

NEWSLETTER OF NAIROBI CENTRE OF SRI AUROBINDO SOCIETY

Website: <http://sites.google.com/site/savitrinairobi/home>

November 2009

Dates to remember

01.11.09 – Sunday – Prosperity Day: Meditation at 11.00 a.m. at the Bhavan.

17.11.09 – Tuesday – The Mother's Mahasamadhi Day – Meditation at 6.30 p.m. at the Bhavan.

20.11.09 – Friday – The Mother's body laid to rest – Meditation at 6.30 p.m.

24.11.09 – Tuesday – Darshan Day - Siddhi Day – Meditation at 6.30 p.m.

Every Saturday 5.15pm-6.30pm: Meditation, study of "Savitri" and reading from "ALL INDIA MAGAZINE" in the Words of THE MOTHER and SRI AUROBINDO.

Every Sunday 11 am- 12.30 pm: reading from "The Synthesis of Yoga".

Shrine

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

NEWS

1. On 4th October 2009, Nairobi Centre of Sri Aurobindo Society hosted a seminar on - '**The Art of Healthy Living**' by Dr. Arvind R. Pathak. Dr. Pathak is running Naturopathy and Yoga Centre in Nairobi. His talk was based on holistic solutions to well being with emphasis on Naturopathy and healing powers within the body. Simple living, balanced food habits, exercises, meditation and keeping in touch with nature in all activities.

2. Varsha Vora gave a talk on Sri Aurobindo Society and its activities to the Indian Women's Association of Nairobi on 6th October 2009. Booklets in the words of The Mother and Sri Aurobindo were also presented.

(All the articles are taken from the book - *The Aims and Ideals of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram*)

WORK IN THE ASHRAM

THE MEANING OF WORK

What you write shows that you had a wrong idea of the work. The work in the Ashram was not meant as a service to humanity or to a section of it called the sadhaks of the Ashram. It was not meant either as an opportunity for a joyful social life and a flow of sentiments and attachments between the sadhaks and an expression of the vital movements, a free vital interchange whether with some or with all. The work was meant as a service to the Divine and as a field for the inner opening to the Divine, surrender to the Divine alone, rejection of ego and all the ordinary vital movements and the training in a psychic elevation, selfless-ness, obedience, renunciation of all mental, vital or other self-assertion of the limited personality. Self-affirmation is not the aim, the formation of a collective vital ego is also not the aim. The merging of the little ego in union with the Divine, purification, surrender, the substitution of the Divine guidance for one's own ignorant self-guidance based on one's personal ideas and personal feelings is the aim of Karmayoga, the surrender of one's own will to the Divine Will.

If one feels human beings to be near and the Divine to be far and seeks the Divine through service of and love of human beings and not the direct service and love of the Divine, then one is following a wrong principle - for that is the principle of the mental, vital, and moral not the spiritual life.

Sri Aurobindo (SABCL 23:850-51)

YOGA THROUGH WORK

Yoga through work is the easiest and most effective way to enter into the stream of this Sadhana.

Sri Aurobindo (SABCL 25:207)

. . . to quiet the mind and get the spiritual experience it is necessary first to purify and prepare the nature. This sometimes takes many years. Work done with the right attitude is the easiest means for that - i.e. work done without desire or ego, rejecting all movements of desire, demand or ego when they come, done as an offering to the Divine Mother, with the remembrance of her and prayer to her to manifest her force and take up the action so that there too and not only in inner silence you can feel her presence and working.

Sri Aurobindo (SABCL 23:533)

WORK AND MEDITATION

It is not our experience that by meditation alone it is possible to change the nature, nor has retirement from outward activity and work much profited those who have tried it; in many cases it has been harmful. A certain amount of concentration, an inner aspiration in the heart and an opening of the consciousness to the Mother's presence there and to the descent from above is needed. But without

action, without work the nature does not really change; it is there and by contact with men that there is the test of the change in the nature. As for the work one does, there is no higher or lower work; all work is the same provided it is offered to the Mother and done for her and in her power.

Sri Aurobindo (SABCL 25:200)

One can progress through meditation, but through work provided it is done in the right spirit one can progress ten times more.

The Mother (CWM 14:321-22)

It is the old methods of yoga which demand silence and solitude.

The yoga of tomorrow is to find the Divine in work and in relation with the world.

The Mother (CWM 14:49)

PERFECTION IN WORK

Let us work as we pray, for indeed work is the body's best prayer to the Divine.

The Mother (CWM 14:321)

There must be order and harmony in work. Even what is apparently the most insignificant thing must be done with perfect perfection, with a sense of cleanliness, beauty, harmony and order.

The Mother (CWM 14:327)

DISCIPLINE IN WORK

Without discipline no proper work is possible.

Without discipline no proper life is possible.

And above all, without discipline no Sadhana is possible.

Each department has necessarily a discipline and you must follow the discipline of your department.

Personal feelings, grudges and misunderstandings must never interfere with the work which is done as a service to the Divine and not for human interests.

Your service to the Divine must be scrupulously honest, disinterested and unselfish, otherwise it has no value.

The Mother (CWM 13:168)

HARMONY AND COOPERATION IN WORK

If anybody in the Ashram tries to establish a supremacy or dominating influence over others, he is in the wrong. For it is bound to be wrong vital influence and come in the way of the Mother's work.

. . . None should regard or treat another member of the Ashram as his subordinate. If he is in charge, he should regard the others as his associates and helpers in the work, and he should not try to dominate or impose on them his own ideas and personal fancies, but only see to the execution of the will of the Mother. None should regard himself as a subordinate, even if he has to carry out instructions given through another or to execute under supervision the work he has to do.

All should try to work in harmony, thinking only of how best to make the work a success; personal feelings should not be allowed to interfere, for this is a most frequent cause of disturbance in the work, failure or disorder.

If you keep this truth of the work in the mind and always abide by it, difficulties are likely to disappear; for others will be influenced by the rightness of your attitude and work smoothly with you or, if through any weakness or perversity in them, they create difficulties, the effects will fall back on them and you will feel no disturbance or trouble.

Sri Aurobindo (SABCL 25:238-29)

You seem to forget that by the fact that you are living in the Ashram, it is neither for yourself nor for a boss that you are working, but for the Divine. Your life must be entirely consecrated to the Divine Work and cannot be governed by petty human considerations.

The Mother (CWM 13:170)

DIFFICULTIES IN WORK

The greater the difficulties that rise in the work the more one can profit by them in deepening the equality, if one takes it in the right spirit. You must also keep yourself open to receive the help towards that, for the help will always be coming from the Mother for the change of the nature.

Sri Aurobindo (SABCL 25:262)

When we have to work collectively, it is always better to insist, in our thoughts, feelings and actions, on the points of agreement rather than on the points of divergence.

We must give importance to the things that unite and ignore, as much as possible, those that separate.

Even when physically the lines of work differ, the union can remain intact and constant if we keep always in the mind the essential points and principles which unite, and the Divine Goal, the Realisation which must be the one unchanging object of our aspiration and works.

The Mother (CWM 14:335)

PAID WORKERS AND SERVANTS

You should be very polite with those who depend upon you for their living. If you ill-treat them, they feel it very much but cannot reply to you as man to man for fear of losing their job.

There may be some dignity in being rough with your superiors, but with those who depend on you, the true dignity is to be very courteous.

The Mother (CWM 13:174)

Do not be indulgent, do not be *severe*.

They should know that you see everything, but you should not scold them.

The Mother (CWM 13:183)

RELATIONS WITH OTHERS

HARMONY WITH OTHERS

I see no reason therefore why you should care so much if anybody is not behaving well with you.... Let only your spiritual change and progress matter for you and for that trust wholly in the Mother's force and her grace which is with you - do not let things or people disturb you, - for compared with the truth within and the journey to the full Light of the Mother's Consciousness these things have no importance.

Sri Aurobindo (SABCL 25:255)

If you want to have knowledge or see all as brothers or have peace, you must think less of yourself, your desires, feelings, people's treatment of you, and think more of the Divine - living for the Divine, not for yourself.

Sri Aurobindo (SABCL 23:825)

In human life the cause of all difficulties, all discords, all moral sufferings, is the presence in everyone of the ego with its desires, its likes and dislikes. Even in a disinterested work which consists in helping others, until one has learned to overcome the ego and its demands, until one can force it to keep calm and quiet in one corner, the ego reacts to everything that displeases it, starts an inner storm that rises to the surface and spoils all the work.

This work of overcoming the ego is long, slow and difficult; it demands constant alertness and sustained effort. This effort is easier for some and more difficult for others.

We are here in this Ashram to do this work together with the help of Sri Aurobindo's knowledge and force, in an attempt to create a community that is more harmonious, more united, and consequently much more effective in life....

The Mother (CWM 13:169-70)

CRITICISM OF OTHERS

Do not dwell much on the defects of others. It is not helpful. Keep always quiet and peace in the attitude.

Sri Aurobindo (SABCL 23:826)

The psychic self-control that is desirable in these surroundings and in the midst of discussion would mean among other things:

1. Not to allow the impulse of speech to assert itself too much or say anything without reflection, but to speak always with a conscious control and only what is necessary and helpful.
2. To avoid all debate, dispute or too animated discussion and simply say what has to be said and leave it there. There should also be no insistence that you are right and the others wrong, but what is said should only be thrown in as a contribution to the consideration of the truth of the matter.
3. To keep the tone of speech and the wording very quiet and calm and uninsistent.
4. Not to mind at all if others are heated and dispute, but remain quiet and undisturbed and yourself speak only what can help things to be smooth again.
5. If there is gossip about others and harsh criticism (especially about sadhaks), not to join - for these things are helpful in no way and only lower the consciousness from its higher level.

6. To avoid all that would hurt or wound others.

Sri Aurobindo (SABCL 24:1555-56)

Do not trouble yourselves with what others do, I cannot repeat it to you too often. Do not judge, do not criticise, do not compare. This is not your lookout.

The Mother (CWM 14:293)

ATTACHMENT TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS

When one enters the spiritual life, the family ties which belong to the ordinary nature fall away - one becomes indifferent to the old things. This indifference is a release. There need be no harshness in it at all. To remain tied to the old physical affections would mean to remain tied to the ordinary nature and that would prevent the spiritual progress.

Sri Aurobindo (SABCL 23:812)

All attachment is a hindrance to sadhana. Goodwill you should have for all, psychic kindness for all, but no vital attachment.

Sri Aurobindo (SABCL 23:819)