

# THE CALL BEYOND

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*Heaven's call is rare, rarer the heart that heeds;  
The doors of light are sealed to common mind,  
And earth's needs nail to earth the human mass,  
Only in an uplifting hour of stress  
Men answer to the touch of greater things:  
Or, raised by some strong hand to breathe heaven-air...*

*-Sri Aurobindo  
(Savitri, Book 11, Canto 1, p. 689)*



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## Work and Enjoy, No Matter What the Outcome

We live in a no-nonsense result-oriented world that has no time for niceties and frivolities. Hence, there is a marked tendency to optimize the link between work and its outcome. The spiritual aspect of this link is generally deduced solely from the verse of the *Gita* that tells us that we have a right only to action, not to its fruit, and that the fruit should not be the motive of our action (The Gita, 2:47). However, the *Gita* has a lot more of great importance to say about work than just disinterested performance of duty. The *Gita* does not prevent us from expecting a particular outcome from our work. Even before the work is begun, any thinking person predicts what the consequences of his action are likely to be. Unless the consequences are likely to be as he would like them to be, he does not even begin the work. What is important to realize is that what we predict is not necessarily what the consequences will actually be, and that the work should not be motivated primarily by what we stand to gain from the work. Our intelligence, hard work, and dedication notwithstanding, the outcome of our work may be quite different from what we expect. For example, Mahatma Gandhi gave his life to the cause of India's freedom. India became free, but freedom was accompanied by partition of the country and communal disharmony that Gandhi ji did not want. The justification for detaching myself from the fruit of 'my' action is that the ability to do the work and the circumstances under which the work can be done have been given to me by the Divine. These have been given to me because the Divine has chosen me to be the instrument for that action. If I am a mere instrument of the Divine, I am neither the doer nor the one who has the right to determine the outcome of the action. The practical

implications of the spiritual approach to work are threefold. *First*, it avoids the stress associated with the uncertainty regarding the outcome of the work. *Secondly*, since the work is done as an instrument of the Divine, and therefore for the Divine, the worker puts his heart and soul into the work. No wonder, the most beautiful buildings in the world are temples, mosques and churches, because while constructing them the workers are conscious of working for the Divine. The same motive can, and should, be brought to any other work as well. *Finally*, even without insisting on a particular outcome, the worker is happy. The psychologist B.F. Skinner constructed a box, known by his name, which had a device for delivering a food pellet to a rat if it pressed a lever in the box. When the rat discovered the association, it was strongly motivated to press the lever again and again. However, the device could be so programmed that it delivered a pellet either every time the rat pressed the lever (continuous reinforcement), or only some of the time. Further, when the pellet was not delivered every time the lever was pressed, the device could be programmed either to deliver the pellet in a random and unpredictable fashion (irregularly intermittent reinforcement) or to follow a predictable pattern (regularly intermittent reinforcement). It may be assumed that the rat was happy with the outcome of its action (pressing the lever) only when it got food. Hence it would be the happiest with continuous reinforcement. On the other hand, it would have maximum anxiety in case of the irregularly intermittent schedule of reinforcement because it would not know when the action would lead to a pleasant consequence. In the real world, the reward that we reap from our work also follows an irregularly intermittent schedule of reinforcement. But unlike rats, we have the choice of adopting in our work the attitude of karma yoga inculcated by the *Gita*. If we do that, we are mentally prepared to accept

any outcome from our work. That happens because we have renounced our right to the fruit of the action. Spiritual acceptance of every outcome with equanimity goes beyond philosophical indifference. Spiritual acceptance is rooted in surrender to the Divine. The surrender, as Sri Aurobindo says, is not only to the Divine Will but also to the Divine Wisdom. Surrender to the Divine Wisdom means that we believe that the real outcome of the work is better than the outcome that we expected. Even if we cannot see how exactly it is better, we know that there is at least one positive feature in every outcome: it can serve as an opportunity for spiritual growth. Hence, we can accept any outcome whatsoever with equal delight. That is how spiritual equality (samattva) goes one step beyond philosophical equanimity. Since the reward of spiritual growth is guaranteed with every outcome, working in the spirit of karma yoga converts the erratic and unpredictable reinforcement schedule of the seemingly unfair world into a continuous reinforcement schedule!

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*See the related articles 'A Deeper Look at Karma Yoga' on page 7 and 'Why Work?' on page 22*

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*Desire, even the best, turns always to limitation and obscuration, to some eager exclusive choice and pressure, to some insistent exclusion of what should not be excluded and impatient revolt against the divine denials and withholdings.*

Sri Aurobindo  
(*'Essays in Philosophy and Yoga'*, p. 124)

## A Deeper Look at Karma Yoga

Nirankar Agarwal

*The idea of works, in the thought of the Gita, is the widest possible. All action of Nature in man is included, whether it be internal or external, operate in the mind or use the body, seem great or seem little.*

*Sri Aurobindo ('Essays in Philosophy and Yoga', p. 120)*

In general, when one talks of Karma Yoga today, the following verse from the Bhagavad Gita is quoted:

*"Thou hast a right to action, but only to action, never to its fruits; let not the fruits of thy works be thy motive, neither let there be in thee any attachment to inactivity." (2:47)*

In common parlance, this is interpreted to mean disinterested work, work for others with neither a selfish motive nor expectation of any returns. Laudable and salutary as this interpretation is, it is not all that is to Karma Yoga. It ought to be kept in mind that this verse is at the beginning of the Gita. The Gita, as a matter of fact, continues to develop the yoga of works in subsequent chapters until by the end it becomes entirely clear that the aim of Karma Yoga is nothing short of becoming entirely conscious of the Divine Will in the world and consequently doing all actions merely as instruments of this Will.

The word Karma comes from the Sankrit root, kri, which means 'to do'. Yoga comes from the Sankrit root, yuj, which means 'joining' or 'union'. More particularly yoga denotes the union of the individual soul, jivatma, to the Universal and Transcendent Soul, para-atma. Karma Yoga, hence,

is essentially a path of securing this union through the instrumentality of work, as the Yoga of Knowledge, Jnana Yoga, is practiced through the means of intellect, and the Yoga of Devotion, Bhakti Yoga, through the means of the emotional being. The universally recognized authority in Indian scriptures on Karma Yoga is the Bhagavad Gita, a part of the greatest Indian epic, the Mahabharata, and an essence of the Vedantic thought of the Upanishads.

“The peculiarity of the Gita among the great religious books of the world is that it ... is given as an episode in an epic history of nations and their wars and men and their deeds and arises out of a critical moment in the soul of one of its leading personages [Arjuna] face to face with the crowning action of his life, a work terrible, violent and sanguinary, at the point when he must either recoil from it altogether or carry it through to its inexorable completion. The teaching of the Gita must therefore be regarded ... as bearing upon a practical crisis in the application of ethics and spirituality to human life”, wrote Sri Aurobindo, highlighting the momentous and practical utility of Gita’s teaching for all times including our own. For none is entirely free of the dualities in this life, and doubts assail us all as to which course of conduct is proper in any given crisis.

### **Confusion regarding ‘renunciation of action’**

For the past many centuries, until perhaps the advent of Swami Vivekananda, Karma-Yoga was considered to be an inferior and inadequate way of seeking God. The path of Knowledge, Jnana Yoga, was given the summit of excellence and, majority of its practitioners shunned mundane life and actions, and resorted to the seclusion of the forest, the hill-top,



or by the bank of a river to meditate and contemplate for the realization of the Divine.

These practitioners were known as Sannyasis, those who shunned all bodily actions motivated by desire, and even went to the length of begging for food in order to maintain their physical life. Sri Krishna refers to them in the following words:

*“All actions should be relinquished as an evil, declare some learned men; acts of sacrifice, giving and askesis ought not be renounced, say others.” (18:3)*

Arjuna, who is exhorted to seek his salvation by following his dharma and engaging in the terrible action of slaughtering his teachers and kin, is naturally baffled. He asks Sri Krishna:

*“Arjuna said: I desire, O mighty-armed, to know the principle of Sannyasa and the principle of tyaga, O Hrikesha, and their difference, O Keshinishudana.” (18:1)*

Sri Krishna replies that on this earth there is none that can live without doing work.

*“For none stands even for a moment not doing work, everyone is made to perform actions helplessly by the modes born of Prakriti.” (3:5)*

Apart from the obvious actions of body, speech and mind, science too tells us that there are hundreds of chemical reactions going on in each cell at any given moment. Life is movement. There is no life without action.

Where then did this tendency to shun all actions referred to above come from? It probably came from a limited understanding of Sankhya philosophy. The dualist Sankhya

philosophy posits that the Creation has come into existence by the interaction of two original and eternal Entities, Purusha, and Prakriti. Purusha is the Conscious Being immobile, immutable, eternal and self-luminous. Purusha is passive, does nothing but reflect the action of Prakriti. Prakriti is active Energy and its processes, and is constituted by twenty-four tattvas:

*“Know thou that Purusha (the Soul) and Prakriti (Nature) are both without origin and eternal, but the modes of Nature and the lower forms she assumes to our conscious experience have an origin in Prakriti (in the transactions of these two entities).” (13:20)*

*“The indiscriminate unmanifest Energy; the five elemental states of matter, the ten senses and the one (mind), intelligence and ego; the five objects of the senses.” (13:6)*

Thus the constituents of Prakriti are Panchbhutas (earth, air, water, fire, ether or aakash), five organs of action (hands, feet, mouth, excretory organs, reproductive organs), five sense organs (eye, ear, nose, tongue, skin), five senses (vision, hearing, smell, taste, touch), the upendriya mind, intelligence, memory, and ego (ahankar). Prakriti is mechanical, but by being reflected in Purusha it assumes consciousness. Ego is that element of Prakriti which makes Purusha identify itself with the actions of Prakriti.

*“Purusha involved in Prakriti enjoys the qualities born of Prakriti; attachment to these qualities is the cause of his birth in good and evil wombs.” (13:22)*

The qualities referred to in the above verse are the three gunas (modes) of Prakriti through which all the work in the cosmos is done. As Sri Krishna explains:

*“The three gunas born of Prakriti, sattwa, rajas and tamas, bind in the body, O great armed one, the imperishable dweller in the body.” (14:5)*

*“Of these sattwa is by the purity of its quality a cause of light and illumination, and by virtue of that purity produces no disease or morbidity or suffering in the nature; it binds by attachment to knowledge and attachment to happiness, O sinless one.” (14:6)*

*“Rajas, know thou, has for its essence attraction of liking and longing; it is a child of attachment of the soul to the desire of objects; O Kaunteya, it binds the embodied spirit by attachment to works.” (14:7)*

*“But tamas, know thou, born of ignorance, is the deluder of all embodied beings, it binds by negligence, indolence and sleep, O Bharata.” (14:8)*

What the above verses bring to the fore is the fact that all actions are instruments of binding the soul, and hence a cause of bondage. The aim of spiritual life is to seek severance from this net of bondage and become free. Swami Vivekananda has also said in his discussion of Karma Yoga, “All work is by nature composed of good and evil ... [and] both good and bad are bondages of the soul.”

This binding quality of action may help to explain the world shunning practice of Sanyasis throughout the past millennia. They aspired to reach the immutable, immobile and the self-luminous state of Purusha, and actions in Prakriti are a formidable stumbling block on this journey; therefore to the greatest extent possible they avoided any external actions as well.

## What then is the Alternative?

Bhagvad Gita's emphasis throughout the discourse deals with an inner state of mind. As Sri Krishna says:

*“What they have called renunciation, know to be in truth yoga [Karma Yoga], O Pandava; for none becomes a Yogin who has not renounced desire-will in the mind.” (6:2)*

That is to say that true sannyasa is the renunciation not of actions, but only of actions instigated by desire-will in the mind. A second attribute of Sannyasis as well as Karma-Yogis is their attitude to the fruits of action:

*“The Blessed Lord said: Whoever does the work to be done without resort to its fruits, he is the Sannyasin and the Yogin, not the man who lights not the sacrificial fire and does not the works.” (6:1)*

Gita is a synthesis of all paths of yoga and it applies practices from other paths to carrying out of the actions in Karma Yoga. For example, the following verse reminds one immediately of Patanjali's well known sutra: “Yoga is a conscious process of gaining mastery over the mind”:

*“He who is in yoga, the pure soul, master of his self, who has conquered the senses, whose self becomes the self of all existences, even though he does works, he is not involved in them.” (5:7)*

Another method practiced by followers of the path of Karma-Yoga is through non-attachment. Swami Vivekananda says, “Non-attachment does not mean anything that we may do in relation to our external body, it is all in the mind... A man may be on a throne and perfectly non-attached; another man may be in rags and still very much attached.” Sri Krishna states in

the Gita that non-attachment purifies the doer of the action and the samskara of his work is dissolved:

*“Therefore the Yogins do works with the body, mind, understanding, or even merely with the organs of action, abandoning attachment, for self purification.” (5:11)*

*“When a man liberated, free from attachment, with his mind, heart and spirit firmly founded in self-knowledge, does works as sacrifice, all his work is dissolved.” (4:23)*

Yet another injunction to engage in Karma Yoga is duty. Sri Krishna also reminds us that even the maintenance of the body is not possible without actions:

*“Do thou action thus self-controlled, for action is greater than inaction; even the maintenance of thy physical life cannot be effected without action.” (3:8)*



Swami Vivekananda comments: “That work which will exalt and ennoble us in accordance with the ideals and activities of the society in which we are born... [And] any action that makes us go Godward is a good action and is our duty; any action that makes us go downward is evil, and is not our duty.”

*(To be continued in the next issue)*

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*See the related Editorial, ‘Work and Enjoy, No Matter What the Outcome’ on page 4 and ‘Why Work’ on page 22*

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## Win Your Little Victories



If through an effort of inner consciousness and knowledge, you can truly overcome in yourself a desire, that is to say, dissolve and abolish it, and if through inner goodwill, through consciousness, light, knowledge, you are able to dissolve the desire, you will be, first of all in yourself personally, a hundred times happier than if you had satisfied this desire, and then it will have a marvelous effect. It will have a repercussion in

the world of which you have no idea. It will spread forth. For the vibrations you have created will continue to spread. These things grow larger like the snowball. The victory you win in your character, however small it be, is one which can be gained in the whole world....

If you really want to do something good, the best thing you can do is to win your small victories in all sincerity, one after another, and thus you will do for the world the maximum you are able to.

**The Mother ('The Great Adventure', p. 19)**

## Karma

One finds an unanswerable truth in the theory of Karma,—not necessarily in the form the ancients gave to it, but in the idea at its centre,—which at once strikes the mind and commands the assent of the understanding. Nor does the austerer reason, distrustful of first impressions and critical of plausible solutions, find after the severest scrutiny that the more superficial understanding, the porter at the gateways of our mentality, has been deceived into admitting a tinsel guest, a false claimant into our mansion of knowledge. There is a solidity at once of philosophic and of practical truth supporting the idea, a bedrock of the deepest universal undeniable verities against which the human mind must always come up in its fathoming of the fathomless; in this way indeed does the world deal with us, **there is a law here which does so make itself felt and against which all our egoistic ignorance and self-will and violence dashes up in the end ...** ... *first*, there is this assurance, this firm ground on which I can base a sure tread, that in the mental and moral world as in the physical universe **there is no chaos, fortuitous rule of chance or mere probability**, but an ordered Energy at work which assures its will by law and fixed relation and steady succession and the links of ascertainable cause and effectuality. **To be assured that there is an all-pervading mental law and an all-pervading moral law, is a great gain, a supporting foundation. That in the mental and moral as in the physical world what I sow in the proper soil, I shall assuredly reap, is a guarantee of divine government, of equilibrium, of cosmos; it not only grounds life upon an adamant underbase of law, but by removing anarchy opens the way to a greater liberty.** But there is the possibility that if this Energy is all, I may only be a creation of an imperative Force and all my acts and

becomings a chain of determination over which I can have no real control or chance of mastery. That view would resolve everything into predestination of Karma, and the result might satisfy my intellect but would be disastrous to the greatness of my spirit. I should be a slave and puppet of Karma and could never dream of being a sovereign of myself and my existence. But here there comes in the *second step* of the theory of Karma, that it is the Idea which creates all relations. ... .. I can by the will, the energy of the Idea in me develop the form of what I am and arrive at the harmony of some greater idea than is expressed in my present mould and balance. I can aspire to a nobler expansion. Still, if the Idea is a thing in itself, without any base but its own spontaneous power, none originating it, no knower, no Purusha and Lord, I may be only a form of the universal Idea and myself, my soul, may have no independent existence or initiation. But there is too this *third step* that I am a soul developing and persisting in the paths of the universal Energy and that **in myself is the seed of all my creation**. What I have become, I have made myself by the soul's past idea and action, its inner and outer karma; what I will to be, I can make myself by present and future idea and action. *And finally, there is this last supreme liberating step* that both the Idea and its Karma may have their origin in the free spirit and by arriving at myself by experience and self-finding **I can exalt my state beyond all bondage of Karma to spiritual freedom**. *These are the four pillars of the complete theory of Karma. They are also the four truths of the dealings of Self with Nature.*

*Sri Aurobindo (In the Arya, Vol. 6, No.1, 15 Aug 1919, pp. 56-64)*



## Mother's Grace

Nepal Ghosh



*Nepal Da, in the Dining Hall of the Ashram, on 12 August 2019*

Every year I happen to be present on Vaisakhi day [14 April] in Calcutta and then return to the Delhi Ashram before the Darshan Day (24 April). Some people ask me, why not observe the Darshan Day in Calcutta? No, on that day I must salute the Mother's flag in the Delhi Ashram after participating in the march past.

This time, a noble soul, a fighter for the cause of the downtrodden [Sukumar] was accompanying me to the Delhi Ashram by Poorva Express on 22 April [1994]. Dr. Robin Bhattacharya of Calcutta, who is closely associated with our Ashram, was also going to Delhi by the same train. The train started on time at 10.15 am and its first stop was Burdwan, where I got down with the intention of meeting Dr. Robin, without informing my companion, Sukumar. I found Robin's coach too far and began returning to my coach, when the train suddenly started moving and within seconds it gathered speed. Hurriedly I got hold of the handle-rod of the door of my coach and tried to get in, but my feet could not, against a heavy wind, touch the footboard. *I fell down upon the platform, then into the railway track.*

After three or four bogies had passed beside me, people on the platform who had seen me falling rushed to the spot and were surprised to see my body untouched by the fast-moving wheels of the train. They picked me up shouting 'saved', 'saved', and assured me that the Guard had noticed the accident and the train would stop. But that did not happen and I was separated from my friend as well as my luggage.

When my companion, Sukumar, noticed my prolonged absence, he anxiously contacted Robin and both of them went through all the bogies in search of me. They came to know that somebody had fallen on the track at Burdwan while trying to board the running train and was probably knocked down. Robin and Sukumar were at first deeply shocked. But soon they got a high official of the Railways, who was travelling by the same train, to make enquiries about me. They were informed that I was following by the next train, the Toofan Express. Robin helped Sukumar to get down at Jhaja to accompany me.

The news of the accident had reached the Ashram through Robin. When I reached the Ashram, everybody was delighted by this miraculous intervention of the Mother's Grace.

Reproduced from *The Call Beyond*, Vol. 19, No. 4, p. 36, 1994

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*Shri Nepal Ghosh, popularly called Nepal Da, is now 95. He still makes his pilgrimage to the Delhi Ashram on Darshan Days. He has come also for the Darshan Day of 15 August 2019. When contacted, he once again thanked the Mother for Her Grace that saved him 25 years ago.*

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## Life Divine

Himanshu Dalakoti

*A life without goal, without aim,  
Miserable life, inane, in vain.  
To unearth the secret of mortal birth,  
What am I to do on earth?*

*Focus of four-legged existence,  
Mere corporeal subsistence,  
Human life's sole motivation,  
In sensations seek salvation.*

*From the pedestrian path if I wish to depart,  
On an unchartered sea if I wish to embark,  
In an unknown ship if I wish to sail,  
What shall I do not to fail?*

*A prayer soars from the depths of my heart,  
"Surrender your self at the feet of the Lord,  
Be His instrument, in your heart Him enshrine,  
As a puppet in His hands, live a life divine."*

*(Translated from the original in Hindi by Alka Kumari)*

## Tarumitra



Tarumitra (literally, friends of trees) is today a prominent nationwide movement for protection of a healthy environment. It was initiated way back in 1988, when environment was not a matter of popular concern, by Jesuit Fr. Robert Athickal from St. Xavier's School, Patna and Anindo Banerjee, a class IX student from Loyola High School, Patna. In April 1989, four high school students from Loyola High School, Anindo Banerjee, Vijay Mathur, Sanjay Pandey and Jayant Chatterjee, set out on a bicycle rally from Patna to New Delhi to promote awareness about the environment and their movement. They met the then Vice-President of India, Shri Shankar Dayal Sharma, to discuss their mission. While returning, when they reached Agra, Jayant fell seriously ill and despite all efforts, could not be saved. But his sacrifice was not in vain. It made his companions work with greater zeal. In 1994, the St Xavier's School gave Tarumitra a 10-acre

plot for plantation at Digha, Patna. Tarumitra has set up a bio-reserve park on this plot of land. It has a rare collection of over 400 vanishing trees and plants of North India. The Centre also has a large genetic nursery, a tissue culture lab and facilities to accommodate 50-100 students for nature-related camps. Tarumitra has organized protests against the felling of trees and forests, built road side gardens, cleaned up garbage dumps, planted rare varieties of trees, taken environmental awareness from house-to-house, and developed several garbage dumps into beautiful roadside gardens called the 'Oxygen Belt' . U.N. conferred a Special Consultative Status on Tarumitra in 2005. Today it has over 2,00,000 members in over 1,000 high schools and colleges besides a large number of volunteers from India and abroad contributing to its efforts.

### References

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tarumitra>

[http://www.go4patna.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=117:tarumitra-patnas-own-environment-movement&catid=32:cityfrangrances&Itemid=101](http://www.go4patna.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=117:tarumitra-patnas-own-environment-movement&catid=32:cityfrangrances&Itemid=101)



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

## Why Work

### S has posed the following questions:

*Although I truly understand that in the blank state there is indescribable fullness, there is one question that crops up sometimes: what is the motivation to go out in this world of forms to work? To undercut all understandings and earn, through means that seem like I am defining myself more and more?*

### Answer:

In a way, your question is easy to answer. In the Gita, Sri Krishna says that He is Fullness, and He needs nothing, and yet He works (3:22). Therefore, everybody should work.

But in a way, your question is also very difficult to answer, but here is an attempt to do so. Doing nothing is attractive only so long as we have plenty to do. The fact is we all need some work to make life interesting. The next question that arises is, what the motive behind the work is beyond simply avoiding the boredom of idleness. The motives behind work may be: to earn money; to get what money can buy; to gain power, prestige, position, name and fame; and to serve a cause greater than oneself. All these may be the *consequences* of the

same work done by the same person. The person may *also make use of all the consequences* of the work. For example, the person may use the money earned to meet the basic necessities of life. He may also use the money to buy something that makes him more productive or efficient at his work. He may also use the power, position, etc. to multiply the impact of his work. His work may also serve a cause greater than himself directly, or indirectly through the money the person earns. All this can happen irrespective of the motive behind the work. And, *yet the motive makes all the difference* because that is what determines the extent to which the work helps the person fulfill the purpose of life, which is spiritual growth. ***Spiritual growth will happen only if the primary motive behind the work is to serve a cause greater than oneself.*** The money, name and fame, etc. are incidental, not the primary motive behind the work. As Acharya Navneet once put it succinctly, “the person does not work for money; the person needs money for his work.”

When you show an aversion to going out to work “in the world of forms”, “undercutting all understandings”, the aversion reflects the common but erroneous tendency to treat the world as an illusion, almost a falsehood, and therefore any active engagement with the world as something that contradicts the understanding of the world as something flimsy, fragile and futile. The fact is that the world of forms is also a manifestation of the Divine. Form is simply a variation of the Divine. Hence, active involvement in the “world of forms” is consistent with “understandings” of the deepest truths of existence.

You also show an aversion “to earn.” Money is not poisonous, and it is not a sin to earn. Sri Aurobindo has considered money

to be one of the major powers in the world. The Power of Money can, and is necessary to, make the world a better place to live in. Again, it is a question of the motive behind the use of money.

You also show an aversion to “defining yourself” which seems necessary to earn. Again, it is a question of motive. If the primary motive is something higher than yourself, both defining yourself and the money become only the means to a higher end. So long as you are clear about your motive, “defining yourself” gets reduced to an act that is put on for a higher end. It projects a certain image of yourself to the world, but does not affect your perception of who you are, your weaknesses and failings included.

So, in short, with the right motive, any work that is legally and morally acceptable can be an excellent vehicle for fulfilling the purpose of life. What should that work be? Ideally, it is work that makes the best use of what the Divine has equipped you to do and what seems to be necessary in your present circumstances. Do that work as an instrument of the Divine, and offer it to the Divine. Use that work to express your love to your fellow beings. Love is expressed by giving what you have to those who need it. This type of a complementary situation is easy to find. The money earned is incidental; the name and fame are a bonus that one is not dependent on; spiritual growth is a by-product, as are the peace, joy and fulfillment that inevitably follow.

*You may find it interesting to watch this 5-minute video (Sansar se bhage phirte ho...) on our YouTube channel, which expresses some of these ideas through a song:*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gpzDLqW0UB4&list=PLbJ59iL6vu-XxftXtTeCDhfO29hvJXR8e&index=15&t=0s>



## Feedback & Encouraging Words

### Feedback on the Workshop, 'Mythology for the Kids' (17-28 June 2019)



Adhvay never wanted to even go for vacations because of this camp. The depth with which Adhvay has learnt Mahabharata and Ramayana is amazing. You are amazing, Shubra. Keep it up.

Chand Sood (mother of Advay Sood)

We thoroughly enjoyed this Mahabharata camp as we got to learn new stories through our child. Hope you continue your great efforts. The best part was games and quizzes.

Shalini Gupta (mother of Mirai)

Raunav had very low interest in Mythology before attending the Workshop. I am glad that this workshop has been able to inculcate the interest in that direction.

Shikha Gupta (mother of Raunav Gupta)

The kids had a great time learning the varied characters in Mahabharata. It was a very complicated epic narrated by Shubra ma'am in a very nice and easy to understand method.

Also, relating Mahabharata to today's life was quite insightful.

Ruchita Gupta

Very enriching experience. Such an interesting way to introduce our children to the great epic. Very great learning experience.

Parulpriya Srivastava

We are very happy and satisfied with this special mythology workshop. It was a great experience. We are really surprised with the amount of knowledge our child has gained about Mahabharata in such a short period of time. We are also very grateful to you for exposing him to various Mantras. It will definitely help him to come closer to our culture, values and Sanakaras.

Manmath Raut (father of Bhaskar)

It was a great experience for not only children who were participating but for us parents and all the family members. This is much needed workshop which touches on those aspects of mythology which are otherwise neglected and ignored. This gives direction to children to adopt good values in life.

Rashmi Tandon

This camp was an awesome experience for Riya. She has learnt so much about our epics, shlokas and bhajans in such a short period. We also discovered that she has a lot of interest in singing and enacting. Shubra ma'am makes the stories so interesting and easy that the kids look forward to the classes eagerly. Riya's summer vacations have been so effectively utilised for the first time by attending both the workshops. We would request to do the crux of the Gita too in a Mythology workshop. Lastly, thanks to the Ashram for conducting such useful and enlightening workshops.

Meenakshi Aggarwal (mother of Riya Aggarwal)

Best course ever!

Please do such a camp on Bhagawad Gita for kids!

Vikram Porwal (father of Aradhya)

Very happy with the amount of information Rudransh absorbed in these limited days of the workshop. I think he really enjoyed the stories. He would come back and share new things with us.

Kapil Gupta (father of Saumya Gupta)

Very good attempt to bring children closer to their roots.

Vinni Sharma

## Feedback on Madhuban

Dear Anju didi,

Our visit to Madhuban ashram was truly enriching and rejuvenating. The aura of the place is magical. Even after coming back, the Ramgarh magic continues to influence our activity-packed, complicated city existence. There is calm in our physical and vital beings, a halo of happiness and contentment around us, and in our hearts there is a sense of having experienced something immensely profound.

We speak about Tara Didi, Vijay Didi and Anju Didi often, inspiring each other with anecdotes and quotes that we remember from our interactions with them. Our new-found camaraderie is here to stay. And so is the stillness that we have subliminally absorbed from the environs of the Ashram. We know where to go if we yearn for more.

With a promise of revisiting the Ashram again and an intention of working with the children of the village school in the near future, we thank each and every member and volunteer of the Ashram for giving us a memorable experience.

Sharing below excerpts from teachers' reflection and feedback of their experience at the ashram:

“I felt privileged to be in the calm place where I actually felt peace. ‘Madhuban’ is a heavenly place.”

“The stillness in the mountains is mesmerizing and touches a pure chord in all of us. I am sure each one of my friends resonated with the serene and healing vibrations all around.”

“The sessions were meaningful and engaging. Still I feel that I really need to expand my horizon of thoughts, exploration.”

“If I still close my eyes and sit quietly for a moment, I can recall the whole experience and feeling of Madhuban in me.”

“Coming back here in the city made me realise that even the trees here are not as friendly as they were in the Ashram. The stress here has also weakened the harmony of things around us.”

Poonam Chauhan  
(Teacher, Shikshantar School, Gurugram)  
(in an e-mail dated 18 July 2019)



## Contact us

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

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

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

To learn about the recent and forthcoming activities through the Ashram's e-magazine, *Realization*, send an email to: [callbeyond@aurobindoonline.in](mailto:callbeyond@aurobindoonline.in)

Please follow a simple two-step process:

1. Subject: Subscribe
2. Click on Send

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

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

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

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

YouTube: <https://youtube.com/sriarobindoashramdelhibranch>

Facebook: <http://facebook.com/sriarobindoashramdelhibranch>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/sriarobindoashramdelhibranch>

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

## Forthcoming Event

Please join us for an evening of DEVOTIONAL MUSIC on the eve of Janmashtami

The music will be offered by

Dr. Mithu Pal, a talented and versatile singer, besides being the Academic Supervisor at Cambridge School, New Friends Colony, New Delhi

TIME: **Saturday, 24 August 2019, 6.45 p.m.**

DURATION: 45 minutes

VENUE: Meditation Hall (Hall of Gratitude)

Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch

(entry through Gate no. 6, opposite Sarvodaya Enclave)

## Feedback

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

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