

The Call Beyond

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International Day of

YOGA

SHOT ON IN 101

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Highlights

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The End of a Legend



Nirankar S. Agarwal
(5 Dec 1943-31 May 2024)

The morning of 31 May 2024 was not just another morning. Nirankar ji, as he was commonly called in Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch, did not turn up in the Dining Hall at 5.30 am for a cup of tea. His routine was to follow up the tea with a morning walk; and while he walked, he chanted shlokas from the Gita, which he knew from the beginning to the end by heart. It was soon discovered that he had collapsed in his office in his chair, and departed overnight from this world. Just the previous day he had finished designing and despatching the June issue of the monthly newsletter, Realization. That is what is literally dying in harness. His criterion for selecting the office was that through its window he could look at the Shrine. Probably it was after a look at the Shrine and remembering the Mother that he departed for some hard-earned rest and peace in the Mother's lap. Remembering the Divine during our last moments on Earth (antakale) ensures refuge in the Divine. That is an assurance Sri Krishna has given in the Gita (8:5)



Dr. Nirankar Agarwal came to the Ashram with the background of a PhD in Chemistry and fairly long stays in the US and Germany. It was his devotion to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother that had made him choose 'the road less travelled', had taken him to Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry in 1968, and brought him to Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch in 1986.

He is best known for giving a practical shape to the youth camps and national integration camps, his contribution to the eye exercise camps, the board games based on the Ramayana and Mahabharata created by him, and his shouldering the responsibility for the Ashram's newsletter, Realization, ever since its inception in 2012. He was a scholar well-versed in English, Hindi and Sanskrit; had read extensively the ancient scriptures as well as the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Although he was rather quiet, he could bring a lot of wisdom to any discussion on a spiritual topic.



Nirankar ji was a private person. He followed meticulously the Mother's guidance about avoiding social interactions. He lived in tune with nature, exposing himself to Delhi's summers as well as winters with little aid from coolers or heaters. He followed

a healthy lifestyle, and was in good health. However, when not well, he preferred to let the self-healing mechanisms of the body heal him, aided sometimes by self-treatment through yoga, homeopathy or ayurveda, or a combination of these. In his last bout of 'not feeling well', he did the same. He did not seek any help, kept up his routine, and avoided help when offered. He insisted on even washing his plate after dinner on the evening of 30 May 2024. After that he must have gone to his office, as usual, where he used to sit in his big revolving chair and work till about 10 pm. But that night he never got up from that chair, leaving everybody guessing when exactly he breathed his last. While he left his mortal body behind in the chair, it is beyond guesswork that his immortal Self would have taken the expressway to the Love and Protection of the Mother's Lap.

Chanting of the Bhagavad Gita in Nirankar ji's voice is available on YouTube in a 3-hour 45-minute video. The video includes the Sanskrit text in the Devanagari as well as the Roman scripts, and the English translation. The link is: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bc9QS2z4aK4>

Nirankar Agarwal - Devotee, Scientist and Scholar

Vidisha Jain

*Om Sri Aurobindo Mira, May all my movements be not for me
but for Thee!*

-Nirankar Agarwal

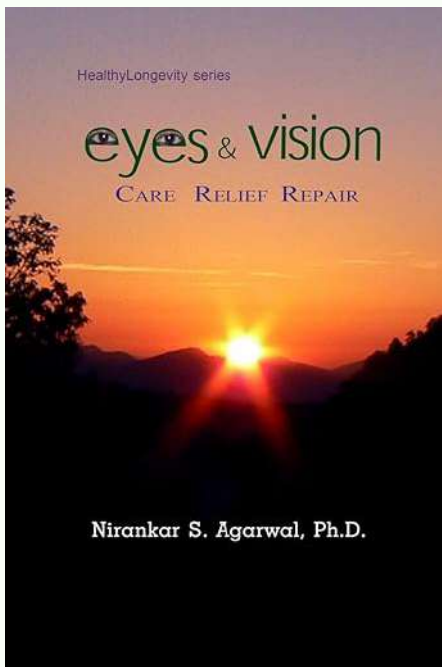
Dr. Nirankar Agarwal was born in U.P. and had his school education in Ramnagar (bordering the Corbett National Park), District Nainital, and college education at Lucknow. Subsequent to his doctorate in organic chemistry with primary focus on medicinal chemistry and related topics, he carried out further research in Germany as well as the U.S.A.

His father was a businessman. It was his mother who brought him in contact with the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. When he joined the Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch in 1986, Tara Didi came up with the idea of youth camps and national integration camps. Nirankar ji was someone whose mission of life mission was to work with the youth to inspire them towards a nobler and more meaningful life. Therefore, he embraced the idea of youth camps and national integration camps wholeheartedly. These camps were his primary responsibility from 1986 through 2008. It was Nirankar ji who gave a practical shape to these camps. He conducted these camps not only at Van Niwas, the Nainital centre of Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch, but also in other regions of the country. In addition to the camps, he led meditation sessions and gave regular talks on character-building and healthcare.

Another pioneering effort for which he is known is as the designer of board games, in the Monopoly format, based on the story and characters of the great Indian epics, Ramayana and Mahabharata. Both the games were made available in English and Hindi versions. The games are designed to make learning of the tales and imbibing their innate wisdom in an entertaining manner.



Nirankar ji was an active promoter of self-care health regimes based on experiential corroboration through 'experiments' on himself. His information came from myriad sources including folk medicine, Dr. Bates' insight into vision, hatha-yoga and shat-karma, Marma Therapy, Homeopathy, and the uncommon commodity called common sense.



He was a man of great integrity and always stuck with what he believed. He was a dedicated worker, and it was in his work that he sought all his satisfaction and fulfilment. He was a very polite, civil and kind hearted person although he was quite contented with his own company and that of books. He found immense happiness in engaging with the youth and was instrumental in giving a new and better direction to numerous lives of the future generations. It is through those whose

lives he gave meaning to that he will be remembered for a long time to come. All those who knew him would miss him.

Sources:

- Personal interaction with Shri Nalin Dholakia
- <https://nirankaragarwal.com/>

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Divine Blessings Enable Us to Attain the Highest!

Swami Gitananda Giri

People often ask me, “What techniques can you teach me to obtain enlightenment?” I can only smile to myself at the folly of the human race. There is no technique which will produce enlightenment. That high state of “Oneness”, of Samadhi, of Cosmic Consciousness, occurs as the fruit of previous labour, as a reward for virtuous and honest and truthful living, as a prize of self-scrutiny and self-study, as the flower of Tapasya. But there are many practices which we can do to purify and strengthen our bodies, minds and heart, so as to make us an *Adhikarin*, or one fit for the higher life. This is where the sincere *Abhyasa* of Yoga Asanas, Pranayama and Jnana Yoga and Raja Yoga kriyas

is important. Not that they in themselves will produce “enlightenment”. This is the subtle distinction that most people miss. If one undertakes an active Yoga Sadhana, according to the Rishi-culture system, with a sincere love and profound interest in the various techniques, with enjoyment and zest, then the Sadhana is performed for its own sake and not for the hope of a reward ... however elevated that reward may be, such as the desire for Samadhi or Cosmic Consciousness. If the Divine so “wills” it, heightened states of consciousness may occur as naturally as a flower blooming on its vine. **If the Divine does not will it, one simply enjoys the Sadhana for its own sake. This is a most necessary attitude to keep one’s Abhyasa fresh and innocent and joyous.** Otherwise, one simply becomes, after twenty years, disillusioned and disappointed, thinking: “In spite of all this work, what did I get after all?” Those kind of thoughts have no place in a wholistic Yoga life lived for the sake of living well, and not for the sake of any reward, spiritual or material.

There is no quid pro quo in Yoga living ... there is no ... this for that ... There is only

“THIS” and “THAT”... Om Tat Sat ... and That is Truth. When we are ready, the illumination will come on its own accord, on its own will. At the proper moment, the cucumber ripens on its vine. With our sincere Sadhana, we cultivate the ground, plant the seeds, and tend the plants. But the fruition of it all ... yea, that fruition is in the hands of the Divine.

*(Reproduced from the 50th Anniversary Brochure of Ananda Ashram,
Puducherry)*



Don't Buy That New Gadget

Money can't buy happiness. Technology won't help either.

DOES technology make us happy? Technologists, business-people, and most politicians assume so, celebrating its ability to improve our persons, experiences, and material circumstances. And ordinary human behaviour seems to answer the question: if technology doesn't make us happy, why do we spend so much time, effort and money developing and buying all the stuff?

But the answer is not so simple. People are irrational about what will promote their well-being, and they aren't very good at anticipating their future preferences. Considering how many decisions about choosing new technologies are based on little (or even erroneous) information, perhaps we sometimes get stuck with technologies that don't make us happy.

The social sciences have been nearly silent on the subject. Since 1974, however, when Richard Easterlin published an article titled "Does Economic Growth Improve the Human Lot?", and more frequently in the last decade, economists *have* turned their attention to the vexing question of the complex relationship between wealth and happiness. Some of their insights can also be usefully applied to technology.

Easterlin and his disciples have demonstrated that while there is a strong correlation between poverty and misery, you can't buy happiness. Despite the fantastic increase in the prosperity of the United States since World War II, most Americans are no happier today than they were in 1947 (when happiness surveys began). Indeed, according to social scientists, the numbers of Americans who say they are "very happy" has actually fallen since the 1970s, even while the average income of someone born in 1940 has increased 116

percent. It turns out that when everyone's income swells, people's subjective sense of what they minimally require to be happy inflates, too.

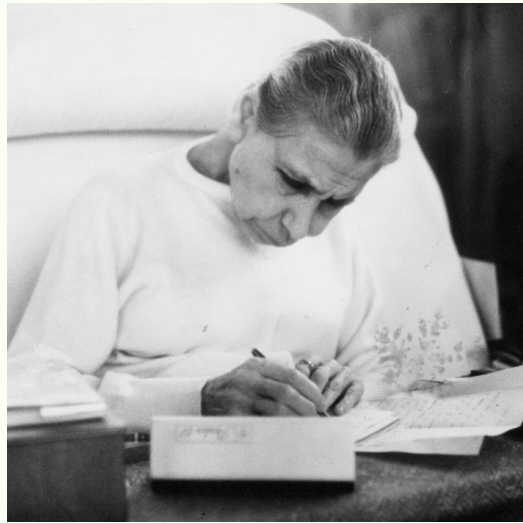
Psychologists call this "hedonic adaptation" – and it works for technology as well. We become desensitized to our good fortune. When international phone calls, jet travel, or broadband access first appeared, they were wonderful things that seemed to clearly make our lives better. But as their price fell and they became commonly available, they quickly seemed quotidian. In no time at all, we were irritated when they did not work perfectly.

So are we happier for new technologies? In one sense, Sure (imagine yourself, hedonically adapted to this world, stripped of all your stuff). In another sense, No. Economists have shown that there is a kind of decreasing return to increasing income. Except for the very wealthy (the Forbes 400 consistently report that they are very cheerful indeed), people who strive ardently to become richer don't report any significant increase in well-being. **Some economists suggest that "inconspicuous consumption" – that is, investment in health, family, or community – tends to have a better return in happiness than buying bigger cars or houses.**

It is the same with new technologies. Purchasing lots of the latest gadgets is unsatisfying: you know that in a few months there will be new, improved versions of the things. But some technology consumption is less conspicuous. Internet technologies like search or social networking are informational and affective networks that expand our knowledge and relationships. Biotechnology and health care offer a better and longer life. They're the better buy.

Reproduced from 'Technology Review' (an MIT publication), January 2005

Inner Cleanliness



Not only is the positive movement of self-giving necessary but also the negative movement of rejection of everything in you that opposes this giving. You must not leave things “like that,” buried somewhere, in such a way that at the first opportunity they wake up and undo all your work...

[Some] have completely neglected cleaning their room; it has remained as dirty as ever, and so, naturally, when the [spiritual] experience has gone, this dirt becomes still more repulsive than before.

One must never neglect to clean one's room, it is very important; inner cleanliness is at least as important as outer cleanliness.

Vivekananda has written (I do not know the original, I have only read the French translation): “One must every morning clean one's soul and one's body, but if you do not have time for both, it is better to clean the soul than clean the body.”

The Mother (*‘The Great Adventure’*, p. 76)

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>

Individuality Matters



The Spirit in humanity discovers, develops, builds its formations first in the individual man: it is through the progressive and formative individual that it offers the discovery and the chance of a new self-creation to the mind of the race. For the communal mind holds things sub-consciently at first or, if consciously, then in a confused chaotic manner: it is only through the individual mind that the mass can arrive at a clear knowledge and creation of the thing it held in its sub-conscient self. Thinkers, historians, sociologists who belittle the individual and would like to lose him in the mass or think of him chiefly as a cell, an atom, have got hold only of the obscurer side of the truth of Nature's workings in humanity. **It is because man is not like the material formations of Nature or like the animal, because she intends in him a more and more conscious evolution, that individuality is so much developed in him and so absolutely important and indispensable.** No doubt what comes out in the individual and afterwards moves the mass, must have been there already in the universal Mind and the individual is only an instrument for its manifestation, discovery, development: but he is an indispensable instrument and an instrument not merely of sub-conscient Nature, not merely of an instinctive urge that

moves the mass, but more directly of the Spirit of whom that Nature is itself the instrument and the matrix of his creations. All great changes therefore find their first clear and effective power and their direct shaping force in the mind and spirit of an individual or of a limited number of individuals. **The mass follows, but unfortunately in a very imperfect and confused fashion which often or even usually ends in the failure or distortion of the thing created.** If it were not so, mankind could have advanced on its way with a victorious rapidity instead of with the lumbering hesitations and soon exhausted rushes that seem to be all of which it has yet been capable.

Sri Aurobindo: The Human Cycle, CWSA Vol. 25, pp. 246-247



Nothing in the world can be understood by itself, but only by that which is beyond it. If we would know all, we must turn our gaze to that which is beyond all. That being known all else is comprehended.

Sri Aurobindo (CWSA Vol 12, 'Essays Divine and Human', p. 142)

Personality is a fiction of the impersonal; impersonality the mask of a Person.

Sri Aurobindo (CWSA Vol 12, 'Essays Divine and Human', p. 142)

The Infinite pauses always in the finite; the finite arrives always in the Infinite. This is the wheel that circles forever through Time and Eternity.

Sri Aurobindo (CWSA Vol 12, 'Essays Divine and Human', p. 143)

Man, the Bridge to Eternity

Michael Virat

Can you feel nature's stillness? Can you sense God's Presence in a tree, or a flower, or a valley? If you can, then hold it, keep it, abide there in the stillness of the Presence.

Perhaps it is there under the night sky when every star seems alive and within reach.

These moments come to everyone and should be treasured. For man is the link between the unmanifest divine reality and the physical world. Standing in awe of nature is more than just a meditation, it is a divine service.

The Mother has said that if we remain at the summit of our consciousness, only good will come to us. To feel reverence for nature is to bring heaven nearer to earth. The heart of man is God's living temple. When we see the sacred in nature's beauty, the link to Eternity is made. Meditation is simply the practice of holding the Presence in our consciousness. When this link becomes constant, the Divine can approach.

Reproduced from 'The Call Beyond', Vol. 24, No. 2, p. 3, 1999



To know the highest Truth and to be in harmony with it is the condition of right being, to express it in all that we are, experience and do is the condition of right living.

Sri Aurobindo ('The Synthesis of Yoga', SABCL edition, p. 358)

Sankhya, the abstract and analytical realisation of truth, is one side of Knowledge; Yoga, the concrete and synthetic realisation of it in our experience, inner state, outer life is the other.

Sri Aurobindo ('The Synthesis of Yoga', SABCL edition, p. 367)

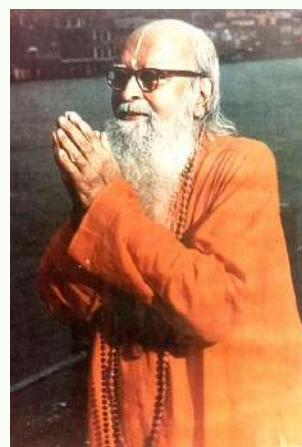
All poetry is an inspiration, a thing breathed into the thinking organ from above; it is recorded in the mind, but is born in the higher principle of direct knowledge or ideal vision which surpasses mind.

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

The Ego is Unfit to Rule

Dilip Kumar Roy

*And what a world is born when the ego rules!
Our hopes decline and aspirations wither,
Like trees whose roots are blasted by the thunder,
And flaming joys flare up and die like rockets,
Prologued by voids, with epilogues of ashes!
A world where no desire fulfills its pledge,
Where fevered hankerings' one antidote,
Detachment, brings such suffering in its train
As will quell even the strongest faith and fervour
Of giant aspirants who, for what long years,
Must climb against the cynic world's derision,
Winning each step against fate's fierce downpull,
And how precariously – through what reliefless
And seemingly termless struggle with their earth-nature,
Paying a fancy toll for every pleasure
Of the flesh! As camels bearing sandal-wood
Know its dead-weight but not its heart of perfume,
Even so we, in this world journey for long,
Carrying, indeed, its burden but never glimpsing
Its flame-import or song-significance.*



*Dilip Kumar Roy
(1897-1980)*

Excerpted from 'The Immortals of the Bhagavat' by Dilip Kumar Roy, p. 113

Feedback and Encouraging Words

Feedback on a Study Camp at Van Niwas (17-23 May 2024)

Dear Tara Didi,

What a beautiful place you have sent me to. A marvellous school to study a subject on which I was almost blank. Religiously taking notes, learning and the quest is on.

Today with a few others we went to the lake and Naina Devi temple and suddenly it rained heavily out of nowhere. Very well realised it was the Mother's action to send us back to Van Nivas, or else we would have been distracted by the town.

Felt very happy to live under Her protection. Dr. Alok Pandey is our spiritual guide in this camp and we are all his hypnotised baalaks and baalikaas. Feel like endlessly listening to him.

Thank you, Taradi, for all that you do to give us a beautiful journey of life.

Ananya Roy

(in WhatsApp messages)



Feedback on 'The Call Beyond'

I read selectively the materials in 'The Call Beyond'. On more than one occasion, I enjoy and benefit from the wisdom that ensues from its content. Please keep up the good work in the service of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo.

I am settled in Pensacola, Florida. We have an active Sri Aurobindo Center guided and led by Shri Rand Hicks, a long time follower of Madhav Pandit.

Many thanks,

Madan Lal Goel

Professor Emeritus

(in an email dated 22 May 2024)



Every choice we make, every thought and feeling we have, is an act of power that has biological, environmental, social, personal, and global consequences.

Caroline Myss ('Anatomy of the Spirit', p. 220)

The most costly energy consequences come from acting out of fear. Even when choices made from fear lead us to what we desire, they generally also produce unwanted side effects. These surprises teach us that choosing from fear transgresses our trust in Divine guidance.

Caroline Myss ('Anatomy of the Spirit', p. 221)

Sometimes the greatest act of love is to withhold judgment of another or of oneself. Again and again we are reminded that being judgmental is a spiritual error.

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

Sorry for the Inconvenience

Dr. Nirankar Agarwal, who had been the man behind the Ashram's monthly e-magazine, *Realization*, since its inception in 2012, left for his heavenly abode on 31 May 2024. Hence, there may be some disruption and delay in the publication of the next issue of *Realization*. We regret the inconvenience caused to our esteemed readers.



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

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

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

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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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Feedback

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