

NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2013

<https://sites.google.com/site/savitrinairobi/>

Date to remember:-

1st October 2013 – Tuesday – Prosperity Day Meditation at 6.30 p.m. at the Bhavan.

*

Every Saturday: 5.15p.m. to 6.30p.m.: Meditation, "SAVITRI" studies, readings from "COLLECTED WORKS OF THE MOTHER – De Luxe Volume 16.

Every Sunday: 11.00a.m. to 12.30p.m.: Readings from "The Synthesis of Yoga"

Shrine: Sri Aurobindo's Shrine at Sri Aurobindo Bhavan is open from 8a.m. to 7p.m. You are welcome. It is a place for silent meditation.

NEWS

1. On 20th August 2013, Nairobi Centre of Sri Aurobindo Society presented fifty copies of eleven different types of booklets which includes 'True Role of Woman' to the Women Enterprise Fund organization which organizes funds for women to set up small-scale businesses in Nairobi and other rural areas in Kenya. Their motto being – You empower a Woman, you empower a Family and a whole Nation. The booklets will be kept in their reception area of Nairobi office and some will be distributed in the offices of rural areas.

2. Nairobi Centre of Sri Aurobindo Society presented 2000 booklets in ten titles and 200 booklets 'Ideal Child' in Kiswahili to Kenya Institute of Professional Counseling at Sri Aurobindo Bhavan, Nairobi. The institute offers counseling, training and consultancy services with integral approach. It has many regional centers in Kenya. The booklets will be distributed among the counselors, trainees and patients.

3. Nairobi Centre of Sri Aurobindo Society held the seminar on 'Suffering, Its Cause and Cure' on 25th August 2013 at Sri Aurobindo Bhavan. The seminar was attended by twenty four people. It began with fifteen minutes meditation at 10.30a.m. followed by the reading of The Mother's Prayer of 18th June 1913. The chairperson of the centre welcomed the participants and gave a brief introduction on the subject. Thereafter the convener spoke a few words on collective and individual sufferings and invited the participants to speak on the subject. The participants mostly spoke about their personal sufferings experienced by them and how they tried to overcome them with the faith in the Divine and will power. The topic on global sufferings was also extensively discussed. Everyone agreed that pain is a teacher and that practicing yoga, in the light of teachings of The Mother and Sri Aurobindo, surrendering to the Divine helps in overcoming suffering and pain. The seminar was concluded by a brief summary on the topic and The Mother's observations on the suffering and its solution taken from Collected Works of The Mother, followed by meditation and lunch.

Following messages of The Mother are taken from Collected Works of The Mother, Volume Twelve, Part Two, Section One which consists mainly of the Mother's correspondence and conversations with the students and teachers of the Ashram's school, the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education

TEACHERS

To love to learn is the most precious gift that one can make to a child, to learn always and everywhere.

*

The following comments were written by the Mother after she was shown a questionnaire on the subject which had been submitted to the Centre of Education by a training college for teachers.

PERSONALITY TRAITS OF A SUCCESSFUL TEACHER

1. Complete self-control not only to the extent of not showing any anger, but remaining absolutely quiet and undisturbed under all circumstances.
2. In the matter of self-confidence, must also have a sense of the relativity of his importance.

Above all, must have the knowledge that the teacher himself must always progress if he wants his students to progress, must not remain satisfied either with what he is or with what he knows.

3. Must not have any sense of essential superiority over his students nor preference or attachment whatsoever for one or another.
4. Must know that all are equal spiritually and instead of mere tolerance must have a global comprehension or understanding.
5. "The business of both parent and teacher is to enable and to help the child to educate himself, to develop his own intellectual, moral, aesthetic and practical capacities and to grow freely as an organic being, not to be kneaded and pressured into form like an inert plastic material." (Sri Aurobindo, *The Human Cycle*)

Published in June 1954

*

Never forget that to be a good teacher one has to abolish in oneself all egoism.

10 December 1959

*

And to be worthy of teaching according to the supramental truth given us by Sri Aurobindo there should no longer be any ego.

December 1960

*

All studies, or in any case the greater part of studies consists in learning about the past, in the hope that it will give you a better understanding of the present. But if you want to avoid the danger that the students may cling to the past and refuse to look to the future, you must take great care to explain to them that the purpose of everything that happened in the past was to prepare what is taking place now, and that everything that is taking place now is nothing but the preparation for the road towards the future, which is truly the most important thing for which we must prepare.

It is by cultivating intuition that one prepares to live for the future.

18 September 1967

*

Think rather of the future than of the past.

15 December 1972

*

TEACHING

The school should be an opportunity for progress for the teacher as well as for the student. Each one should have the freedom to develop freely.

A method is never so well applied as when one has discovered it oneself. Otherwise it is as boring for the teacher as for the student.

*

There is one thing that I must emphasise. Don't try to follow what is done in the universities outside. Don't try to pump into the students mere data and information. Don't give them so much work that they may not get time for anything else. You are not in a great hurry to catch a train. Let the students understand what they learn. Let them assimilate it. Finishing the course should not be your goal. You should make the programme in such a way that the students may get time to attend the subjects they want to learn. They should have sufficient time for their physical exercises. I don't want them to be very good students, yet pale, thin, anemic. Perhaps you will say that in this way they will not have sufficient time for their studies, but that can be made up by expanding the course over a longer period. Instead of finishing a course in four years, you can take six years. Rather it would be better for them; they will be able to assimilate more of the atmosphere here and their progress will not be just in one direction at the cost of everything else. It will be an all-round progress in all directions.

10 September 1953

*

... What you should do is to teach the children to take interest in what they are doing – that is not the same thing as interesting the students! You must arouse in them the desire for knowledge, for progress. One can take interest in anything – in sweeping a room, for example – if one does it with concentration, in order to gain an experience, to make a progress, to become more conscious. I often say this to the students who complain of having a bad teacher. Even if they don't like the teacher, even if he tells them useless things or if he is not up to the mark, they can always derive some benefit from their period of class, learn something of great interest and progress in consciousness.

Most teachers want to have *good students*: students who are studious and attentive, who understand and know many things, who can answer well – good students. This spoils everything. The students begin to consult books, to study, to learn. Then they rely on books, on what others say or write, and they lose contact with the superconscient part which receives knowledge by intuition. This contact often exists in a small child but it is lost in the course of his education.

For the students to be able to progress in the right direction, it is obvious that the teachers should have understood this and changed their way of seeing and teaching. Without that, my work is at a standstill.

16 December 1959

*

It is not through uniformity that you obtain unity.

It is not through uniformity of programmes and methods that you will obtain the unity of education.

Unity is obtained through constant reference, silent or expressed, as the case demands, to the central ideal, the central force or light, the purpose and the goal of our education.

The true, the supreme Unity expresses itself in diversity. It is mental logic that demands sameness. In practice, each one must find and apply his own method, that which he understands and feels. It is only in this way that education can be effective.

13 October 1960

*

Mother, would you please define in a few words what you mean essentially by “free progress”?

A progress guided by the soul and not subjected to habits, conventions or preconceived ideas.

*

The education we are given here at present differs little from the education that is given elsewhere. This is precisely why we should try here to educate the latent and spiritual faculties of the student. But how can we do this in school?

This cannot be done by any external method. It depends almost entirely on the teacher's attitude and consciousness. If he does not have the vision and the inner knowledge himself, how can he transmit them to his students?

To tell the truth, we rely mainly on the all-surrounding atmosphere charged with spiritual force, which has an effect even if it is not perceived or felt.

20 April 1966

*

(A teacher complained that trivial and useless things were being taught – that, for example, in the language classes students were asked to read foolish stories and given insignificant details about the life and customs of the people.)

Your difficulty comes from the fact that you have still the old belief that in life some things are high and others low. It is not exact. It is not the things or the activities that are high or low, it is the consciousness of the doer which is true or false.

If you unite your consciousness with the Supreme Consciousness and manifest It, all you think, feel or do becomes luminous and true. It is not the subject of the teaching which is to be changed, it is the consciousness with which you teach that must be enlightened.

31 July 1967

*

I don't even know whether I have a soul, but as a teacher I am expected to help the students and "insist on the growth of the soul" – some light please.

The contradiction comes from the fact that you want to "*mentalise*" and this is impossible. It is an attitude, an inside attitude mostly but which governs the outside action as much as *possible*. It is something to be *lived* much more than to be taught.
