistake and seek correction from an unscholarly dabbler in scriptural lore. While hundreds regarded him as the last word on subtle problems he would time and again



want a confirmation or correction from one who was a tyro in comparison. Then there was his sympathy and quick response and happy trust. I vividly remember an incident of many years ago. I was living on my own means at the time. Finding myself in financial straits I sought a loan from him. He readily agreed to a series of advances month after month from a book-printing organisation he had formed. I wrote out a grateful receipt of the first instalment and gave it to him. Instantly he tore it to bits and threw it into the waste-paper basket. I caught hold of his hands affectionately and have never forgotten this gesture of absolute faith on his part.

His helpfulness to fellow-sadhaks, even to those whom others regarded as small fry, could always be counted on. He would do all he could to make their way smoother. There was also his friendly turn towards souls in difficulty or uncertainty. Pitted against powerful presences, they would depend on him to slip to them some private information which would enable them to come up fighting when a cause seemed forlorn.

I may also glance at Madhav's extreme orderliness of method and efficiency of execution. The Mother had full confidence in his assessment of a situation and in his management of it. If accounts kept by him and other agents differed, she would give preference to his. Along with meticulous method went his phenomenal memory for small items like people's addresses. Everything was in its proper place both in his mind and in his daily life. But I never found

anything rigid in his manner. He was always ready to change according to the need of the moment.

Now a word about his literary activity. He was an accomplished impressive speaker, very much in demand. Nobody in the Ashram has written so many books of lucid direct exposition of the Master's and the Mother's teachings. Nor has anybody done as many extensions of these teachings to touch problems theoretical or practical of sadhana. Not that one could always agree with all his pronouncements, but there was seldom any pronouncement which did not open up some vista, which would lead one to make some discovery of one's own.

Here was an enterprising adventurous mind looking in diverse directions – and behind it one felt a questing soul ever remembering the glory it had seen and loved and obeyed: Sri Aurobindo's vast-visioned wisdom and the Mother's deeply insightful care and creativity.

Courtesy: *Mother India*/24.4.1993

(Reproduced from 'The Call Beyond', Vol. 18, No. 3, 1993, p. 19)

## Gratitude

Manisha Jacob

*I thank You for my body,  
Which you have loaned me.  
I thank You for my waking,  
As I walk around asleep.*

*I thank You in words,  
Which seek meaning.  
I thank You with emotion,  
That seeks a shore.*

*I am here, You are nowhere,  
I am nowhere, You are now here.  
You are The Essence, The Ocean.  
You are All Knowing, The Eternal.*



*In this column, we try to answer three types of questions from the readers: those related to spiritual quest ('aspiring high'); those related to psychological issues ('feeling low'); and those related to physical health ('frailties of the flesh'). It is needless to say that the identity of the person sending the question is kept confidential if the question is about a sensitive issue. The questions may be sent to [callbeyond@aurobindoonline.in](mailto:callbeyond@aurobindoonline.in).*

## **Attachment Precedes Detachment**

At the end of one of his talks. Acharya Navneet was asked: "How can one be detached but not indifferent?"

### **Acharya Navneet's answer:**

First get attached to someone, preferably someone whom you do not even know. Then work on your detachment.

### **Editor's comment:**

Detachment is fine, but detached from what, detached from whom? The answer is detached from possessions, and detached from people whom one was attached to. Hence, attachment has to precede detachment. To claim to have achieved detachment without ever having been attached to anybody is glorified indifference, which is not what spirituality is about. Indifference implies not being concerned. Being concerned about

others is something basic in an ethically sound life, still more in spiritual life. Concern is an expression of love; indifference is absence of love. Love leads to attachment. Love with attachment is better than no love at all. Detachment can wait.

Although detachment is a much talked about spiritual quality, it is a by-product of getting attached to the Divine. Thus, there is really no getting away from attachment! This state is still considered detachment because attachment to the Divine is not only permissible but also desirable. When one is attached to the Divine, one can have for one's fellow beings love without attachment.



## Feedback & Encouraging Words

### Feedback from B.El.Ed. students of Lady Shri Ram College for Women

*A group of 43 students doing BEL Ed at Lady Shri Ram College for Women, New Delhi had a workshop on Integral Education in the Ashram on 10 October 2018*



When I heard about Sri Aurobindo Ashram I thought that it would be like any other ashram in the city. But the moment I entered the premises, I was amazed to see the infrastructure, cleanliness and greenery of the campus. The musical part of the session was the best and the most soothing part of the session. The three principles of teaching of Sri Aurobindo is the part I most connected with. And the phrase, “The one who confesses should not be punished” by The Mother was the highlight for me and a lesson I learned today.

I love the Ashram, how it functions, its philosophy and would like to attend more sessions over here.

Mansi Jain



The session was a very enriching and mind-stimulating experience where I thought about my life, how I've been living it and how I would want to spend the rest of it. I learnt how true joy lies in giving rather than getting. In a city like Delhi, the Ashram is very peaceful, green and clean, away from the hustle and bustle. I felt very calm and relaxed here.

The children stories were fun and entertaining as well as aptly displayed the mind of a child and how he/she justifies his/her actions although his/her conscience is awake to what is right and wrong. Both the characters, Raghav and Kavya are very real and relatable for the children and their stories aptly capture the emotions of children. Overall, I enjoyed this session where I felt at peace as I hadn't in a long time.

Tanvi Malhotra

This session was very enriching for me. I was always distressed that I came to the field of teaching which I never wanted to. But, in the session I was very happy when Sir has talked about life as a journey and we could go to our goal using all life. So, this has provided me with lot of motivation to do the things in my life, which I really want. Thank you so much, Sir for providing this motivation.

Neha Kain

The workshop was very interesting. It gave us peace of mind and body. It enlightened the soul. It made us view that teaching should include not only physical or mental but a psychic education. The workshop is not only enlightening but useful for our B.El.Ed department as we were enriched with philosophy of education propounded by Sri Aurobindo. It was not just a talk kind but we also sang some peaceful

and spiritual songs which were soothing. The stories that sir read in between were not only helping us to know children's thinking in a better way but were very different story from the usual ones. For example, 'Kavya Made Up Her Mind' it seemed to be realistic because it was very relatable to my childhood. It gave me a thought that teaching can be seen as an appreciable profession or best profession, as now I am doing. I will listen to my inner voice with a different view.

Divya Rani

I really liked this session. I was able to connect it to my life. That's why I think I feel so good and I feel very motivated. Most of the time, I feel very depressed and sad, through this session I learnt that we should be always happy or always try to be happy and make others happy. Yes, this is true that our happiness depends on the happiness of our loved ones. One more thing that I liked the most was the video of cellular jail because I went there last year, so I was feeling very good like, Wow! The whole session was so good, motivational and awakening. I will come here again.

Shilpi Kumari

When I heard about this session being organised for us I was really excited to know that it will help us grow as an individual. I had certain things in mind before the session but the session was way more useful than I had imagined it to be. I loved the engaging nature of the topic, the way it was being transacted, the environment of the Ashram. It was really an enriching session for me and something that has helped me answer a lot of questions that I had been struggling with for a month. Its impact will be remembered by me and stay with me forever. Thank you Sir for giving us this amazing experience.

Rashi Chawla

The whole day in the Ashram was very enriching. Got to know a lot about the teaching-learning process and about spirituality. The line that strikes me the most was that giving is in our own hands while getting is not. Teacher as a profession is a vehicle (life) where you give.

Meenakshi Sharma

It was an enthralling session. It helped me to look within, to reflect on some questions I have been struggling with for a long time. The session helped me to understand the relationship between psychic, mind and body and the purpose of life; it helped me realize that my circumstances, struggles in life are not an end in themselves but a path to reach the 'goal'.

Thank you so much Sir for such an exhilarating experience. Looking forward to many more.

Shruti

The complete experience for me was really enriching. All the stories were very interesting especially the story 'Kavya Makes Up Her Mind'. The musical elements of the sessions were engaging. Overall I could understand the meaning of integral education and how it can be practiced.

Shivani Garg

The session was very interesting, giving me a new perspective towards my life, my goal and also my profession. There were a lot of opportunities to ponder about things we generally take for granted. I would love to think and wonder and question everything I learned and heard today and apply it as much as I can. I sincerely hope not only me but my students will become good humans.

Paridhi Gupta

I love the greenery of the ashram and the way it is built. The entrance into the place itself left me peaceful. The session was very enlightening. Awakening about the 'inner voice' was stimulated. Much more active and conscious choices would be perhaps taken by me in the future now. The interesting pedagogical approaches that we heard about were fascinating and really felt relevant. Also how the culture of cleaning your own dishes filled me with reflection that this is the least I can do to make myself independent. How the philosophical ideas from 1800s and 1900s are still being practised and sustained was a treat to see. Hope it makes us critical thinkers.

Simran

The session today was very enlightening. It not only enhanced our knowledge about the educational ideals, but also was enriching for our own holistic development as a more 'awakened' being. It opened our minds to a different aspect of spirituality that I wasn't aware of and how it can be incorporated as part of our daily life leading to a healthier mind, body and soul, i.e. our psychic being.

Shyna Singh

The events were quite peaceful; the talks were prompting us to think more of what we learn and how these things are different. The stories were the best part of the program as they were written in a very unique manner. They're different from all children stories I've heard and read in terms of the concepts they follow and the way they go about it. Got to learn a lot about the vitality of the soul and the inner voice. Taking back so much from today's session.

Gargi Jha

The session was very enlightening. I feel that it is very beneficial for the younger generation to understand these aspects of life.

Rajshree

The sessions were really interesting and enriching for us, especially the concept of integral education and its various aspects and how it can be adapted to the present scenario. We also got to have an insight into the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother. The presentation of children's literature was quite interesting too.

Sugandhi Sharma

The session was quite relaxing and peaceful. It gave us a lot of open-ended questions to linger on. It helped me reflect over the present realities and how little changes can bring about big results. The psychic education was a completely new concept and I liked it when I saw the same being reflected in the stories for children where they are shown not only the positive, but also the negative or the escaping side of a situation. It was overall a great experience and I would love to be back here for another enriching session.

Aditi Wadhwa

I found today's session quite enriching. It helped me to reflect upon my own life and see in which direction I am heading. I also learnt several things which I can apply later on as a teacher. I found the environment of this ashram very peaceful. Various examples provided during the session were very relatable.

Bhawna Yadav

For me the session answered many questions which I was contemplating since long but at the same time, now I have more questions for which I seek answers. I found myself enlightened about how conscience, inner voice and intuition differ from each other; how our thoughts rationalize what we want; how intellect and inner voice contemplate. I am still seeking an answer for how to get into a detached attachment in life. I still do not find a way how to attain detachment but without giving up my daily routines and chores. Seeking more future associations.

Dr. Bhawana Arora  
Teacher, LSR College

*(Editor's note: The expression 'detached attachment' here means 'love without attachment')*

The session enlightened us on the various aspects of Integral Education. What I liked the most was the part on Inner Reward and Punishment mechanism, and how psychic education goes beyond value or moral education and helps in breaking the inner conventional barrier of our thoughts.

Akanksha Mishra  
(PhD student, Amity Institute of Education)

Being a teacher, I thoroughly enjoyed the session. I would surely like to pass on the knowledge I gained through the session. Integral Education can surely be one of the rescue points for our continuously degrading education system.

Ranjana Mishra  
(Teacher)



## Feedback from Visitors from the USA

*A group of 6 Yoga enthusiasts from the US led by Mr. Jogi Bhagat stayed in the Ashram and attended sessions on Sri Aurobindo's and the Mothe's life-affirming spiritual philosophy on 13 & 14 October 2018*



This was my first exposure to these ideas. So, I have a lot to absorb. Thank you for the presentations. I look forward to reading my notes and your writing.

Ruthie Powers

First of all I wish to thank you for the time you devoted to us and for your spirit. What I liked the most was the last session about the purpose of life and the practical list of how to “manage stress” in a spiritual way.

Josefina Castillo

Very inspirational sessions, giving reasons to re-evaluate life. I thank you for your time and inspiration.

Rekina Firstenberg

I appreciate the time you shared with us and your preparations on the topics of this weekend.

I am taking with me a lot of knowledge and looking forward to apply what was taught.

Lizbeth Rodriguez Hellen

I enjoyed the presentations. I especially enjoyed the music selections played at the beginning of the sessions. The PowerPoint was helpful and useful; I especially enjoyed the books for children that you read to us.

Susan Downs

It was a true gift to be able to spend so much time with you. You have a true tutorial style where insights arise sometimes rather unexpectedly. That can take a lot of time, but I believe that true learning can happen that way.

Patricia Hadden

### **Feedback from Visitors**

Dear Tara Didi,

It was a pleasure staying at The Delhi Ashram. I cannot thank you enough for accommodating us in your busy schedule. It reminded me of the days when we used to visit the Nainital and Delhi Ashram in our young age. We started aspiring for the Mother's and Sri Aurobindo's philosophy in those days.

As per our discussion, we look forward for arranging spiritual camps as well as youth camps at Nainital.

Kalpesh Joshi  
(in an e-mail dated 22 October 2018)

Dear Tara,

The Foundation for World Education Board reviewed your report on the 60th Anniversary of the Relics Enshrinement, and we are very pleased that the programme was so successful. The YouTube videos were amazing; they made it easy for people to participate without attending! We were glad to support the participation of the young people.

With congratulations and gratitude,

Jean Eisele

Secretary

Foundation for World Education  
(in an e-mail dated 26 October 2018)



## 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](http://www.sriarobindoashram.net).

For a free subscription to *Sri Aravind Karmadhara*, please send an e-mail to [sakarmdhara@gmail.com](mailto:sakarmdhara@gmail.com)

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

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For information about Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch

Please visit the website [www.sriarobindoashram.net](http://www.sriarobindoashram.net)

**Ashram's YouTube channel:** <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcmF6JzAOsBMdqJjZbnmyng>

For information about Auro-Mira Service Society and the Kechla project, please visit the website [www.auromira.in](http://www.auromira.in)

## Feedback

Please send your feedback to  
[callbeyond@arobindoonline.in](mailto:callbeyond@arobindoonline.in)

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