

# THE CALL BEYOND

Volume 45 No.9

15 September 2020



## Goodness

A day spent without doing a good deed is a day without a soul.

*The Mother*

## *Highlights*

*My Goodness! What is Good? ... Page 7*

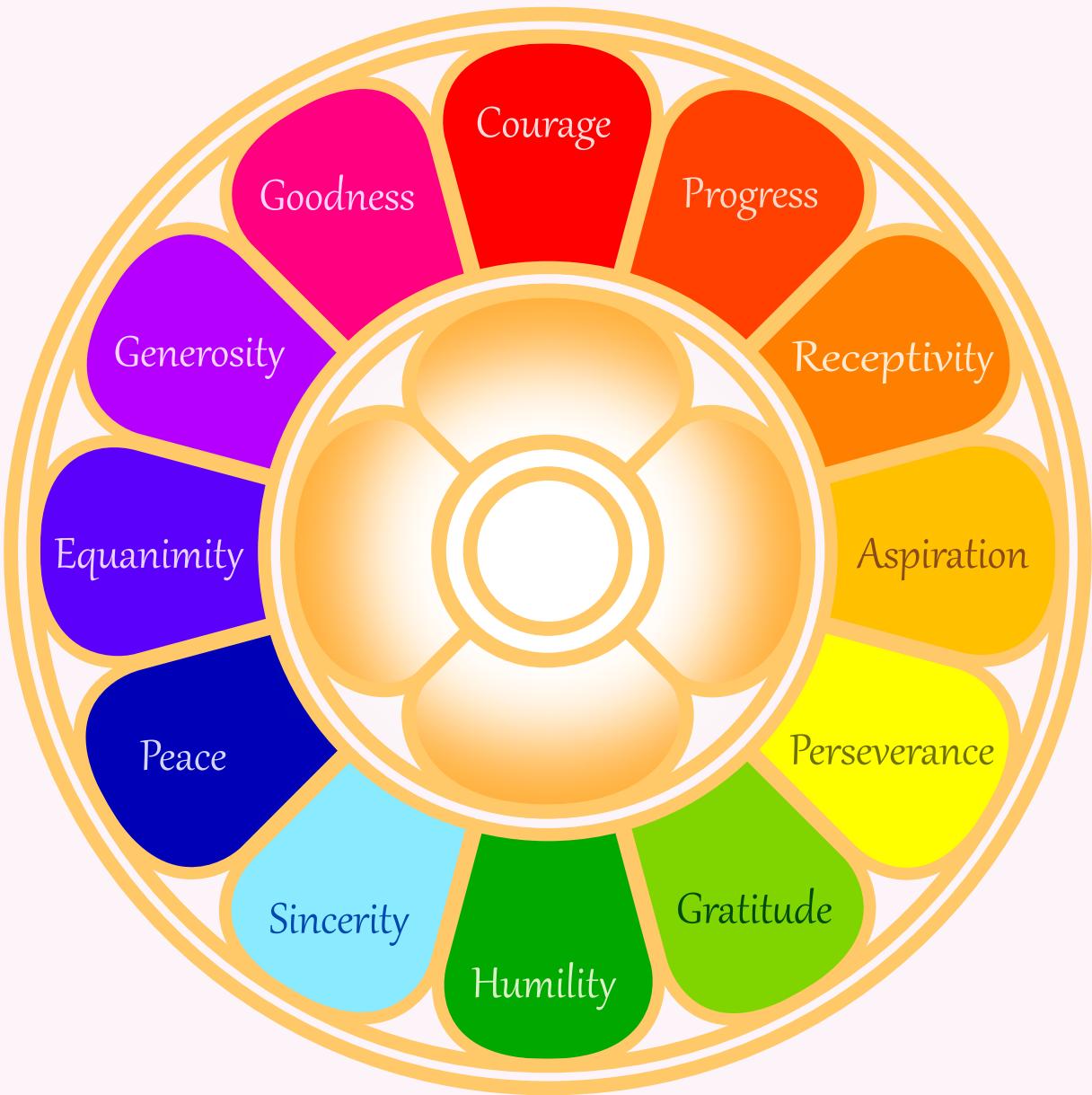
*Parenting, as it Could Be, Should Be and Would Be ... Page 10*

*Charged with the Spirit, Rooted in the Earth ... Page 20*

*Am I Unfit for Spiritual Life? ... Page 24*



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SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM - DELHI BRANCH



The central circle represents the Divine Consciousness.

The four petals represent the four powers of the Mother.

The twelve petals represent the twelve powers of the Mother manifested for Her work.

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## Am I Not Good Enough?

*A tireless benevolence, clear seeing and comprehensive, free from all personal reaction, is the best way to love God and serve Him upon earth.*

*The Mother*

All of us go through phases of self-certification as well as self-flagellation. While we do have occasional moments of humbling introspection that make us hate ourselves for being what we are, there are also prolonged phases of uninterrupted complacency. We certify ourselves as being at least good enough, if not the best possible. I am good because I do my job in the office honestly, take good care of my children, pay my taxes, and do no harm to anybody. If I am not the best, it is because there is no time to do anything more than what I am already doing. If that remains the attitude, there never will be any time to spare. Doctors would tell you that that is the reason many old people have chronic aches and pains. When their essential worldly responsibilities are over, their attention is focused on the body, and the result is that every suspicious sound that their worn-out machine makes becomes a cause of concern. Thus, wanting to be better than I am is always a conscious decision. Anyone who has taken that conscious decision has taken the first step on the path of yoga. The equipment for the first step is love. Love whispers to me. Albert Schweitzer describes the whisper thus, "Whatever more than others *you have received* in health, natural gifts, working capacity, success, a beautiful childhood, harmonious family circumstances, you must not accept as a matter of course." Nobody receives all of these, but all of us have received something. How should we accept what we have received? With gratitude. What should we do with what we have received? Share it with those who haven't. In short, give. Not just give; give selflessly, give unconditionally. That is what being good is about.

PETAL OF THE MONTH: Goodness

## We Love to Hear From You

The magazine and its contents are a gift beyond words. Mother's pearls of wisdom and vision give strength and coping capacity in times of stress. I am fortunate and blessed to receive this periodically to enrich myself. Thank you.

*Rakesh Mohan, IAS (Retd.)*

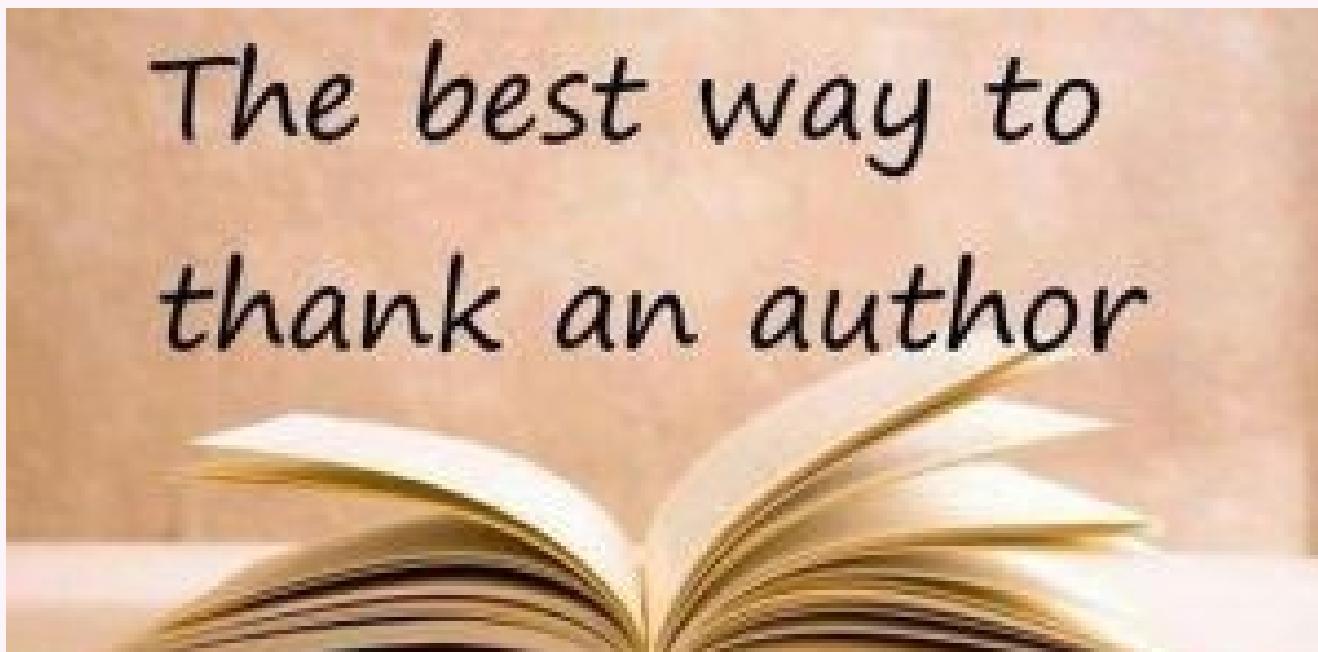
*(in an e-mail dated 10 August 2020)*

I have greatly enjoyed reading your second instalment in the 'kidzkorner' based on 'Whispers of Nature'. You have written things so simply and so clearly and in such an interesting manner. I would like to see how more children can read it.

*Vijay (Bhai)*

*Sri Aurobindo Society, Puducherry*

*(in an e-mail dated 21 August 2020)*



The best way to  
thank an author

is to write a review.

## My Goodness! What is Good?

*One should keep goodwill and love constantly in his heart and let them pour out upon all with tranquility and with equanimity.*

*The Mother*



Sweet Alison, Sweet Alyssum  
(Botanical name: *Lobularia maritima*)

Spiritual significance given by The Mother: Goodwill

Modest in appearance, does not make a show but is always ready to be useful.

'Good and evil are relative' is a trendy statement, but it invites the question: relative to what? Is there an absolute good against which all so-called good or evil may be evaluated? Before we come to that question, let us make a not-so-trendy assertion: good and evil may be relative, but still relatively good is better than relatively evil. That there are multiple planes from which good and evil may be judged is obvious from the different ways in which these words are used. For example, when we call a chair 'good', we are referring to the comfortable feeling we get when we sit in the chair. When we call a painting 'good', we are referring to the aesthetically pleasing effect of the painting. And, when we say 'apples are good' we are equating good with the beneficial effect of apples on health. However, none of these uses of the word 'good' has a moral connotation. In all these examples, we are evaluating an object or action in terms of its effects on an individual. Moral connotation begins when evaluation moves beyond the individual. For example, like apples, milk may also be good for human health, but when human beings take milk, the calf has to be deprived of its legitimate share of its mother's milk. Therefore, taking milk raises moral questions of good and evil. Whenever the good of an individual comes in conflict with the

good of the collectivity, the good of a few comes in conflict with the interests of many, or human interests come in conflict with animal welfare, we are compelled to think in terms of ethics and morality. Many such controversial activities can be condoned only in terms of relative ethics, not in terms of an absolute or ideal ethical code. In fact, all ethical codes are to some extent relative, because they are products of the human mind. Not only is the human mind a faulty tool, it is further conditioned by so many environmental inputs that it can lead to highly variable conclusions regarding what is good or evil. The individual conscience is a product of aesthetic sense, intellectual work, and an intuitive sense of good and evil. Therefore, the conscience provides more reliable situation-specific guidance than a fixed ethical code. However, even our conscience is not perfectly reliable in judging good and evil because its origin is mixed, and some of the factors that contribute to the mixture lack consistency. Mental evaluation, which contributes significantly to the conscience, is conditioned by place, time, culture and the 'atmosphere'. The most reliable guide to good and evil is our deepest self, called the psychic being by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. When we contact our psychic being, and do not allow the mental judgment to overshadow it, we know what is consistent with universal and unconditional love. Only the actions that pass this test are good in absolute terms.

What is the most practical way for an individual to sort out this tangle of good and evil? According to Sri Aurobindo, it is quite acceptable to start with an ethical code as a guide, and to observe it faithfully. But any such code should be treated as a temporary standard. As the individual evolves, he would start feeling uneasy about some aspects of the code that he has been following. Then the time has come for him to move to a higher temporary standard. For example, a low-level standard may allow me a certain luxury so long as I acquire it with money that I have earned through means which are legally and morally

acceptable. But after some time, I may start feeling uneasy with the luxury because many people around me do not have it. Now I may adopt a still higher standard, and deliberately give up the luxury although I can afford it. After some time, I may start feeling uneasy even while consuming basic necessities, because they are also beyond the reach of so many. It does not matter that such people are not in my immediate surroundings; I cannot see them, but I know about them. Now I may adopt a standard that is still higher, and deliberately expose myself to some hardship, and also try to make some contribution towards the basic necessities of needy strangers whom I cannot see and may never see. This process allows step-wise spiritual progress, and also prevents fanatic attachment to a rigid ethical code. Finally, the individual may reach a level where his own inner guide is adequate to guide him towards an absolute good. At this level, the distinction between good and evil is abolished because the individual is no more capable of doing anything evil. Till this level is reached, is there a simple formula to keep a person away from evil? One of the simplest is based on the principle that we try to hide what we are doing if it is the wrong thing to do. Therefore, we try to do it when 'nobody is watching.' If we remember that even when nobody else is watching, God is, we will not do what is wrong. That is why, Sri Aurobindo said, "Always behave as if the Mother was looking at you; because she is, indeed, always present."

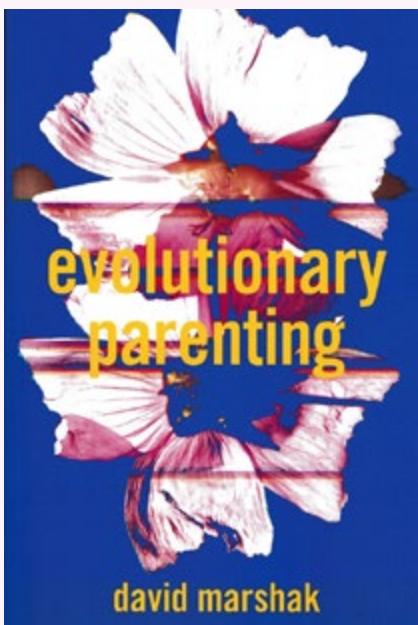
Finally, why should a person be interested in being good? The reason is that we are part of a web in which each part is connected with every other part. It is not possible for an individual to be truly happy unless others around him are also happy, or at least he thinks about them, feels for them, and acts in their interest. That is why, we are happy because we are good, not the other way round.

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*Are we happy because we are good, or are we good because we are happy?*  
-Victor Hugo, in 'Les Miserables'

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## Parenting, as it Could Be, Should Be and Would Be



*Evolutionary Parenting*  
by David Marshak.  
Fairhaven Spiral Press,  
2016, 187 pp. ISBN-13:  
978-0692692561.

*Continued from the previous issues*

*In the previous two issues, the review discussed the five insights that could help parents with a level of consciousness higher than the average provide their children the parenting that would make the child realize her full potential and at the same time make a contribution to creating a better world. After that, the review discussed the general features of child development in terms of three eras into which the first 21 years of life may be divided. The author emphasizes that each era has to be lived fully. Nothing is gained, and much may be lost, if the child is rushed prematurely.*

*The next seven chapters* (Chapters 4-10) are based on interviews with parents with post-modern or integral consciousness to illustrate what motivated their parenting style and selection of the school for their children. Even more important, there are also a few interviews with such children who are now grown up, and can look back objectively and critically at their out-of-the-ordinary childhood and schooling. This is more instructive than any amount of theorizing because, as Ralph Bunche has said, "If you want to put an idea across, wrap it up in a man."

What is it that makes these parents stand out? These parents look upon the children neither as a mere responsibility to be shouldered nor as material that they have to mould towards a pre-determined destination. Rather, they acknowledge that the children are providing them an opportunity for their own spiritual growth. Further, in some cases, they realize as the child is growing up that the child is spiritually more evolved

than they themselves are. One common feature of these parents is that they respect the individuality of the child. If a child learns reading late, instead of pushing the child, they support the child, help the child cope with peer pressure, and ignore the comments of well-meaning relatives and friends. They also show a good understanding of what is normal during different phases of development. Therefore, whether it is dealing with the temper tantrums of a toddler, or the rebellion of a teenager, they try to rise above their own feelings, and resist the criticism of their parenting style by others. For example, when dealing with the tantrum of a toddler, a lady who is just restraining the child calmly and patiently without losing her own temper or hitting the child may be told by her own mother, 'hit him, show him who is the boss, you are raising a monster, etc.' asserts that she knows what she is doing and why she is doing it. These parents also do what they expect the child to do. If they do not want the child to watch the TV, they decide not to have a TV at home. When the child is grown up and they want to control what the child watches and for how long, they themselves also control the duration and quality of what they watch. The result is that when the child is sixteen, and gets full freedom to watch whatever she wants, she has developed a discerning taste, and even if in order to keep up with the peer group, she sometimes watches something mediocre, crude or vulgar, she finds that she does not enjoy it, and decides to stick to what she likes, and to stop caring for what others do or say. One very important thing that these exceptional parents do is to spend a lot of time with the children. As a family, they eat together, they pray together, they tidy up the house together. The result is that they have very good communication. Uninhibited intimate communication established in early childhood comes in handy during the teenage rebellion. These children also rebel: that is normal; an essential transitional phase for the child to become independent, to become a distinct individual in her own right.

But these children, as teenagers, have no difficulty in asking difficult questions. For example, one girl, age 13, asked, "Why do we have to eat organic all the time?", and one day even asked her mother when she lost her virginity. This lack of hesitation to talk about any topic with the parents can save the child from getting into trouble during the vulnerable period when the child is no longer a child, and is also not yet an adult.

These exceptional parents were careful, particularly during this phase of the child's development, not to make an issue of things that will not matter in the long run; the dictum being, in matters of taste, give in; in matters of principle, don't. For example if the child wanted to go for shopping, but her mother didn't; or the child wanted her mother to wear make-up, but the mother didn't; or the child wanted to have her ear pierced at six places, but her mother didn't like the idea; the mother gave in gladly, quickly, without a fuss. In short, be very careful in picking up a battle. Then the battles to be fought will be very few, and if handled with compassion and understanding, will not impair the parent-child relationship. In this context, here is a gem from the book: "*Parenting is about letting go in a conscious and measured manner, not too fast and not too slow – and by conscious and careful choice.*" These parents give values of love and compassion to the children, but do not try to thrust any religion. They may also not try to impose any spiritual philosophy on the child. The result is that the child may go through a phase of being an atheist, but eventually starts believing in a Higher Power. One thing these parents carefully avoid is not to create the impression that making money is the aim of life. As one parent put it, the child may grow up and get a job in which he can make a lot of money, but the important thing is that he should know what he is "going to do with the money." This shows up in the children when they are grown up, and visualize their future. They so often make statements that show a deep insight and maturity far ahead of their age. As samples, here are statements made by

a girl age 17, "I do feel that it's a life of service"; a man age 24, "When I look at what's wrong around me, I feel that I have to do something ... I want to feel that I'm having an effect on things"; a girl age 18, "I need to make money – money is necessary, but that's never been my goal. I want to make a difference, and I know that's kind of a cliché, but I don't want to feel like I haven't done anything to help anybody else beside myself" and a man age 25, "I view myself as a citizen of the world ... I do believe in capitalism. ... But I think that directed capitalism can be even more effective. We need incentive capitalism that is effective for the right values."

Coming to schooling, these parents generally selected a Waldorf school (inspired by Rudolf Steiner's philosophy), or went in for home schooling. After the child was ten or twelve, sometimes because the parents felt and sometimes because the child wanted it, the child started going to a regular conventional school. In some cases, the shift worked well; in some it did not, and the child again went back to an unconventional school. But in all these cases, the initial exposure to an unconventional nurturing environment left an indelible mark on the child. As one parent put it, the experience of Waldorf school in formative years of the child "keeps bubbling up and resurfacing."

The book is a labour of love. Some of the material in the book has been collected by the author over a long time. For example, in some cases, the same family has been interviewed several times over a period of nine years, so that by the time of the last interview, the child was also grown up enough to give her perspective. The author concedes that the book is not for all parents; it would appeal only to those who have a post-modern or integral consciousness, parents who are still in the minority. But they, and the exceptional children they are raising are the future; they are the promise for a better future; and their number is going to grow. This book can facilitate a fuller manifestation

of the consciousness of these parents and their children, and thereby contribute to raising the consciousness of the human race. It is through efforts like this book that the world will inch, and eventually leapfrog, towards the world full of love, peace and harmony visualized by Sri Aurobindo and The Mother. This book review has turned out to be rather long, much longer than I had intended, but it is still not a substitute for the book. If it has kindled in you the curiosity to know more about the subject, get hold of the book; you will learn a lot more.

*(Concluded)*

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*Readers who missed the July & August 2020 issues of 'The Call Beyond', in which the first two instalments of the review of the book, 'Evolutionary Parenting' appeared, may send an e-mail to the editor on [callbeyond@aurobindoonline.in](mailto:callbeyond@aurobindoonline.in). We shall be happy to send them the issues that they missed.*

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*As a matter of fact, everything which in the ordinary ethical valuation of the relations of men to each other ranks as good can be brought under the description of material and spiritual maintenance or promotion of human life, and of effort to bring it to its highest value. Conversely, everything which ranks as bad in human relations is in the last analysis material or spiritual destruction or obstruction of human life, and negligence in the endeavour to bring it to its highest value. Separate individual categories of good and evil which lie far apart and have apparently no connection at all with one another fit together like the pieces of a jig-saw puzzle, as soon as they are comprehended and deepened in this the most universal definition of good and evil.*

*Albert Schweitzer*

## Be Good for the Sake of Being Good



You must not cherish the illusion that if you want to follow the straight path, if you are modest, if you seek purity, if you are disinterested, if you want to lead a solitary existence and have a clear judgment, things will become easy ... It is quite the contrary! When you begin to advance towards inner and outer perfection, the difficulties start at the same time.

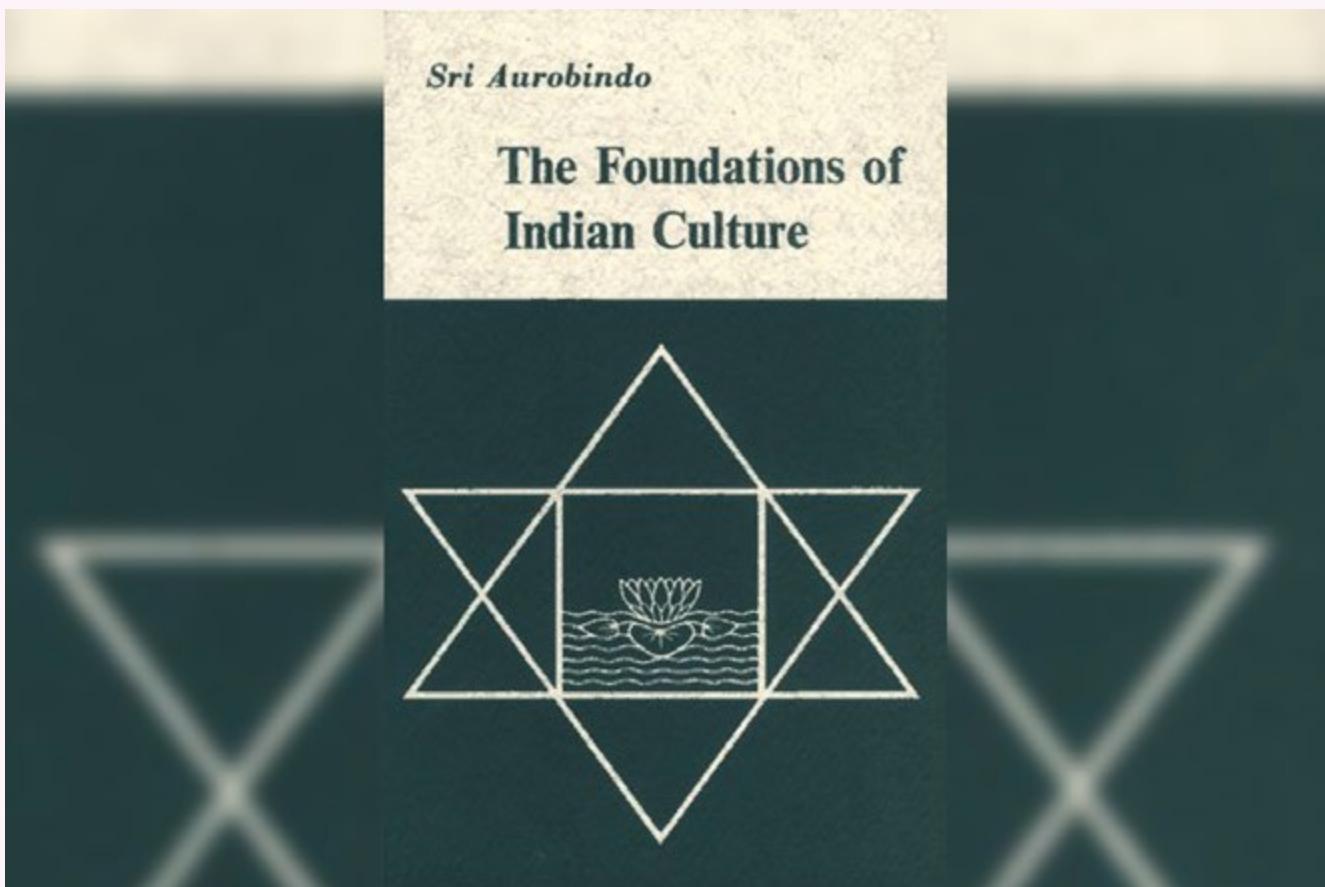
I have very often heard people saying, "Oh! now that I am trying to be good, everybody seems to be bad to me!" But this is precisely to teach you that one should not be good with an interested motive, one should not be good so that others will be good to you – one must be good for the sake of being good.

It is always the same lesson: one must do as well as one can, the best one can, but without expecting a result, without doing it with a view to the result. Just this attitude, to expect a reward for a good action – to become good because one thinks that this will make life easier – takes away all virtue from the good action.

You must be good for the love of goodness, you must be just for the love of justice, you must be pure for the love of purity and you must be disinterested for the love of disinterestedness; then you are sure to advance on the way.

*The Mother*

## A Defence of Indian Culture



The dominant note in the Indian mind, the temperament that has been at the foundation of all its culture and originated and supported the greater part of its creative action in philosophy, religion, art and life has been, I have insisted, spiritual, intuitive and psychic: but this fundamental tendency has not excluded but rather powerfully supported a strong and rich intellectual, practical and vital activity. . . .

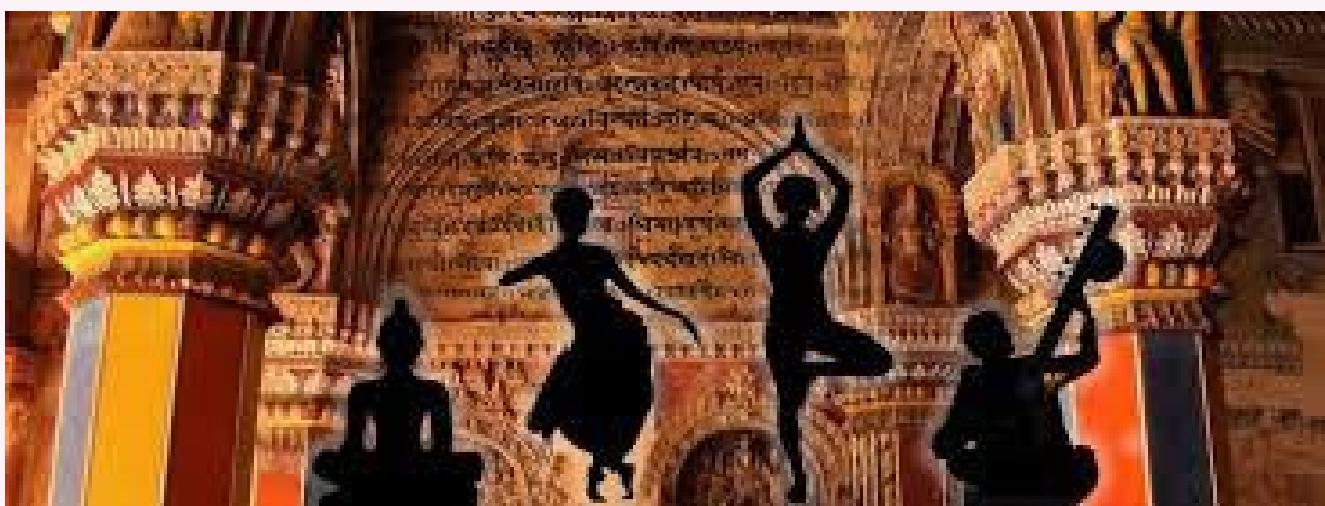
*The philosophical creations of India differ in this respect from the bulk of the metaphysical thinking of Europe that even when they most adopt the intellectual form and method, yet their real substance is not intellectual, but is rather the result of a subtle and very profound intelligence working on the stuff of sight and spiritual experience.* This is the result of the constant unity India has preserved between philosophy, religion and Yoga. The philosophy is

the intuitive or intellectual presentation of the truth that was sought for first through the religious mind and its experiences and it is never satisfied by discovering truth to the idea and justifying it to the logical intelligence, although that is admirably done, but has its eye always turned to realisation in the soul's life, the object of Yoga. ... .

As the Sanskrit literature begins with the Vedas and Upanishads, these later literatures begin with the inspired poetry of saints and devotees: for *in India it is always a spiritual movement that is at least the source or imparts the impulse of formation to new ideas and possibilities and initiates the changes of the national life.* ... .

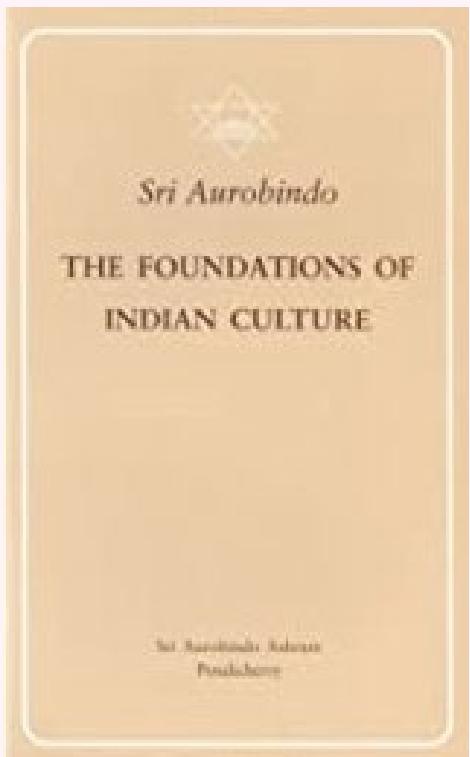
I have dwelt at this length on the literature because it is, not indeed the complete, but still the most varied and ample record of the culture of a people. Three millenniums at least of a creation of this kind and greatness are surely the evidence of a real and very remarkable culture.

*Sri Aurobindo (In the Arya, Vol. 7, No. 2, 15 September 1920, pp. 88-105)*



## The Problem of Indian Unity

*Prof. M.V. Nadkarni*



Most historians tend to underestimate the momentous contribution of Sri Aurobindo to the Indian freedom struggle. I am sure that Sri Aurobindo's place is among the immortals of human history and that his life and work have significance beyond the boundaries of this country and this age. So, I am not particularly uncomfortable about his not getting his due from contemporary historians of our freedom movement, except that this has had another undesirable consequence, namely that his seminal writings on Indian culture and spiritual tradition have suffered the

same neglect which their author has. Not many people in India know today of his writings which expound the fundamentals of Indian culture. These were all serialized in the 'Arya' between 1918 and 1921 and have now been issued under the title 'The Foundations of Indian Culture'. *There is no book of this range and depth which deals with the life-embracing spirituality of India and which shows how it has moulded the country's religion, art, literature and polity.* Nobody who is interested in the future of India can afford not to study this book.

Excerpted from *The Call Beyond*, Vol. 20, No. 4, p. 9, 1995

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*Editors note: 'The Foundations of Indian Culture' is now available as an enlarged edition under the title 'The Renaissance in India and Other Essays on Indian Culture'*

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## Positive Thinking

Good morning

We are not STUCK"  
at home.

We are SAFE  
at home.



When we change our  
thinking, everything  
changes!

"The world is closed  
for renovation, Grand  
reopening soon

*(Source: Received as a Forward on WhatsApp)*

## Charged with the Spirit, Rooted in the Earth

*At first she raised no voice, no motion dared:  
 Charged with world-power, instinct with living force,  
 Only she clung with her roots to the safe earth,  
 Thrilled dumbly to the shocks of ray and breeze  
 And put out tendril fingers of desire;  
 The strength in her yearning for sun and light  
 Felt not the embrace that made her breathe and live;  
 Absorbed she dreamed content with beauty and hue.*

Sri Aurobindo ('Savitri', Book 2, Canto 5, p. 157)



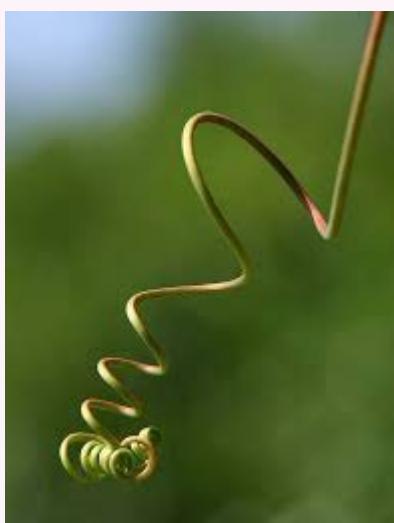
Sweet Children of the Sweet Mother, When the One invisible Creator decided to become many and visible, it had to choose from the endless variety of forms that it was capable of assuming. Even a glimpse of the variety that we find in the stone, plant, animal and man is mind-boggling. While trying to grasp the variety, it is easy to forget that all these are just different forms of the One Creator, and their essence is still the Creator.

The essence of the Creator in Its visible forms is called the Spirit. The same Spirit, in individuals, is called the Soul. The different forms of creation not only have the Spirit of the Creator, they also have the Intelligence of the Creator. But the Creator has chosen to express, or reveal, only very little of its Intelligence in the creation. However, the little of the Intelligence revealed can be remarkably different in different forms of the creation. Today we shall get a glimpse of the way this enormous Intelligence expresses itself in plants.

One thing many plants have in common is that their roots go down, and shoots go up. The roots pick up water and other nutrients from the soil. Shoots use carbon dioxide from the air

to manufacture starch, for which they need also sunlight. How the roots know that they should go down and the shoots know that they should go up is itself a type of intelligence, but it does not stop there. If the soil has less water, or the water is deep, the roots grow longer and try to reach the water. You might have seen that the branches that are growing upward also bend towards the sunlight. These things appear so natural that we take them for granted, and we may not see any intelligence at work. But at the beginning of the twentieth century, a Viennese biologist, Raoul France came up with such startling facts about plants that one is compelled to admit that plants are indeed feeling and thinking creatures in spite of being silent and stuck at one place.

You might have seen plants with tendrils. A tendril is a thin, coiled structure that helps the plant climb. When a tendril finds a support to which it can cling, within twenty seconds, it starts curving around the object, and within an hour winds itself around the object so tightly that it becomes difficult to separate it from the object.

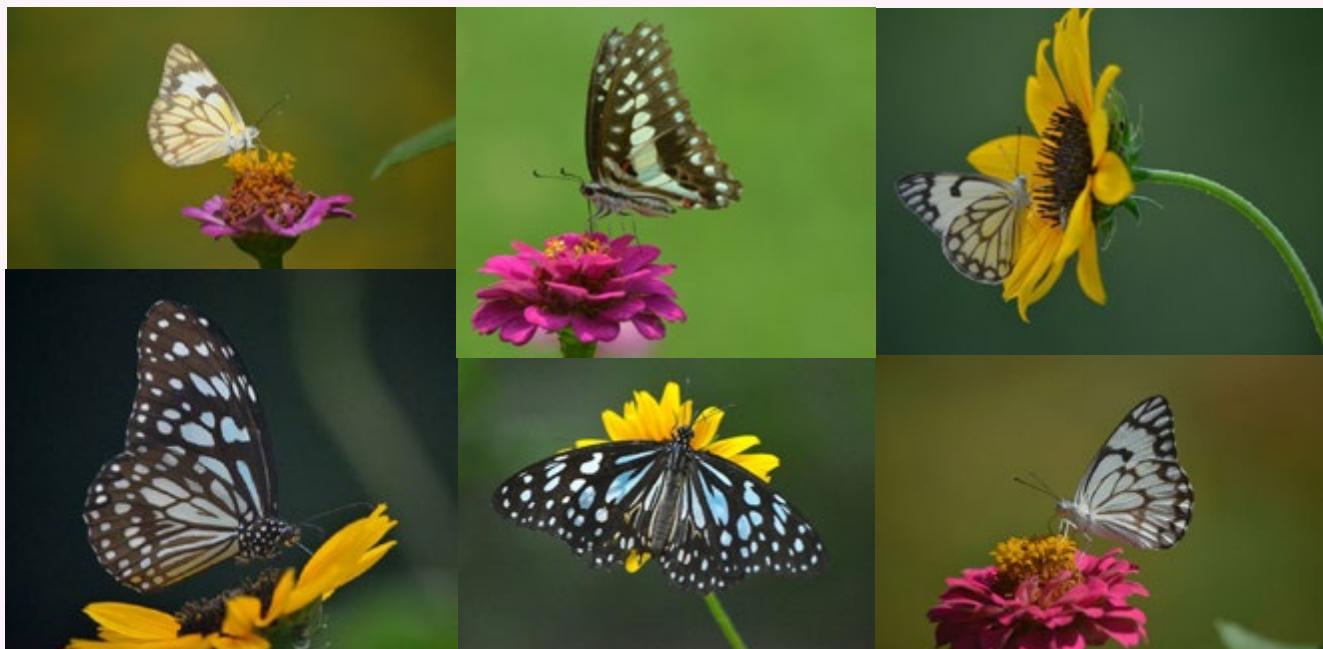


*A tendril*

Some of the most striking observations that Raoul France made were concerning flowers which have nectar. These are the flowers that reproduce by their pollen being carried to another flower, a process called cross-pollination. The job of carrying pollen around is carried out by insects, who visit the flowers for the nectar. These flowers not only have nectar, but are also bright, colourful and fragrant, so that the insects would get attracted to them. However, that

is not all. The shape of the flower, and the type of fragrance it emits, are designed to attract specifically the insects that help the plant with transporting the pollen grains. Some of these

flowers are also equipped to trap the bee that visits them for the nectar, and the bee is released only when the process of pollination has been completed.



*Butterflies spotted in Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch  
(Photographs: Hira Das)*

Flowers that are pollinated by night moths are white in colour, so that the flowers would be easier to spot at night, and these flowers emit a stronger fragrance late in the evening than during the day. Then there are plants such as the carrion lily, which grow in dirty areas where the insects that thrive are flies. Carrion lily emits a smell resembling that of rotting meat, because that is the smell that would attract flies. Some plants also have special arrangements to protect their nectar from ants, who would steal the nectar but would not help with pollination. These flowers close when ants are around, and open up only when their stems are moist with dew, which would make it difficult for the ants to climb. However, the smart acacia plant enlists the services of a breed of ants that can protect it from grazing animals, and rewards these friendly ants with nectar. Finally, plants which reproduce by simply using the wind

to scatter their pollen do not waste their energy on making themselves big, colourful, fragrant and sweet.

This is only a small sample of facts that compel us to rethink our view of intelligence. Intelligence is not simply about solving mathematical problems or writing poetry. The Infinite intelligence inherent in all creation expresses a small fraction of itself in innumerable ways. The way it is expressed is such that it would help the organism survive. Even the little that is expressed is enough to give more than a hint of the Supreme Consciousness that has designed such a variety of creatures with amazing ingenuity.

We shall continue this dialogue month after month. In the meantime, do two things. *First*, keep your ears open to the whispers of the intelligence hidden in all the plants in your surroundings. *Secondly*, if you have any questions, please send an e-mail to [callbeyond@aurobindoonline.in](mailto:callbeyond@aurobindoonline.in).

With love, CB

(Based on *Whispers of Nature*. Edited by Vijay. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Society, 1981, pp. 22-25.)



*The fragrance of flowers spreads only in the direction of the wind.  
But the goodness of a person spreads in all directions.*

*Chanakya*

*Virtue is bold. And goodness never fearful.*

*Shakespeare*

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

## Am I Unfit for Spiritual Life?

*Kautuk Kishore's question is:*

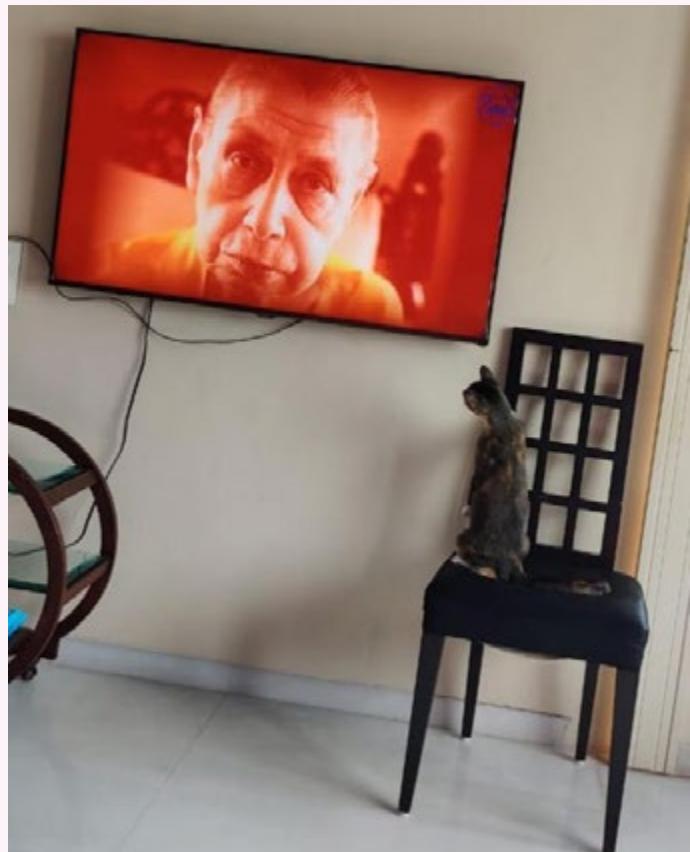
*I consider myself someone totally materialistic, aiming to enjoy the pleasures life has to offer. Does this make me purposeless, ineligible or incompetent as a human being? Is spirituality the only purpose of life, and if yes, how to bring spirituality into practice?"*

Dear Kautuk, Your questions are almost every spiritual seeker's questions. You are a young person, so I shall answer it keeping that in mind. Making spiritual growth the purpose of life is not a one-step process. There are a few strands that run simultaneously in life to reach that conclusion and put it into practice. *First* is experiencing some material comforts and success. After you have experienced some of them, you will start realising that they bring fleeting pleasures, thrills, and short-term happiness. None of them ever brings lasting happiness. Hence, experiencing some sensory pleasures and material success is important and necessary. It does not help if somebody tells you that fulfillment of worldly desires will not bring happiness and therefore don't go after them. Theoretical knowledge is not enough. Your experience must verify it. *Second* is acquiring spiritual knowledge, and reflecting upon it so that it gets deepened -- *shravan* and *manan*. *Third* is your personal experience confirming the theoretical knowledge. *Fourth* is experiences of life which bring misery, failure, difficulties, which you think you do

not deserve, and you find it is only spiritual knowledge which helps you go through those situations with minimum pain and maximum personal growth. All these strands start falling in place, and you reach the conclusion that life is not helped by spirituality; actually life helps us grow spiritually. So, life has been given to us with a purpose. The ups and downs of life, the failures and successes (both – even success is an opportunity for spiritual growth), the apparently unfair nature of life, and even the routine work that we do – in short, everything that constitutes life, is actually there with a purpose. It is all helping, or at least can help, in growing spiritually. *When we start using life to grow spiritually, we start experiencing a new level of happiness.* It is a happiness that is long lasting. It feels much better than the happiness of material comforts. And, while material comforts and success are not always in our own hands, happiness that comes from spiritual actions or spiritual attitudes is always in our own hands. But for reaching this conclusion, all those four strands are necessary. And they take time. *So, along with everything else, patience is necessary.* Experiencing ordinary comforts and happiness is also necessary. As Kabir said, just by giving too much water, a plant will not grow faster. It is programmed to grow at a certain rate. Similarly, we are also programmed. Spiritual knowledge only helps us grow at the maximum that is possible within the limits of that program, and it can help us avoid those things which may slow us down even more than is necessary in terms of that program. *Sri Aurobindo says there are four important aids on the path of yoga: knowledge, guru, personal effort and TIME. Time is also an aid!*

## The Gaze of Tofu

*Harsha Dalal*



*Tofu in a serene obeisance  
To the Mighty Mother's gaze,  
Uplifting itself in an aspiring glance,  
In a yearning for its spirit to raise.  
  
Maybe, in an answer, to evolve, to grow,  
Opening for the grace forever to flow.  
A cat so aware, a sight rare to behold,  
Multiplying joy a thousand-fold.*

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*My friend Arunaben sent this picture of her pet cat, Tofu, intently gazing at the divine Mother's picture. This inspired me to write this poem. – Harsha Dalal*

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## Feedback and Encouraging Words

### Feedback on the Lifestyle Questionnaire

I have completed the 'Lifestyle Questionnaire' online and received prompt feedback. It is well structured and doesn't intrude on privacy. I received very good inputs and it has helped me calm down and bring further correction to living healthier with less anxiety.

*Rakesh Mohan (IAS, Retd.)*

*(in an e-mail dated 10 August 2020)*



*An integral health questionnaire for self-evaluation of lifestyle has been designed by Dr. Bijlani of Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch. Anyone interested in answering the questionnaire may go to the following link:*

*<https://forms.gle/u4D3J4Q68WrpjBTK7>*

## Feedback on the YouTube Channel

We all have locked down ourselves in safe environment of our houses for our own good and for the good of others. But thanks to social media and its positive uses, people like me are still in touch with the Ashram.

I watched the video titled “Wish Macaulay had been more explicit!” I thoroughly enjoyed it, like all other videos of Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch channel. I write to you to especially thank you for this You Tube channel! It has been an anchor to me in these anxious times of the pandemic. Whenever I am worried about the looming uncertainties of future, concerning my son, husband or for anyone else, I just listen to Tara Didi’s recitation from “The Great Adventure”. Thank you for anchoring us all through this.

*Mahima (Shroff)*

(in an e-mail dated 15 August 2020)

The talk “Wish Macaulay had been more explicit!” on the Ashram’s YouTube channel was highly captivating. This came at just the right time. ... I badly needed to hear these words. This talk strongly reinforced that I am moving in the right direction, and more importantly, under the guidance of the right people. Once again, many thanks for your everlasting, enlightening and encouraging words.

*Sonika Thakral*

(in an e-mail dated 16 August 2020)

## The Call Beyond (Spanish Edition)

With the blessings of the masters, we managed to launch the first issue of 'The Call Beyond' (Spanish Edition) on 15th August, 2020. We felt a special atmosphere throughout the whole day, a deep calmness and a feeling of inspiration.

With Love,

*Marcelo*

(in an e-mail dated 18 August 2020)

*Editor's Note:*

*Mr. Marcelo de Aquino Vicente, a devotee who has visited the Ashram several times with groups of yoga enthusiasts from Argentina, felt that it was in our Ashram and from 'The Call Beyond' that he got a good and authentic picture of Integral Yoga. He is charged with the passion to share this knowledge with the Spanish speaking world. With this idea, he has decided, to start with, to translate selected articles from 'The Call Beyond' into Spanish.*

## Feedback from Van Niwas

Didi,

Got everything according to my wish-list. I am getting much more from you and the Ashram than I really deserve.

I have no words to express my sense of gratitude for the Mother's Grace.

*Nalin (Dholakia)*

*Van Niwas, the Nainital Centre of the Ashram*

(in an e-mail dated 11 August 2020)

*Shri Nalin Dholakia, who has been managing Van Niwas for several decades.*



## Forthcoming Events

### Ashram Opening Up

After remaining closed to visitors for about six months, Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch has decided to keep the **Meditation Hall** of the Ashram open to visitors **every Sunday from 8 am - 1 pm, starting October 2020.**

The **Sunday Satsangs (10-11.30 am)** and **Mr Prashant Khanna's classes on three Sundays a month (11.30 am - 12.30 pm)** would also be resumed in **October 2020.**

The Ashram looks forward to seeing you on a Sunday morning in October.



### Appeal for Funds

As you know, the economy everywhere has taken a hit due to the coronavirus pandemic, and the Ashram is no exception. The Ashram particularly needs money these days for construction work. The new buildings will make it possible to improve facilities and expand activities, and we would like to finish the work well before Sri Aurobindo's 150th Birth Anniversary in 2022.

The immediate requirement is for 'Ashirvad block', which would house youngsters going through various skill development and personal growth programs. That will enable us to do youth upliftment programs on a much larger scale. The money may be sent by a **cheque payable to 'SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM – DELHI BRANCH TRUST'**. Alternatively, money may be sent by bank transfer. For the details of our Bank Account, you may send an e-mail to [ashirvadbblock.saa@gmail.com](mailto:ashirvadbblock.saa@gmail.com)

## Contact us

*Our quarterly magazine in Hindi, **Sri Aravind Karmadhara**, is also available on-line now, and may be viewed on our website [www.sriaurobindoashram.net](http://www.sriaurobindoashram.net).*

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

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

*Please follow a simple two-step process:*

1. *Subject: Subscribe*
2. *Click on Send*

*If you subscribe either to **Realization**, or to **The Call Beyond**, you will start receiving, month after month, both the magazines.*

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

**Get in touch with Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch on:**

**Our website:** [www.sriaurobindoashram.net](http://www.sriaurobindoashram.net)

**YouTube:** <https://youtube.com/sriaurobindoashramdelhibranch>

**Facebook:** <http://facebook.com/sriaurobindoashramdelhibranch>

**Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/sriaurobindoashramdelhibranch>

**Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/sadelhibranch>

## **Feedback**

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

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