
Auroville Tomorrow

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

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Sri Aurobindo

Kiran: 1

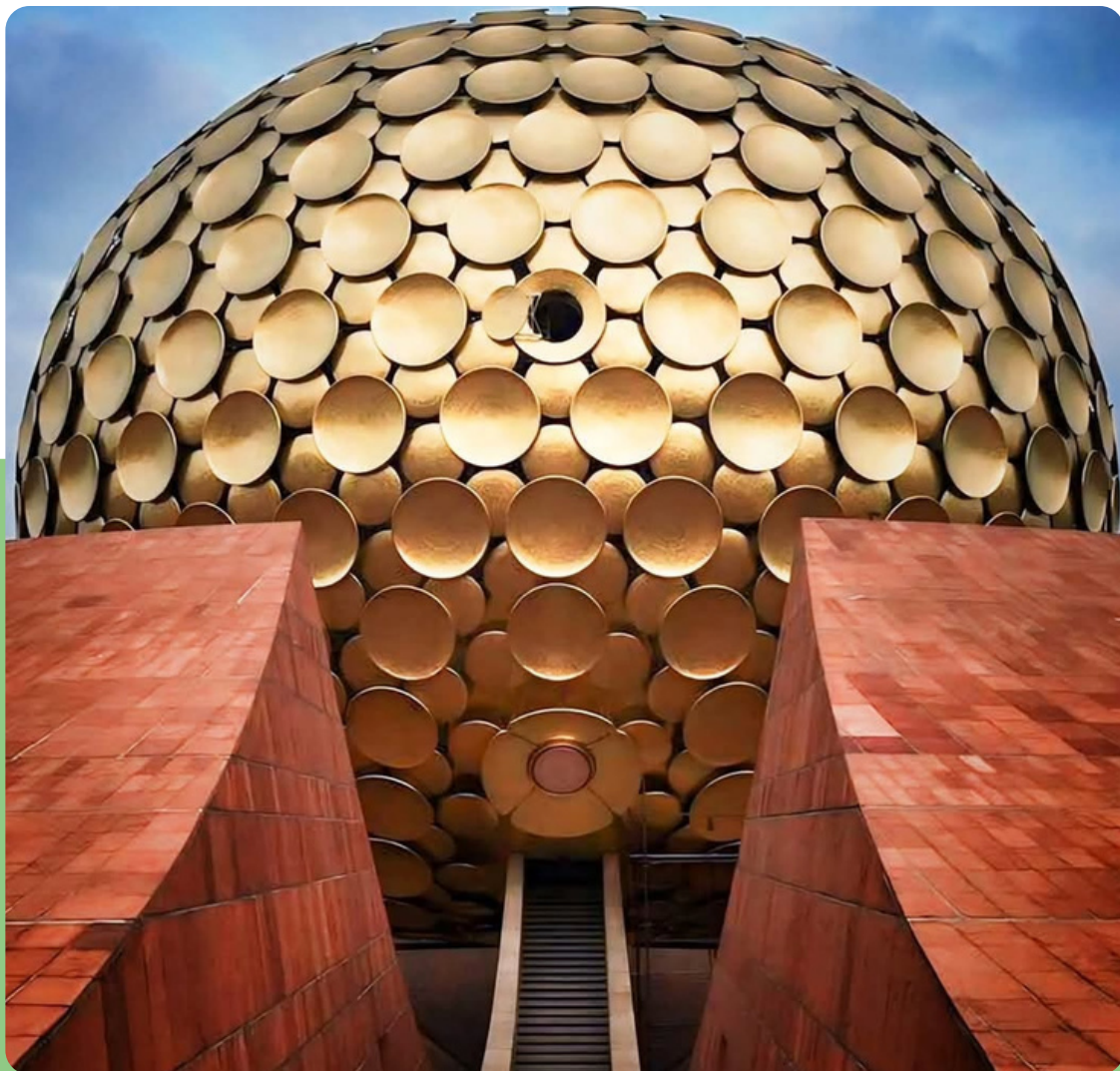
Auroville's newsletter, rooted in the present, focused on the future

24th April 2026

The Divine Dispensation

The anniversary of my return to Pondicherry, which was the tangible sign of the sure Victory over the adverse forces.

— The Mother, 24 April 1937



That she should come here and work with me for a common goal was, as it were, a divine dispensation. Without her, the work of transformation would not have been possible. She has helped and is helping to give a concrete form to my yoga.

— Sri Aurobindo, CWSA 32 — *Letters on The Mother*

Where Stories Meet, At the Zero Point

We stand at a zero point.

Exactly one year ago, on the sacred day of Darshan — 24th April — the very first issue of Auroville Tomorrow was published. That moment marked not just the beginning of a publication but the opening of a shared space of reflection, aspiration, and collective inquiry. Today, as we begin our second year, we find ourselves once again at a threshold, not a continuation in the ordinary sense, but a return to origin.

This is not merely the start of a new volume or another cycle of content. It is, in a deeper sense, a genuine zero point: a sacred pause in time where the momentum of the past softens, where inherited patterns can loosen their hold, and where something new, still fragile, still undefined, can begin to quietly take root within us. A zero point is not empty. It is full of potential.

However, stories are all we really have.

Every individual who arrives in Auroville brings with them a vast, living story, not a simple narrative, but a layered and evolving tapestry woven from culture, memory, joy, trauma, karma, and dharma. These stories are not static; they breathe, they shift, and they shape how we perceive, relate, and respond to one another.

Some come from the high plateaus of Tibet, carrying with them the silence of mountains and the endurance of exile. Others arrive from the deserts of Balochistan, shaped by harsh landscapes and resilient histories. Many come from the bustling cities of Europe, where speed, structure, and modernity define the rhythm of life. Others travel from the quiet villages of Latin America or from the ancient lands of Africa, each bringing a distinct imprint of experience and perception.

Each carries a different language of the soul, a different rhythm of pain and longing, and a different understanding of what it means to belong.

Here, at this cultural crossroad, all these stories converge. Not to compete or to dominate, but to meet. To encounter one another in a space that asks for more than agreement, it asks for presence.

And it is precisely here that the real work of Auroville begins, not with architecture, governance, or outer organisation, but with the slow, humble, and often difficult work within. The visible structures of the city can only reflect the quality of the consciousness that sustains them.

The Mother spoke of Auroville as a space for the birth of a new consciousness, a kind of living womb for transformation.



Just as the education of a child begins before birth, shaped by the inner and outer environment in which it is formed, so too must our work in Auroville begin at a level that precedes visible construction.

The inner atmosphere we participate in shaping today will inevitably influence the conditions in which future generations grow. We, the current generation of Aurovilians, are therefore not only inhabitants but participants in the formation of a subtle field, a psychological and cultural environment that carries forward what we embody, consciously or not.

If we remain unconscious carriers of division, fear, cultural superiority, or rigid ideological frameworks, these patterns do not disappear; they are transmitted. They become part of the shared field, quietly shaping what comes next.

This is why the inner work is not secondary. It is foundational.

At this zero point, we are being asked: can we hold our own story lightly enough that it does not become a barrier? Can we listen, not only intellectually, but with genuine openness, to someone whose history, culture, and dharma are radically different from our own? Can we allow differences to exist without immediately attempting to resolve, correct, or assimilate them?

And perhaps most importantly, can we trust a process that exceeds our personal preferences and mental constructions?

This is the education Auroville calls us toward, not an education confined to childhood or formal systems, but a continuous unfolding. An education of the soul that invites us to move beyond surface identities and into a deeper engagement with what is emerging through each individual and through the collective as a whole.

It asks us to move from the known to the unknown, from certainty to openness, from the personal to the universal, and from inherited patterns toward something not yet fully defined.

In the soil of India, a land that has, for millennia, witnessed the meeting and transformation of multiple civilisations, Auroville carries a distinct possibility: to engage consciously with difference and to transform historical and cultural tensions through the lived experience of coexistence.

This does not require the erasure of difference, nor the creation of uniformity. Rather, it invites us to hold difference within a wider field of awareness, one that does not reduce complexity, but allows it to be part of an evolving whole.

Yet this possibility can only unfold if we resist the impulse to impose a single narrative. The moment Auroville is defined by one culture, one ideology, or one fixed interpretation, its scope narrows. What was intended as an open experiment risk becoming another closed framework.

The Mother did not come to establish a fixed system, but to create the conditions for a new kind of emergence. Such emergence cannot be predetermined; it requires openness, uncertainty, and a willingness to remain in process.

At this cultural crossroad, our task is therefore not to conclude, but to remain available, to stay permeable to what is not yet known, and to engage with one another without prematurely reducing complexity into simplified forms.

Some arrive carrying the weight of historical conflict and unresolved memory. Others come from contexts of relative stability and privilege. Some bring with them long-standing spiritual traditions; others arrive with a more exploratory and unstructured openness. Each position carries its own limitations and its own potential.

All are part of the field. None is incidental.

What becomes possible here depends not on the absence of difference, but on the quality of the relationship we can establish with it. The capacity to encounter another without immediate judgment, to listen without defensiveness, and to remain present without needing to resolve, these are not passive states, but active disciplines.

In such encounters, something begins to shift. Not necessarily in visible or immediate ways, but in the underlying patterns through which we perceive and relate.

This is our zero point.

Not a dramatic revolution marked by noise or visible rupture, but a quiet and significant threshold, a moment in which the past does not disappear, yet no longer holds absolute authority over what can emerge. In such a space, possibility is not abstract; it is lived, shaped by the quality of our attention and the depth of our awareness.

At this juncture, what is being asked of us is neither withdrawal nor assertion, but a more subtle movement: the capacity to loosen our identification with the stories we carry. Not to reject them, nor to erase their importance, but to recognize their limits. Every story, whether personal or collective, carries within it both truth and conditioning. To remain bound to it completely is to reduce the field of what can become possible.

Auroville, as a meeting ground of cultures, histories, and inner trajectories, places us in direct contact with this challenge. The question is not whether we have stories, but whether we can relate to them with enough space to encounter others without immediately interpreting, correcting, or absorbing them into our own frameworks. This requires a form of listening that is not passive, but attentive and disciplined, a listening that allows difference to exist without urgency to resolve it.

In this sense, the zero point is not an escape from complexity, but an entry into a more conscious relationship with it. It asks for a form of inner spaciousness through which something larger than individual or cultural narratives can begin to take shape. What may emerge is not a single unified story, but a shared field in which multiple truths can coexist without cancelling one another.

To participate in this process requires humility, patience, and a willingness to trust a movement that does not always align with our expectations or preferences. If a new consciousness is indeed seeking to manifest, then our role is less about constructing outcomes and more about preparing the conditions in which it can take root.

As we stand at this threshold, the invitation is simple but demanding: to remain attentive, to listen more deeply than we are accustomed to, and to act without prematurely closing what is still unfolding. In doing so, we may begin to sense that what is taking shape here does not belong to any one of us, but moves through all of us, quietly, persistently, and with a direction that reveals itself only over time.

— Anita Kamali, Writer and Editor of Auroville Tomorrow Newsletter



From a Lamp to the Sun, April and the Call to the Sunlit Path

**In the quiet movement from aspiration to surrender,
a greater light takes over.**

In the stillness before dawn, in the small altar beside the bed, I lit a lamp and sat quietly.

The flame was steady—silent, unwavering. Beside it, an incense stick slowly dissolved into fragrance, offering itself completely: its form turning to scent, as if the self melted to surrender.

In that moment, consecration was no longer an idea—it was a lived experience- that spoke eloquently in the silence- as it burned, to give, and to transform.

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



My gaze now rested on the flame. It seemed complete in itself. And yet, after some time, when I opened my eyes again, the world had shifted. A soft pink sun had risen across the horizon. The lamp still burned. Its light had not diminished. My attention had glided effortlessly and entirely to a greater radiance. There was no sense of loss, no contradiction. Only a quiet certainty: the lamp had done its work. It had prepared the seeing.

This simple yet profound moment carries, for me, the deeper meaning of April, a month that marks decisive transitions in the lives of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, Mirra Alfassa, and offers us a map of inner evolution.

The early life of Sri Aurobindo can be seen as a long and meticulous preparation. Sent to England as a young boy by a father determined that he grow entirely free of Indian influence, he was immersed in the finest traditions of Western education. He excelled in languages, literature, philosophy, and classical studies—absorbing with brilliance all that was placed before him. Yet, even at this stage, something deeper stirred within - the Lamp of preparation?

Though he qualified for the Indian Civil Service, he chose not to pursue it. Instead, he returned to India and joined the service of the Maharaja of Baroda. What followed were thirteen formative years—years not merely of professional engagement, but of inner accumulation. In Baroda, he turned inward and eastward. He immersed himself in Sanskrit, Indian scriptures, epics, and philosophical texts. He explored not just their intellectual content, but consciousness as an experienced depth. Encounters with spiritual figures such as Vishnu Bhaskar Lele, and powerful inner experiences, including those associated with the Kali temple at Chanod, marked a shift from scholarship to realization.

These years were like the steady flame of the lamp—disciplined, contained, luminous with aspiration. Each effort, each experience, each insight added quietly to an inner readiness. Then came the turning point.

On the 4th of April, 1910, Sri Aurobindo arrived in Pondicherry.

This moment marked not just a geographical shift, but a decisive inner transition—one he would later regard as a kind of rebirth. If Baroda was the lamp, Pondicherry saw the sunrise of a New Consciousness. Here began a new phase of work—no longer preparation, but direct engagement with the highest possibilities of consciousness. The aspiration that had burned steadily now opened into a vast and luminous realization, one that would not remain confined to the individual but would seek to transform life itself.

This symbolism finds a beautiful resonance in the Matrimandir, where the first rays of the rising sun are aligned to enter and illuminate the crystal in the inner chamber on 4th April, an image that echoes that decisive moment of the inner sunrise.

April holds another profound moment.

On the 24th of April, the Mother made her final arrival in Pondicherry, marking the beginning of her permanent spiritual collaboration with Sri Aurobindo. This was not merely an outer event, but a decisive inner convergence. The Mother described it as a victory over adverse forces, a shift in the very atmosphere—a recognition of having entered the field of a work that was destined to unfold on a new scale. With this union, the foundation was laid for what would become a living experiment in consciousness—the path of Integral Yoga, and eventually, the vision that would take form as Auroville. Yet, this path demands something essential from those who would walk it- the discipline of fearlessness.

The Mother spoke with great clarity about fear—calling it ‘one of the deepest impurities, one that directly obstructs the divine work. To advance on the path is to confront and eliminate even its subtlest traces.’

True courage, she reminds us, is not bravado or emotional intensity. It is a quiet, unwavering steadiness—the capacity to face everything, from the smallest to the greatest circumstances, without inner disturbance. It is to stand anchored in a constant awareness of the Divine presence, with a complete and conscious self-giving.



Such fearlessness is not achieved overnight. It is the fruit of sustained effort, sincerity, and grace. It requires vigilance, endurance, and above all, trust.

Sri Aurobindo reminds us that realization of the Divine is essential—but equally essential is the spirit in which we approach it. Not merely through intellectual understanding, but through love, devotion, and self-giving in action.

To know the Divine is not only to think it, but to live it, to allow it to permeate thought, feeling, will, and action. This is the essence of Integral Yoga: not an escape from life, but its transformation from Aspiration to Surrender constantly. April, then, is not just a month marked by dates and events. It is a living invitation. It reminds us that the small, steady lamp of aspiration—our efforts, our disciplines, our practices—is indispensable. It prepares the ground, purifies the being, and focuses the will.

But it is not the end. There comes a moment when a greater light must take over—when effort yields to grace, when seeking opens into seeing, when the inner sun rises and reorders everything in its radiance.

April almost symbolises a living invitation. To recognize that moment, to welcome it, and to align ourselves with it—that is the deeper call. The lamp prepares us from various geographies, cultures, practices, and backgrounds, but at a ripe moment, the sun reveals, ushering us definitively towards the path that calls.

May the April Sunrise carry us upon this sunlit path- sustained by faith, purified by sincerity, and fulfilled in surrender- that we move forward together: to manifest the vision of Auroville, and to allow the highest truth to awaken, shape, and express itself through every dimension of our being.



The Gnostic Being and the Metabiological Evolution

Into the first two decades of the 21st century, and it already feels like a planet-wide diagnostic test that we may be collectively failing as a species. From the fragmentation of the global political order to the accelerating depletion of the biosphere, the signals are all flashing red. We are told we are in a crisis of resources combined with a crisis of climate, which in turn is getting catalysed by a crisis of geopolitics. But if we look more deeply, through a Sri Aurobindonian framework and adding the lens of Jonas Salk's (1914-1995) vision, the virologist who pioneered the Polio vaccine, we may actually be in the midst of a biological and spiritual 'point of inflection'.

Jonas Salk, the virologist who saved the world from polio, spent the latter half of his life articulating a bio-philosophy that he called the Survival of the Wisest. Across the world and decades earlier, Sri Aurobindo, the revolutionary turned yogi-seer, mapped the Human Cycle, unveiling the possibility of a transition from the age of reason to a spiritual age. When we place Salk's metabiology within the vast architecture of Sri Aurobindonian evolution, we discover a startlingly unified map for the human future.

We are not merely witnessing the end of an era; we are witnessing the labour pains of a new species.

Jonas Salk, in his work 'The Survival of the Wisest' (1973), frames human evolution through a metabiological lens, beyond the strictly biological, where consciousness, values, and wisdom become the new drivers of adaptation. Drawing on the S-shaped (sigmoid) growth curve of the human population and analogous biological systems (e.g., fruit-fly populations in closed systems), Salk identifies a critical point of inflection. This marks the transition from Epoch A (exponential quantitative growth, resource exploitation, survival of the fittest) to Epoch B (stabilisation at sustainable levels, qualitative development, survival of the wisest).

Sri Aurobindo's 'The Human Cycle' (originally 'The Psychology of Social Development', 1916–1918; revised 1930s–1949) maps a parallel but deeper evolutionary principle of consciousness in society and the individual. Humanity progresses through psychological stages of collective development: the infrarational (instinctive/vital), the rational/individualistic (Age of Reason, mechanical economism, democracy of the individual), the subjective (inward turn, discovery of the nation-soul and inner life), and finally the suprarational/spiritual age.



The decisive movement is the spiritual transformation: a shift from mental/vital governance (Life-Force centred in cravings, power, ego) to a spiritual order in which the Spirit (higher divine Reality) becomes the sovereign principle. This culminates in the Gnostic being, the supramentalised individual and collective living in Truth-Consciousness (supramental gnostic consciousness), where ego is transcended, inner freedom reigns, and life expresses divine harmony, unity-in-diversity, and creative fulfilment on earth.

The 'Ego to Being' transition that Jonas Salk delineates functions as a precise metabiological/psychological module within Sri Aurobindo's larger supramental evolutionary architecture, a preparatory or bridging stage in planetary consciousness.

Let us do a quick and rough mapping of the process that Jonas Salk describes to the evolutionary path that Sri Aurobindo unveils.

·Epoch A that Salks brings out aligns with what Sri Aurobindo describes in detail in a psycho-spiritual frame as the 'Curve of the Rational Age' and its end: Ego-dominated individualism, mechanical society, quantitative expansion, and the 'infrarational' and 'rational' phases that have exhausted their creative potential.

·Salk's point of inflection and the emergence of Being, which consists of the inward turn, value inversion, and metabiological reorientation (wisdom over mere intellect; Being over Ego domination), aligns with what Sri Aurobindo describes as the necessary subjective preparation. Individuals begin to live 'in the image of the Spirit', developing the psychic being/soul as the intermediary that opens to the supramental.

·Epoch B represents the fruition: Salk's 'survival of the wisest' and balanced coalescence (Being-Ego harmony, qualitative life, Nature-aligned wisdom) becomes the human-side foundation for Sri Aurobindo's divine life on earth. The Gnostic being is the fully realised supramental expression, collective as well as individual, where metabiological wisdom is divinised into gnostic Truth-Consciousness, enabling a spiritualised society of free, harmonious, evolving beings rather than mechanical uniformity or ego-anchored conflicts.

Salk supplies the naturalistic, scientific, and practical vocabulary for the deep spiritual-psychological core affecting the societal and individual evolution that Sri Aurobindo describes.

The crisis we face today as a species indicates the arrival of the planet at the inflection point. The sigmoid curve of population, technology, and consumption has reached its steepest ascent; the rational-mechanical age has exhausted itself in ecological overshoot, resource depletion, climate disruption, mass inequality, geopolitical fragmentation, and a profound crisis of meaning and values. These are not isolated problems but should be seen as symptoms of evolutionary pressure - the natural consequence of Epoch A / rational-ego domination reaching its limit.

The crisis forces the exact transition required: from Ego-centric, quantitative, win-lose paradigms to Being-centric, qualitative, 'AND' - based coalescence. Without this integrated pathway, humanity risks self-inflicted collapse. In the vision of Sri Aurobindo, it is mechanical, rigid crystallisation blocking the ascent of the soul and the descent of the Supramental. Salk sees this as a human being making himself 'his own victim' through metabiological pathology; With it, through deliberate cultivation of wisdom, inner reorientation, and collective receptivity to higher consciousness, the planetary crisis becomes the birth canal for the spiritual age and the emergence of Gnostic being on earth.

In such a vision where Sri Aurobindo's gets reinforced with that of Jonas Salk, the planetary emergency we face today, may not yet be doom, but perhaps the precise evolutionary moment when humanity is called to choose: continue the old curve toward catastrophe, or consciously navigate the metabiological or Gnostic pathway toward a higher, wiser, divinely fulfilled planetary existence. The survival of the wisest and the advent of the Gnostic being are, at root, the same evolutionary imperative.

— Aravindan Neelakandan, Author and Writer

Nolini Kanta Gupta: Masculine Prose



Nolini Kanta's English prose is singularly disinterested, niskama -- and compact. It reminds us of Sri Aurobindo's detection of Vyasa standing behind his words with his sadhana, the authentic and original poet of the Mahabharata.

The substance counts for everything, and the form limits itself to its proper work of expression with precision and power. This is that rare art of masculinity, where there is no exuberance, no colour, no ornamentation, no glaik of rhetoric.

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

It is not external discipline, but an inner state made of absolute surrender, and a wish not to become so flashy that his words hide the light of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo. He could, but he never claimed to be the third avatar of supramental yoga.

What were his subjects, and how was his prose style? He chose some of the master thinkers and poets of the past and the present and related them to Sri Aurobindo's thoughts. Talking of Blake, he remembered the yoga of triple transformation but used a new word for the transformation of the vital: "Energy," for Blake. Interpreting Blake, Gupta said that energy was not to be suppressed but transubstantiated. That compacts the whole theory of transformation of the vital, lower, and higher.

Great prose writers make sweeping generalisations and often hide the examples within the structure of their passages. Ruskin and Carlyle, Emerson and Arnold, Sri Aurobindo and T.S. Eliot —in all these great prose writers, we can see this tendency. Gupta is very special in his generalisations. His sentence is a colourless wonder--- one example, one inspired sentence, and then a series of understated statements of fathomless depth! There were great Aurobindonian writers in the past, Iyengar and Gokak, Sisirkumar Ghose and Sethna, and quite a few others, but they wrote majestic prose. Nolini Kanta does not attract all readers. We have to rise to a certain level to see his imprisoned splendour!



The Unlived Possibility of Education

There is a particular quality of attention that sometimes appears in children who have not yet been fully schooled. A four-year-old watching an ant carry something three times its size. A seven-year-old sitting very still at the edge of a pond, not because she was told to, but because something in her wanted to stay.

This quality — unhurried, absorptive, lit from within — is not naivety. It is a form of intelligence.

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



Most of us have felt this, even if we did not have the language for it. And one of the quiet tragedies of modern education is how efficiently it is extinguished. We have built systems of extraordinary sophistication to replace it with something else: with performance, with comparison, with the anxiety of falling behind. And then we wonder why so many educated adults feel, beneath their competencies, a vague but persistent sense of having missed something. Education, at its most honest, is a question about what a human being is for. Not what they can produce, not what they can earn — but what they are, underneath their conditioning, and what they might become if that depth were taken seriously.

Most education systems never ask this question. They inherit an answer — the productive citizen, the skilled worker, the socially adjusted individual — and then engineer backward from it, designing curricula, assessments, and institutions to deliver that answer as efficiently as possible. The efficiency is real. The loss is also real! What gets quietly sacrificed is interiority: the capacity of a person to be in genuine contact with their own experience, to distinguish what they actually think from what they have been told to think, to feel the difference between borrowed purpose and their own. This is not a mystical faculty. It is observable in everyday life. It is the difference between a student who reads because a grade depends on it and one who reads because something in the book is answering a question they already carried. The first learns to perform understanding. The second undergoes it.

The developmental cost of ignoring this begins early — and earlier than most people realize. Modern schooling introduces abstract reasoning, symbolic logic, and decontextualized literacy long before the cognitive architecture to receive them is in place. Jean Piaget's work demonstrated, with decades of careful observation, that formal operational thinking — the capacity for abstraction, hypothetical reasoning, and systematic logic — does not naturally consolidate until early adolescence. We routinely demand it of eight-year-olds. The child does not fail. The child adapts. They learn to mimic the form of understanding without its substance.

They learn to produce correct-looking outputs from processes they have not genuinely internalized. And then this adaptation calcifies. By the time they reach university, many students have spent a decade perfecting the performance of learning while remaining, in some essential way, strangers to it. What would it look like to resist this? In some schools within the Reggio Emilia tradition, a child who cannot yet read is not hurried. They are given clay, given paint, and given problems that can be held in the hands. The understanding they build through material encounter becomes the ground into which, later, abstraction takes root.

The sequence matters enormously. Concept before experience produces a thin, brittle kind of knowing. Experience before concept produces something that lasts. The body is not peripheral to this. It is, as the philosopher Mark Johnson demonstrated through careful analysis of how we actually think, the source of our most fundamental concepts. We understand argument because we know what it feels like to push against something. We understand depth because we have moved through space. The mind does not float above the body and occasionally consult it. The mind is, in significant part, the body's thinking. To educate the body only as a vessel — to be fed, kept healthy, and occasionally exercised so the real work of the mind can continue — is to misunderstand the architecture of cognition itself. And yet physical education in most systems remains either competitive or neglected.

The question it never asks is: what does it mean to inhabit yourself well? To move with awareness rather than only with speed? A student who has learned to feel where tension lives in their own body, who can notice the moment their breathing changes under pressure, has learned something about self-knowledge that no philosophy class will easily replicate.

The emotional dimension is no different. Feelings are treated in schools either as obstacles to learning or as subjects for occasional pastoral care. What is rarely taught is the skill of feeling with precision — the capacity to distinguish anxiety from excitement, grief from resentment, genuine conviction from the desire for approval. Without this, moral education remains theatrical. A student can write a sophisticated essay on justice while remaining emotionally illiterate about their own cruelties. The gap between knowing what is right and caring enough to act is not closed by more ethics coursework. It is closed by a deeper encounter with one's own interior life. This is where the question of discipline becomes interesting. The model most institutions rely on — external enforcement of norms — produces compliance, and sometimes competence, but rarely wisdom. Lev Vygotsky's concept of voluntary attention points toward something more durable: the self-directed capacity to govern one's own mind, to choose where to place awareness and why.

This capacity cannot be installed from outside. It can only be grown, slowly, through experiences of genuine choice — through being trusted before one has fully proven trustworthy, through being given responsibility and allowed to feel its weight. When education works — really works — it has a particular texture. A student encounters something that resists them. Not the manufactured resistance of a test, but the real resistance of an idea that doesn't resolve easily, a material that behaves unexpectedly, a person whose experience entirely contradicts their own. They stay with it, not because they have to, but because something in them refuses to let it go. The teacher nearby is not intervening. They are present in a different way — available, watchful, unhurried. Confident that the struggle is the learning.

In that moment, nothing is being delivered. Something is being discovered. And the student who experiences this even once carries it differently from the student who never has. They know, somewhere below articulation, that they are capable of genuine understanding — not just of receiving it, but of arriving at it. That knowledge changes how they relate to difficulty for the rest of their life. The crises converging on us now — ecological, social, psychological — are not simply failures of policy or technology. They are, in significant part, the downstream consequences of educating for capability without interiority, for productivity without wisdom, for adaptation without the inner depth that makes genuine choice possible.

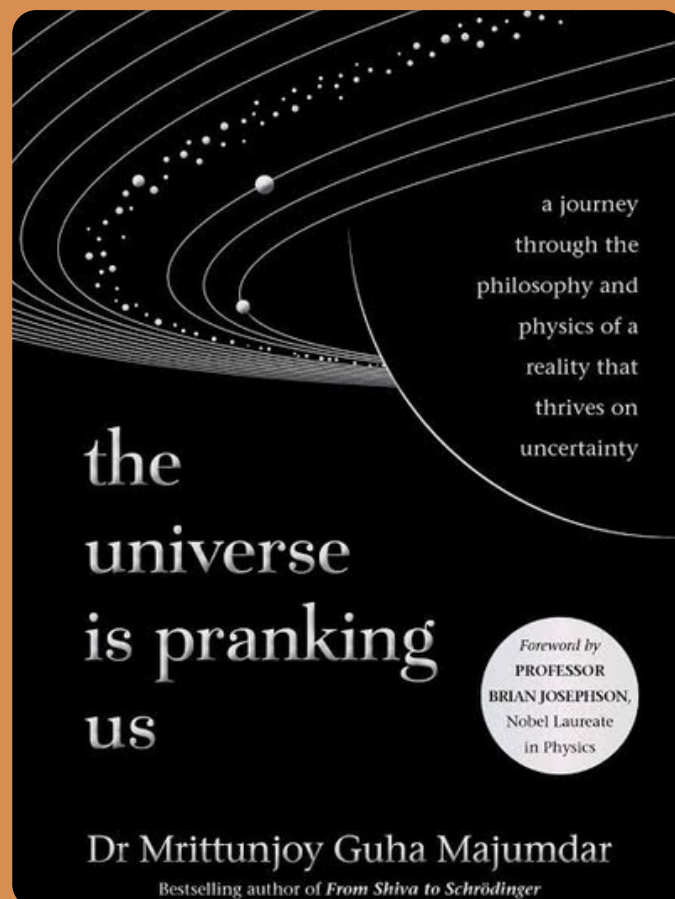
We have produced generations equipped to execute within systems they did not design and cannot, in the deepest sense, question — because questioning at that depth requires a relationship with oneself that their education never cultivated. No technological acceleration will resolve this. No curriculum reform, by itself, will reach it. The transformation required is not in what is taught but in what is honored: the mindful journey of a human being becoming more fully themselves. To educate in this sense is not to implement a method. It is to hold a different set of convictions about what a human being is. That beneath the performance and the anxiety, there is something authentic pressing toward its own expression.

That this something is not an obstacle to be managed, but the very thing education should serve. That a child who learns to trust their own perception, to question with rigor and feel with honesty, to act from values they have actually examined — that child is not a product of good teaching. They are a person becoming real. This is not an idea waiting to be tried. In fragments, in quiet classrooms and experimental communities and single moments between a teacher and a student, it is already happening. The question is only whether we are willing to recognize it, to protect it, and to build the conditions in which it can become ordinary rather than exceptional. Not a future to be planned. A possibility already here, waiting to be lived.

In an age of algorithmic certainty, we forget: the universe runs on paradox, not absolutes. *The Universe Is Pranking Us* by Dr. Mrittunjoy Guha Majumdar (NIAS and Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Delhi NCR) explores quantum quirks, limits of logic, and the strange truth that reality is far more fluid than fixed.

A mind-bending invitation to embrace uncertainty—and think beyond “right answers.” Featuring a foreword by Nobel Laureate Prof. Brian Josephson, the book has been endorsed by luminaries like Prof. Gregory Chaitin and Padma Shri Prof. Subhash Kak. You can now grab your copy here:

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Learning and growing with children and youth

Over the past 13 years, I have had the opportunity to work with children and youth across many learning spaces—at Isai Ambalam School, Udavi School, Deepanam School, several government schools, STEM Land, and various summer workshops. I have also worked with youth at C3STREAM Land Designs (formerly Aura Auro), the Auroville Institute of Applied Technology (AIAT), and with many visiting college students. I am especially grateful to Subash at Isai Ambalam for encouraging me to engage across multiple spaces—an approach I continue to follow.

I initially came to Auroville with the intention to “teach” and “contribute.” Over time, however, these engagements have become a path of unending education and personal growth. Working with children and youth has helped me evolve not only as an educator but as a human being, and has deepened my ability to create environments where others can learn and grow. It has also gradually taught me to engage with discomfort and, at times, with conflict.

Before coming to Auroville, I had taught undergraduate students as a teaching assistant during my MS at IIT Madras and later during my PhD at Columbia University. In these settings, technical competence was often sufficient when working with motivated students. It was through my engagement with NGOs across India, working in alternative education, that I began to see education as something more than fitting in or standing out—it was about knowing oneself and living without inner conflict.

This understanding deepened when my spouse and I spent nine months in a tribal village, working with school dropouts. There, I began to experience what it meant to be an educator. A child whose hands trembled while solving arithmetic problems came alive when working with materials and repairing torches. I saw that working with our hands—building, creating, and working on real-life applications —brought children far more joy and confidence than passing the 10th-grade examinations.

As with many who begin teaching, one of the first qualities I had to develop was patience—the ability to pause, not to react immediately, and to remain steady when things did not go as planned. Over time, I found myself relying less on patience and more on something deeper: presence. When I was truly present, I found that I could support a child’s learning more effectively. Responses arose more naturally—just enough to move learning forward.



In such moments, judgment was replaced by a quieter discernment. I found myself responding to similar situations with greater clarity and poise. Gradually, I began to see that who I was mattered more than what I was doing. Preparation, then, was not only about designing engaging ways to teach science and mathematics through real-life projects, but also about making time for meditation that cultivated stillness and reflection.

Another quality I began to develop was the ability to hold multiple perspectives. Initially, this came from the need to present ideas in different ways for children with different orientations, and to recognize and address misconceptions.

At times, however, I found children approaching familiar ideas in ways I had not considered—often with surprising clarity and creativity. For example, a child once connected the cross-multiplication method to the LCM method, bridging a gap that had often confused students. These moments helped me realize that what I took for granted was not always the only or the most interesting way of seeing something. They invited me to remain open and to see each situation with fresh eyes rather than defaulting to established patterns.

Through a series of circumstances, I took on the challenge of working closely with three youth—two from Auroville and one from the bioregion—to help them upskill within a year. During this time, they volunteered at schools for a few hours each day, teaching mathematics, while also being supported financially to learn skills that could make them productive in a semiconductor company (Aura).

Looking back, I realize I was overexcited to share electronics—a field I loved and knew well. While the youth made progress in mathematics and learned some electronics over six months, building a chip remained a distant goal. An unexpected opportunity arose when Aura needed support to maintain and update the software they had received from an external company. We took on this challenge together, learning programming along the way and gradually beginning to work on software for hardware.

This experience was both challenging and enjoyable—we were learning and building something new together. It also taught me an important lesson: it is more meaningful to understand what someone is ready to receive than to remain fixed on what I am eager to offer.

As I worked more closely with youth, I noticed that their choices did not always appear logical to me. I often felt the urge to analyze their situations and offer solutions—essentially, to give advice. It did not take long to see the limitations of this approach.

Over time, I began to accept that people make decisions based on their own perspectives and contexts. Rather than trying to direct their choices, I shifted my focus to supporting both them and myself in discovering a sense of purpose, and in developing the tools needed to engage with others and the world more effectively.

When I worked with children in difficult situations—such as when the borewell at a school stopped functioning—I found myself focused on solving the problem. The children, however, responded very differently. They decided to dig a pond, choosing to create a sense of abundance even in the face of scarcity.

This reminded me of my time as a graduate student at Columbia, when I was raising funds for a building for an orphanage. I had begun with something as simple as a penny drive—an audacity of hope in its own way. Reflecting on these moments, I noticed how easily I had become overly practical in a place like Auroville, which was meant to be a divine dream. It called not only for responding to problems, but for going beyond them—to realize our inner potential.

Nature plays an important role at Isai Ambalam School as a way of connecting more deeply with ourselves. Having grown up in a city, my relationship with nature was largely that of an observer. Over time, this began to change. I now take responsibility for feeding the cows, bulls, ducks, cats, and dogs on campus early each morning. This simple act has helped me feel more connected to the place I live in and to the many beings we share it with.

Each of these animals has found its way into the school in its own way—the duck, for instance, fled from dogs, flew onto our campus, and eventually settled in among the cows. These experiences have gently shifted my thinking from independence toward interdependence.

Just as nature plays an important role at Isai Ambalam School, so does its work on culture. I had earlier seen culture as something to be managed or dealt with. However, engaging with the stories of the Nayanmars—the Shaivite saints—through the lens of universal values, and spending time learning them with depth and understanding, has been deeply enriching.

It also began to reshape how I understood knowledge itself. I started to see the limitations of an overemphasis on formal mathematics in schools, and the value of more empirical ways of learning and knowing. This led me to explore Indian Knowledge Systems, where knowledge is often rooted in observation, practice, and lived experience.

I have begun to experience Auroville not merely as a place that accepts or rejects different traditions, but as a space that seeks to synthesize the highest that each has to offer.

Another important learning from working with children and youth has been the need for constant renewal—to keep doing something fresh. Over time, this has become a norm within our team, where we consciously try to create something new each year.

A few years ago, we started the Becoming and Being a Shifu program—a one-year residential program for graduates to know themselves, master a skill, and develop the ability to shape their environment through that skill and their inner growth. During this time, a child I had worked with when I first moved to Auroville had become my young co-worker. He questioned why we needed to wait until graduation, when much of the learning and unlearning happens from scratch here.

This made me reflect on my own tendency to become comfortable once something had been established. I began to see that what I viewed as an achievement could instead be a starting point for something deeper. A year later, we collaborated with AIAT to start the Bachelor of Vocation (B.Voc) program, working with youth immediately after schooling and creating the first undergraduate program in Auroville.

Working with children and youth has helped me experience a youth that never ages. The qualities I have learned—presence, discernment over judgment, multiple perspectives, and the ability to respond to what is needed rather than what I wish to offer—have extended beyond these spaces into other areas of my life. They have shaped how I engage with difficult situations, conversations, and moments of conflict.

Conflict, at its simplest, arises when two people want different things. Without such tensions, little would change. The question, then, is not how to avoid conflict, but how to meet it with a smile. My hope is not that children are shielded from conflict, but that both they and I develop the poise and the tools to transcend conflict-and, in doing so, create something beautiful together.

— Sanjeev Ranganathan, *The Executive of Saiier*



The Solution

As we awaken today to the global news of the continuing hostilities of some humans and nations against each other, of how fiery the start of this new year 2026 is, with the awareness of the intense forewarnings, and hopes, associated with the coming "double-fire" Year of the Fire Horse, we are again starkly reminded of why Sri Aurobindo and the Mother insisted on "Man is a transitional being... not final.", and created Auroville this City of Dawn with the Prime Directive: "The whole earth must prepare itself for the advent of the new species, and Auroville wants to work consciously to hasten this advent."

Sri Aurobindo and the Mother were so vivid about what was to come, which is what we are experiencing, and unequivocally prompted us to make the definitive choice:

"Wherever thou seest a great end, be sure of a great beginning. Where a monstrous and painful destruction appals thy mind, console it with the certainty of a large and great creation. God is there not only in the still small voice, but in the fire and in the whirlwind.

"The greater the destruction, the freer the chances of creation; but the destruction is often long, slow, and oppressive, the creation tardy in its coming or interrupted in its triumph. The night returns again and again, and the day lingers or seems even to have been a false dawning. Despair not therefore, but watch and work. Those who hope violently, despair swiftly: neither hope nor fear, but be sure of God's purpose and thy will to accomplish.

"The hand of the divine Artist works often as if it were unsure of its genius and its material. It seems to touch test and leave, to pick up and throw away, and pick up again, to labour and fail and botch and repiece together. Surprises and disappointments are the order of his work before all things are ready. What was selected is cast away into the abyss of reprobation; what was rejected becomes the cornerstone of a mighty edifice. But behind all this is the sure eye of a knowledge which surpasses our reason and the slow smile of an infinite ability.

"God has all time before him and does not need to be always in a hurry. He is sure of his aim and success cares not if he breaks his work a hundred times to bring it nearer perfection. Patience is our first great necessary lesson, but not the dull slowness to move of the timid, the sceptical, the weary, the slothful, the unambitious, or the weakling; a patience of a calm and gathering strength which watches and prepares itself for the hour of swift great strokes, few but enough to change destiny.

"Wherefore God hammers so fiercely at his world, tramples and kneads it like dough, casts it so often into the blood-bath and the red hell-heat of the furnace? Because humanity in the mass is still a hard, crude, and vile ore which will not otherwise be smelted and shaped; as is his material, so is his method. Let it help to transmute itself into nobler and purer metal; his ways with it will be gentler and sweeter, much loftier and fairer its uses.



"Wherefore he selected or made such a material, when he had all infinite possibility to choose from? Because of his divine Idea which saw before it not only beauty and sweetness and purity, but also force and will and greatness. Despise not force, nor hate it for the ugliness of some of its faces, nor think that love only is God. All perfect perfection must have something in it of the stuff of the hero and even of the Titan. But the greatest force is born out of the greatest difficulty."

Thoughts and Glimpses, SABCL, Vol. 16, pp. 392-93

"After all, the whole problem is to know whether humanity has reached the state of pure gold or whether it still needs to be tested in the crucible.

One thing is evident: humanity has not become pure gold; that is visible and certain.

But something has happened in the world's history which allows us to hope that a selected few in humanity, a small number of beings, perhaps, are ready to be transformed into pure gold and that they will be able to manifest strength without violence, heroism without destruction, and courage without catastrophe.

But in the very next paragraph, Sri Aurobindo answers: "If man could once consent to be spiritualised." If only the individual could consent to be spiritualised... could consent.¹

Something in him asks for it, aspires, and all the rest refuses, wants to continue to be what it is: the mixed ore which needs to be cast into the furnace.

At the moment, we are at a decisive turning point in the history of the Earth, once again. From every side, I am asked, "What is going to happen?" Everywhere there is anguish, expectation, and fear. "What is going to happen?..." There is only one reply: "If only man could consent to be spiritualised."

And perhaps it would be enough if some individuals became pure gold, for this would be enough to change the course of events.... We are faced with this necessity in a very urgent way.

This courage, this heroism which the Divine wants of us, why not use it to fight against one's own difficulties, one's own imperfections, one's own obscurities? Why not heroically face the furnace of inner purification so that it does not become necessary to pass once more through one of those terrible, gigantic destructions which plunge an entire civilisation into darkness?

This is the problem before us. It is for each one to solve it in his own way.

This evening I am answering the questions I have been asked, and my reply is that of Sri Aurobindo: If man could once consent to be spiritualised....

And I add: Time presses... from the human point of view."

"All would change if man could once consent to be spiritualised; but his nature, mental and vital and physical, is rebellious to the higher law. He loves his imperfection."

"For man (the mental human being and its tools), the foremost realization for man is understanding—understanding things.

For the Supermind (the Supramental being as the new species), realization means Power (Mother stretches out her arms in a sovereign gesture), the Creative Willpower.

But naturally, it would be quite disastrous if human intellectual capacities, mental capacities, were to gain control of that power—it would be terrifying! It would cause terrible havoc. Hence the need to consent in all humility to become imbecile before being able to acquire it." — The Mother

"A selected few" who WILLS and CHOOSES to be "Pure Gold".

— Zech Joya, Residents of Auroville



Prosperity in Auroville, Between Vision and Structure

When viewed through the lens of a financial analyst, shaped by experience in both fundamental and technical market analysis, a certain structural tension becomes visible in Auroville. A community that positions itself as a laboratory for the future, in some of its economic layers, still operates through mechanisms that belong to an earlier phase of organization.

This observation is not a negation, but rather an invitation to a more essential question: what does prosperity truly mean in Auroville?

A significant part of Auroville's financial infrastructure still relies on manual processes, fragmented reporting, and trust-based coordination. While these characteristics may be rooted in the founding values of the community, in practice, they can lead to considerable inefficiencies. In many cases, even the recording and reconciliation of simple transactions can take time.

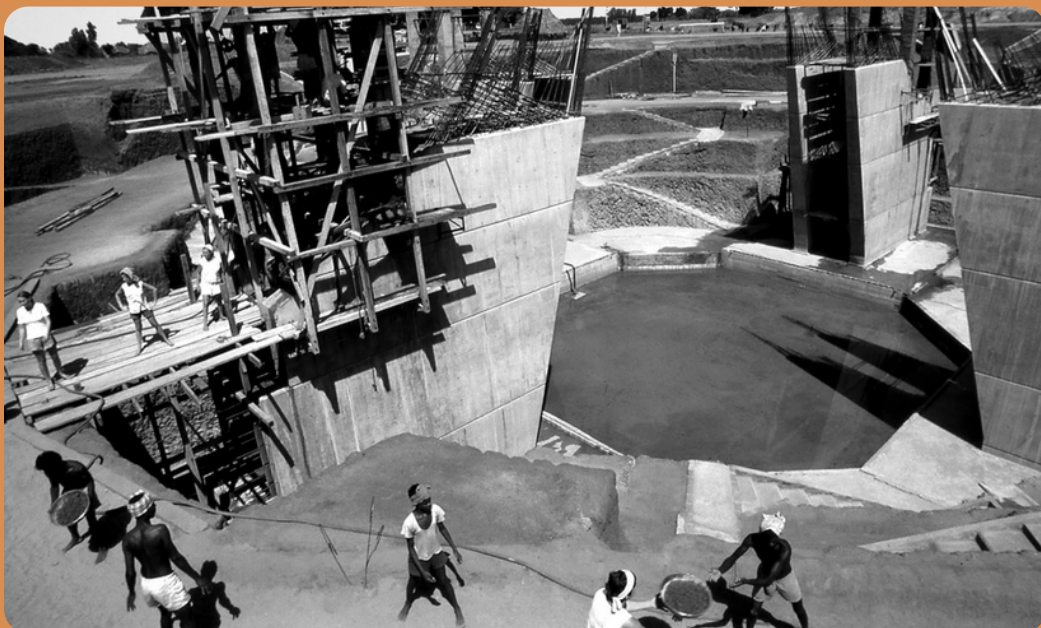
At a time when financial systems globally are moving toward real-time accounting, data transparency, and digital traceability, this gap is not merely technical; it directly affects the flow and resilience of resources.

What emerges here is not only a question of efficiency, but something deeper: what in fundamental analysis would be described as structural or foundational risk, a vulnerability arising from within the system itself, rather than from external conditions.

A high dependence on external contributions, combined with the absence of a clearly defined and sustainable income model, places Auroville in a position where even small shifts in support can have amplified consequences. This condition does not stem from a lack of intention, but from an economic structure that remains incomplete.

However, critique alone is not sufficient. If these observations are to be meaningful, they must also point toward possible directions.

First, Auroville would benefit from a level of transparency and integration in its financial system that allows the flow of resources to be visible, traceable, and timely. This does not imply an uncritical adoption of mainstream digital capitalism, but rather a conscious use of tools that make economic reality more legible. Even a simple internal platform, capable of recording individual contributions (time, skills, knowledge) and aligning them with existing needs, could serve as a meaningful starting point.



Second, the question of income sustainability. No community can rely indefinitely on external support. Auroville, given its unique capacities, holds the potential to develop revenue models aligned with its values: value-added agriculture, renewable energy production at a meaningful scale, conscious forms of tourism, and, importantly, the possibility of offering its lived experience and accumulated knowledge as a form of consultancy to other communities and regions seeking to build alternative models of living.

Such a knowledge-based contribution could become not only a source of income but also an extension of Auroville's original purpose.

In parallel, a more careful approach to financial reserves may also be considered. Rather than engaging in speculative activity, a transparently governed and conservative reserve fund, designed to preserve value and maintain stability over time, could support long-term resilience without compromising the underlying ethos of the community.

But perhaps the most critical dimension remains the human factor.

Experience in financial markets has repeatedly shown that even the most advanced systems can fail in the absence of maturity, integrity, and long-term vision among those who operate them.

No structure, on its own, guarantees the health of a system.

Auroville is no exception. Even if advanced financial and administrative tools were to be implemented, without attention to the quality of awareness and responsibility of those engaging with them, the risk of reproducing the same patterns remains, only in a more modern form.

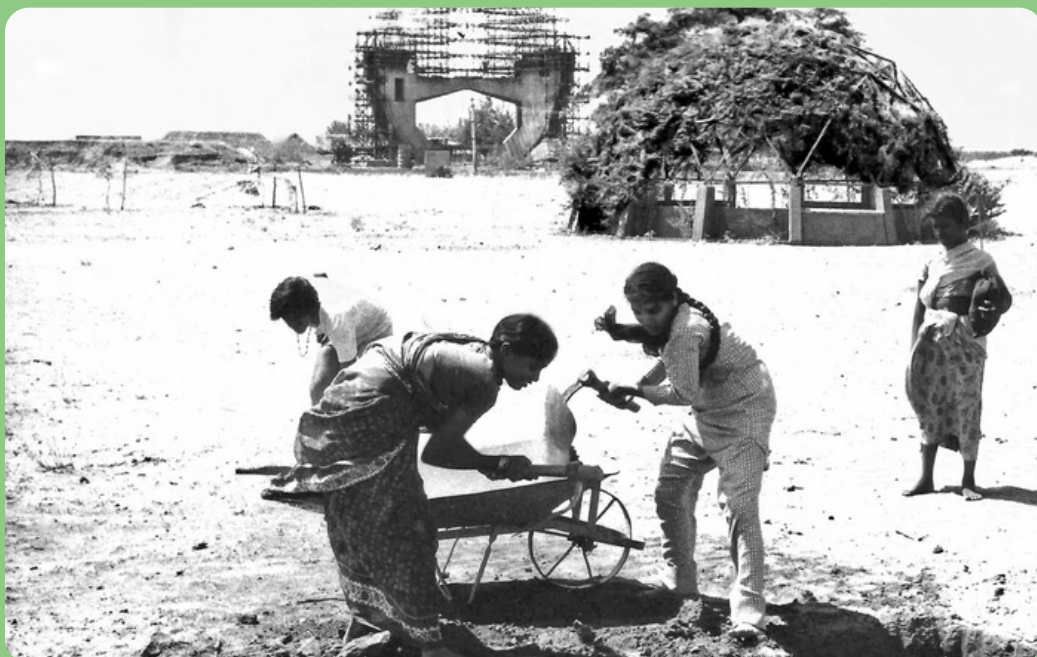
For this reason, prosperity in Auroville cannot be approached as a purely technical matter. It emerges at the intersection of two transformations: the transformation of systems and the transformation of human beings.

Without the first, structures remain fragile and dependent. Without the second, any new system eventually returns to familiar limitations.

The future of prosperity in Auroville lies neither in the wholesale adoption of modern financial tools nor in the unaltered continuation of older models. Rather, it lies in finding an intelligent balance: using tools that enhance transparency and efficiency, while remaining grounded in the principle that resources and systems must serve the growth of human consciousness, not the other way around.

This is not an easy path. But if Auroville can embody such a balance in practice, it may not only strengthen its own internal foundation of prosperity but also offer a credible and lived model for communities seeking new ways of being.

— Anita Kamali



Auroville, where Learning Felt Like Living

Six Days That Rewired My Rhythm

The camp did not begin in Auroville.

It began in a train coach, somewhere between Mumbai and Puducherry.

Seven of us—strangers at first—found ourselves adjusting and meeting at the same coach, bound by a shared destination and an unspoken excitement. As the train rolled out of Mumbai, something else quietly began: a journey not just across states, but into connection.

The Journey Before the Journey

Stop by stop, station by station, the coach filled with energy. We talked about where we came from, why we were going, and what we hoped for. We played small games to pass the time, shared snacks and meals, and laughed at inside jokes that formed far too quickly for people who had just met.

Time moved differently on that train. Conversations deepened without effort. Phones were present, yet rarely dominant. There was a sense that something meaningful awaited us, and that we were already stepping into it—together.

Somewhere along the way, we stopped being individuals headed to the same place and became a group.

Friends made on the path.

In Auroville, as soon as we entered the silence opened our hearts, to stay in the moment, mornings did not begin with alarms but with light—soft, insistent, honest. I woke up earlier than I usually do, not because I had to, but because the day invited me to. This small shift was the first of many changes the youth camp gently but firmly introduced into my routine.

The camp was designed as an immersive experience—six days of shared living, learning, movement, reflection, and play. Yet what it offered went far beyond a schedule of activities. It offered a different way of being.

Each day began with cycling. Not as exercise, not as a task, but as a way of arriving—into the body, into the surroundings, into the day itself. Cycling through red-earth paths, trees arching overhead, silence broken only by birds and the sound of tires on soil.

The camp was filled with engaging sessions—some structured, some conversational, some experiential. What stood out was not just what we learned, but how we learned.



Some discussions asked us to listen more than speak. Activities that require collaboration rather than competition. Exercises that made us aware of our habits—how we react, how we lead, how we withdraw, how we connect.

No one rushed to conclusions. No one pretended to have final answers.

Learning felt collective, alive, and deeply human.

Living together created its own quiet curriculum. Sharing meals, responsibilities, laughter, and moments of fatigue built a sense of community that felt natural, not forced.

Small acts—waiting for someone, helping clean up, adjusting plans collectively—became lessons in empathy and flexibility. I realised how rarely we slow down enough to truly coexist, rather than just co-occupy space.

Here, togetherness was not an event. It was the background.

Not everything was easy. Waking up early every day, being physically active, stepping into unfamiliar conversations, and staying present without digital distractions—all of this brought discomfort.

But it was the good kind.



The kind that doesn't exhaust you, but stretches you.

By the third or fourth day, I noticed resistance softening. I was less reactive. More observant. More willing to sit with silence, with uncertainty, with difference.

One of the most striking aspects of the camp was the depth and range of sessions led by experts. The topics moved seamlessly from the inner to the outer world.

We explored **ethics and responsibility, consciousness, humility**, and **the science of living**—not as abstract ideas, but as lived practices. Sessions on The Brain of India and **the level of mathematics in Indian history** were eye-opening, challenging many assumptions about knowledge systems and intellectual heritage.

These conversations felt like a rediscovery of **the foundations of Indian culture**—not through nostalgia, but through inquiry. There was a recurring sense of **meaning, purpose, and beauty** woven into every discussion. Books were not merely recommended; they were offered as companions.

Savitri, The Life Divine, The Synthesis of Yoga, and several others were introduced not as texts to “finish,” but as works to grow with.

The learning extended far beyond sessions. We visited **Sadhana Forest**, where we learned about their philosophy of ecological responsibility, water conservation, and community living. It was grounding to see ideals translated into daily action.

Practicing **Kalaripayattu**, the ancient martial art form, was another powerful experience. The movements demanded focus, strength, and coordination. Learning its history alongside the practice connected the body to lineage and discipline.

Visits to the **Visitor's Centre, Auroville Bakery, Upasana**, and learning about the making of Auroville itself gave us insight into how vision, design, sustainability, and community intersect in real life. One of the most introspective moments came through a self-enquiry questionnaire—simple yet profound questions that invited honesty. It was a mirror, asking not whom we want to be, but whom we are becoming.

What Stayed With Me

The camp ended, as all temporary spaces do. But its impact did not.

I returned with a changed sense of routine, a deeper respect for intentional living, and a renewed curiosity about India's intellectual and spiritual traditions. I carried back a quieter mind, a more attentive body, and a stronger sense that learning is not separate from living.

Most importantly, I understood that transformation often begins before arrival—on a train, among strangers, sharing food and stories, moving together toward something unknown.

Auroville did not give answers.

It offered direction.

And in those six days, I learned how powerful it can be to **walk, cycle, think, question, and live together**.

— Jagruti Tiwary, Social entrepreneur & fashion designer



From Life to Kindness, Real Stories from India

How Sarang Bobade Built Donatekart to Make Giving More Effective

In the story of Sarang Bobade, change does not arrive as a sudden leap, but as the outcome of a gradual encounter with lived suffering, shaped by the influence of figures like Baba Amte and grounded in on-the-field work with grassroots organisations. Along this path, he recognizes a crucial gap: financial and material aid often fail to align with actual needs, diminishing their impact.

This mismatch becomes especially visible in crises such as the Chennai floods, where the abundance of aid does not necessarily translate into effectiveness. From this experience emerges an idea to turn giving into a more conscious act by enabling targeted, need-based donations of goods.

The platform Donatekart is born from this very logic, a space where helping shifts from something broad and abstract into a precise, traceable act. Here, one does not merely donate money, but provides exactly what is needed, delivered at the right time and place.

Trust forms the backbone of this model: transparency in campaigns, documented narratives of recipients, and a focus on small, local organisations that often remain unseen yet operate at the frontlines of impact.

Over time, this idea grows into an expansive network, thousands of organisations and campaigns, each addressing a specific, tangible need. And in the end, the article returns to a simple truth: kindness finds its meaning only when it moves beyond feeling, taking shape as a deliberate and responsible act in the world.



The Voice That Lived Through Time: The Enduring Journey of Asha Bhosle

In the life of Asha Bhosle, the voice is not merely something to be heard; it is something that extends through time. From an early age, when the loss of her father reshaped the course of her life, she stepped into music not out of ease, but out of necessity.

The early years were neither simple nor luminous. Entering an industry already defined by established voices, she had to carve space for herself with patience and persistence. Yet those very margins became a ground for experimentation, allowing her to explore without being confined to a single form.

What followed was not just a career, but an expansion of voice itself. Asha Bhosle moved across styles—from classical and ghazals to energetic film songs, without losing a sense of identity. This range was not dispersion, but a mark of control and adaptability.

For her, music always remained close to life. Inspiration emerged from ordinary moments—from lived experience, from observation, from a sensitivity to detail. This is why her songs often feel familiar, as though they have been lived before they are heard.

Over time, her work expanded across languages and forms, thousands of songs and collaborations that crossed borders. Her voice no longer belonged to a single space or generation; it became part of a shared cultural memory.

What ultimately distinguishes her journey is a continuous impulse to transform. Even in years when many turn toward retrospection, she continued to experiment, as if the voice is not something one attains once, but something to rediscover repeatedly.

In the end, her life gestures toward a simple truth: some voices are not merely performed, they settle into lives, endure across time, and become part of a collective human memory.





I was on the boat, at sea, not expecting anything (I was of course busy with the inner life, but I was living physically on the boat), when all of a sudden, abruptly, about two nautical miles from Pondicherry, the quality, I may even say the physical quality of the atmosphere, of the air, changed so much that I knew we were entering the aura of Sri Aurobindo.

It was a physical experience.

— The Mother, 17 March 1951



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