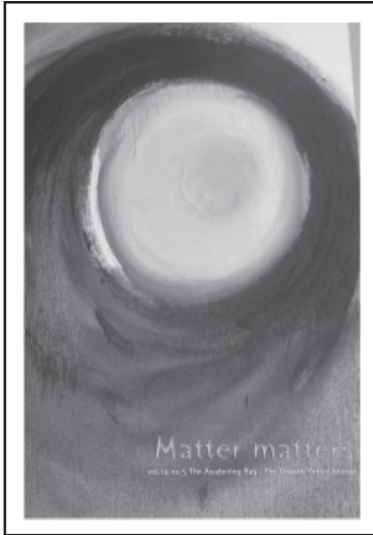


# Matter matters

vol.14 no.5 The Awakening Ray : The Gnostic Centre journal





the awakening ray  
v.14, issue 5 : sep-oct'2010

THE AWAKENING RAY  
vol.14 issue 5

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PRINTING PRESS

Gokul Offset Private Limited

D-159A, Okhla Phase 1

New Delhi-20

PLACE OF PUBLICATION

The Gnostic Centre

H-401 Som Vihar Apts.

Sangam Marg, New Delhi-22

The views & thoughts expressed in the articles are those of the authors and therefore the editor shall bear no responsibility for them.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, Pondicherry:

\* All quotations from

Sri Aurobindo and The Mother

\* Material (including photographs) from the Ashram publications

\* The Awakening Ray image (artist: Krishnalal)

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## EDITORIAL

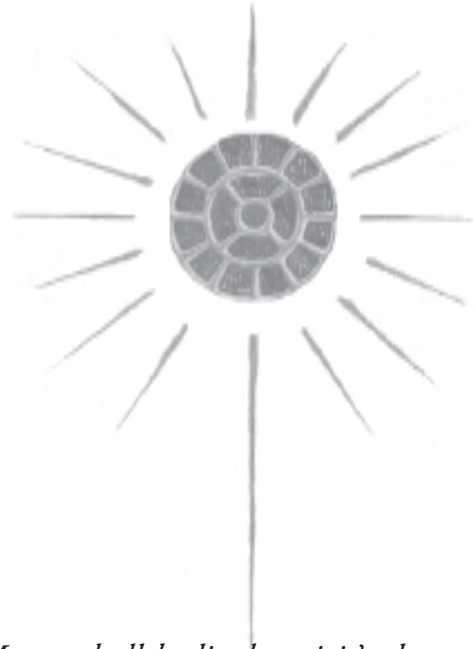


**T**he material body of the Divine was the first to manifest. Night was the first-born of the twins, says the Veda; Dawn was the second. For this reason perhaps, while we seek physical forms to connect to the Divine, we also treat the physical with maximum unconsciousness. Matter is essential to encase the subtler realities – life, mind, spirit. Matter is most imbued with the characteristics of Night and hence veils what is encased. The birth of Dawn in Matter is the reality that awaits us.

This indeed is the challenge of working with Matter. A sculptor perceives the innate Spirit and reveals it through her art. A Zen garden, an instrument well played, a dish well made, a building... all participate in this unveiling. We feel elevated. But what of our daily interaction with Matter? The cloak of Night is dense there. How to unveil it?

Read on... and reflect on your own response to Matter – whether in the life of the body, or the upkeep of machines, the things you use, how you arrange them. And remember... the birth of Dawn in Matter is the reality that awaits us.

~ Anuradha

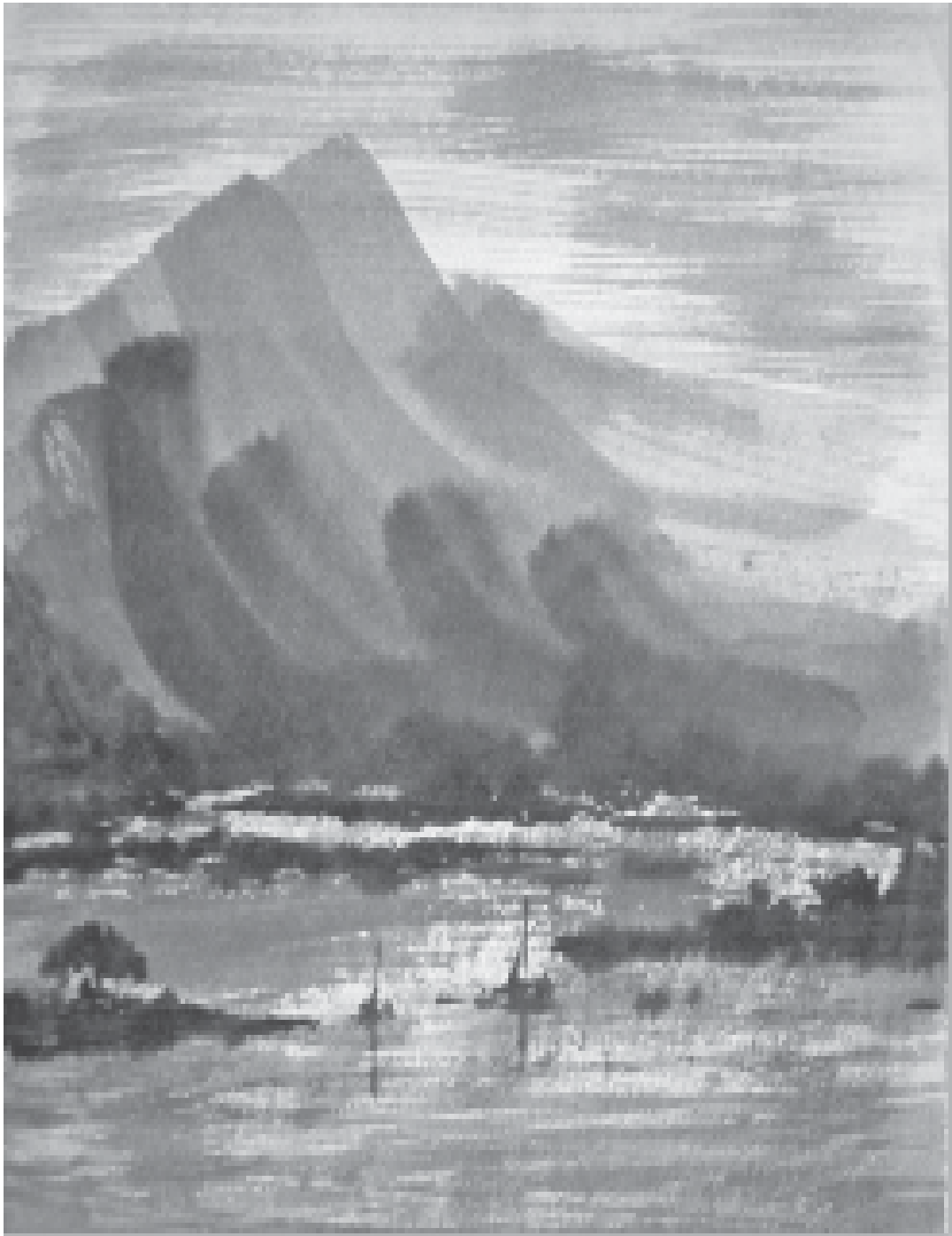


*In Matter shall be lit the spirit's glow,  
In body and body kindled the sacred birth;  
Night shall awake to the anthem of the stars,  
The days become a happy pilgrim march,  
Our will a force of the Eternal's power,  
And thought the rays of a spiritual sun.<sup>1</sup>*

Our material world is the result of all the others, for the other principles have all descended into Matter to create the physical universe, and every particle of what we call Matter contains all of them implicit in itself.

~ Sri Aurobindo

<sup>1</sup> Sri Aurobindo. Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram.



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# THE WORSHIP OF THE SUPREME IN MATTER



In all religious and particularly in occult initiations, the ritual of the different ceremonies is prescribed in every detail; each word uttered, each gesture made has its importance and the least infraction of the rule, the least mistake committed can have disastrous consequences. It is the same with the material life, and if one were initiated into the true way of living, one would be able to transform physical existence. If the body is considered as the tabernacle of the Lord, then medical science, for example, becomes the initiatory ritual for service of the temple and doctors of all categories are the priests who officiate in the different rituals of the worship. Thus, medicine is truly a priesthood and should be treated as such. The same thing may be said of physical culture and of all the sciences dealing with the body and its working. And if the material universe is regarded as the external robe and manifestation of the Supreme, then it can be said, generally, that all the physical sciences are rituals of worship. So we always come back to the same thing: the absolute necessity of a perfect sincerity, a perfect honesty, and a sense of the dignity of what one does, so that one does it as it should be done. If one could know all the details truly, perfectly, all the details of the ceremony of life, of the worship of the Lord in physical life, it would be wonderful—to know and not to make more mistakes, never make any more mistakes. One performs the ceremony with the perfection of an initiation.<sup>1</sup>

~ The Mother

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<sup>1</sup> The Mother. Collected Works of the Mother vol.15. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram.



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# THE PLAY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

*in Machines, Resources, Organisations*



**T**here is no matter animate or inanimate that does not respond to attention. In an institution the employees, the ideals, systems of functioning, rules, machinery, material and physical space all require a certain minimum of attention and all of them will respond to increased attention by serving better. The result is most pronounced where the attention given is motivated simply by respect and concern for the thing and without demand or expectation. The truth is that the Divine is in all things and all things are Divine. By giving attention in the form of mental interest, loving concern, enthusiasm, physical care, we contact and respect the Divine in matter.<sup>1</sup>

## ATTENTION TO TOOLS AND MACHINES

When a tool breaks or a machine is constantly in need of repair or some item is lost – all these are warnings that one's attention to these things has not been adequate. Constant use is attention to material things. As with living things so with inanimate objects. Not only our outer handling of them but also the thoughts and feelings or unconsciousness we have concerning them affect their performance and life-span. It is true from our side that an active concern leads to better handling and maintenance. It is also true that concern elicits an active response from the objects themselves. They serve better and even if lost find their way back. For all matter, not only plants, animals and men, possess a consciousness. But while in living organisms the consciousness manifests itself as growth, movement, sensitivity, feeling, thought, etc., in inanimate matter it is involved and invisible to sense perception. Nevertheless all matter responds to the consciousness of beings near to it. Also like the living organisms, it is in its essence Divine. If one has progressed far enough in his own conscious development, the inner conscious attention is a matter of everyday experience. Many famous spiritual personalities have been known to treat the objects around them as if they were living beings and there are numerous stories of how the objects have responded by performing far longer than is normally possible without wearing out.

Not only objects but areas of space, rooms and buildings respond to attention. Naturally in most cases the response is more subtle, less easily perceptible. Yet most people are aware that some places have a nicer "atmosphere" than others. In some, one feels more comfortable, better able to concentrate, more relaxed, happier, more alert. These qualities are directly

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<sup>1</sup> Gary Jacobs in Dr. G. P. Gupta (ed). Management by Consciousness: a Spirituo-technical Approach p.53. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Institute of Research in Social Sciences, Sri Aurobindo Society, 1994.



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attributable to the consciousness of the individuals who normally occupy the place and to the manner of their behaviour. Cleanliness, orderliness, absence of loud sounds or of the expression of anger, positive thoughts and feelings, the presence of beautiful music or fresh flowers, all contribute to creating a positive atmosphere. Once created, this atmosphere actually responds by discouraging the occurrence of such events or the approach of such behaviour as would tend to disturb or diminish its quality. When established in a business enterprise it serves as a powerful influence increasing the efficiency and perfection of the work done as well as the satisfaction enjoyed by those who work in it.<sup>2</sup>

## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- **Proper usage of what one has generates a momentum of flow that keeps the supply uninterrupted.**<sup>3</sup>

At one time the manager of Mother Estates was finding it difficult to attract a sufficient labour supply for the work at hand. Despite all the usual inquiries and efforts no increase was possible. He decided to examine present usage of available labour and see if some lapse was apparent. During the meeting he found that the men had been working under poor supervision and sometimes without any supervision for the past week or so and that their work output had been very low by any standards. He decided to clamp down and require a full day's work for a full day's wage. After a single day the supervisor in charge reported over a 100% increase in work completed and the very next morning three new men appeared for work unsolicited. He continued his efforts and in the following days men continued to come until there was no longer a shortage.<sup>4</sup>

\*\*\*

About the same time there was a nation-wide shortage of cement because power cuts had reduced factory production time. When the manager tried to obtain cement for building an irrigation system, the government officers told him there was a waiting list of 500 people for approximately six months. He decided to try another method. First he ordered a search of the entire garden for unused cement, anything from a handful to a bag, and gathered about three bags which he immediately used to begin the irrigation project. Then he reviewed the entire history of cement purchases and utilization at the garden and uncovered areas of wastage and misuse. He made an inner effort to arrive at the proper attitude and feelings towards the cement already used and that which was yet to come. Within three days a cousin of one of the staff called to offer 5 bags of cement at market rates. The cement was purchased and utilized. A few days later someone in town offered 15 more bags and a week later another man came forward with 50 bags which the manager purchased. Thus he could complete all the pending work.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> —. pp.59-60. <sup>3</sup> —. p.63. <sup>4</sup> —. <sup>5</sup> —. p.64.



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During the power cut in 1973 there was not sufficient electricity for running the water pumps at Mother Estates. Local officials appealed to the farmers not to raise the next crop. The current supply reached a minimum of four hours per day. Even when the current was on, often the voltage was below the level required for the larger motors. Besides this there were frequent shutdowns during the four hours so that each pump had to be restarted one or more times. Further more, the pumps were far apart and the responsibility for starting them was given to only a few responsible men wasting additional time in travel from one pump to the next. Between all these factors 30 or 40 minutes would be lost daily before all the pumps were commissioned. The staff made a collective resolution that every minute of power must be utilized. New systems were employed to cut down on each of the sources of waste. On the first day all of the pumps were started within the first 5 minutes. Gradually the time was reduced to 15 seconds. The next day there was an announcement by the government that 7 hours of electricity would be given. A few days later it was extended to 9 hours. Within two weeks it rose to 15 hours and finally to 20 hours during the hot season.<sup>6</sup>

- **There is also a relationship between the availability of resources and the distribution of the final product. When the product is neglected for any reason, there may be difficulty in acquiring resources.**<sup>7</sup>

The son of a liquor merchant came for guidance because business had been unusually slow. In the course of discussions he mentioned a \$ 4000 consignment of wine that had been sitting for 6 months in the cellar without a single sale. We highlighted this unsold stock as the major cause of the business slump and requested him to examine every fact relating to the consignment from the day of purchase, to look for movements of indecisiveness, hesitation, laziness, forgetfulness, unconsciousness in his own and his father's attitude, to take a firm mental decision with genuine feeling that wine stock must be sold, to exhaust every possibility for sales and report back in two days. In short, to give the product the attention it deserved. The man returned four days later and apologized for his delay. He said that in the intervening days over half the consignment had been sold and general business had increased so much that he had no time to come earlier.<sup>8</sup>

★ ★ ★

A manufacturer of hand-made paper asked us to study his factory. He said that the local supply of raw materials for the paper was in abundance but he was running into continuous delays in getting his own supplies on time. In the course of investigation we came across a stock pile of drawing paper worth \$ 5000 which had been produced about a year earlier and then the order cancelled. Since then it had been lying forgotten in storage. We gave him a similar recommendation, adding that he should take initiative to remove delays from every aspect of his production lines, including delays in his response to other companies or prospective clients. The manufacturer made a firm decision to act. The next morning a truck load of raw materials arrived. But the manufacturer's hesitation remained and he failed to make a serious effort to market the paper. A few weeks later he realized his mistake and reaffirmed his decision. Within five minutes a man came in and offered to arrange the sale of the entire stock overseas.<sup>9</sup>



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## MANAGING POWER

- Each time an individual or an institution acts according to a higher standard than that which the situation necessitates, he makes a growth in consciousness.<sup>10</sup>

An industrialist was plagued with complete shutdown of his three factories due to a labour strike. The trouble had been instigated by a single man who became leader of the workers and made untenable demands on their behalf. After more than two months this leader was caught in possession of a stolen watch belonging to one of the supervisors. The police placed him in jail. The industrialist knew of this principle for the exercise of power and wanted to rely on the justness of his position rather than on legal power. After great hesitation he decided not to press charges and ordered the police to release the man. The leader-thief came directly to the industrialist. He apologized for his behaviour, requested the workers to accept the fair terms offered and abandon their strike, and then he promptly left the company and the city.

The greatest power available to a man is his highest ideal or his deepest faith - that is the Divine for him. Let his ultimate reliance be on these. Then lower authorities such as law can be resorted to when necessary as an instrument for this power to express itself.<sup>11</sup>

~ Gary Jacobs



*Spiritual thought is crammed in Matter's forms,  
Unseen it throws out a dumb energy  
And works a miracle by a machine.*

~ Sri Aurobindo  
in 'Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol'

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<sup>6</sup> —. pp.64-65 <sup>7</sup> —. p.65. <sup>8</sup> —. p.66. <sup>9</sup> —. pp.66-67. <sup>10</sup> —. p.79. <sup>11</sup> —. pp.79-80.



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# CARE OF MATERIALS



*Mother, why do I lose things so often?*

Because you do not keep things sufficiently in your consciousness.

\*\*\*

It is always very good to make use of things instead of uselessly destroying them.

\*\*\*

It was an act of ignorance.

Received in the right spirit the curtains could have lasted two or three years more. Received wrongly they might have gone to pieces within a month. Things also have a consciousness of their own.

\*\*\*

The Divine is in things also and that is why they must be treated with care.

\*\*\*

Not to take care of material things which one uses is a sign of inconstancy and ignorance.

You have no right to use any material object whatsoever if you do not take care of it.

You must take care of it not because you are attached to it, but because it manifests something of the Divine Consciousness.<sup>1</sup>

\*\*\*



*Sweet Mother,*

*While inspecting the stores I found that the principle of keeping all materials without throwing anything away is not above reproach. The good materials get spoiled under a pile of useless things, because one cannot take care of them.*

*If only the good materials had been kept, it would have been easier to take care of them. Am I right, Sweet Mother?*

I think so. But more than anything, it is the lack of organization and order which causes all this waste. Certainly, if there is not enough room to keep things in order and separate, the good things on one side and the bad on the other, it is better to get rid of the bad things. But this should be done with great care so as not to go to the other extreme and throw away things that may be useful.

\*\*\*

*Sweet Mother,*

*I heard that one can know all the qualities of any material by identification of consciousness. Is this true? Is it possible? For example, if there are cracks in a roof, I want to know the exact cause. How can I identify myself with the roof? Is there a definite method? Is this method easier and more certain than the mental process of reasoning which is based on acquired experience?*

In theory, it is true that everything can be known by identification, but in practice it is rather difficult to apply. The whole process is based on the power of concentration. One has to concentrate on the object to be known (in this case the roof) until all the rest of the world disappears and the object alone exists; then, by a slight movement of will, one can succeed at identification. But it is not very easy to do and there are other means of knowing besides reasoning—intuition, for example—which are also effective.<sup>2</sup>

~The Mother

*For one who knows how to see behind appearances, there is hidden at the centre of this Matter - at the centre of each atom of this Matter - there is hidden the Supreme Divine Reality working from within, gradually through the millennia, to change this inert Matter into something that is expressive enough to be able to reveal the Spirit within.*

~ The Mother



<sup>1</sup> The Mother. Collected Works of the Mother vol.14. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram. <sup>2</sup> ---. vol.16.



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# WHEN MATTER CALLS

In Tokyo I had a garden and in this garden I was growing vegetables myself. I had a fairly big garden and many vegetables. And so, every morning I used to go for a walk, after having watered them and all the rest; I used to walk around to choose which vegetables I could take for eating. Well, just imagine! There were some which said to me, “No, no, no, no, no.” ... And then there were others which called, and I saw them from a distance, and they were saying, “Take me, take me, take me!” So it was very simple, I looked for those which wanted to be taken and never did I touch those which did not. I used to think it was something exceptional. I loved my plants very much, I used to look after them, I had put a lot of consciousness into them while watering them, cleaning them, so I thought they had a special capacity, perhaps.

But in France it was the same thing. I had a garden also in the south of France where I used to grow peas, radishes, carrots. Well, there were some which were happy, which asked to be taken and eaten, and there were those which said, “No, no, no, don’t touch me, don’t touch me!”<sup>1</sup>

\*\*\*

Mother was to visit one of our departments. Naturally the person in charge tidied up things and all was kept spick and span. Old and ungainly items were all stacked together in the shed in a corner of the compound.

When Mother got down from the car, she was received and shown the way to the office where things had been arranged. But she looked round and proceeded in the direction of the shed. On reaching there, she asked what was inside the place. The reluctant sadhak opened the door and there was a heap of dried coconut shells and other junk thrown in pell-mell. Mother said nothing and went through the programme.

On returning to the Ashram, however, when she was asked why she had gone to that shed, she explained that as soon as she stepped into the compound, she heard calls from the shed: “Look at us, look how they have kept us.” And she did find how shabbily they had been treated!<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Mother. *Collected Works of The Mother* vol.6. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram.

<sup>2</sup> MP Pandit. Cited in *Whispers of Nature*. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Society.



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*It is very true that physical things have a consciousness within them which feels and responds to care and is sensitive to careless touch and rough handling. To know or feel that and learn to be careful of them is a great progress of consciousness.*

~ Sri Aurobindo





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# MATTER IS THE HELPER.

## MATTER WAS THE BAR

*To all those who work with machines, buildings, repairs...*

*As I engage with works of construction and maintenance, I am faced with my own superficial and mechanical response to matter, an impatience in the being to take the known way - that of the mind - rather than step back and invoke the subtler reality that awaits manifestation through matter or is contained in matter. Also, I notice a coarseness of consciousness seeping in because of working in rough conditions of the construction site, with labour and with rough materials. At the same time, the joy of a building well-built, harmony of space, an atmosphere of peace - these too I experience. Maintenance is another matter... the following is an attempt to connect to the deeper aspects of this work... .. Hope it finds resonance in your being.*

**T**o destroy is easy, to build is tough. But tougher still is to maintain what is built. We are surrounded by structures, materials, objects. As students we studied that these are inanimate and we learnt to ignore them, use them for our convenience without any conscious interaction with them, unless of course, there was a risk or novelty factor. For instance, when we first learnt to drive, we were very aware of the gear, the brake, the steering... but as we developed the skill, these lapsed back into their inanimate status for us. Suddenly one day we were faced with the spiritual dictum 'All here is Brahman' (*sarvam idam brahmam*). As Indians, we even mouthed it to others. But our interaction with matter remained true to its conditioning – inert, mechanical, utilitarian. This is our daily reality.

As one begins to engage with the consciousness approach – consciously or unconsciously, through a spiritual path or through other means (art, for instance) – one opens to experiences that reveal the hidden life in matter – a perception of something animate revealing itself as beauty, harmony of form, even a spirit of form... a vibration reaches out. You are arranging a cupboard, a shelf and the objects seem to guide your hand as to where their right place is. You and the car you drive become one and when you turn the steering right or left, it is your own body that makes the turn and the car is one with it... a speeding vehicle almost scrapes your car and your own body quickly shifts out of the way as you move the car aside. And then the larger experiences when in certain spaces which are imbued with prayer since centuries, even though derelict now. There is no end to it, if one is receptive and sensitive. But still, it is only a beginning – '*sarvam idam brahmam*' is still a dictum, not a reality lived.

As one engages with bricks, mortar and cement; as one works on the computer or uses the cellphone... one is quite unconscious once again. When things go wrong – telephones not working, machines breaking down, materials getting spoilt, buildings developing cracks –



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one wakes up and dips within, once again... to seek the inner reason for this disconnect. That is the only way if one wishes to be true to the consciousness approach. There is no other. The conditioned response seeks an outer cause and an outer cure – sure, there are many. But nothing seems to work for long. If this is cured, the fault develops elsewhere. One can be foolish and ignore the larger picture – like one does with one's own body – treating only the superficial symptoms rather than going to the root of the disorder (and pays heavily for it later) – but if one has sincerity... one is forced to step back and review. What is the inner cause of these breakdowns? And that is when maintenance begins. Measures which though based on outer expertise, knowledge, skills, yet derive their effectivity from an inner seeing of the disorders and correcting them first within. Matter becomes the spiritual preceptor.

For long Matter was considered a bar to the spiritual progress. For long spiritual progress was shunned by those worshipping Matter. But not any more. Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have established a decisive shift in the earth atmosphere and many are responding to it. Their yoga integrates the two polarities. It makes alive again the Vedic utterance, '*sarvam idam brahman*' and shows the steps for divinizing matter, for practising the yogic way of life in mundane acts. It appeals to the mind – one does not have to leave the world to become whole. It appeals to the heart – one can raise all relationships, emotions to a nobler height. Matter itself need not be a bar any more, it can be the means and the laboratory for a lasting spiritual change.

But this is still only an aspiration, an ideal the mind has accepted. The change takes long. One struggles with one's conditioning. It is so easy to seek the outer. So difficult to accept the inner responsibility for change. The power is mine and so is the responsibility – the most difficult shift.

This is my personal journey. Perhaps many face it. What is the way forward? There are days when the effort seems too big and one wants to give in to depression. But, the being is not ready to accept that path any more. One looks for small hooks, supports to lift oneself out.

At the physical level, a calling forth of the *rajas* (the principle of kinesis, action – through sports, exercise, dressing well, shopping – whatever means work) – not for its own sake, but to bring oneself to a state of enthusiasm; a joy in the effort, a willingness to take up challenges – to string one's being to that pitch. This naturally elevates the vital, the emotional being. Without the collaboration of the vital, one cannot take this on, so it is very important to awaken and enthuse the vital.

The mental will, a reconnecting with the ideal one has decided to live and work for, a sense of self-worth – all these help not only the mind, but also exert their influence on the vital being. Focusing on the work step by step, instead of making it too big for oneself, organising the resources one by one – all these simple organizational steps which one might have learnt very early in life – now come in handy. The outer being feels focused, organized.

And the most important of all... offering, turning to the Power Supreme for holding one in its arms, for giving strength to make a sincere effort, for faith that it will be done – and suddenly all becomes simple – first in one's own perception, and then in the outer reality as well, and one moves ahead with an inner smile : )

~ Anuradha



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# REJUVENATE, REVITALISE, REJOICE!



*“You can’t put a limit on anything. The more you dream, the farther you get.”* Michael Phelps – the winner of 16 Olympic medals in swimming

**There** is a strong connection between what you dream, what you think and what you achieve. Many a success story is based on these – set your goals, dream about them, think about them and see them happen! Well, physical fitness has been an area that I have aspired for at different stages of my life.

As a young teenager I aspired to swim the English Channel. So focused was I that I would swim hundred lengths of the swimming pool daily. While swimming I would imagine the waves carrying me back and forth and I would hasten my pace as if to meet the challenge. While swimming I would dream about how it would be to actually swim in the sea. However, this dream of mine did not materialize but I enjoyed those three to four years of practising for it.

Then there was the stage when I was pregnant; I made sure that I ate a good healthy diet but did not over indulge, so that most of the excess weight I gained I could shed easily after child birth. Now that I am in my forties, I find that the metabolic rate of my body has slowed down to a level where I need to work doubly hard to maintain my weight.

Last year I weighed more than I had ever before (even during my pregnancies). I then set about on a serious plan to shed the weight. First of all I enrolled into a serious yoga class. Here I stretched and extended my self to maintain the different postures. On alternate days I would



walk to get that extra aerobic exercise. During the yoga sessions I practised pranayama which enhances the metabolic rate of the body and also rejuvenates the cells and tissues of the body. After that we did a few minutes of meditation which relaxes and rejuvenates the mind.

Apart from this I have tried to maintain a balanced diet with no non-vegetarian through the week. I eat a high fibre diet which is low on carbohydrates. Also, I have stopped eating the normal sugar and switched to Styvia which is a natural sweetener made from the plant extract.

All these different methods to achieve my goal of losing weight seem to be very easy but to stay focused and committed to it is a challenge. Even in the weeks that I do not lose any weight I have to continuously motivate myself to stay with it. I do a lot of self talk and had kept a target of losing ten kgs and have so far managed five. The bonus is that I feel good, I feel happy and my face shows it. I feel an inner glow that seems to reflect in all the actions that I take through the day and I am a happier person with this exercise and diet regime. So – rejuvenate your thoughts, actions and deeds; revitalise your energy through your body, soul and mind and rejoice in this state of feeling happy and content – this is the new motto of my life.

~Roohi Kapur



*In finite things the conscious Infinite dwells:  
Involved it sleeps in Matter's helpless trance,  
It rules the world from its sleeping senseless Void;  
Dreaming it throws out mind and heart and soul  
To labour crippled, bound, on the hard earth;  
A broken whole it works through scattered points;  
Its gleaming shards are Wisdom's diamond thoughts,  
Its shadowy reflex our ignorance.*

~ Sri Aurobindo  
in 'Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol'



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# Who

*In the blue of the sky, in the green of the forest,  
Whose is the hand that has painted the glow?  
When the winds were asleep in the womb of the ether,  
Who was it roused them and bade them to blow?*

*He is lost in the heart, in the cavern of Nature,  
He is found in the brain where He builds up the thought:  
In the pattern and bloom of the flowers He is woven,  
In the luminous net of the stars He is caught.*

*In the strength of a man, in the beauty of woman,  
In the laugh of a boy, in the blush of a girl;  
The hand that sent Jupiter spinning through heaven,  
Spends all its cunning to fashion a curl.*

*These are His works and His veils and His shadows;  
But where is He then? by what name is He known?  
Is He Brahma or Vishnu? a man or a woman?  
Bodied or bodiless? twin or alone?*

*We have love for a boy who is dark and resplendent,  
A woman is lord of us, naked and fierce.  
We have seen Him a-muse on the snow of the mountains,  
We have watched Him at work in the heart of the spheres.*



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*We will tell the whole world of His ways and His cunning:  
He has rapture of torture and passion and pain;  
He delights in our sorrow and drives us to weeping,  
Then lures with His joy and His beauty again.*

*All music is only the sound of His laughter,  
All beauty the smile of His passionate bliss;  
Our lives are His heart-beats, our rapture the bridal  
Of Radha and Krishna, our love is their kiss.*

*He is strength that is loud in the blare of the trumpets,  
And He rides in the car and He strikes in the spears;  
He slays without stint and is full of compassion;  
He wars for the world and its ultimate years.*

*In the sweep of the worlds, in the surge of the ages,  
Ineffable, mighty, majestic and pure,  
Beyond the last pinnacle seized by the thinker  
He is throned in His seats that for ever endure.*

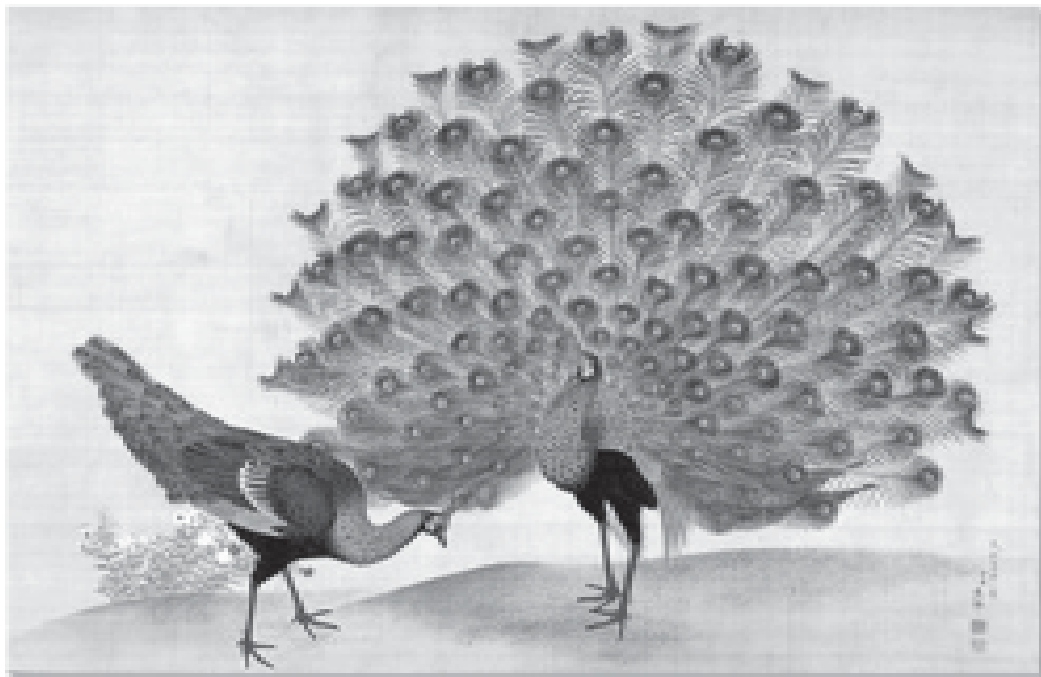
*The Master of man and his infinite Lover,  
He is close to our hearts, had we vision to see;  
We are blind with our pride and the pomp of our passions,  
We are bound in our thoughts where we hold ourselves free.*

*It is He in the sun who is ageless and deathless,  
And into the midnight His shadow is thrown;  
When darkness was blind and engulfed within darkness,  
He was seated within it immense and alone.*



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# THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW BEING



*“Sri Aurobindo belongs to the future; he is the messenger of the future. He still shows us the way to follow in order to hasten the realization of a glorious future fashioned by the Divine Will. All those who want to collaborate for the progress of humanity and for India’s luminous destiny must unite in a clairvoyant aspiration and an illumined work.”*

- The Mother

Darshan message of August 15, 2005

## INTRODUCTION

*“We are precisely not in an age when men have been left to their own means. The Divine has sent down His Consciousness to enlighten them. All who are able should take advantage of the opportunity.”*

- The Mother

I have been blessed with four darshans of The Mother. The first meeting was before I was born! My mother was expecting me and it was her darshan but I consider it to be a double darshan! Thereafter, I was taken by my grandmother and my mother for a second meeting when I was 6 weeks old and subsequently, a year later at age 1+ and then again, at age 2 and ½ years. So, this unfolding journey of the “instrument” being formed started from the very



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beginning, first subconsciously and then with slow gradual growing awareness as circumstances became clearer. My introduction into this world was through Them.<sup>1</sup> In hindsight, it seems inevitable that my conscious journey would be through Their guidance and teachings but at the time of questioning, it wasn't so clear. I took my time to arrive at this conclusion and until then, I explored other teachings but no one was able to answer my questions so completely as Them. I wanted to do my own exploration first and to not just blindly accept what had been right for my grandfather. Therefore, when I came full circle and finally looked towards Their teachings out of my own inner curiosity, I arrived at the conclusion with full certainty that this practice was my exact fit and not just conditioning. In hindsight, it was so clear that the circumstances were "arranged". I was born into an Ashram family and spent summer holidays with my grandparents in the Ashram regularly playing with the other sadhaks and children. I was being "prepared" with exposure in the most conducive place and by the sadhaks who were my extended family. My father and his sister grew up in the Ashram, went to the Ashram School, from a very young age, with direct regular contact with The Mother. My father left as a young adult for further college education and subsequently joined the Indian Foreign Service and became a Diplomat. My aunt stayed on for intense sadhana, after completing her own travel and educational pursuits in France. She was led towards Auroville as her laboratory of work, with the Ashram nearby as her childhood base and foundation.

Although I grew up largely abroad, going from posting to posting, school to school, and country to country, my contact with India remained strong and regular. In fact, I was never "allowed" to settle anywhere and grow roots. We moved every 3 years so life was a constant adaptation and no one country could become home. A living contact with Pondicherry ensued with visits to the grandparents throughout my life. My father had pictures of The Mother and Sri Aurobindo in the house and we received blessing packets and Darshan messages regularly from my grandparents. My father kept a living contact with The Mother through letter writing. It was the one constant and unchanging base. During my formative years I took Them for granted and never asked any questions. The Ashram seemed to be a perfectly natural part of my life and although I didn't understand much of it, I accepted it without question. They were just there, like relatives, doing their own thing! It was their home and therefore it became mine too. The whole extended ashram was one big home full of love, acceptance and warmth. These were the days of few visitors and no cars!

Long before I started questioning the meaning of life, I was fascinated by the occult, past lives, reincarnation and death in general! I had an intrinsic feeling that there was another world beyond death and that we didn't just die and disappear forever. But I never gave it any deep consideration. Only in my 20s did I start wondering about the purpose behind life. I was coming to the very definite conclusion that life was not a random series of accidents but that it seemed to be leading somewhere and I saw patterns emerging. I also realized that things that had happened to me were necessary to learn certain important lessons and acquire certain traits. There seemed to be something else in control that was arranging events. Suddenly I felt that all the events and happenings in my life were conspired!! I almost felt like a helpless bystander who was watching her own show! So I decided that if there was "something or someone" out there, then I wanted to know more about it and I decided to get up to speed

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<sup>1</sup> Sri Aurobindo and The Mother



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and start reading. I started devouring “spiritual/psychological” books, mostly western authors to start with, everything from Edgar Cayce, Brian Weiss to Carl Jung. I ransacked the ‘New Age’ book section in New York. Then, finally on one of my annual trips to Pondy, I started questioning people I knew there with queries I had never asked them before! I started leafing through my grandfather’s books and papers. Finally, I started reading The Mother and other disciples like Nirod-da, and then finally Sri Aurobindo. Once I started reading Them, I never looked back and I started focusing on this teaching exclusively. I instantly resonated with their words and meaning. The content seemed almost familiar and I felt like it was an unraveling of sorts. They answered all my questions simply and precisely and I was completely hooked. I couldn’t imagine life being any other way and everything started making sense. I kicked myself for taking so long to arrive at what was always right in front of my nose but I also knew that it was important for me to reach them at my own pace and not through blind conditioning. It seemed what I was born to do all along and I felt I had to go through these various experiences and personalities in order to arrive at this conclusion. Once I started putting Sri Aurobindo’s Integral Yoga into practice, I started to notice life transforming changes taking place. Everything changed; my perspective on life shifted, my attitude and mindset was revolutionized! I was able to step back and evaluate my journey, progress, obstacles, weakness etc. My aspiration intensified, my surrender became more total and receptivity increased. I started to have spiritual experiences that blew me away!! I started going more within, understanding the power of silence and meditation and using difficulties and challenges as a means for learning and improvement.

*“...when there is no conscious participation of the being, the movement of progress is relatively slow...”*

## PURPOSE BEHIND THE NEED TO COLLABORATE

*“The teaching of Sri Aurobindo starts from that of the ancient sages of India that behind the appearances of the universe there is the Reality of a Being and Consciousness, a Self of all things, one and eternal. Sri Aurobindo’s teaching states that this One Being and Consciousness is involved here in Matter. Evolution is the method by which it liberates itself; consciousness appears in what seems to be inconscient, and once having appeared is self-impelled to grow higher and higher and at the same time to enlarge and develop towards a greater and greater perfection. But while the former steps in evolution were taken by Nature without a conscious will in the plant and animal life, in man Nature becomes able to evolve by a conscious will in the instrument.”*

- Sri Aurobindo  
‘On Himself’



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The purpose behind active participation in one simple word is Evolution. The time to collaborate in this evolutionary journey has come and Sri Aurobindo came to tell us about it. This can be done through His process of Integral Yoga. We need to go past the mental being that man currently is. The mind only takes us up to a certain point and then we go round in circles trapped in a box. We can get shut up in the mind making it our own brick wall. The mind and the ability to reason is our trump card which makes us the superior animal but now it has been exhausted by enough people that many can push past it into another domain, another dimension of acquiring knowledge altogether. The time has come to push past the highest reaches of the mind and break into another realm where knowledge is more direct and instantaneous. We can break past the lid of mind and emerge into another state of consciousness completely. Through personal effort and discipline, we can take part in this transformation process, thereby hastening the journey and enriching our lives by living them more meaningfully. The more we resist, the more difficult the journey is. We can go from conditioned robots to self-aware individuals. We can break out of our still animal humanity and emerge into a more divine race. By transforming our outer nature, we can discover our true inner potential and connect to the divinity within and around us. By going through a process of inner self-discovery and development we can discover the One in All and evolve into a higher consciousness.

*“When we have passed beyond knowings, then we shall have Knowledge.*

*Reason was the helper; Reason is the bar.*

*When we have passed beyond willings, then we shall have Power.*

*Effort was the helper; Effort is the bar.*

*When we have passed beyond enjoyings, then we shall have Bliss.*

*Desire was the helper; Desire is the bar.*

*When we have passed beyond individualizing, then we shall be real Persons. Ego was the helper; Ego is the bar.*

*When we have passed beyond humanity, then we shall be the Man.*

*The Animal was the helper; the Animal is the bar.*

*Transform reason into ordered intuition; let all thyself be light. This is thy goal.*

*Transform effort into an easy and sovereign overflowing of the soul-strength; let all thyself be conscious force. This is thy goal. Transform enjoying into an even and objectless ecstasy; let all thyself be bliss. This is thy goal. Transform the divided individual into the world-personality; let all thyself be the divine. This is thy goal. Transform the Animal into the Driver of the herds; let all thyself be Krishna. This is thy goal.”*

*- Sri Aurobindo*



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## THE VITAL BEING: ITS TRANSFORMATION AND ROLE

*“The vital has not to be killed or destroyed, but purified and transformed by the psychic and spiritual control.”*

- Sri Aurobindo

The vital being is the life force and energy that moves us. A higher consciousness can and should take hold of this energy and then use it for a higher purpose. The vital is crucial and is needed in order to be an instrument of action but it needs to be converted so that it is helpful and not harmful to our spiritual growth. At present, our unconverted vital being is in charge and it is through our desires, preferences, and emotions that the vital is led. We need to tame this vital like one tames a wild horse! Firmly train it into obedience with persistence and discipline. Each time you successfully train the vital (do not give in to your ego), your higher self or psychic being gets stronger and eventually will come forth with a full burst and take over. You strengthen the psychic being bit by bit by restraining the vital with tightly held reins until the vital is completely converted to obey the psychic being. It is an overlapping process where you strengthen one by converting the other. Each successful step of holding the vital back from desires takes you one step closer to uniting with The Divine. The vital can then begin to act according to its true purpose and be guided by the Divine instead of the ego. Restrain anger, jealousy, impatience, greed, vanity, depression and all other movements of the ego, each minute of the day, constantly, until it becomes as easy as switching a button on and off. Fan your Divine spark, turn it into a flame until it is blazing and all of you becomes this aspiring flame straining to get closer to The Divine.

All vital movements are discouraged - this is why when we take up yoga to start this purification and transformation process, the struggle gets so much harder. The moment you concentrate on converting the vital, it rebels by getting stronger so it can get the better of you. One must be stronger and win over the vital being's rebellious nature and not fall prey to its whims and fancies. Do not identify with these lower movements, treat them as a disobedient child and be firm. Do not give in because the vital will try every trick in the book and be very convincing in order to get you to do what you should not do! All the knocks we get in life are ultimately an attempt at transforming this vital. Eventually its hold will weaken and it'll give up enforcing itself via the ego, but not before a pretty good fight.

This vital being is the indispensable instrument for all action done by the Divine through us on the material world. Only when the vital is transformed can one become a pure, strong and useful instrument. The vital must turn and aspire to the Divine for its transformation like a flower turns to sunlight. It must surrender its own will to the Divine so that a higher will and guidance can take over. Until then, the vital is the plaything of all forces and we get tossed about here and there like a ship on a stormy sea.

Physical fitness plays a very important role. Your body must be strong, fit, open, receptive and wide so that it may hold the Divine's force. Without a healthy body, you can do nothing. The old adage of treat your body like the temple that houses the soul is very relevant. Personal hygiene, beauty, grace, strength and endurance are key to do Divine work. Our bodies are heavy and we tend to be lazy, tamasic and full of inertia. We must fight this tendency by



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awakening a need towards developing the perfection of the body. As the body becomes stronger, we feel more energized and we are able to do so much more and an inner glow enters into the actual substance of the body. Our bodies are capable of so much more and must be developed and perfected through physical exercise, proper nutrition and adequate sleep. The mind, body and soul should all be developed and perfected together in harmony so neither lags behind. The mind must be quiet and calm. Your disposition must be joyful and cheerful. Refrain from criticism, judgment, righteousness, feelings of superiority, need for power and personal ambition. Strength, calm, humility, devotion must be your driving force and your attention should be only on uniting with the Divine. The vital must entirely submit to the soul before it can lead a spiritual life. Learn to welcome criticism and the pointing out of imperfections - the more rapidly you will advance.

*“To advance alone on the path can be a form of egoism. One can liberate oneself alone only if the others refuse to follow. One must therefore first offer to lead them along. And if this burdens the advance and increases the difficulties, one should take it as the effect of a special Grace that tests the sincerity of the consecration in this way. The capacity to receive the divine help is in proportion to this sincerity.”*

## THE PROCESS OF CONVERTING THE VITAL TO ITS TRUE IDENTITY

It is very important not to struggle and do this conversion on your own. You must offer these lower movements to The Mother and remember Her throughout so that the Grace can help you through. On your own, it can take forever! Follow the sunlit path of surrender. Hold up the lower vital to the light of the psychic and ‘offer’ them to a Higher Consciousness – The Mother’s. Allow Her to take care of the problem while you remain vigilant. This way is most helpful and less painful and much more effective. The Mother called it The Sunlit Path. Personal effort and restraint is an important discipline in strengthening the Will but ‘reining’ in the vital in isolation without offering and surrendering to a Higher Source only leaves its unregenerate strength exactly the way it was but further buried so you think it’s gone but it is only ‘withheld’, not necessarily diminished or transformed. And it can come out when you least expect it! Offer these lower vital movements to The Mother’s light and allow Her to do the work by surrendering completely. Remember and offer. This is the least painful and surest way.

Two movements are necessary in this vital conversion. One is the movement upward; the vital aspires to join with the higher consciousness. It turns towards the Divine light for transformation. When you rise with the vital from its lower reaches to the higher regions, your vital being fills with devotion and pure aspiration. It can then connect and obey a Higher knowledge. The second is the movement downwards where the vital remains silent and empty of its ordinary movements and waits for the Divine force to descend into it. The force will do the work and the transformation to your true inner self will come about gradually.



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One has to be stubborn in converting the vital. You are forcing a very rigid, old and obstinate change - it is a breakthrough into a new kind of humanity. The vital, which is your life force, can just stop functioning causing lethargy, *tamas* and depression. When the vital is dissatisfied because it is being compelled to change, it will not cooperate and leave you feeling dull and heavy. This can leave you in a dry and passive state with no enthusiasm for anything including the yoga. The only way to get past this is to persevere past it. Ride the test of time by remaining committed. Remain quiet, as silent as you can be and meditate. Call on the Divine to lift you out. Don't react or get depressed. Have faith. If you fall or succumb to the vital, simply get up after every fall and try again and again and again. Do not lose hope. This journey must be your very *raison d'être* - not a side dish but the main course! An indomitable will is needed to press forward along this path.

Three spiritual exercises given by The Mother, which can be very helpful along the way, are - maintaining The Witness Attitude, Stepping Back and using the Mirror Model.

1) Stepping back is a very simple and effective way of re-assessing your thoughts, feelings, and emotions before taking any rash action or word. The old adage of counting to ten before you speak is a golden rule. We mostly live on the surface of our beings and react without deeper thought-processing and often regret it. Learn to step back and be silent before saying a word or doing anything and you will save yourself much angst and trouble. This doesn't slow you down or waste time, in fact it speeds you up as you make less mistakes and have to spend less time undoing the damage or fretting about the consequences. Even if you are in a hurry, pause for a minute and then act, you will be surprised at how much smoother everything will go. Minimize talk to the necessary. Concentrate fully on what needs to be said or done. If someone is angry with you, step back, do not be caught in that person's vibrations of anger but simply stay quiet and that person's anger, finding no support, will quickly diminish and fade away. Always keep your calm and question your motive and goal before reacting.

2) In order to practise the Witness Attitude you need to discover that there are contradictory wills within you and many parts to your being. Very often we have a conversation within ourselves as to whether or not we should say that or do that or we even discuss whole scenarios and play out the consequences too. The part that cautions you against certain behavior is the part within you that knows better, the part which is in touch with the divine or your intuition. The other part that says - sure, go ahead because you will feel vindicated and you need to vent, is the part that is motivated by your ego and desire. One needs to go on a discovery of one's being and its various parts. Self-observation is key; how one reacts to what and why and when need to be explored with detachment. Become self-aware and start to self-organize. You will soon see all the conditioning in you. There should always be a part of you that is calm and peaceful and is watching every movement with a serene detachment almost as if you were watching someone else. That is the Witness. You are watching someone else, in fact, because this is not the "true" you but instead a conditioned bunch of habits and responses that you have accumulated over the years. It should feel as if you are play-acting, you do what you have to but practically, with detachment to the outcome. There is a higher part of you that is quietly observing and guiding and keeping you in check. Pay attention to your intuition, that small voice or feeling that warns you against saying or doing something. The more you listen to it, the stronger it gets.



3) The mirror model is very useful because it clearly highlights and shows you the traits within you that need to be changed. It is rather remarkable that when we have an annoying habit it doesn't bother us much but when someone else exhibits that same habit, it can drive us crazy. There is a lesson to be drawn from this. Instead of criticizing others, reflect upon your own weaknesses and be more tolerant. Almost everything that irritates you in the other person is something you carry in yourself in more or less varying degrees; otherwise it wouldn't bother you at all. This observation will greatly help you to change and also be more patient and understanding with others. It will help remove judgment, irritation and resentment. This model is used as a benchmark for the identification of your own faults through the interaction with others. Their faults mirror yours. All relationships play a key role in reflecting your own weaknesses - spouses, parents, children, bosses, siblings, employees, friends and every other small interaction can teach you how to perfect yourself instead of analyzing and criticizing others.

## THE ROLE THAT ATAVISMS PLAY, THEIR IDENTIFICATION AND THEIR REMOVAL

*“Why accept the obscure bonds of heredity and atavism - which are nothing else than subconscious preferences for our own trend of character - when we can, by concentration, come into a type of being constructed according to the highest ideal we are able to conceive?”*

- The Mother



We get conditioned and gather baggage along the way starting from birth. In fact, even before birth, during the gestation period, one is already absorbing atavisms (samskaras). We first absorb from our parents and then from our environment, school, teachers, siblings, experiences etc. Fears and insecurities pile up. There are many studies today that show how unborn babies in the womb react to noise or their parent's emotions. They are already developing traits in utero! In traditional India, women were treated very gently throughout their pregnancies and great pains were made to keep them happy and calm for the baby's emotional wellbeing. The greatest amount of absorption is done between the ages of birth and five. We are young, mimics, and malleable sponges, completely open for our families, the environment, and school to write on our blank slates. We often notice, as we grow older that we even have the very simple mannerisms of our parents such as how we nod our head or even smile! We absorb so much, we copy, we learn, we grow and we also add lots of excess baggage. Most of whom we think and are is absorbed from outside. Our parents have a certain disposition, health, physical and emotional habits and formations from their own childhood, which they give to us subconsciously. We are very much the way we are because of our environment, the country we were born in, the type of schools we went to, the siblings we have, the life we've led, lonely or



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popular, healthy or unhealthy, rich or poor, challenging or free flowing... every single experience leaves a bit more of a layer on you. And even the best of parents, the best of schools, the best of everything, leave their imprints on you, which then have to be shed. The unlearning process is very important if you are on a quest to discover who you really are and why you are here. To discover your full potential you must break outside the box.

Through the process of life's events we continue to blindly carry more and more baggage until one gets so weighed down by them that we struggle to go on. The need to understand, identify and then start shedding the baggage becomes necessary. One must go through the process of de-conditioning oneself pretty much everything one has learnt has to be unlearned! In order to progress truly, you must get rid of all these habits, ideas, emotions, opinions, personalities and identifications that come from your families, schools and environment. In order to truly know who you are, deep inside, you must strip away all these layers which are obstacles to your spiritual growth. We layer ourselves constantly with the residue of all our experiences. We gather insecurities, low self-esteem and a whole plethora of maladies that can be stripped away with a bit of work.

Liberate yourself and break through your old habits, your old ways of thinking and wake up to your true potential and destiny. Living without control over your subconscious nature, plunging ahead blindly and going through life like an automaton is completely unnecessary. We can move past that sort of senseless robotic life. Understand yourself better, contemplate and introspect on the very meaning of life, why you are here on earth and then you can connect to your own inner divinity and answer its call.

*“If you analyze with care, you will perceive, for example, that all that you think has been thought by others; these are things that circulate and pass through you, but you are not at the origin of your thoughts. All your reactions arise out of atavism from those who gave you birth and the environment in which you have lived, out of the impressions that have gathered in you and built up something which appears to you as yourself, but it is not created by you. We know by experience that if we go down into the subconscious, lower than the physical consciousness, into the subconscious and even lower still into the inconscient, we can find in ourselves the origin of atavism, of what comes from our early education and the environment in which we lived. And this gives a kind of special characteristic to the individual, to his outer nature, and it is generally believed that we are born like that and we will stay like that. But by going down into the subconscious, into the inconscient, one can trace the origin of this formation. There comes a time when the being is fully developed, fully individualized, fully master of itself and its destiny.”*

- The Mother

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## FIND YOUR PSYCHIC BEING AND BRING IT FORWARD TO GOVERN YOUR NATURE



*“Each one of you should be able to get in touch with your own psychic being; it is not an inaccessible thing. Your psychic being is there precisely to put you into contact with the divine forces. Go in search of your soul and find it. It does not make a point of hiding itself; it does not play with you just to make things difficult; on the contrary, it makes great efforts to help you find it and to make itself heard. Only, between your soul and your active consciousness there are two characters who are in the habit of making a lot of noise, the mind and the vital. And because they make a lot of noise, while the soul does not, or, rather, makes as little as possible, their noise prevents you from hearing the voice of the soul. You have to be very quiet, very attentive, and very peaceful.”*

- The Mother

Every individual has a soul or a spark of the divine - Sri Aurobindo refers to it as the Psychic. In most this spark is not felt and goes unnoticed for an entire lifetime. The clamor and noise of everyday life covers it up well for the soul can only be heard or felt in calm and quiet. A few take the time and have the interest in connecting with their soul. As they do that their psychic being develops and a Divine being, which is centered on the soul and inspired directly by the soul, starts to emerge. Thus this new Divine “personality” gets formed. The psychic comes directly from the Divine and is in touch with the Divine so it’s our own personal link with the Divine. As we identify with our soul, a high-speed connection with the Divine is established. Ordinarily, this psychic being lies hidden behind a veil and is not noticed from our ordinary consciousness. It is not developed and until we attempt to consciously unite with it, we cannot know of its existence. Once we attempt to start uniting with it through various spiritual practices, it starts to develop and form a personality that grows like a child and we can start communicating with it. It gains strength each time we attempt to unite with it and as it gets stronger and stronger, one day it bursts forth as an independent entity on its own. Thereby the psychic individuality gets formed.

Our lives should be devoted to finding our psychic being and bringing it forward. Everything else is a distraction along the way, a necessary one for learning, but still only a stepping-stone to this ultimate awareness. We must focus on connecting with our psychic being. We can aspire to know and feel the psychic presence within us and nurture its growing presence until it gains strength, bursts forth and infiltrates our entire being. We need to organize our mind, body and vital around the psychic centre. They do not become psychic themselves but are led by the psychic and become its willing servants. They receive orders from the psychic and carry them out instead of doing their own thing dictated by ego, desire or personal preference. They understand the higher ideal and work towards that goal consciously. They are under the influence of the psychic. Through the process of yoga, we bring it from behind out into the front. It is the very nature of the psychic to turn towards the divine just as the



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flower turns towards the sun. It clings to the divinity in things and shuns perversions. It has difficulty expressing itself at first as it's only a spark to begin with. The mind and the vital are much louder so it doesn't get heard and gets drowned out. Our consciousness is turned so outward and not inward so we cannot hear or feel it. Instead if we learn to look within, into our depths, we can listen to our inner inspirations and start living more consciously.

The psychic being does not give reasons; it just knows. The psychic sees and understands. The mind describes and explains. To bring out our psychic and to give it strength we must cultivate goodwill, tenderness, enthusiasm, joy, sweetness, self-giving, bhakti and equanimity. We must immerse ourselves in these attributes and we can do that through various activities. We can help others through feelings of love, compassion and goodwill. We can learn to connect with nature and beauty from within. We must spend more time being quiet and learn to meditate. We must surrender and have faith in the Divine. Miracles happen with faith, not skepticism. You carry the divine within you, you have only to enter into yourself and find the Divine there.

Although you may not be aware of your psychic being, it is still organizing and arranging your life so that you can progress closer to this awareness. There is a spiritual presence in everyone that needs to be awakened and then developed. But this presence is already responsible for our lives, growth and safety without us even realizing it. Without this presence, the disorders, violence, catastrophes would be so much greater. This presence allows for a minimum of general harmony, which allows nature's work to be accomplished. What we want is to consciously collaborate with this presence and create a maximum harmony with nature and then we are simply carried forth. We co-operate and accelerate our growth by not resisting change and inviting stress. The psychic will create for you all the circumstances that are needed precisely for your next level of growth. Often it arranges challenging and difficult circumstances, which we fly into a rage over but in hindsight, realize that it was needed to get us to the next stage of growth and awareness. It will continue to arrange the circumstances specifically necessary for you to wake up to your true purpose. It will push you past your comfort zone until the divine is born into your consciousness. This is why you might one day realize that life is not random and that there is a higher purpose behind life. When your psychic being is sufficiently awake, it arranges everything, every circumstance and experience, including the people who come your way, to get you further and further along your path, closer to the goal. Once you collaborate and are conscious, the organizing becomes detailed. It gives you just what you need to advance. One must form the habit of silent concentration and descend into the depths of one's being daily.

## MAINTAIN THE PSYCHIC BEING IN AN ACTIVE AND DOMINANT ROLE

*"In the depths of your consciousness is the psychic being, the temple of the Divine within you. This is the centre round which should come about the unification of all these divergent parts, all these contradictory*



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*movements of your being. Once you have got the consciousness of the psychic being and its aspiration, these doubts and difficulties can be destroyed. It takes more or less time, but you will surely succeed in the end. Once you have turned to the Divine, saying, "I want to be yours", and the Divine has said, "Yes", the whole world cannot keep you from it. When the central being has made its surrender, the chief difficulty has disappeared. The outer being is like a crust. In ordinary people the crust is so hard and thick that they are not conscious of the Divine within them. If once, even for a moment only, the inner being has said, "I am here and I am yours", then it is as though a bridge has been built and little by little the crust becomes thinner and thinner until the two parts are wholly joined and the inner and the outer become one."*

- The Mother

The discovery of the psychic being is a very definite and concrete fact and all who have had the experience know. When it awakens, it influences the rest of the being and starts to change you so that you may become a true expression of your soul. If the psychic being comes out then the conversion becomes easy or even instantaneous. If the psychic does not come to the front, if your contact with your "soul" is not established, then nothing concrete has been done. That is why Sri Aurobindo advocates the psychic change first, for that means the purification of the heart and everything else follows naturally over the course of time.

By going deep within and connecting with your soul, you can become aware of it and then you can follow its dictates. Once this connection is felt and the flame is kept burning, you start feeling its presence clearly. Circumstances do arrange themselves, right people show up and generally everything starts organizing itself as if a benevolent higher will were at work. There is an emotion that one experiences with the growing psychic presence, which is of a different quality. It could be described as empathy or an identification and connection to All but with a sense of calm, peace and joy. A psychic love is felt but it is an unemotional love, in a detached way and with a strong sense of discernment. It is an emotion that washes over you and comes and goes depending on your inner state. It is an emotion of another vibration that you haven't felt before therefore it is hard to put in words. Psychic emotion is one of the most powerful helps, it is the lever to strengthen and bring out the psychic; bringing forth tears of emotion, which result out of bhakti and devotion, which ought not to be suppressed. The "don't do it" voice, which we call intuition, comes from the psychic. This voice or feeling comes often but mostly we discard it and follow our impulsive wishes. If you don't disregard this voice or sense, it becomes stronger and comes frequently. Learn to listen, learn to discriminate and obey; it is an immense help along the way.

Compassion and gratitude are psychic qualities when they are purely expressed without tinges of pity, charity or condescension. An ease and peace is felt at a very deep level and a sense of joy and contentment is strong and stable. Goodwill towards all is felt, this does not remove discernment, but judgments are not present either. An appreciation for beauty and nature that move the soul and an ability to connect with nature and feel divinity everywhere is felt. A strong sense of the aesthetic, creativity and organization develop. New talents or latent talents



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emerge. The influence of the psychic gives balance. One feels more alive, more full of force and joy. One is in harmony with nature, the rhythms of the world; everything lives and starts to vibrate with you. One is in a joyful serenity and full of energy and enthusiasm. One must be in a certain state of receptivity to feel this way. Inspiration can be obtained at will. Turn towards Truth, Beauty and Goodwill; it is always the soul in us that turns towards these attributes. Gradually you will strengthen your psychic being and it will grow in stature.

You can awaken the inner consciousness through meditation. The ordinary consciousness lives on the surface of our being and is full of activity. This veils our real self. There is another deeper hidden consciousness, behind the surface, which we need to become aware of. We need to discover our soul and liberate and transform our nature through this awareness and awakening. To quiet the surface mind and to begin to live within is the object of this concentration. There are two main centers for this concentration or meditation; one is in the heart and the other is in the head. One should concentrate naturally where one is most comfortable but the heart centre is the easier and safer route, otherwise one can get shut up in the mind. Concentrate, go deep within and widen yourself, lose the sense of limitation. This must be done regularly and in deep tranquility. This effort must be repeated persistently for results just as you go to the gym to keep fit. By the action of Grace, the veil may suddenly be rent from within and at once you can enter into the truth. A single minute of true experience teaches us more than millions of words and hundreds of explanations. You are changed forever.

Each person represents a certain special quality or capacity, a particular achievement to be embodied. The way this is done is by setting an opposition to it. That is how a power is increased and strengthened – by fighting against and overcoming all that weakens and contradicts it. It is the hammer that beats the weak and soft iron to transform it into hard steel. The preliminary discord is useful and needs to be utilized for a higher harmony. This is the secret of self-conflict in man. You are weakest precisely in that element which is destined to be your greatest asset. This you have to learn and acquire through life experiences. There are certain activities and dispositions that push us outside our small limited selves, that open a door to something greater and cause you to step outside of your ego - an act of kindness perhaps, a sense of gratitude for life, creative abilities for art or music, etc. It's the part of the being which enthuses over something. The capacity for enthusiasm and joy must be developed and maintained, a participation of the whole being. When this state is active, something in the being awakens which can connect him to his source, the Divine. An innate state of gratitude, warmth, devotion, joy and a feeling of marvel towards life can make you reach higher heights. Connecting to beauty and nature not from a place of ownership but from a place of simple appreciation for the glory of life and existence. The contact with the psychic can be very frequent under these states and you have a sense of being carried, a deep feeling of security and belonging. This develops gradually with personal effort. Always carry the capacity for enthusiasm, something that removes you from your mean little ego and a gratitude that puts you in a state of thanksgiving. These are the two most powerful levers to enter into the psychic. Depression and fear are your biggest roadblocks.

The first thing to do is to realize what role you have to play, your particular mission and the capacity or quality you have to express. You have to discover that and also the things that oppose (your fears) and do not allow the psychic to flower or come to full manifestation. You



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must be absolutely sincere and impartial to do that. Cultivate a perfect sincerity and remain inwardly calm. You must observe yourself as if you were observing a third person. If you are able to maintain such an attitude of repose and quiet trust, then something may be revealed to you. That is how your secret truth of being will appear and present itself. At your first contact, you will start to see the true qualities of your being and the traits of your divine personality, what you really are and what you are meant to be. You will no longer be able to live with certain flaws and will start to change yourself actively.

## CONCLUSION

I've been blessed by being born in a family which gave me an instant introduction to The Mother and Sri Aurobindo. My entire life's journey, in hindsight, has been an unraveling of this connection I have with Them and since the past 10 years I have immersed myself in Their teachings consciously.

Having one foot in Pondicherry despite living abroad and being a part of the inner ashram life during regular visits kept this contact living and strong on many levels, which I was never aware of. I spent my holidays playing on the Ashram grounds and running with the other kids around. It was a much more quiet and intimate place than with few visitors.

On the other side, I was exposed to American schools in various countries all over the world, quite a juxtaposition indeed. And yes, I was rather confused for many years about my identity! A rebellious teenager and then a new being emerged after my car accident just prior to my 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. These beings evolved naturally without my awareness. It's only in hindsight that I recognized the value of all circumstances and realized they were new births.

My personal and conscious journey had started and all the 'behind the scenes' activity of the past became clear and several patterns emerged. If I look back to 10 years ago, I can barely recognize who I was. In fact, I've undergone so many new "births" throughout my life that I sometimes wonder how I recognize myself at all! I realize that I was none of those beings and the journey to bring forth the "real" being is on with full force. I am completely immersed in this process of transforming my nature and bringing out my Psychic Being. Some say I'm obsessed with it and have become very boring and annoying! This is the only purpose to my life, my *raison d'être*. My faith, my surrender, and my aspiration, have all increased manifold and there is no shred of doubt in me. I'm better able to identify my weaknesses, fears, atavisms and I'm always working towards change in order to become more conscious of my inner soul's workings. Of course, I fall and stumble and get distracted along the way regularly, but I always return to my foundation and start again without losing resolve.

~ Robini Verma

This is the final research monograph submitted for the ICIS online PG Certificate course: 'Explorations towards a New Creation of the Self' facilitated by Ameeta Mehra.



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# UPCOMING EVENTS

## ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES FOR 6-10 YEAR OLDS

14 November to 12 December - on Sundays, 9.45am to 12.45pm  
Facilitated by Durjee

## OVERNIGHT CAMP FOR 6-10 YEAR OLDS

27-28 November ; Facilitated by Sunaina & Durjee

## TALKS BY RICHARD HARTZ

13-19 December

## INTEGRAL EDUCATION RESIDENTIAL CAMP

26-30 December ; Facilitated by Anuradha

## SPECIAL MEDITATIONS

- 5 November : Deepawali
- 17 November : The Mother's mahasamadhi
- 24 November : Siddhi Day (Darshan day)
- 5 December : Sri Aurobindo's mahasamadhi

## ONLINE POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES & COURSES

February to July 2011 semester

- **Introduction to Sanskrit** ; facilitated by Vladimir Yatsenko
- **Paradigms of Psychological Knowledge** ; facilitated by Suneet Varma, PhD
- **Introduction to Integral Studies** ; facilitated by Monica Gupta

*Other courses - on Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagawad Gita - available on request*

# EVENTS

## September-October

## INTRODUCTION TO INTEGRAL EDUCATION

- 15 October : A full-day session by Anuradha, with teachers from Government Schools of Karnataka, and Mirambika teacher-trainees, at Sri Aurobindo Ashram (Delhi)
- 20 October : A two-hour session by Anuradha, with teacher-students of Pallavan

## ATTITUDES OF A TRUE TEACHER

4 September : A Talk by Ameeta Mehra  
for teachers of Amity Schools, at Amity School, Saket (Delhi)

## NADAKA & GOPIKA IN CONCERT

25 September : A Music Concert by Nadaka, Gopika and Keshava from Auroville



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than to be always truthful.”**

The Mother

*with best wishes*

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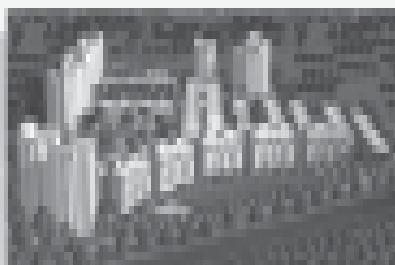


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