
Auroville Tomorrow

We do not belong to the past dawns, but to the noons of the future

Ushus: 2

Sri Aurobindo

Kiran: 4

Auroville's newsletter, rooted in the present, focused on the future

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The Future Begins Between Us Exploring New Ways of Living Together



Human society progresses really and vitally in proportion as law becomes the child of freedom; it will reach its perfection when man, having learned to know and become spiritually one with his fellow-man, the spontaneous law of his society exists only as the outward mould of his self-governed inner liberty.

— Sri Aurobindo, The Ideal of Human Unity, Nature's Law in Our Progress

The Language of the Land

The First Lesson Auroville Can Offer Future Ways of Living

The world grows louder every day; So loud that finding silence now feels like searching for it with a magnifying glass, hidden between passing moments and fleeting seconds. Amid this endless noise, not only has silence become rare, but the very act of listening has become scarce.

Words no longer listen to one another.

Everyone simply waits for their turn to speak, as though conversation has become an endless game of verbal ping-pong. We return the ball, not to understand, but merely to keep the rally going. And with a quiet sense of pride, we consume words as if, at the end of the match, a gold medal awaits the one who has spoken the most.

There was a time when words carried a certain sacredness. Before they were spoken or committed to paper, they passed through the filters of silence, reflection, and responsibility. Today, however, we use them so carelessly that we seem to have forgotten that every word carries the power to build, or to destroy, a world.

How did we lose the ability to hear one another's language?

And perhaps the deeper question is this: Have we only lost the language of one another, or have we also forgotten how to understand the language of the world itself?

By "language," I do not mean merely a mother tongue, vocabulary, or grammar. Every human being carries another language besides the one they speak, the language of their character, experience, culture, talents, vulnerabilities, aspirations, and way of seeing the world.

Every land, too, has its own language.

Every landscape, every river, every forest, every desert speaks with its own vocabulary. Nature, too, has a language, a language written not with letters, but with rhythm, colour, light, wind, rain, and silence.

If we shift our gaze from the part to the whole, we begin to see that nature stands at the beginning of all these languages. The world carries meaning long before it speaks, and nature is its first storyteller.

The seasons are nature's sentences.

Autumn speaks through yellowing leaves. Winter speaks through silence. Spring through new growth. Summer through ripeness.

None of them utter a single word. Yet they say everything.

Perhaps we, too, must relearn the language of the earth: to turn yellow for a while, to let ourselves fall away, so that we may become green again.



Perhaps what nature teaches us is not only how to live, but how to live together. If we fail to understand the language of the land, we will sooner or later also forget the language of building community.

If, one day, an intentional community like Auroville were to be founded somewhere else in the world, perhaps the first question would not be how it should be governed, or what economic model it should adopt.

The first question is far more fundamental: Do we know the language of the land on which we intend to live?

Every community has a land before it has laws, and it inherits a language before it builds institutions.

A community does not begin with buildings, regulations, or administrative structures. It begins the moment people learn how to live together on a shared piece of land, and how to listen both to one another and to the language of that land itself.

This is why so many idealistic projects struggle, not because they lack money or plan, but because they fail to understand two fundamental realities: land and language.

No ideal is born in a vacuum.

Every idea, every culture, and every community inevitably takes root in a particular soil and finds its meaning within a particular history.

But land is not merely geography. Land is the body of a country.

Just as no human being exists apart from their body, no country exists apart from its land.

It is a body that carries within it the memory of generations, their suffering, rituals, agriculture, wars, reconciliations, and dreams.

Just as the human body is far more than a collection of cells, land is far more than a parcel of property or an economic asset.

Every land has been living its own story long before we arrived.

Perhaps one of the greatest mistakes of the modern world is that it has stopped listening to the land.

When the language of the land is forgotten, the land is no longer recognized as a living presence. It becomes a landscape to move through rather than a relationship to belong with; our relationship with the land shifts from participation to distance, from respect to separation.

And that is precisely where Auroville, today, has something important to teach the world.

From its very beginning, the Mother articulated what may be Auroville's most significant principle:

"Auroville belongs to nobody in particular. Auroville belongs to **Humanity** as a whole."

This was never meant to be merely an idealistic slogan. It was an invitation to transform human consciousness, an invitation to move beyond the logic of ownership toward the spirit of responsibility.

Over the years, many of us have come to Auroville from different parts of the world, with sincere aspirations, deeply human intentions, and the hope of building a shared future.

Yet, without even realizing it, we sometimes bring with us the very patterns of thinking that shape the world outside: the assumption that any land we live on should, sooner or later, become our property.

This mindset is not a matter of nationality. It is a matter of consciousness.

Colonialism, before it is a historical event, is a way of seeing the world, a way of looking at land that treats it as something to be possessed before recognizing it as a living presence.

In this way of seeing, the question is not where we come from, but how we look at the land. Wherever the mentality of ownership prevails over the spirit of service, the language of the land falls silent.

Perhaps this is why the Mother and Sri Aurobindo did not choose India merely as a convenient place in which to build a city.

Had the objective been to find suitable land, countless places across the world could have served that purpose.

But India, in their vision, was far more than a geographical location. It was a civilization that carried within its living memory millennia of spiritual inquiry, cultural diversity, and the continuous experience of seeking unity amid differences.

Auroville was founded on Indian soil because that soil was not merely the setting for the experiment; it was one of the conditions that made the experiment itself possible. Recognizing this places an ethical responsibility upon all of us.

Living in India means more than residing in another country.

It means learning the language of this land, not only Tamil or Hindi, but the language of its history, its social and political sensitivities, its people's relationship with the land, and the memory of a nation that still carries the experience of colonialism, independence, and renewal.

I learned this not from books, but from life itself, as someone who came to this land from Iran.

Getting to know a country does not begin with learning its official language.

Every land must be heard before it can truly be seen. No land can be loved without understanding the language of its wounds. And no community can be built while ignoring its memory.

Yet this dialogue is not solely the responsibility of those who have come to Auroville.

If Auroville is to embody human unity, that unity can only emerge when listening becomes mutual.

Dialogue begins the moment neither side sees the other merely as "guest" or "host," but when both recognize themselves as stewards of a shared future.

Perhaps the word "steward" is more accurate than "owner".

Ownership marks the end of a relationship.

Stewardship marks the beginning of responsibility.

We do not own the land, just as we do not own the rivers, the forests, or the sky. For a brief moment in time, we are entrusted with the care of something that existed before us and will continue long after we are gone.

This understanding resonates not only with the spirit of Auroville, but also with many of India's ancient traditions, in which the land is regarded not as an object to be possessed, but as a living presence worthy of reverence.

If, after decades of experience, Auroville has only one lesson to offer the world, perhaps it is not about architecture, governance, or technology. Perhaps it is about this subtle shift in consciousness. Before building any community, learn the language of its land. Before writing its laws, learn the memory of its soil. Before claiming any place as your own, ask yourself whether you are worthy of becoming its steward.

Perhaps the future of human communities will begin not when we learn merely to live together, but when we learn to dwell humbly upon land that does not belong to us.

For the moment we believe we own the land, we begin to lose its language. And once we lose the language of the land, sooner or later we lose the language of one another as well.

Perhaps the future of Auroville, and perhaps the future of every community seeking human unity, will begin not with reforming structures, but with returning to this simple humility.

Before laying the very first stone, let us ask ourselves: Have we learned the humility required to listen to the language of the land before building upon it?



— Anita Kamali, Writer and Editor of Auroville Tomorrow Newsletter

Cooperation, Consciousness and The Future of Collective Living

Earlier this month, on 5 July, the world observed the International Day of Cooperatives, a reminder that enduring institutions are built not merely on efficiency or economic success, but on mutual trust, shared purpose and the willingness to work together for the common good. This year assumes added significance for Gujarat and India with the establishment of the Tribhuvan Sahkari University (TSU), a national institution dedicated to nurturing the cooperative movement inspired by one of India's greatest architects of collective action.

— *Dr. Jayanti Ravi,*
Secretary Auroville Foundation, IAS



The Mother once wrote:

"I am very fond of proper organisation—if those who organise want sincerely to do it—I require only clear and precise information. When this is given, and there is sufficient trust in the Organising Power, it is sufficient. The rest will be done."

These words reveal that true organisation is not merely a matter of systems and procedures. It is, first and foremost, a matter of sincerity, clarity and trust. They offer a profound perspective for all institutions that seek to endure.

Tribhuvandas Kishibhai Patel, a son of Anand, chose a path inspired by Mahatma Gandhi rather than personal comfort or privilege. History remembers him as the pioneer who laid the foundations of the cooperative dairy movement that eventually blossomed into Amul, transforming the lives of millions of farmers and becoming one of the world's most successful cooperative enterprises. While Dr. Verghese Kurien became the brilliant architect who operationalised this vision and carried it to extraordinary heights, Tribhuvandas Patel remained its heart and moral centre—the custodian of its values and collective spirit.

A lesser-known yet fascinating aspect of his life is his close friendship with Dhyumanbhai, who later became a disciple of Sri Aurobindo and spent much of his life at the Ashram in Pondicherry. It is believed that Tribhuvandas Patel visited Pondicherry and that Dhyumanbhai had sought the help of NDDDB for the Gloria farm of the Ashram. Whether or not all this influenced Tribhuvandasbhai's public work directly, it offers an interesting reflection on how India's deepest spiritual currents have often quietly nourished its greatest institutional experiments.

The cooperative movement itself rests upon timeless principles—mutuality, participation, generosity, equality, trust and shared responsibility. It reminds us that lasting excellence is rarely the product of isolated brilliance alone.

Individual genius can indeed produce spectacular results in the short term. Yet institutions that survive generations are almost always built upon collaboration rather than competition, upon shared ownership rather than personal acclaim.

This, however, invites a deeper question. Is cooperation by itself sufficient?

Sri Aurobindo observed:

“For the Ashram there has never been, at any time, a mental plan, a fixed programme or an organisation decided beforehand. The whole thing has taken birth, grown and developed as a living being by a movement of consciousness (Chit-Tapas) constantly maintained, increased and fortified.”

— 22 August 1939

Here lies perhaps India’s distinctive contribution to the discourse on institutions. Cooperation, while essential, reaches its highest fulfilment only when anchored in consciousness. Otherwise, even collective structures remain vulnerable to the familiar human tendencies of ego, possessiveness, rivalry and division.

This is precisely what makes Auroville such a remarkable experiment. Conceived by the Mother not merely as a township but as a prototype for humanity, it was intended to explore a new way of living together. Like the world itself, Auroville has experienced disagreements, conflicts, breakthroughs and setbacks. It has never been insulated from the complexities of human nature. Rather, it serves as a microcosm of humanity’s larger journey, seeking answers through a progressive evolution of consciousness.

Such an approach does not deny individuality. Nor does it advocate reducing everyone to the lowest common denominator. On the contrary, Integral Yoga envisions a society that is abundant, beautiful, creative and prosperous, where excellence flourishes because individuals willingly place their gifts in the service of a larger collective purpose. It is not uniformity that is sought, but harmony.

As Sri Aurobindo reminded us in his reflections on the ideals of the French Revolution, liberty and equality, valuable though they are, cannot by themselves sustain a just society. Their fulfilment lies in fraternity. Without fraternity, liberty becomes licence and equality becomes mechanical. Fraternity alone provides the living bond that transforms society into a true human family.

This thought acquires particular significance as we also approach the International Day of Friendship on 30 July. Friendship, in its highest sense, is not merely a social relationship. It is an expression of fraternity—a recognition of the Divine presence in one another. It dissolves the barriers of “me” and “mine” and awakens the deeper consciousness of “we”.



This reflection also resonates with the spirit of Guru Purnima, which reminds us that the true Guru within ultimately awakens the Divine light within. It is an invitation to move beyond the restless movements of the mind and allow consciousness itself to guide our thoughts, relationships, and actions.

The Mother beautifully expressed the inner discipline required for such collective living: “Everyone must do his or her work conscientiously and earnestly, and overcome all obscure selfish movements.”

And elsewhere she cautioned:

“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... This work of overcoming the ego is long, slow and difficult; it demands constant alertness and sustained effort.”

Perhaps this is the missing dimension in many contemporary discussions on institutions and governance. We speak of cooperation, management, participation and inclusion. Yet unless these are rooted in an ever-growing consciousness and guided by an aspiration towards the Divine, they remain confined to the plane of the intellect. The mind, left to itself, almost inevitably invites its inseparable companion—the ego.

India’s civilisational gift has always been the understanding that consciousness is the foundation upon which enduring institutions are built. When mutuality, sincerity, compassion, generosity, equality and harmony all spring from that deeper source, cooperation becomes far more than an organisational model—it becomes a way of life.

As we enter the sacred month ahead, may we renew our aspiration to build not only better institutions but also better human beings. By consecrating our work, transcending the narrow claims of the ego and allowing the Divine Consciousness to become the guiding force of our collective endeavour, we may indeed take a meaningful step towards what Sri Aurobindo envisioned as Life Divine—a new way of living together, in harmony with ourselves, with one another, with nature and with the Divine.



Tantrik Cult and Shelley's Prometheus Unbound



The Indian scriptural texts in translation became easily available in England by the later part of the eighteenth century, and by 1784 India became a cultural idol to the English poets. Blake had a copy of Prince Dara Shuko's Persian translation of the Upanishads in an English translation. Sir William Jones and some other scholars were related to the Asiatic Society of Bengal, which was founded in Calcutta in 1784.

**— Prof. Goutam Ghosal,
Member of the Governing Board, and
Sri Aurobindo's scholars.**

Prometheus Unbound, of which we have abundant allusions in Sri Aurobindo's Savitri, was begun in 1820.

Earlier in 1818, Shelley and Mary had visited the Indian Library in the British Museum. His wish to come to India did not materialize, but the influence of the Tantrik cult got into his blood while writing Prometheus Unbound, especially while he was describing the form and action of Asia in Act II of his utopian text. Nigel Leask tells us that by 1800, "Orientalism had been transformed from the status of an exotic mercantilist commodity, a token of Oriental luxury, into a form of knowledge". ("Easts" in Romanticism: An Oxford Guide, ed. Nicholas Roe, 2005).

Shelley uses this knowledge in Prometheus Unbound like a master without distorting anything of the basics of the finer variety of Tantrik cult, which seeks to elevate woman as an object of profound respect and worship.

The text is the surest guide, and the text shows Shelley's awareness of the finer points of Mother-Worship, which had also been there in the western tradition, especially in the writings of the Mariologists like Bernard de Clairvaux (1090-1153) or Saint Bernard.

The most distinct Indian influence on Prometheus Unbound is the aspect of Kundalini, the sleeping serpent, the latent consciousness in a human being, which Shelley powerfully describes in Act II, as Asia journeys down to the cave of Demogorgon and finds the coiled serpent.

The reader will remember Sri Aurobindo's description of the rising serpent in Savitri, although that mighty vision was beyond the reach of the English poet.

The physical transformation of Asia and the reference to her feet pressing the earth are two of the most romantic statements of Tantrik cult. There are others, which surprise us to a degree.

Auroville, A Deva SANGHA

Auroville was envisaged by The Mother as a City of the Future dedicated to the manifestation of the vision of Sri Aurobindo. From its inception, Auroville embodies the Dream and an intense aspiration for a new world that would transcend the limits of our human species and help man to ascend to a higher consciousness, the Supramental Consciousness.

On 28 February 1968, the inauguration of Auroville took place. The text **“A Dream”**, the Auroville Charter and the City Plan for this Universal Township are foundational texts given by the Mother for life in Auroville. The first point of the Charter states: **Auroville belongs to nobody in particular. Auroville belongs to humanity as a whole. But to live in Auroville one must be the willing servitor of the Divine Consciousness.**

What does it mean to be a willing servitor of the Divine Consciousness? We can find guidance from several texts of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother referring to a Gnostic Society, or in another terminology - Deva Sangha. In Auroville, the first step to the manifestation of this ideal was the construction of Matrimandir.

The first few years were consecrated simultaneously to the regeneration of the soil on a barren plateau and to the building of the Matrimandir. The Mother said in 1970: **“The Matrimandir will be the soul of Auroville. The sooner the soul is there, the better it will be for everybody, and especially for the Aurovilians.”** Work at Matrimandir has been an amazing example of unity, as all who worked here through the years have been carried by this atmosphere of transformation. Among the volunteers were some people staying in Auroville but also many inmates of Sri Aurobindo Ashram who came daily to participate in this work.

It may be interesting to note that The Mother's description of the City relates to what scientists today call “the green city”. The Mother spoke of (for example) electric mobility vehicles, which is becoming today's reality. The Auroville Township Plan prepared under the guidance of The Mother is not only spiritually visionary but also an integral approach towards sustainability. The need for such a plan is increasingly understood by planners and governments all over the world today. This City plan has been a source of inspiration for many scientific innovations.

This is because all positive movements in the formation of Auroville have always been due to The Mother's spiritual vision of human unity through the principle of a spiritually elevated society, which is substantially different from the experiments of sustainable urbanization being followed by conventional architects with a purely commercially attuned mindset.



We see therefore that living in Auroville is a call to the future. In 1972, the Mother mentioned: **“Everybody has to progress and become more sincere. Auroville has been created not for the satisfaction of the egos and their greed, but for the creation of a new world, the supramental, expressing the divine perfection.”**

As we live and work in Auroville, our aim is to aspire to progress inwardly as well as outwardly to be worthy of the New World – a Deva Sangha. This is no ordinary task as it requires a constant discernment in our daily life in Auroville where we are, often, carried away by our desires and ambitions and rigid mental ideas especially while functioning as a collective. The collective shall make an error if it tries to form groups in favour of some individuals against other groups. The capacity of each resident of Auroville to exist by oneself in allegiance to the Mother and Sri Aurobindo would form the very foundation of this Deva Sangha.

In Sri Aurobindo's words: **“A change of this kind, the change from the mental and vital to the spiritual order of life, must necessarily be accomplished in the individual and in a great number of individuals before it can lay any effective hold upon the community.”**

Therefore, if each one of us could focus on the task in front of us and do it as well as possible and as an offering to the Divine, we could constitute slowly and steadily that divine community or Deva Sangha. It is not as much what we do but how we do the work and what we become while working. For me personally, I feel immense gratitude for the different types of work I have been associated with in Auroville and its sheer diversity, ranging from the Centre for Scientific Research, Matrimandir, Security Service to Emergency Medical Service. Treading on uncharted paths has been a great adventure, above all an adventure of consciousness. The joy of work as an offering to the Mother and Sri Aurobindo has always provided the necessary energy to surmount obstacles, find appropriate solutions to existential problems and greet each day as an opportunity to progress.

It is only by a transformation of our present-day consciousness that we may hope to manifest Auroville. That can happen by a change, first and foremost, in our way of looking at life which would then translate into action. Sri Aurobindo offers us a beautiful insight through his writing on The Mother: **“The personal effort required is a triple labour of aspiration, rejection and surrender... an aspiration vigilant, constant and unceasing...rejection of the movement of the lower nature...surrender of oneself and all one is and has and every plane of the consciousness and every movement to the Divine...”**

Implementing this attitude in our daily life would bring an end to many of our conflicts and disagreements. We need to rise above our pettiness and ego and let go of our fear to be able to integrate different points of view on a subject. Thus, we may have a harmonious way of functioning, always keeping alive the flame of aspiration for the intended Deva Sangha.



Keeping this in mind, we need to concentrate more on what we can agree upon than on our disagreements while we take tough decisions as we move forward in manifesting the City that the earth needs.

As a voluntary optimist, I would like to cite in Sri Aurobindo's words the *raison-d'être* of a spiritualized society: **"It would regard the peoples as group-souls, the Divinity concealed and to be self-discovered in its human collectivities, group souls meant like the individual to grow according to their own nature and by that growth to help each other, to help the whole race in the one common work of humanity. And that work would be to find the Divine Self in the individual and the collectivity and to realise spiritually, mentally, vitally, materially its greatest, largest, richest and deepest possibilities in the inner life of all and their outer action and nature."**

This beautiful text provides immense hope to us living in Auroville and striving to constitute the intended Deva Sangha.

Last, but not least, is the power of prayer in action, which allows the possibility, many a time, for an ideal seemingly impossible to manifest.

Let us continue this journey, inspiring ourselves through the following lines from Sri Aurobindo's epic poem Savitri, book II, Canto VII:

**Only were safe who kept God in their hearts:
Courage their armour, faith their sword, they must walk,
The hand ready to smite, the eye to scout,
Casting a javelin regard in front,
Heroes and soldiers of the army of Light**



**— Srijita Roy, Team Leaders and Executives of Auroville EMS
(Emergency Medical Services)**

Guhyavidya and Communities of Tomorrow

Edifices are built on principles; principles are not built on edifices. Auroville stands as perhaps humanity's most audacious wager: that a community can be born not from pragmatic necessity, but from the radiant depths of spiritual philosophy, which Sri Aurobindo and The Mother's vision might be woven so intimately into its fabric that the city itself becomes a meditation made manifest. This crystallizes into a question far more exquisite: What understanding must awaken in the human heart before the world can genuinely conceive another Auroville? The vision of The Mother and Roger Anger did not flow from budgetary abundance or administrative prowess, but from something infinitely more subtle and sacred: an alignment with evolutionary purpose itself! So, if we had to create a second Auroville, what was the key(stone) that was needed?



I realized that the answer lies not in long-forgotten blueprints or infrastructure (notwithstanding the intricacies of parametricism and biophilic design today), but in something much more subtle and essential. It lies in what Sri Aurobindo called Guhyavidya: the hidden or secret knowledge that transforms how human beings understand themselves and their capacity to live together. We stand at a peculiar moment in human history. We have more tools for connection than ever before. We understand cooperation, sustainability, and regeneration intellectually. And yet, our communities, whether they are villages, cities, or digital networks, often feel fragmented, anxious, and struggling. We can design beautiful urban plans and write inspiring constitutions, but something essential remains missing. This is the paradox that emerges when we look at what truly created Auroville: it was not primarily the architectural design or the organizational structure, though these mattered. It was a deeper intention, a commitment to explore what it means to live together consciously. The founding aspiration was human unity, not as an idea to be intellectually agreed upon, but as a lived reality to be discovered through daily practice. Sri Aurobindo's concept of Guhyavidya points us toward this missing element. It suggests that there is a hidden wisdom, a secret knowledge that we must uncover about ourselves and about our capacity to evolve, before we can truly build the communities we imagine.

The term Guhyavidya carries multiple layers of meaning. "Guhya" means secret, hidden, concealed; "Vidya" means knowledge or wisdom. But this is not knowledge that is deliberately kept hidden; rather, it is knowledge that remains hidden until we develop the capacity to perceive it. Sri Aurobindo understood human development not as a fixed thing, but as an ongoing evolution. He saw that humanity carries within itself possibilities for growth that we have barely begun to explore. These possibilities are "hidden" not because they are locked away, but because we have not yet developed the inner sight to recognize them. Guhyavidya, in this sense, refers to the knowledge of our hidden potential. Each human being carries capacities for consciousness, creativity, and connection that far exceed what our ordinary minds can perceive. Most of us live using only a fraction of our being.

The hidden wisdom involves recognizing and awakening these deeper capacities, not as some distant spiritual achievement, but as the practical foundation of how we can genuinely live together. Equally essential is the knowledge of how consciousness evolves. Sri Aurobindo taught that consciousness is not static, locked into the forms we currently inhabit. There is a direction to human development, a pull toward greater complexity, greater unity, and greater responsiveness to life itself. This evolution is not automatic; it requires understanding and conscious participation.

Communities of the future, then, are not simply replicas of existing models but expressions of consciousness at a new level of unfoldment. Underlying both of these is the knowledge of interconnection. At a fundamental level, all things are expressions of a single reality. Separation is a useful practical fiction, necessary for navigation and action in the world, but Guhyavidya points to the truth of connection that underlies all division. This is not merely spiritual poetry; it is practical wisdom about how real collaboration actually happens. When human beings touch this deeper truth of interconnection within themselves, they naturally begin to relate differently to each other, to the land, to the future itself.

Finally, there is the knowledge of transformation. True change does not come through force or manipulation, through legislation or architectural brilliance imposed from above. It comes when we touch the deepest truth of something and allow that truth to unfold. This applies to individuals, to the awakening that can happen within a single human being, to communities, and to human civilization itself. The communities of tomorrow will not be built by those who believe they have all the answers, but by those who understand that transformation happens when we create the conditions for deeper truth to reveal itself. Sri Aurobindo never built a community in the way Auroville's founders did, yet his philosophical framework made something like Auroville conceptually possible. He wrote extensively about what he called "the future of humanity" and "the human unity that must come."

What distinguished his vision was this: he refused to accept that the divisions we see in human society were fundamental or permanent. Rather, he saw them as stages in an evolution. Just as animal consciousness evolved into human consciousness with entirely new capacities, Sri Aurobindo envisioned humanity evolving into a new consciousness where unity, creation, and integral living would become natural. For communities, this meant something radical: they cannot be built on compromise or institutional design alone. They must be built on the recognition of a deeper truth that members discover in themselves and in each other. This recognition creates a different kind of cohesion, not the enforced unity of a system, but the natural harmony that comes when people touch something real and true within themselves. This is Guhyavidya in action: the hidden knowledge that what connects us is deeper than what divides us.

Most contemporary approaches to building sustainable communities focus on the visible, measurable aspects: governance structures, economic models, environmental practices, skills development. These are all necessary and important. The observances this month, like International Day of Cooperatives, World Rural Development Day, World Youth Skills Day, correctly emphasize these practical dimensions. But there is often a gap.

The best-designed systems can still produce anxiety, competition, and alienation if the people within them have not awakened to something deeper in themselves. Conversely, communities that seem materially simple can radiate a kind of richness and coherence when the people within them have touched a shared recognition of what is real and true.



This is where Guhyavidya becomes crucial.

It asks: "Before we design the structures, have we looked inward enough? Have we recognized the evolution of consciousness that must accompany the evolution of our societies?" So, you may ask: How does this hidden wisdom translate into practical action? First, it means cultivating contemplative practice. Not as an escape from the world, but as a way of developing clearer seeing. When individuals in a community take time to look inward, to recognize their own deeper nature, they naturally begin to relate differently to others. They see past the surfaces, past roles, fears, and defensive patterns, to the shared humanity underneath. Secondly, it means creating spaces for genuine dialogue. Not debate where we defend positions, but dialogue where we genuinely listen and speak from our deepest knowing. These conversations, when they happen authentically, have a transformative power.

They create the invisible bonds that make real cooperation possible. Thirdly, it means recognizing that human development is the foundation of community development. You cannot build a conscious, collaborative, regenerative community with unconscious, fragmented people trying to operate conscious systems. The personal work is not separate from the collective work; it is foundational to it. And lastly, it means allowing the future to be "lived into existence" rather than only designed. This doesn't mean abandoning planning. It means holding plans lightly, remaining responsive to what emerges, and trusting that there is an intelligence in the evolution of communities that is larger than any single vision. In Aurobindo's terms, it means aligning ourselves with the evolutionary impulse itself.

When I look back at the question of what the world needs to learn before building the next Auroville, I believe the answer is this: The world needs to learn how to see itself fundamentally; to know and be in itself, truly, fully, as it is! It needs to learn that consciousness is not a luxury or a spiritual indulgence; it is the very foundation of sustainable living. It needs to learn that the deepest problems we face, like fragmentation, exploitation, and ecological destruction, arise from a fragmented consciousness that believes in separation. And it needs to learn that healing these problems requires not just new systems, but a development of human consciousness itself. This is Guhyavidya: the hidden wisdom that we are capable of far more than we believe, that unity is as real as division, and that communities of the future will be built by human beings who have awakened to their own deeper nature and the deeper nature of others.

Sri Aurobindo ends many of his writings with an invitation rather than a conclusion. In that spirit, let me invite you to live with this question: "What would it look like if we approached every community we build, whether a village, a school, a workplace, or a global movement, from the recognition that consciousness itself is evolving through us?"

The communities of tomorrow will not be built by perfect systems or by people who have all the answers. They will be built by people who recognize that within themselves and within each other lies a capacity for consciousness, for unity, and for transformation that is still largely undiscovered. This is the secret knowledge. This is the Guhyavidya that makes genuine community possible. And this, perhaps, is what an architect building around any ideas of Auroville 2.0 needs to know before laying the first stone: begin by helping people see themselves more fully. The structures that follow will naturally align with a deeper truth.

**— Dr. Mrityunjay Guha Majumdar, Assistant Professor at Amrita and
Adjunct Professor at NIAS Bengaluru**



Growing with Auroville



Born and raised in Auroville, Sundar Rajamani has witnessed the community's journey from the very beginning. Now serving as a Trustee of Artisana Trust and an executive at La Boutique d'Auroville, he reflects on a lifetime of living, serving, and growing with Auroville.

1- Having grown up in Auroville and spent your entire life here, how does today's Auroville compare with the one you remember as a child? Which changes have left the deepest impression on you?

Yes, I was born in Auroville and have spent my entire life here. I did all my schooling here, from Samata's Crèche to Transition High School.

Growing up in Auroville until my twenties was truly amazing. There were very few personal attachments or material concerns—it was a life centred around the community. There was a strong sense of togetherness, freedom, and collective responsibility that shaped who I am today. When I look at Auroville now, I feel the experiment has, in some ways, been derailed. This may be due to the many challenges in the world and the tremendous changes India has gone through over the past decades. These external influences have inevitably affected Auroville as well.

One of the biggest changes I notice is that life has become more personal than collective. The emphasis has shifted from "we" to "I." While inner consciousness is naturally a personal journey, the shared sense of purpose has become less visible than it once was.

Whenever I have the opportunity, I still participate in community life because it remains an important part of who I am. Like many others, my daily life is now largely divided between work and home. Even so, I continue to believe in Auroville's ideals and hope we can strengthen our collective spirit again.

2- If someone invited you to help create a community inspired by Auroville elsewhere in the world, where would you advise them to begin? What essential lessons from Auroville should guide such an effort?

If someone wanted to create a similar community, my first advice would be to establish a clear governance system and organizational structure from the very beginning. A shared vision alone is not enough—you also need transparent processes, clear responsibilities, and people committed to a common purpose.

A community is built on trust, relationships, and a willingness to serve something greater than oneself. The spiritual dimension is important, but it must always be balanced with practicality. Vision without grounded action cannot sustain a community over time.

My perspective comes not only from growing up in Auroville but also from living in the Findhorn Community in Scotland and spending time at Arcosanti in Arizona. Those experiences taught me that no community can simply be copied. It must grow from its own culture while staying true to its purpose.

If I were invited to support such an initiative, I would gladly share my experience. I feel particularly drawn to Japan and Southeast Asia, where values such as discipline, simplicity, respect, and a strong sense of community could provide fertile ground for a new experiment. Inspired by Auroville, every new community must ultimately find its own authentic expression.

3- The theme of this Kiran is Cultivating the Communities of the Future. In your view, what does it mean to cultivate a community rather than simply manage one? And does Auroville still have something valuable to offer the world today?

If the purpose of a community remains alive, the future will find its own answers. A community cannot simply be managed through rules and administration. It must be nurtured through shared values, participation, trust, and a collective sense of purpose. Cultivating a community means helping people grow together, creating a culture where individuals are inspired to contribute, evolve, and care for something larger than themselves. Good management is necessary, but without cultivation, the spirit of a community can slowly fade.

I believe Auroville is a living experiment, and that is what makes it valuable. I don't see it as the only model for the future, but I do believe it offers important lessons for humanity. At the same time, Auroville must continue to evolve. We need to be more open to the world, more willing to listen, and less attached to fixed opinions. Before we can truly inspire others, we must continue inspiring ourselves by living the ideals we believe in. Only then can Auroville become a stronger example for the world.

4- You've served Auroville in many different roles over the years. Looking back, what has been the most meaningful part of that journey, and what kept you going through both the rewards and the challenges?

Yes, I have been part of many working groups over the years. There was a period when most of my mornings were spent attending meetings and reading endless emails. After a while, I became completely burnt out. I decided to step away from almost all of those responsibilities because I realized I needed to find balance again.

Looking back, every role taught me something valuable. I learned a great deal from serving on the Auroville Board of Commerce, but one of the roles closest to my heart was serving on the Housing Board.

Personally, I never had housing problems, but I could deeply relate to the struggles that many Tamil Aurovillians faced. Being born and raised in Auroville, I knew many of these families personally, and it mattered to me that their voices were heard.

For many years, the Housing Service had been led primarily by foreign nationals, and decisions were often influenced by existing relationships and perspectives. During my time on the board, I worked to ensure that the concerns of local Tamil Aurovillians were represented more fairly. For me, that was one of the most meaningful contributions I was able to make.

There were many moments when I wanted to walk away—and, in fact, I did more than once. Community work can be exhausting because people often judge you without knowing the full picture. In the end, however, positions, opinions, and conflicts are all temporary.

5- You've worked closely with people from many cultures and backgrounds. In your experience, what enables a community to stay together through disagreement and conflict? Do you still see that spirit alive in Auroville today?

One of the most valuable lessons I have learned in Auroville is that there is rarely a simple definition of what is right or wrong.

I have witnessed many disagreements, conflicts, and difficult moments while serving in different working groups. When people from different cultures, backgrounds, and perspectives come together, differences are inevitable. But disagreement does not have to weaken a community—it can also help it grow, if we remember why we are here.

The beauty of Auroville is that, regardless of where we come from, we are ultimately one larger family trying to live for the same purpose. We may argue, disagree, or become frustrated with one another, but underneath it all there is still a shared commitment to something greater than ourselves.

I have had several opportunities over the years to leave Auroville and settle somewhere else, but I simply cannot. This is my home. Whatever the arguments or misunderstandings, my connection to Auroville has never changed.

Do I still see that spirit alive today? Yes, I do. Sometimes it may seem hidden beneath conflict or opinion, but I believe it is still there. The spirit of Auroville cannot be removed. It has carried this community through many challenges, and I believe it will continue to do so. She is watching.

6- How do you imagine the economy of a future community? What qualities should it have to remain both economically strong and deeply human?

I believe that a strong and self-sufficient economy is essential for Auroville's future. Auroville should be able to generate enough income to support itself rather than depending primarily on grants or donations. External support can then be used to strengthen the surrounding region and contribute to broader social development.

I also believe the time has come for Auroville to think bigger. The Industrial Zone has enormous potential, and I hope to see it developed in a more comprehensive and visionary way. Many of our small units have achieved remarkable things over the years, but there are also opportunities for greater collaboration, consolidation, and shared infrastructure. By working together, we can build a stronger and more resilient economic foundation.

Today, Auroville has opportunities and support that previous generations did not have. I am confident that many people are already working towards developing the Industrial Zone, and I would be very happy to see that vision become a reality.

7- You became one of Auroville's youngest trustees. How did that experience shape your view of the younger generation, and what role do you believe young people should play in Auroville's future?

Becoming one of the youngest Trustee of Artisana Trust was something I never expected. Artisana Trust itself was created around the time the Auroville Foundation Act came into being. My mentor, Myriam Isaac, recommended me to the Auroville Board of Commerce to succeed her, saying, "I have done my part. You are young, and now it is time for the youth of Auroville to take responsibility for the future."

At the time, I had no real understanding of what it meant to be a trustee. When my nomination first went to the Board of Commerce, it was rejected because I was considered too young. A few months later, after Myriam continued to support my appointment, it was approved.

Today, I feel it is the younger generation's turn to step forward. This is an important moment, as more opportunities are being created for young people to take responsibility and contribute in meaningful ways.

At the same time, the world has changed, and the lifestyle of today's youth is very different from the one I grew up with. Even so, I believe young people have to step forward and take meaningful responsibility for Auroville's future.

8- You grew up in a Tamil family while being part of an international community. How have these two identities shaped you, and how has your family's view of Auroville evolved over the years?



Growing up in a Tamil family while being part of an international community has never felt like a conflict. I continue to follow my Hindu traditions and practices while also celebrating festivals from many religions in India.

At the same time, Auroville gave me the opportunity to build lifelong friendships with people from around the world. Those relationships broadened my understanding of different cultures, perspectives, and ways of living.

Looking back, Auroville taught me who I wanted to become. It allowed me to stay true to my roots while opening my mind to the wider world.

9- Can the future be designed, or must it be lived into existence? And if you were invited to help create a new intentional community elsewhere, what principles would you bring?

For me, the future cannot—and perhaps should not—be fully designed. We can hold a vision, but life must be lived and allowed to unfold in its own course.

I believe Auroville will eventually fulfil its original aspiration. How, when, or by whom is less important than remaining true to its purpose. Everything that is built can be changed or even removed, so we should not become too attached to structures or opinions. Rather than complaining about what is wrong, each of us should simply do our work with the right spirit.

If invited to support a new community, I would gladly share what I have learned from Auroville, Findhorn, and Arcosanti. I feel particularly drawn to Japan or Southeast Asia, but wherever such a community emerges, it should grow from its own local culture rather than trying to copy Auroville. It should be inspired by the same principles while finding its own authentic expression.

10- Finally, what message would you like to leave for Auroville, Aurovilians, and those who have come to know Auroville during the recent years of change?

My message is simple: let your life be your message. Our actions speak more powerfully than our words.

Auroville can never truly be understood through books, the internet, or other people's opinions—it has to be experienced.

I do not see the developments since 2023 simply as a challenge. In some ways, they may have been the shock Auroville needed to reflect again on why we are here and what we are trying to build together. I believe some of the changes introduced by the Auroville Foundation have been necessary, but they can achieve much more through greater collaboration, collective participation, and a deeper shared understanding of Auroville's purpose.

People will come and go, but Auroville will remain.

The City That Chose Me



I came to Auroville in May 2023 as a Master's student in Psychology, specialising in Industrial and Organisational Psychology. I had come to complete my internship with Eco Femme, an opportunity that was mutually beneficial. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, the organisation was looking to strengthen its fundraising efforts as global sales had declined, while I needed to study the psychological dynamics of a small enterprise for my academic research.

During those two months of blistering summer heat, something unexpected happened. Alongside my internship, I experienced a subtle but profound shift within myself. I found myself questioning what I had been working towards for years and, almost unexpectedly, recognising that many of those aspirations already existed in Auroville. In a remarkably short period, I felt at home.

Looking back, I often feel that Auroville chose me long before I consciously chose it. The city has a way of speaking—provided one is willing to listen.

From the very beginning, I felt drawn to understand the philosophical foundations upon which Auroville rests. I immersed myself in the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, beginning with *The Adventure of Consciousness* by Satprem, *Seven Tetrads of Integral Yoga* by Giacomo Colomba, *Auroville: A City of the Future* by Anu Majumdar, *The Mind of the Cells*, *The Bhagavad Gita* with Sri Aurobindo's translations and commentaries, and *The Agenda of the Mother*, among many others.

There was a part of me that wondered why I had not encountered these works much earlier in life, and another part that felt immense relief that I had finally found them.

What struck me most about Auroville was the extraordinary clarity of its foundation. The Mother did not simply envision an ideal; she left behind a vast body of guidance that continues to illuminate the path ahead. Many intentional communities struggle because they spend decades debating what their destination ought to be. Auroville, in contrast, already possesses a compass. The challenge before us is not to invent the destination but to become capable of walking towards it.

Gradually, I came to see Auroville as a meeting point between the rigour of modern scientific inquiry and the depth of spiritual exploration. It welcomes people with different cultures, beliefs, temperaments and even contradictions, yet invites everyone to orient themselves towards a shared aspiration. There is something profoundly beautiful in witnessing such diversity working, however imperfectly, towards a common ideal. The more deeply I participated in community life, the more I discovered aspects of myself that I had never previously encountered.

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There is something profoundly beautiful in witnessing such diversity working, however imperfectly, towards a common ideal. The more deeply I participated in community life, the more I discovered aspects of myself that I had never previously encountered.

One of Auroville's greatest gifts is the freedom to experiment—not merely intellectually but through work itself. There are remarkably few barriers to participation. One is welcomed not because one already possesses expertise, but because one is willing to contribute sincerely.

Over the past three years, I have had the opportunity to serve in many different capacities. I volunteered with the Auroville Ambulance Dispatch, where my previous experience as airline cabin crew and my training in Basic Life Support allowed me to contribute while also witnessing first-hand the remarkable efficiency and dedication of Auroville's emergency services.

I later managed a community kitchen, where I discovered immense joy in cooking alongside the akkas. Despite my limited Tamil, warmth, humour and care transcended language, reminding me that community is built through shared work far more than shared vocabulary.

Without any previous background in martial arts, I began training at Abhaya Martial Arts Academy. What began as curiosity gradually became commitment. I earned my yellow belt and eventually an instructor's certification, opening the opportunity to teach children the fundamentals of martial arts and self-defence. I also got a chance to participate in many workshops collaborating with NGOs. Those interactions naturally led me to volunteer at the school, reading stories to children during the summer holidays. There is a way to balance the aspects of life here—physical, mental, and spiritual.

Along the way, I also found myself volunteering in Urban Farming and at the Matrimandir, each experience offering another perspective on service, collaboration, and conscious work.

This, to me, is one of Auroville's greatest strengths. Within a short bicycle ride, one can move from a pottery studio to a forest trail, from a sports ground to a community kitchen, from a research project to meditation. Opportunities to learn, create, serve and grow exist in extraordinary abundance.

Such a reality is exceedingly rare in today's world. It fills me with both gratitude and urgency. When Auroville succeeds in manifesting what the Mother envisioned, it will stand as living proof that humanity need not remain confined to its old patterns. It will demonstrate that another way of organising society—one rooted in consciousness rather than competition—is not merely an idealistic dream but a lived possibility.

Today, Auroville is home.

It offers me a space where meditation, work and daily life need not be separated into isolated compartments. There are no rigid dogmas demanding conformity. Instead, there is an invitation to grow in consciousness through experience.

Before coming here, I studied and worked in several countries and across different professions. Despite the diversity of cultures and economic systems, I repeatedly encountered the same underlying dissatisfaction. No amount of material wealth, social status or professional success seemed able to resolve a deeper human longing.

Even today, when I speak with friends occupying senior positions in multinational corporations across India, Europe and the United States, I hear strikingly similar struggles. Different languages, different societies—but remarkably similar questions beneath them all. That struggle of purpose, deeper meaning and true joy.



For me, Auroville offers something fundamentally different. It provides a space where one can pursue inner growth without withdrawing from action. Here, work itself becomes the laboratory for consciousness.

The challenges before Auroville are undeniable, and perhaps they will become even more complex in the years ahead. Yet I remain optimistic.

As younger generations, we possess an extraordinary privilege. We have inherited not only a physical township but also an immense body of knowledge, experience and spiritual guidance. If we dedicate ourselves more earnestly to discovering our psychic being and sincerely engaging with the writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, our decisions may arise from a deeper consciousness rather than from the loudest opinions or the most persuasive arguments.

I believe there is a growing number of young people who carry an unarticulated longing—a yearning for a way of living that transcends the limitations of the modern world, even if they have not yet found the language to describe it. I recognised that longing in myself when I first encountered these teachings.

In an increasingly uncertain world, to have such a guiding light is an extraordinary blessing.

Unlike much of the world outside, Auroville offers young people the opportunity not merely to observe history unfolding but to participate in shaping it. Whatever our interests—education, ecology, governance, technology, the arts, health, farming or entrepreneurship—we are invited to take responsibility, contribute sincerely and help build something larger than ourselves.

That, perhaps, is the greatest invitation Auroville extends to its youth: not simply to inherit a city, but to consciously participate in its becoming.

— Monica Pradhan, Operations Coordinator and Kids Coach

Superhuman Operating System

A reflective vision



Just as a computer operating system enables and powers various applications to operate properly and fulfil their functions, a human operating system is that which supports human existence, a complete yet open civilizational system that enables humanity to rise and fulfil its evolutionary potential, both in individual and collective terms. The system must be complete in the sense that it must cater to all key aspects of the human situation, leaving nothing unanswered or unaddressed.

— Neelesh Marik, Leadership consultant and faculty member at La Grace Center

It must be open in the sense that it must be capable of permanent adaptation coordinated with the Time-Spirit, or Yuga Dharma.

Broadly speaking, the existential software ought to satisfy six fundamental needs:

- Metaphysics — What is?
- Self-Identity — Who am I?
- Epistemology — How do I know?
- Ethics — What am I here for, or what should I do?
- Politics — How do I work with others?
- Aesthetics — How do I purify, refine, and beautify?

Let us now examine how most of humanity today—including leaders in business, education, politics, and other fields of human endeavour—answers these six questions.

- Metaphysics — Our physical universe constitutes our reality, and our entire focus is therefore rooted in materiality, bereft of higher considerations.
- Self-Identity — We are a species called Homo sapiens, bound by a skin-encapsulated ego operating as the centre of our identity and the fulcrum of our actions, thereby limiting our priorities to "I, me, myself."
- Epistemology — We know primarily through our normal senses, the data from which is processed by our conceptual faculty, aided by our emotions, thereby undermining more direct and accurate means of knowledge acquisition.
- Ethics — We are here to optimize our well-being at the levels of body, emotions, and mind, while perhaps also caring for family, friends, and colleagues, provided they bolster the ego-identity.
- Politics — We rely on educational systems for learning, organizational systems for our professions, health systems for our well-being, social systems for community life, and political-economic systems for national and international governance and cooperation, all of which are suboptimal and conflict-ridden at best, and corrupt at worst.
- Aesthetics — We pursue art, love, learning, wealth, and other human values largely for utilitarian purposes, vitalistic gratification, or the commercial advantage of the small self.

Why a superhuman operating system? Aren't we good as we are?

More than three years after this reflection was first set down, the question has only sharpened. It is becoming apparent to an ever-growing number of people that we still have not figured out how to live in peace at a collective level, or in a state of non-contradictory joy at an individual level.

Our existential situation continues to appear as a series of trade-offs and compromises, suffering from imperfect optimization even as rapid progress is made in some areas. All our personal identity systems remain fragile or shaky.

Our social and institutional systems remain inadequately functional at best, and thoroughly corrupt at worst. Most metrics of human well-being, though not all, remain either unstable or in free fall. The number of issues and challenges continues to rise faster than our capacity to cope, not just cognitively, but even energetically. Many people carry a sinking feeling that without a reboot of the Human Operating System, we may not make it.

We could say that humanity as a species is being called to evolve toward super-humanity, with access to knowledge and power that include the mind but are above and beyond it. Someone once said, 'No problem can be solved from the same level of consciousness that created it.' A superhuman operating system can only be created by a superhuman being.

Fortunately, Integral Yoga helps us envision an upgraded version.

Broadly speaking again, a superhuman philosophical system could be summarized, at an introductory level, as follows:

- Metaphysics (What is): Our physical universe is only an outer material manifestation of a much vaster reality which has a multi-planar hierarchical structure, the planes having their own characteristics, operating rules, and functional validity, yet held together in oneness and interpenetration.
- Self-Identity (Who am I): Our outer ego is a pale reflection of a larger inner self, one with the cosmos and a transcendental Self which is the Source of all creation and yet beyond all creation. Our true and inmost identity is the soul. We are a transitional species evolving from animal nature to divine nature, in which we ascend to peace and harmony from strife and division.
- Epistemology (How to know): We have access to not just objective knowledge and subjective knowledge through separative indirect contact, but inner knowledge through direct contact at the level of being, and self-knowledge through identity.
- Ethics (What to do): We are here for acting from our highest identity and deepest knowledge. Our actions are then not bound by existing social laws and codes but always exceed and improve upon them as per the divine will, received and acted upon directly from Source, and serving the Self in all beings.
- Politics (How to organize): In being and doing as described above, we are here to create a socio-political system wherein every individual, group and nation have full freedom to rise to their highest potential and fulfil their singular purpose in the gnostic destiny, wherein the individual is in total harmony with the collective, fulfilling the ideal of human unity.
- Aesthetics (How to beautify): The pursuit of the Beautiful (along with the True and the Good) takes us closer to unearthing the inherent divine qualities within ourselves and eventually ascending to the divine nature. True Art expresses the soul of things, the divine element within, and strives to restore harmony in and with everyone and everything.

Our task is to undertake the journey to raise our own consciousness, to understand the system properly, to receive its inherent power, and then to roll out that blueprint through a suitable planetary infrastructure that upholds and supports the superhuman operating system.

May we be up to that calling and that adventure.

A Lifetime of Service, Building a Culture of Care

Every thriving community depends not only on its schools, farms, economy, or physical infrastructure, but also on an invisible culture of care. Looking back on more than four decades of service in healthcare and community development, I have come to understand that health is not confined to clinics or hospitals. It is nurtured through education, prevention, compassionate relationships, and a shared commitment to one another throughout every stage of life.

My journey began in 1978 at VHS Hospital and its community health centres in Chennai, where I worked closely with economically disadvantaged families. Those early years taught me that healthcare begins long before illness appears. By supporting mothers and children, promoting immunisation, providing health education, and participating in tuberculosis and leprosy control programmes, I discovered that prevention and awareness create healthier communities than treatment alone.

This understanding deepened when I joined the Auroville Health Centre in 1986 as a Volunteer Nurse and Midwife. Caring for mothers during pregnancy and childbirth, attending emergencies at all hours, and working alongside Dr. Kamala Tewari showed me that healthcare is built on trust, presence, and continuity of care. Beyond clinical responsibilities, I collaborated with village health workers, organised immunisation programmes, promoted environmental sanitation, supported family planning, and helped ensure that quality healthcare remained accessible to families with limited financial resources. These experiences revealed that a healthy community grows through cooperation rather than isolated medical services.

In 1993, I began my long association with the Auroville Dental Centre (AVDC) and ADCERRA, where I served for more than three decades in different capacities, including Executive, Dental Hygienist, Rural Dental Preventive Programme Coordinator, and Accountant. During these years, I came to see oral health as an essential part of community well-being rather than a specialised medical service.

Working with schools, families, teachers, and village communities reinforced a simple truth: education is the most effective form of healthcare. Teaching children healthy nutrition, oral hygiene, and preventive care helps build habits that remain with them throughout life. Prevention not only reduces disease but also empowers people to take responsibility for their own well-being.



One of the most meaningful aspects of this work has been implementing the World Health Organization-endorsed Atraumatic Restorative Treatment (ART) programme. By training community health workers and bringing preventive dental care to places where dentists are unavailable, the programme demonstrated that quality healthcare can reach even the most remote communities when knowledge is shared and local people are empowered.

Over the years, this work expanded beyond Auroville into Odisha, Gujarat, Delhi, and the tribal regions of Tamil Nadu. Although each place presented different challenges, the lesson remained the same: communities become healthier when prevention, education, and local participation are valued as highly as professional treatment. Seeing children gain healthier smiles, greater confidence, and improved quality of life confirmed that lasting change begins with small, consistent acts of care.

My commitment to community health has always extended beyond clinical practice. Through the Health and Healing Trust, women's health education, counselling, elderly care, and programmes on child protection and adolescent well-being, I have witnessed how emotional support, respectful relationships, and health education strengthen the social fabric of a community. Health is not merely the absence of disease; it is the presence of dignity, trust, and mutual responsibility. The same understanding has guided my involvement in cultural and educational activities. For many years I have supported the Aurohansadhwani Art Centre, encouraging children from Auroville and neighbouring villages to discover confidence and discipline through music and classical dance. I have also taught AVIVA exercises to women and conducted Awareness Through Body programmes for adolescents, believing that physical awareness, emotional well-being, and self-respect are essential foundations for healthy lives.

Service has also taken me on an inner journey. For more than twenty-five years I have volunteered regularly at Matrimandir, where quiet service has taught me that caring for others begins with cultivating inner peace and presence. More recently, volunteering with the Farewell Team and the Vigil team has reminded me that a compassionate community accompanies its members through every stage of life—from birth and childhood to old age and the final moments of life. Care does not end when treatment ends.

Looking back, I no longer see my journey as a series of different professions. Whether serving as a village nurse, supporting mothers during childbirth, promoting oral health, educating children, counselling families, or accompanying people at the end of life, I have been participating in the same work: nurturing a culture of care.

Healthy communities are not created by infrastructure alone. They are sustained by people who quietly dedicate themselves to educating, empowering, and supporting one another with compassion and respect. If my lifelong journey has taught me anything, it is that true healthcare begins long before illness and continues throughout every stage of life. By caring for one another, we do more than improve health—we help create the kind of community in which humanity can truly flourish.



— H. Suriyagandhi, Village Health Nurse, Community Health Worker, Dental Health Educator, Trustee

The Secret of the Veda

This is a personal story. It has to be. In these times of conflicting reports, I can at least be sure of what I saw and heard and did. I'm spilling the beans. However, my whistleblowing may resemble *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* more than Sri Aurobindo's *The Secret of the Veda*. Even though his book has been around for more than a hundred years and is amazing, he said, "small is the chance" anyone would get it. He concluded: "The secret of the Veda, even when it has been unveiled, remains still a secret." (CW. v.15, p.369)

Way back in 1967, when I studied for a bit in Taiwan, people were always asking me my name. I said, "Ling Ling Chi." It translates, "Zero Zero Seven." I've been spying on Auroville now for more than 50 years. Almost every time I go into the Auroville Financial Service, Prabhu says, "Here comes James Bond." I have never told him anything about my past. How does he know? Yes, I am a secret agent. It will remain secret because nobody will get it. It's too much in plain sight. Only Sukrit knows. He gave me the code name, "Slippery Fish." He first listened to me for nine months from the womb of Janet, his mother. She became a wonderful chronicler of Auroville's early years, recording and transcribing the direct testimony of those who lived in Auroville from 1968–1973. Prisma published all those invaluable memories in 2021. Her book is called *Memories of Auroville Told by Early Aurovilians*. It's only about people. It's who you know or have met that makes all the difference. Still, only secret agents understand this. Neither the one portrayed by Joseph Conrad in his classic *The Secret Agent* nor the British intelligence agent Alec Leamas from *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*—no, not them. Christine has spent much of her life working with Auroville Press. She gathered the accounts of those who met the Mother and published *Turning Points* in 2008. Just a year later, Dianna Bowler, with her characteristic British grace, profiled another thirty-four Aurovilians in *The Journeying Years*. Besides the classic report *The Dawning of Auroville* by W. M. Sullivan (aka B), the must-reads include the literary masterpiece *Better To Have Gone* by Akash Kapoor and his excellent *Dust and Dreams*.

So, what can be said in Auroville Tomorrow about Auroville today that is "under transformation" and "under the Divine"? Alan, Annemarie, Carel, Roger, Tineke, and I started a little experiment in 1988. People laughed and said it would quickly fail. It was called *Auroville Today*, a monthly newspaper to share Auroville with everyone openly.



It served Auroville and the world for 37 years until it shut down, as the conditions for continuing publication had changed in ways it could not accept.

Now I am writing this for its replacement, Auroville Tomorrow. Perhaps fifty years of observing Auroville have taught me something about the secret Sri Aurobindo wrote of in *The Secret of the Veda*.

One of the Government of India representatives I came to know in Auroville was P. N. Ojah. He arrived after the passage of the Auroville Emergency Provisions Act of 1980. He pulled up in an old GOI Ambassador where I was working by the side of the road. I put down my mumpti, and he introduced himself. We spoke at length about my background and about Auroville. As I got to know him better over time, he shared many of his experiences and perspectives from those years. We don't speak much about those days now, of course.

Nobody seems to notice, let alone fully understand, the significance Auroville represents for the world. The vision announced by the Mother challenged many conventional ways of thinking and invited people to aspire towards a new consciousness. She offered a Charter, shared a Dream, and outlined what it means to be a True Aurovilian. In the early years, she gave bold directions for this universal township, emphasizing values that would set it apart from conventional society. Today, thanks to Gilles and the early efforts of Bhaga, all of the Mother's recorded words on Auroville have been brought together in two volumes.

I remembered Meister Eckhart, who told us about 800 years ago that I have eyes so God can see. He died before the Church could condemn him for those ideas, though the Veda had expressed a similar insight long before. I have recently written a new little book, *Maureen 4 Now*, and have also begun another book on Auroville, because I believe it is a city the Earth needs.

Over the years, my own journey through Auroville has continued to reveal new layers of meaning. The mystery of Auroville only deepens, reminding me how much there is still to discover. As Sri Aurobindo suggested, the deepest truths are not easily grasped.

— B William Sullivan, Executive at Ecoservice, Matrimandir Guide, and member of the International Zone team.



From Auroville to Belvoir Castle, Redefining Luxury Through Conscious Living

On 15 May, garments created in Auroville, India, entered the historic halls of Belvoir Castle, one of Britain's most iconic heritage estates. More than a fashion presentation, the event marked an important international milestone for Upasana, the conscious design studio founded in Auroville in 1997, bringing together two worlds united by a shared commitment to beauty, meaning, and mindful living.

Rooted in Auroville's vision of human unity and sustainable living, Upasana has spent nearly three decades exploring how design can encourage more conscious ways of living. Long before sustainability became central to the global fashion conversation, it was asking three simple questions: Can fashion be responsible? Can beauty coexist with ethics? Can clothing become a vehicle for wellbeing rather than consumption?

Those questions continue to shape its work across conscious fashion, organic textiles, education, social impact initiatives, and design-led sustainability. What began as a small design studio has evolved into a globally recognised voice for conscious living through design, offering an alternative at a time when the fashion industry faces growing concerns over waste and overproduction.

The Belvoir Castle presentation reflected this philosophy. Designed around the experience of the wearer, the garments combined natural fibres, comfort, wellbeing, and longevity with flowing silhouettes, layered wraps, and meditation shawls. Upasana describes this approach as Conscious Wellness Wear, bringing together conscious fashion, wellness, mindful living, and personal transformation.

The choice of Belvoir Castle added further significance. Led today by Emma Manners, Duchess of Rutland, the estate became the setting for a relationship that began during her visits to India, where she encountered not simply a fashion brand but a philosophy rooted in conscious living.

Alongside conscious clothing, Upasana is now developing wellness-focused experiences, learning journeys, and residencies that explore design as a pathway to self-awareness and intentional living. The gathering also offered an important reminder that some of the most innovative responses to the future of fashion may emerge not from the world's fashion capitals, but from places like Auroville, where design, sustainability, community, and human wellbeing have been explored together for decades.

What travelled from Auroville to Belvoir Castle was not simply a collection of garments, but twenty-five years of exploring how design can nurture a more conscious relationship with ourselves, with one another, and with the world we inhabit.



Collective Work

I have often wondered how **collective work** can flourish when our actions leave people feeling more distant from one another.

Growing through years of drought taught me that nature often reveals the truth most clearly in the middle of hardship. Maybe that is why I felt the need to write these words.

This article is for everyone who speaks about Auroville with concern. Still, sometimes I feel that, among all these discussions, Auroville itself is the one thing that is heard the least.

All of us, no matter where we come from, can sometimes become trapped in our own political, ideological, or personal views. When an Indian speaks about India, they are speaking about their own home. But I still ask myself how we foreigners can sometimes speak so confidently about India, while each of our own countries is dealing with its own wounds and challenges.

My own country has been living under the shadow of war and bombardment for months.

Living through such a reality has made me value dialogue even more, especially when disagreement arises.

Yet whenever I have respectfully asked a question, the answer I have heard most often has been: "Because of the Mother's Vision."

To me, the Mother's Vision is reflected above all in responsibility, dialogue, and accepting our differences. If that vision truly lives in our daily lives, perhaps each of us would look more carefully at our own responsibilities before criticizing someone else.

Do I believe in the Mother's Vision? Absolutely, I do. But in my view, faith does not need constant slogans. I have continued my own path by trusting Her, and whenever I have felt lost, I have returned to that same trust.

I still believe that dialogue, even when it is difficult, is more constructive than silence and distance. Sometimes these boycotts, exclusions, and calculated silences remind me of patterns that have left deep wounds in societies around the world, including the Middle East. They are patterns that begin with people no longer listening to one another, not necessarily with violence.

Whether the words of this Iranian are accepted or not, they are part of his experience in Auroville. You may not agree with them today, but I believe that time will give all of us the chance to see more clearly.

Can a place devoted to human unity truly exist if people gradually stop listening to one another?

Auroville is a human laboratory, a place where people have the right to make mistakes, to experiment, to fail, and to learn from those experiences.

I hope we never reach a point where we are afraid of making mistakes or admitting them.

Sometimes I feel that fear even in the simplest moments, in the way some people look at me on the staircase of the place where I live. Looks that sometimes make me feel not like a neighbor, but like a stranger.

Even so, I still have hope.

I hope we can listen to each other more.

I hope we can choose dialogue before judgment.

Perhaps that is where collective work truly begins.

— Anita

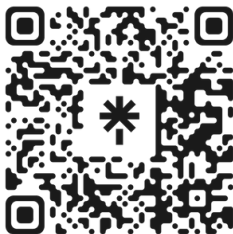


Have No Fear — Nothing has the power to take you away from me, for I am always with you — IN YOU.

Affectionately.

— The Mother

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It is always a mistake to complain about the circumstances of our life, for they are the outward expression of what we are ourselves.

with my blessing!