

Collaboration

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**Theme of the Next Issue: Money
Deadline for Contributions: Feb. 10**

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Doing Sadhana . . . in the Yoga

By Gordon Korstange

*All Life is Yoga.
Sadhana is the practice of
Yoga. (23:541)**
Sri Aurobindo

AT SOME POINT during this summer's gathering in Madison, Wisconsin I began to think about the difference between sadhana and Yoga (with a capital letter, meaning the Yoga of Mother and Sri Aurobindo). Perhaps distinctions I am about to explore only pertain to those of us trying to forge and maintain our connection to Them outside of the Ashram and Auroville; perhaps they only pertain to me. Nevertheless, when I hear people in the U.S. speak about being "in the Yoga," I know what they mean, in a vague sort of way. It's part of a shared dialect that we use when we're together—but what do the phrases "doing sadhana" and "in the Yoga" really mean?

The Seamless, One-Pointed Life

First some relatively free association. When I think of doing sadhana, I think of the Ashram, of the samadhi, of long hours of meditation and sadhaks absorbed silently in their work. I also think of the Matrimandir workers chipping away at concrete for hours above the red Auroville earth. Sadhana seems to represent, for me, a seamless, one-pointed life that is separated from the ordinary in its absolute dedication to surrendering to the Divine. Sadhaks don't go to the Indian Coffee house—or Lindy's Diner. They're not interested in the Cosby Show.

Sadhana, wrote Sri Aurobindo, "is the practice of yoga; the practice by which perfection (siddhi) is attained; spiritual self-training and exercise."

* All quotations are from the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library

(30-338). It involves Tapasya (the concentration of the will to conquer the lower nature), Aradhana (worship of the divine through love, self-surrender, aspiration, calling the name, and prayer), and Dhyana (inner concentration, meditation, going inside in Samadhi). (30-p. 541).

The first step of sadhana is "to get a settled peace and silence of the mind Aspire to the Mother for this settled quietness and calm of the mind and this constant sense of the inner being in you standing back from the external nature and turned to the light and Truth The forces that stand in the way of sadhana are the forces of the lower mental, vital and physical nature. Behind them are the adverse powers of the mental, vital, and subtle physical worlds. These can be dealt with only after the mind and heart have become one-pointed and concentrated in the single aspiration to the Divine." (23-635-6)

There are people in the U.S. who do such sadhana, I think. They exist on a plane of consciousness somehow removed from rap music, Rolling Rock, salaries, and super highways. They have found ways to order their lives so that most of what they do involves, directly or indirectly, the Yoga. The rest they ignore.

As for our own position it is that ordinary life is Maya in this sense, not that it is an illusion, for it exists and is very real, but that it is an Ignorance, a thing founded on what is from the spiritual point of view a falsehood. So it is logical to avoid it or rather we are obliged to have some touch with it but we minimise that as much as possible except in so far as it is useful for our purpose." (23-851-2)

I admire these people who devote their American lives to sadhana but am not one of them. If I were able, I would probably have stayed in India. But for me, it was . . . "not helpful to abandon the ordinary life before the being is ready for the full spiritual life." (23-849). Yet, I am not ready to abandon the Yoga and everything it implies either.

The Field of Yoga

Yoga is "joining, union; the union of the soul with the immortal being and consciousness and delight of the Divine; a methodised effort towards self-perfection by the expression of the potentialities latent in the being and union of the human individual with the universal and transcendent existence." (30-p. 365)

It is clear from reading Sri Aurobindo that practicing Yoga and doing sadhana are one and the same, so it is no use fooling myself about what the guru meant by the term. Yet, at some point, the potentialities latent in my being were touched in a way I cannot forget or escape. I was drawn into the field ("physics: a space within which magnetic or electrical lines of force are active") of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, and it is to this field that I think we refer when we say we are "in the Yoga."

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After having once been in that field where I was jolted awake by the Mother's eyes, I still feel threads of connection—a connection that I hope will not be broken by the clutter of my distracted American life. Maybe this is mere nostalgia, but it is what I have to work with.

"Peace is never easy to get in the life of the world and never constant, unless one lives deep within and bears the external activities as only a surface front of being." (23-870) wrote Sri Aurobindo, and so I want to burrow inside to where the thread of connection still dangles, swaying in the winds gusting from the day-to-day life.

Thus the Yoga becomes not an endeavor that I can throw myself into

soul and body, but a collection of memories, experiences, dreams, and ideas in a room that I drift in and out of, a room somewhere in my being where I can go and always be safe, a room with Their photos, incense, and books.

Each one of us has our own room for sadhana. Perhaps the wallpaper is the text of *Savitri* or the *Synthesis of Yoga*; maybe the walls are white, and the room is bare except for two photos and a stick of smoldering incense; or the room has a telephone linked to someone else's room, to be connected by words like samadhi, Auroville, or Agenda.

My room contains issues of *Collaboration* that continually pull me into "the field of Yoga" when a new one must be added. It also has Indian musical instruments with which I chant and sing the names of my gurus. When visitors from Auroville or the Ashram happen by they find a place in my room. And when the USA family gathers for its annual reunion, all of our rooms become a house of many hues where doors swing open and shut noiselessly.

It is not absolutely necessary to abandon the ordinary life in order to seek after the Light or to practise yoga. This is usually done by those who want to make a clean cut, to live a purely religious or exclusively inner and spiritual life, to renounce the world entirely and to depart from the cosmic existence by cessation of the human birth and passing away into some higher state or into the transcendental Reality. Otherwise, it is only necessary when the ordinary life is no longer compatible with the pursuit of the dominant spiritual objective. Till then what is necessary is a power to practise an inner isolation, to be able to retire within oneself and concentrate at any time on the necessary spiritual purpose (my underlines). There must also be a power to deal with the ordinary outer life from a new inner attitude and one can then make the happenings of that life itself a means for the inner change of nature and the growth in spiritual experience. (22-147)

It is in these rooms, where we practise our inner isolations, that most of us do sadhana . . . in the Yoga.

Grace at the All-USA-Meeting

For when her Personalities are all gathered in her and manifested and their separate working has been turned into a harmonious unity and they rise in her to their supramental godheads, then is the Mother revealed as the supramental Mahashakti and brings pouring down her luminous transcendences from their ineffable ether.

Sri Aurobindo

SOMETHING HAPPENED at AUM. Call it what you like, but something came pouring down into those 50 or so aspiring souls. Call it grace.

At the closing circle, person after person spoke of their gratefulness for being at AUM. To be even conscious enough to be grateful is a great advance, for it is an acknowledgment of the grace which in turn is in response to one's aspiration. It is a gratefulness for life as it can be, not as it is.

The grace was epitomized in a two-part talk by C.V. Devan Nair entitled "Toward the Great Turning Point." Perhaps it should be called an epic, both in terms of content and presentation. Devan Nair did not merely suffer, he was a political prisoner for five years; he did not merely exude man's typical arrogance, he was an "insufferable bastard."

His journey ultimately led him to the Mother. He had planned to do the gentlemanly thing and offer a bouquet of flowers, shake her hand, and say "Good work, Mother." "I can't explain what happened next." Call it grace. The grace was visible at AUM in the hearts and on the faces. It was unmistakable.

I would like to present a quote from *The Mother* by Sri Aurobindo which will be followed by a compilation on Grace from *Questions and Answers* by the Mother which is to be a chapter in the third volume of the *Soul Series*: *Search for the Soul in Everyday Living* (1990), *The Soul and its Family* (1991-1992), *Finding the Soul* (1992).

Wayne Bloomquist



There are two powers that alone can effect in their conjunction the great and difficult thing which is the aim of our endeavor, a fixed and unfailing aspiration that calls from below and a supreme Grace from above that answers.

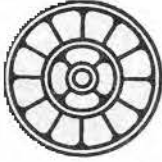
But the supreme Grace will act only in the conditions of the Light and the Truth; it will not act in conditions laid upon it by the Falsehood and the Ignorance. For if it were to yield to the demands of the Falsehood, it would defeat its own purpose.

These are the conditions of the Light and Truth, the sole conditions under which the highest Force will descend; and it is only the very highest supramental Force descending from above and opening from below that can victoriously handle the physical Nature and annihilate its difficulties... for its creation and its victory over all opposing forces.

Let your sincerity and surrender be genuine and entire. When you give yourself, give completely, without demand, without condition, without reservation so that all in you shall belong to the Divine Mother and nothing to be left to the ego or given to any other power.

The more complete your faith, sincerity and surrender, the more will grace and protection be with you. And when the grace and protection of the Divine Mother are with you, what is there that can touch you or whom need you fear? A little of it even will carry you through all difficulties, obstacles and dangers; surrounded by its full presence, you can go securely on your way because it is hers, careless of all menace, unaffected by any hostility however powerful, whether from this world or from worlds invisible. Its touch can turn difficulties into opportu-

nities, failure into success and weakness into unfaltering strength. For the grace of the divine Mother is the sanction of the Supreme and now or tomorrow its effect is sure, a thing decreed, inevitable and irresistible.



This brings us to something else, which is not positively a question, but a request for an explanation, a comment or a development of the subject. It is about Grace.

I have said somewhere, or maybe written, that no matter how great your faith and trust in the divine Grace, no matter how great your capacity to see it at work in all circumstances, at every moment, at every point in life, you never succeed in understanding the marvelous immensity of Its Action, and the precision, the exactitude with which this Action is accomplished; you will never be able to grasp to what extent the Grace does everything, is behind everything, organises everything, conducts everything, so that the march forward to the divine realisation may be as swift, as complete, as total and harmonious as possible, considering the circumstances of the world.

As soon as you are in contact with It, there is not a second in time, not a point in space, which does not show you dazzlingly this perpetual work of the Grace, this constant intervention of the Grace.

And once you have seen this, you feel you are never equal to it, for you should never forget it, never have any fears, any anguish, any regrets, any recoils... or even suffering. If one were in union with this Grace, if one saw It everywhere, one would begin living a life of exultation, of all-power, of infinite happiness.

And that would be the best possible collaboration in the divine Work. (*Mother's Collected Works*, Vol. 8, pp. 251)

Contact with Grace

To cast off one's ego, to let it fall off like a useless garment.

The result is worth the efforts that must be made. And then, one is not all alone on the way. One is helped, if one has trust.

If you have had even a second's contact with the Grace - that marvelous Grace which carries you along, speeds you on the path, even makes you forget that you have to hurry - if you have had only a second's contact with that, then you can strive not to forget. And with the candour of a child, the simplicity of a child for whom there are no complications, give yourself to that Grace and let it do everything.

What is necessary is not to listen to what resists, not to believe what contradicts - to have trust, a real trust, a confidence which makes you give yourself fully without calculating, without bargaining. Trust! The trust that says, "Do this, do this for me, I leave it to You."

That is the best way.
(Vol. 9, p. 428)

Contact the Grace for Personal Reasons?

You have said that one must know that without the divine Grace one is nothing. Then why make such a great effort to know that one is nothing?

Why make such a great effort? In what sense? You want to make this effort for a personal reason? Is it for your personal satisfaction that you want to make this effort? It is like those people who say, "But if it is not I who work and if it is not my work, how can I work?" It is the same thing, and yet it is like that. If you feel like that, it means that you still need, need very much, your ego and that if your ego were suddenly taken away from you, you could no longer do anything. If you need a personal motive in order to do something, it means that you are still entirely in your ego, you understand. So long as it is necessary, one has to remain in it. Only, you must not

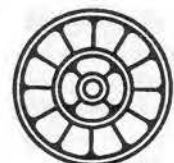
then think that you can go fast. It takes a very long time, sometimes several lives, sometimes a greater number of lives. If you need personal reasons for doing things, you have only to wait till you grow out of it and understand that it is not for a personal reason that you must do things.

**And with the
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it do everything.**

For example, it is not for a personal reason that you must want perfection, it is not for a personal reason that you must want union with the Divine, it is not for a personal reason that you must want the supramental transformation. If it is for your own good and for a personal reason, well, follow your path; I tell you, you will get there - after a certain number of lives. You see, there is a state in which one can't even understand how one can exist without a personal reason. So long as it is like that... If perchance I were suddenly to take away from you your personal consciousness and reason, you would exist no longer. So you must wait quietly till you can realise within yourself that this is not the true cause of things.

Is there nothing to be done but to wait?

Eh? Nothing to be done but wait? For me! It is I who mark time waiting for you to be ready!
(Vol. 6, pp. 330, 331)



Gratitude

What is the way to accept the Grace with gratitude?

Ah! First of all you must feel the need for it.

This is the most important point. It is to have a certain inner humility which makes you aware of your helplessness without the Grace, that truly, without it you are incomplete and powerless. This, to begin with, is the first thing.

It is an experience one can very well have. When, you see, even people who know nothing find themselves in quite difficult circumstances or facing a problem which must be solved or, as I just told you, an impulse which must be overcome or something that has disturbed them... and then they realise they are lost, they don't know what to do - neither their mind nor their will nor their feelings help - they don't know what to do, then it happens; there is within them something like a kind of call, a call to something which can do what one cannot. One aspires to do something which is capable of doing what one can't do.

That is the first condition. And then, if you become aware that it is only the Grace which can do that, that the situation in which you find yourself, from there the Grace alone can pull you out, can give you the solution and the strength to come out of it, then, quite naturally an intense aspiration awakens in you, a consciousness which is translated into an opening. If you call, aspire and if you hope to get an answer, you will quite naturally open yourself to the Grace.

And later - you must pay great attention to this (Mother puts her finger on her lips) - the Grace will answer you, the Grace will pull you out of the trouble, the Grace will give you the solution to your problem or will help you to get out of your difficulty. But once you are free from trouble and have come out of your difficulty, don't forget that it is the Grace which pulled you out, and don't think it is yourself. For this, indeed, is the important point. Most people, as soon as the difficulty has gone say, "After all, I pulled

myself out of the difficulty quite well."

There you are. And then you lock and bolt the door, you see, and you cannot receive anything any more. You need once again some acute anguish, some terrible difficulty for this kind of inner stupidity to give way, and for you to realise once more that you can do nothing. Because it is only when you grow aware that you are powerless that you begin to be just a little open and plastic. But so long as you think that what you do depends on your own skill and your own capacity, truly, not only do you close one door, but you know, you close lots of doors one upon another, and bolt them. You shut yourself up in a fortress and nothing can enter there. That is the great drawback: one forgets very quickly. Quite naturally one is satisfied with one's own capacity. (Volume 6, pp. 322,323)

One is Nothing Without the Grace

But Mother, even when one tries to think that one is powerless, there is something which believes one is powerful. So?

Ah, yes, ah yes! Ah, it is very difficult to be sincere... That is why the blows multiply and sometimes become terrible, because that's the only thing which breaks your stupidity. This is the justification of calamities. Only when you are in an acutely painful situation and indeed before something that affects you deeply, then that makes the stupidity melt away a little. But as you say, even when there is something that melts, there is still a little something which remains inside. And that is why it lasts so long...

How many blows are needed in life for one to know to the very depths that one is nothing, that one can do nothing, that one does not exist, that one is nothing, that there is no entity without the divine Consciousness and the Grace. From the moment one knows it, it is over; all the difficulties have gone. When one knows it integrally and there is nothing which resists... but till that moment... And it takes very long.

Why doesn't the blow come all at once?

Because that would kill you. For if the blow is strong enough to cure you, it would simply crush you, it would reduce you to pulp. It is only by

How many blows are needed in life for one to know to the very depths that one is nothing, that one can do nothing, that one does not exist, that one is nothing, that there is no entity without the divine Consciousness and the Grace.

proceeding little by little, little by little, very gradually, that you can continue to exist. Naturally this depends on the inner strength, the inner sincerity, and on the capacity for progress, for profiting by experience and, as I said awhile ago, on not forgetting. If one is lucky enough not to forget, then one goes much faster. One can go very fast. And if at the same time one has that inner moral strength which, when the red-hot iron is at hand, does not extinguish it by trying to pour water over it, but instead goes to the very core of the abscess, then in this case things go very fast also. But not many people are strong enough for this. On the contrary, they very quickly do this (gesture), like this, like this, in order to hide, to hide from themselves. How many pretty little explanations one gives oneself, how many excuses one piles up for all the foolishness one has committed.

Does the number of blows depend on people, Sweet Mother?

Yes, it depends on people; it depends, as I said, on their capacity for progress, and on their strength and their resistance. But I know very few people who don't need blows at all. (Vol. 6, pp. 323,324,325)

Invoking the Grace

But, Mother, when one prays sincerely for the intervention of the Grace, doesn't one expect a particular result?

Excuse me, that depends on the tenor of the prayer. If one simply invokes the Grace or the Divine, and puts oneself in His hands, one does not expect a particular result. To expect a particular result one must formulate one's prayer, must ask for something. If you have only a great aspiration for the divine Grace and evoke it, implore it, without asking it for anything precise, it is the Grace which will choose what it will do for you, not you. *That is better, isn't it?*

Ah! That's quite another question.

Why, it is higher in its quality, perhaps. But still, if one wants something precise, it is better to formulate it. If one has a special reason for invoking the Grace, it is better to formulate it precisely and clearly.

Of course, if one is in a state of complete surrender and gives oneself entirely, if one simply offers oneself to the Grace and lets it do what it likes, that is very good. But after that one must not question what it does! One must not say to it, "Oh! I did that with the idea of having this," for if one really has the idea of obtaining something, it is better to formulate it in all sincerity, simply, just as one sees it. Afterwards, it is for the Grace to choose if it will do it or not; but in any case, one will have formulated clearly what one wanted. And there is no harm in that.

Where it becomes bad is when the request is not granted and one revolts. Then naturally it becomes bad. It is at that moment one must understand that the desire one has, or the aspiration, may not have been very enlightened and that perhaps one has asked for something which was not exactly what was good for one. Then at that moment one must be wise and say simply, "Well, let Thy Will be done." But so long as one has an inner perception and an inner preference, there is no harm in formulating it. It is

a very natural movement.

For example, if one has been foolish or has made a mistake and one truly, sincerely wishes never to do it again, well, I don't see any harm in asking for it. And in fact, if one asks for it with sincerity, a true inner sincerity, there is a great chance that it will be granted.

You must not think that the Divine likes to contradict you. He is not at all keen on doing it! He can see better than you what is really good for you; but it is only when it is absolutely indispensable that He opposes your aspiration. Otherwise He is always ready to give what you ask. (Vol. 8, pp. 255,256)

Infinite Wisdom

If one were in union with this Grace, if one saw It everywhere, one would begin living a life of exultation, of all-power, of infinite happiness.

And that would be the best possible collaboration in the divine Work.

Talk of 1 August 1956 (p. 251)

The first condition is not very easy to realise. It is the result of a conscious growth, a constant observation and perpetual experience in life.

If you have only a great aspiration for the divine Grace and evoke it, implore it, without asking it for anything precise, it is the Grace which will choose what it will do for you, not you

I have already told you this several times. When you are in a particular set of circumstances and certain events take place, these events often oppose your desire or what seems best to you, and often you happen to regret this and say to yourself, "Ah! how good it would have been if it were otherwise, if it had been like this or like that," for

little things and big things... Then years pass by, events are unfolded; you progress, become more conscious, understand better, and when you look back, you notice - first with astonishment, then later with a smile - that those very circumstances which seemed to you quite disastrous or unfavourable, were exactly the best thing that could have happened to you to make you progress as you should have. And if you are the least bit wise you tell yourself, "Truly, the divine Grace is infinite."

So, when this sort of thing has happened to you a number of times, you begin to understand that in spite of the blindness of man and deceptive appearances, the Grace is at work everywhere, so that at every moment it is the best possible thing that happens in the state the world is in at that moment. It is because our vision is limited or even because we are blinded by our own preferences that we cannot discern that things are like this.

But when one begins to see it, one enters upon a state of wonder which nothing can describe. For behind the appearances one perceives this Grace - infinite, wonderful, all-powerful - which knows all, organises all, arranges all, and leads us, whether we like it or not, whether we know it or not, towards the supreme goal, that is, union with the Divine, the awareness of the Godhead and union with Him.

Then one lives in the Action and Presence of the Grace a life full of joy, of wonder, with the feeling of a marvelous strength, and at the same time with a trust so calm so complete, that nothing can shake it any longer. (Vol. 8, pp. 256,257)



TOWARDS THE GREAT TURNING POINT

(Part 2)

By C. V. Devan Nair

(Text of a talk delivered at the gathering of AUM '91 -St Benedict Center, Madison, Wisconsin, July 5, '91)

Yes, we live in a world of rapidly exploding appearances. They explode right in our faces, and especially in the faces of our experts, the whiz-kids of modern science, technology, politics and economics, who conjured them up in the first place. Unprecedented eruptions in every sphere of human thought and activity — in politics, science, religion, philosophy. Nothing is spared, whether without or within us. Explosions outside, implosions within. What is happening? Where is everything leading to?

An Evolution of Mind

We know what the modern scientists tell us. Our planet began as a fiery metal ball flung out around a solar orbit by a mindless, whirling Sun. Over long geological Ages, the earth cooled, the clouds dissolved, and the oceans formed. Until, quite fortuitously (so they tell us), a Darwinian efflorescence of life forms took place, proceeding by a process of sheer accidents called "natural selection" towards an evolutionary culmination in mental Man. And the experts are truly surprised by the extraordinary luck of universal Chaos that it managed to accidentally throw up paragons of Intelligence like themselves in the mindless immensities of physical space. No conscious design in evidence anywhere! Only, a purely accidental collection of molecules of amino-acid on the slimy shore of some lifeless, ancient sea, and hey-presto, life began! No magician was present. No Houdini. Not even an expert. It was all so entirely "natural".

Very straightforward, very simplistic, and very laughable. I am never tired of repeating the story of how a British biologist named Cronklin punctured this particular scientific balloon. I cannot recall his exact words. But they were to this effect. He remarked with

humor (and who says wisdom is not humorous!) : "The possibility of life originating from accidents is comparable to the possibility of all the volumes of the unabridged Oxford English Dictionary resulting from an explosion in a printing shop."

Then along came Karl Marx who thought he did one better than Darwin. According to this mental genius, evolution was not primarily physical. It was an evolution of communal living forms, which led to the evolution of social production in human societies, which would culminate in the social paradise of world-wide communism. Today, communism lies in shambles. And despite the Wall Street Journal and the Dow Jones Index, capitalism as we know it is likely to go the same way.

An Evolution of Consciousness

But a great, wandering, infallible Intuition, which exceeds all shifting mental conclusions, whose time had come, found human vessels of descent in two extraordinary beings, who spoke, not from the recesses of the libraries of mental men, nor from their laboratories and observatories, but from the heights and the depths of a great conscious EXPERIENCE. And what did the living Experience reveal? Not a fortuitous evolution of physical shapes and forms, nor an evolution of communities plant, animal or human, but an evolution of consciousness.

Consciousness is the source, Sri Aurobindo and the Mother said. Consciousness is the middle, consciousness is the key, consciousness is the goal. And Consciousness, or the Great Shakti as the Tantric yogis of India call Her, is also, at once, the motor and Driver of all the worlds, both visible and invisible. And She doesn't stop anywhere.

Shakti

Mineral, plant, insect, reptile, bird, mammal, ape and man are all temporary transit stations on Her great evolutionary route. Somebody else, a

disciple of the Mother, has written about the Shakti in inspired language which simply cannot be equalled. I cannot do better than quote this disciple, Satprem :

We talk of the power of the atom, the power of Nature, electrical, intellectual or spiritual power, but there is only one Power, not two. That Power rose through the ages and the centuries. It built ever more complex instruments, covered itself with one shell or another, ever aspiring, ever in search of more space, more light, more earth and more bodies to embrace, ever ascending towards some ineffable totality of itself. It built trap upon trap to annex ever more world to its totality, invented love to bind beings together and the millions of species to its earth—it was love itself, the fire burning within, the need to be ever more, to embrace ever more, to live everywhere and in everything. It cast forth galaxies as it cast forth innumerable little animals, as it cast forth man just a little while ago. With him it reached the conscious knot of its evolution. It strove to grow more, always, through the senses as well as the heart and mind, capture ever more world within its

**The world's Matter,
our matter,
our shells of clay,
your's and mine and
everybody's, is Her
shadow. And the
emergence of Light
from its own nether
shadow is evolution.**

huge net of love-fire, conquer and dominate. It even soared to the clouds with the ascetics and the saints, was dissolved for a few seconds in their contemplation, only to show up somewhere else and resume its old, ceaseless conquest. It is the Flame without respite, the

need to be that cannot stop so long as it has not become all and forever more. Some call it Desire, Evil, and they try to stifle it to find nameless Peace at last; some call it Intelligence, Power, and they try to harness it to their Machine to stifle themselves beneath the very weight of their inventions. But it shatters all the traps it has built, breaks men and the very constructions it has erected, topples Intelligence, topples the Spirit, topples Desire even when they tie it to a stake, smelts and resmelts its earthly ore until it has found its own secret — it is Shakti, the Driver of the worlds, the Realization, and without her none lives and none aspires. She is the Fire in the atom and the Fire of the yogi; She is Death always coming undone into life, Nirvana exploding into a million new galaxies only to find her again. Paradises come apart, species come apart, millions of machines, tricks, traps and inventions come apart only to find her endlessly. That Fire is inextinguishable. From age to age a few have known her Secret. But even that Secret she breaks and buries until all is ready to experience and build her secret, for She is ONE in a million forms. She is the Mother of the worlds and everything is equally her child.

Sri Aurobindo knew her secret. Mother knew her secret. They were together again because the Time had come to attempt one more time the great Experience —

Yes, Sri Aurobindo and the Mother knew Her — experientially. They experienced Her everywhere, at both extremities, at the utmost Heights and beyond all conceivable summits, as well as right down in the core of their physical cells, in the least atom and particle of Matter. They had come for that, to prepare the next great leap in Evolution, when :

*The Spirit shall look out through
Matter's gaze
And Matter shall reveal the Spirit's
face.*

The Shadow of the Supreme Shakti

From some remarkable lines in *Savitri*,

we can get some idea of what Sri Aurobindo Himself experienced when He first encountered the Great Mother :

*Above them all she stands supporting
all,
The sole omnipotent Goddess ever-
veiled
Of whom the world is the inscrutable
mask;
The ages are the footfalls of her
tread,
Their happenings the figure of her
thoughts,
And all creation is her endless act.
His spirit was made a vessel of her
force,
Mute in the fathomless passion of
his will
He outstretched to her his folded
hands of prayer.
Then in a sovereign answer to his
heart
A gesture came as of worlds thrown
away,
And from her raiment's lustrous
mystery raised
One arm half-parted the eternal veil.
A light appeared still and imperish-
able.
Attracted to the large and luminous
depths
Of the ravishing enigma of her eyes,
He saw the mystic outline of a face.
Overwhelmed by her implacable
light and bliss,
An atom of her illimitable self
Mastered by the honey and lightning
of her power,
Tossed towards the shores of her
ocean ecstasy,
Drunk with a deep golden spiritual
wine,
He cast from the rent stillness of his
soul
A cry of adoration and desire
And the surrender of his boundless
mind
And the self-giving of his silent
heart.
He fell down at her feet uncon-
scious, prone.*

So, consciousness to emerge from Nothing? Nothing can evolve out of Matter which is not therein already contained, Sri Aurobindo declared. It was the Supreme Shakti which had plunged into Her own shadow. The world's Matter, our matter, our shells of clay, your's and mine and every-

body's, is Her shadow. And the emergence of Light from its own nether shadow is evolution. If we choose, we can tangibly experience this evolution, in ourselves and in everything around us.

Mental man is no more the end of the adventure of consciousness on our planet than was the ape. We will be exceeded as all life forms before us were exceeded. A radical change of consciousness is the crux of the Future. Humanity is not the last rung of terrestrial creation, said the Mother. Evolution continues and man will be surpassed. It is for each one to decide whether he wants to participate in the adventure of the new species.

And Sri Aurobindo :

*In the beginning is prepared the
close.
This strange irrational product of
the mire,
This compromise between the beast
and god,
Is not the crown of thy miraculous
world.
I know there shall inform the incon-
scient cells,
At one with Nature and at height
with heaven,
A spirit vast as the containing sky
And swept with ecstasy from
invisible founts,
A god come down and greater by the
fall.*

Three-fourths of humanity is obsolete, said the Mother calmly. In which case, the question arises : Which fourth do we belong to? A good guess would be that that fourth would certainly include those who are slightly "cracked", who have suddenly realized that the conclusions of the mind are futile; that new machines, new bomb delivery systems, new constitutions, new political and economic panaceas, will deliver nothing but spectacular new failures, mightier explosions. We once again recall Sri Aurobindo:

*O Force-compelled, Fate-driven
earth-born race,
O petty adventurers in an infinite
world
And prisoners of a dwarf humanity,
How long will you tread the circling
tracks of mind
Around your little self and petty*

things?
 But not for a changeless littleness
 were you meant,
 Not for vain repetition were you
 built;
 Out of the Immortal's substance you
 were made...
 A Seer, a strong Creator, is within,
 The immaculate Grandeur broods
 upon your days,
 Almighty powers are shut in
 Nature's cells.
 A greater destiny awaits you in your
 front.....
 The life you lead conceals the light
 you are.

"Shall I Take You With Me?"

I would be an idiot to try and paraphrase Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. How do you paraphrase an experience? When something in you responds in a totally unexpected way to a sunset, for example, you are not responding to a library in the sky! When you looked into the Mother's eyes, it was not a walk into the Ashram Library to read the books there? You were not even responding to an experience? You cannot. You live it. In fact, your ARE the experience. Oh, words are so futile. The most powerfully moving parts of the *Agenda* are the several occasions when the Mother found herself at a total loss for words. She stopped speaking, took the disciple's hand in Her's, and said: Shall I take you with me? And closed Her eyes.

There are times when I read *Savitri*, and find myself suddenly elsewhere, which is, probably, all the while right Here, and Now! The words begin to swim in eyes awash with tears—the physical translation of an experience. It is a miraculous book, said the Mother. Everything is said there!..... It is staggeringly real. A step-by-step, exact description, paragraph after paragraph, page after page. ...

And She didn't mean by Everything a gigantic Directory of Information. She meant the Consciousness which was Sri Aurobindo, issuing from a stupendous, a powerful Silence, in vast, rhythmic pulsations, ensuing in a material, a cellular contagion. And the body trembles. And because your cells cannot contain that overwhelming

Force, you stop reading, and take a walk, until you find yourself back in the old, familiar, pathetic bag of skin, once again safely insulated from Infinite Reality. Which was why the Mother said: Salvation is physical. For salvation only comes when the entire being — mind, heart, and body — right down to our cells, become limpid, unobstructed transmitters of the Infinite Shakti, the Creatrix, the Divine Mother.

The True Victory

Before we proceed, an emphatic reminder of something which becomes so overwhelming in its intensity in the fabulous volumes of the *Mother's Agenda*. When Sri Aurobindo and the Mother talked about spiritual victory, they did not mean a victory up above, where it is possible to vaporise into an ineffable Nirvana.

An inner illumination that doesn't take into account the body or external life is fairly useless because it leaves the world exactly as it is, said the Mother. Right to the end, She sounded variations on the same essential theme: It is in life that the true victory is to be won. You must know how to be alone with the Eternal and the Infinite in the midst of all circumstances. You must know how to be free, with the Supreme for companion, in the midst of all occupations. That is the true victory.

The reign of the mind is over. The world as we know it is already dead. As Satprem remarked: They are stuffing a corpse with penicillin and monetary regulations. All the political, economic, technological panaceas cannot promise a better life, a better existence. Even that better is worth nothing, She said. The old Adam merely resurrects, as he has always done, but under a new mask.

The Truth is Simplicity itself. In fact, the Mother made it so stunningly obvious: The conditions in which people live on earth are the result of their state of consciousness. To want to change the conditions without changing the consciousness is a vain chimera. And Change yourself if you want to change the world.

Salvation is physical. The victory must be sought in the very cells of our bodies, all bodies, when our cells become capable of containing the

Supramental Shakti. And if, in Her compassion, the Mother released only in minutely regulated doses what She called The Bath of the Lord, it was because She knew that the full charge would flatten everybody and everything around Her, like deep sea sprat which explode if brought up suddenly to the atmosphere above sea-level.

The Emperors Try to Hide

Even the most dense of people are beginning to see what the child in Hans Andersen's tale, in that primordial clarity of vision which some children have, saw — the naked emperor! Today, we see them stark naked everywhere — the mental emperors, the vital emperors, the emperors in politics, economics, statistics, science, art, et al; all of them trying desperately, and vainly, to hide their nakedness. But we don't yet see the emerging naked glory of the next consciousness which will walk the earth. Emerging, not merely descending from some height above. Emerging from physical depths. But at least a few have felt strange, powerful stirrings in those depths.

This may be the best place to relate a symbolic vision — Krishna in Gold — somebody had in 1958. In the second volume of his powerful trilogy on the Mother, *The New Species*, Satprem writes:

I recall a very remarkable vision of a young, a very young Indian girl, a child of Mother, who did not very well understand herself what she was seeing because no one could really understand its meaning at the time — but now it is fairly obvious. In her vision, she was with a very "important" gentleman, a prominent grown-up, suitably attired in a hat (this gentleman was the Mind), and she herself was very young, a child of no more than ten or twelve years old. The two of them suddenly came upon the door of a sanctuary. It was clear that the gentleman was not supposed to go in there, but since he had the key to the door, they both went in. In the sanctuary, quietly seated on his throne, was the god Krishna, the child Krishna, very small, with an aura of blue light as he is usually depicted in Hindu

mythology (blue is the light of the mind and Krishna is the symbol of the higher regions of the mind), and he was very much alive and smiling. As soon as he saw the young Indian girl, he got up, came towards her, took her hand, and notwithstanding the protests of the prominent gentleman, he went outside ... into the world. He was no higher than the little girl's chest. And together they set out hand in hand : "Wait, I'll show you something.....," he said, with a charming, mischievous smile as only Krishna can have, "we are going to have a good time." So off they went, and as they walked peaceful folk began to quarrel, quiet fields began to swarm with people, towns fell into confusion — he sowed chaos everywhere, laughing all the while. A bit uneasy, the little

Krishna in gold is growing up amongst us. Beware of the sanctuary

girl turned towards him and suddenly noticed that instead of looking down at him, it was he who was looking down at her! Her Krishna had grown very tall — he had even changed color! Krishna was in gold! In solid gold, and yet light, smiling, mischievous, gamboling with her through the world. And he kept growing and growing and growing. And as he grew, the chaos kept growing and growing and growing. Finally, seeing this chaos everywhere, the very dignified and by now indignant gentleman attempted to lock Krishna back up in his sanctuary (the sanctuary of the Mind) so that he could be worshipped as he ought to be, under lock and key, and cease sowing his chaos. And Krishna accepted the gentleman's plea, all the while keeping the little girl's hand in his, but when he arrived once again at the door of the sanctuary, he said to her with a smile in the corner of his eyes : "I'll show you something....." Krishna in gold went back inside and began growing, growing so much that the roof of the sanctuary

flew off in splinters! His head went right through the roof of the sanctuary, then, laughingly, he tore out the walls with his bare hands, strode over the ruins, strode over the gentleman who was beneath the debris, and everything came to a close in the child's vision with an immense burst of laughter.

The divine laughter of the new world.

Gold is the color of the supermind.

Krishna in gold is growing up amongst us. Beware of the sanctuary.

And what is a vision? It is the translation, in a visual language of a phenomenon that can be seen in all kinds of languages, on all kinds of levels, and with as many explanations as there are levels. The whole problem is to see things at the right level.

In the introduction to another remarkable book, *Mother or The Divine Materialism*, Satprem came out with this : *But the secret of the next world is not in a thought. It is supramental. It takes place within the depths of the body, at that knot between life and death where, for the first time, something has begun to stir materially in the body's cells, at the frontier of biology and prayer. With Sri Aurobindo and the Mother the Great Shakti had plunged into the physical depths to prepare the emergence of what Sri Aurobindo had seen :*

All shall be done for which our pain was borne.

Even as of old man came behind the beast

This high divine successor surely shall come

Behind man's inefficient mortal pace, behind his vain labour, sweat and blood and tears;

He shall know what mortal mind barely durst think,

He shall do what the heart of the mortal could not dare.

Inheritor of the toil of human time

He shall take on him the burden of the gods;

All heavenly light shall visit the earth's thoughts,

The might of heaven shall fortify earthly hearts;

Earth's deeds shall touch the super-

human's height,
Earth's seeing widen into the infinite.

Best not to theorize in mental language about a non-mental, a supramental emergence. For that would sound as much gibberish as if the apes had theorized in the language of simian grunts and gestures about the coming of Plato, Einstein or Shakespeare. Haven't we been deafened enough by the ceaseless mental gibberish of the modern world? Anyway, as the Mother said, quite categorically, it isn't man who is going to change himself into superman! That's the point, you see, it's something else that's going to do the work. But no (yes, there is a "but", I don't want to be cruel), Man can collaborate. That is, he can lend himself to the process, with good will, with aspiration, and he can help to his utmost. That's why I have said it will go faster. I hope it will go faster.

An Ancient Traveller Within All of Us

How might we collaborate, help to make it go faster? Not with our mental theories or computer projections. But there is something within us which can recognize the Eternal Shakti, and collaborate with Her. It is a timeless portion of the Shakti Herself, older than our most ancient rocks, older even than the Big Bang of our scientists which is supposed to have spewed forth all our galaxies, and yet perennially new, as only Eternity can be. It is an ancient traveller within all of us, whose only aspiration through the millennia, through all our countless lives, is to achieve the final, inevitable junction with the source and goal of all things.

Many, on rare occasions, have had sudden glimpses of this Something, deep within. The occasion may have been anything at all. Perhaps a play of colours, some notes of music, a line of poetry, a gesture, or even a mathematical equation.

And it is only this Ancient of Days within who can collaborate in the next evolutionary transition. It is what Sri Aurobindo and the Mother called the psychic being, or soul. Our task is only to hasten the final abdication of the

already naked emperors of our mental and vital egos, and allow the psychic being to preside over our separate unfoldments. And it will be an unerring guide in all the adventures to come. For it has an infallible intuition of the secret Truth in all things.

A Temple in Sri Lanka

A striking illustration, known to very few in a small corner of India (such things are never reported in the modern media) might be cited. One of the most violent places in the world today is the north-eastern part of Sri Lanka. Tamil revolutionaries and Sinhalese burn down each other's villages amid killings galore. The awful carnage has been going on for a long time now.

Imagine a little temple on the borders of a jungle which straddles these murderous trails. It is a temple to the Mother Kali, one of the aspects of the Great Shakti. A temple tended by a very silent, smiling little man, always arranging jungle blooms to offer at the Mother's feet.

But the killing hordes, whether Tamils or Sinhalese, spare the man. In fact, they make a little detour when they see the temple and its smiling keeper. Some of the killers even fold their palms in a sudden gesture of veneration as they pass or run by with their rifles or knives.

One day somebody stopped, glared at the smiling keeper, and asked : You, how can you smile in the midst of all this killing? Don't you see what is happening? And for once, the silent, smiling man spoke. But only three words, in Tamil. "Veliye Nindru Par." They translate into four English words: "Stand outside and see."

Those familiar with the lore of eastern tradition, whether Hindu or Buddhist or Taoist, would immediately know what he meant. Stand outside yourself, outside your mind and the passions of your heart, stand within your soul, and see. Then, everything is seen differently. The very same world, but seen with different eyes. The human caterpillar becomes the spiritual butterfly.

It was this spiritual butterfly within the human caterpillar which the Mother sought to bring out in everybody who approached Her. To all those who asked Her how they could collaborate

in Her work, She gave essentially the same answer, right to the end. In the last but one darshan I had of Her, I too asked Her the same question. And that frail, white figure, with that incredible golden glow on Her face, in that quavering voice, barely audible, which seemed to have crossed vast interstellar distances, said : "In the individual, it is the psychic that represents the Divine. Find it, and unite with it."

The Crystal

About the collective sadhana to be **practised** in Auroville, She said the same thing : The first thing needed is the inner discovery, to **find** out what one truly is behind the social, moral, cultural, racial and hereditary appearances. At the **centre** there is a being, free and vast and knowing, who awaits our discovery and who should become the active centre of our being and our life in Auroville.

... while a traveller
within us knows the
whole picture and all
the strings, all the
old and never-lost
encounters, the
uncompleted
gestures ...

Just a few days ago, I **recieved** a letter from somebody in Auroville. From the way she began that letter, I almost wept in recognition. "Devan, the crystal has arrived," were the thrilled words. And a couple of days later, I received the **Matrimandir Newsletter**, and read, under a picture of the Crystal : The only one of its kind, the largest glass crystal globe in the world — beautiful, priceless, quietly exciting like a **great** mystical person. Now it is here . . . welcomed warmly at Madras Airport, it was passed through customs in record time, loaded safely into a van, driven by our statesmanlike emissaries through the night towards its destined home in Auroville.

Now it is here . . . on the morning of April 27th it was hoisted in its special container up to the Inner Room of Matrimandir. It was ushered in with a

kind of automatic procession, as for a king or some other very high dignitary. In the silence, when the container was opened, one had the feeling that something momentous and profound had happened, like an awakening. Then everyone hopped up around the edge of the container and each one in turn looked down on the crystal marvel. It is all still waiting there in the room but now there is a plexiglass top on the container so that the crystal is visible to all. The wonderful atmosphere of the room becomes more wonderful.

I also knew from that Newsletter that I was not the only one who experienced those magical lines from Savitri which I quoted earlier:

...And from her raiment's lustrous
mystery raised
One arm half-parted the eternal veil.
A light appeared still and imperishable.'

Often, I've found myself praying for the early completion of Matrimandir. I no longer pray, since I came across what the Mother said, only some two years before Her physical departure : The Manimandir is directly under the influence of the Divine and certainly He arranges things better than we could do ourselves.

And just a year earlier, in 1970 :

The Matrimandir will be the soul of Auroville.

The sooner the soul is there, the better it will be for everybody **and** especially for Aurovillians.

That will be a great symbolic turning point, when a strange inner and outer acceleration will seize earth and men.

Japan

Probably as early as 1916, when Mother was in Japan prior to permanently rejoining Sri Aurobindo in India in 1920, there were some who obtained more than an inkling of the great and **fiery** Shakti that was in Her.

We lived together for a year, recalled an elderly Japanese gentleman by the name of Ohkawa. We sat together in meditation every night for an hour. I practiced Zen and they

practiced yoga..... There was a light in her eyes like that of the great morning of the world that was about to dawn She had a will that moved mountains and an intellect sharp as the edge of a sword. Her thought was clarity itself and her resolve stronger than the roots of a giant oak..... An artist, She could paint pictures of an unearthly loveliness. A musician, She enchanted my soul when She played an organ or guitar. A scientist, She could formulate a new heaven and earth, a new cosmogony. I do not know what Mirra had not become or was not capable of becoming..... She was beautiful in Western clothes. And She looked surpassingly lovely when She wore a kimono. If I could see her now, I would surely have said that She looked equally lovely in an Indian saree..... How could I, who lived in the very heart of Fujiyama, tell you about the volume of its fire and flame and the dimensions of its light.

Mother recorded in her journal a tremendous experience which marked the end of her stay in Japan :

I was intensely concentrated, asking the Lord, "This is it. I had sworn to You that I would do it. I had even said, 'If I have to go down into hell, I will go down into hell to do it.' Now tell me what I should do." Evidently, the Power was there—all of a sudden everything became still in me; the whole outer being was completely stilled, and I had a vision of the Supreme more beautiful than the one in the *Gita*. A vision of the Supreme. And this vision literally took me into its arms, turned towards the west, towards India, that is, and I saw that Sri Aurobindo was at the other end. It was... I felt it physically. I saw it, saw it—my eyes were closed, but I saw it. Indescribable. It was as if that immensity were reduced to a rather giant being, which lifted me up like a feather and then offered me. Not a word, nothing, just that. Then everything vanished..... The next day I began preparing for my return to India.

The Great Turning Point

Which brings us to the Great Turning Point of the next cycle of the evolution of Life on our planet - the Supramental Age — which began on March 29, 1914, the day on which Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, once again met on the physical plane. The most powerful, the most beautiful evocation of that encounter is one given by Satprem in his book *The Divine Materialism*. I take the liberty of quoting some luminous paragraphs what simply cannot be improved upon:

He whom we saw yesterday is on earth.

Thus She simply noted their first encounter, on March 29, 1914. Exactly as in my vision. It was not a Hindu divinity; it was Sri Aurobindo. There was such a tenderness in her voice whenever She pronounced that name: "Shri Aurobin'do." I heard her say it thousands of times, and each time, even after fifty-nine years, there was the same love tinged with sweetness and veneration, a second's pause in the middle of a sentence, a faint smile in her half-closed eyes, and one could feel Sri Aurobindo right there, in an envelopment of pale blue light—almost white, whitish-blue and very luminous. She never pronounced that word carelessly. It was like a mantra. Shri Aurobin'do was there as if they were totally one, with sometimes her in the forefront, sometimes him. "Him" was that vast, comprehending softness. With Sri Aurobindo you always felt you were entering infinity—and so, so soft! It was always the feeling of something "soft," I don't know, vibrations that always made you feel wider, that soothed you—you felt your were in contact with something boundless. Indeed, boundless. It did not stop at any point. You were taken far away from yourself — which was perhaps your pure self — on great wings of snow. Just one second, She closed her eyes and it was there. Forever. A name that incarnates an experience, that holds the power of an experience. That is the mantra, Shri Aurobin'do....

She wanted to meet him alone the first time. They had landed (perhaps not by accident) at Dhanushkodi, all the way in the south, not far from the great temple of Rameshwaram, whose high purple towers rose above dunes of white sand—the temple of mental man's first Avatar and of his wife, Sita, who was swallowed alive by the earth she

For some, everything coincides, every gesture and every encounter, and the whole universe down to the most minute detail is a fabulous encounter . . .

loved—perhaps to pay homage to that story of the past before going to meet the future. She already felt that something that one breathes in the atmosphere of the country. They arrived in Pondicherry by train. Her eyes turned within, She saw nothing. We picture her with her tulle veil over long, flowing hair simply parted in the middle, a very white hand holding the veil against the gusts of the sea breeze. On the afternoon of March 29, She walked alone towards a large, columned house, slightly dilapidated from the monsoons, perhaps with a beating heart, in the silence of life's moments when one knows without knowing. No.41 rue Francois Martin. A big postern gate with capitals adorned with vines of quinquifolius, which She would call "faithfulness," an open door, a neglected courtyard with a few banana trees and weeds, a ground-floor veranda with high colonnades, a stairway to the right.

I went up the stairs and he was standing at the top of the stairs, waiting for me. Exactly as in my vision. Dressed in the same way, the same position, in profile, his head held high. He turned his head towards me and I saw in his eyes that it was He. Both things went like

. how She always thought of the Earth! The Earth's beauty, the Earth's greatness, the Earth's realization! Mother was perhaps the Earth's aspiration within one small body

this, and the inner experiences immediately joined with the outer experience and there was a merging, the decisive shock.

*And nothing happens in the cosmic play
But at its time and in its foreseen place.*

We always walk along two roads, the outer and the inner, and we progress blindly on the former, spinning a million "chance" events like some absurd Cubist painting, stumbling here and there into sorrows or joys, encounters or unexplained (and unexplainable) gestures, while a traveller within us knows the whole picture and all the strings, all the old and never-lost encounters, the uncompleted gestures — until the day both travellers meet. The road within becomes the road without and all becomes an eternal encounter. ONE Consciousness moves through its eternal picture, gradually recognizing its own totality.

The Great Eternal Highway

Life's only moments of recall are the ones when both paths meet: a little shock within that recognizes a point of the The Great Picture and, for an instant, finds itself on the great eternal highway—a split second of coincidence. And that's it. Everything else is haphazard grayness where nothing happens, because nothing happens in life except on that road and during the only seconds when we coincide with that road.

The coinciding points are an exact measure of our consciousness. For some everything coincides, every gesture and every encounter, and the whole universe down to the most minute detail is a fabulous encounter. Those are the ones who pursue the

great eternal Work and come back together, life after life, to make ever more little points aware of the great coincidence. Such is the supramental vision, the consciousness of the next cycle.

This is Mother's and Sri Aurobindo's long course through forgotten ages and countless consciousnesses. There is no difference between the Mother's path and mine, Sri Aurobindo wrote; we have and have always had the same path, the path that leads to the supramental change and the divine realisation; not only at the end, but from the beginning they have been the same. And She said, From the beginning of the earth's history, in one form or another, with one name or another, Sri Aurobindo has always presided over the great earthly transformations.

They are what we could call the pioneers of evolution. Their meeting was the sign that the new Manifestation was about to take place. The time has come, Mother wrote in her journal, the new manifestation is certain, the new manifestation is close..... This human hour, this earthly hour is blessed among all the hours. The hour of the Earth—how She always thought of the Earth! The Earth's beauty, the Earth's greatness, the Earth's realization! Mother was perhaps the Earth's aspiration within one small body. Grant that my aspiration be intense enough to arouse the same aspiration everywhere, She prayed.

Yes, an inescapable Need. Nothing else matters. Nothing. That alone. The supramental work of the end was at the beginning of the great journey. It is the fire of aspiration burning and burning from body to body, growing stronger and stronger, recalling more and more, until it reaches its full totality and its solar body. It is the journey of the Shakti confined in the atom's unconsciousness to the Shakti fully conscious in every cell of its body.

Such is the mystery of the Shakti.

It was that Great Turning Point, which occurred on March 29, 1914, which would lead to the Stupendous Divine Response, forever enshrined in those imperishable lines in *Savitri*, in The Book of Everlasting Day :

My hidden presence led thee
unknowing on
From thy beginning in earth's
voiceless bosom
Through life and pain and time and
will and death,
Through outer shocks and inner
silences
Along the mystic roads of Space and
Time
To the experience which all Nature
hides.

Whether we know it or not, whether we like it or not, we are all being led, willy-nilly, to The Experience Which All Nature Hides — the Supramental Transformation, the next cycle, the adventure of consciousness and joy.

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New Age, New Consciousness, New Species

By Eugene Finn

THIS WAS THE VISION, the prophesy, the Realization of Sri Aurobindo, the great sage of India at the turn of the century. It was also the great future promised by His collaborator the French lady, Mirra Richard, called by many of Their adherents "The Mother."

These were no impractical dreamers building castles in the air, but two very practical people with Their feet planted firmly on the earth. Sri Aurobindo was the voice and the initiator of the Indian movement for Indian independence. Nehru, who was Gandhi's protege, understudy, and first Prime Minister of India, said of Aurobindo, "He set the stage for Gandhi's movement."

Sri Aurobindo was also a great revolutionary, poet, philosopher, psychologist, historian, playwright, political scientist, metaphysician, and the list could go on and on. He was a giant whose work in any one of these fields would have placed Him among the immortals.

But all these achievements, great as they are, pale alongside His real work and reason for being, the establishment on earth of a New Consciousness He called Supramental or Truth Consciousness which will transform mind, life, and body into Their Divine absolutes and bring to the human race a Divine Life on earth that was promised by Christ almost 2000 years ago.

He and The Mother, Mirra Richard, who was of equal stature and equal status and of the same consciousness as Sri Aurobindo, spent Their whole lives to establish this New Consciousness in Their own minds, lives, and even down to the very cells of Their bodies. One has only to study Them with an open mind and heart and body to see that They have gone far enough along this path of transformation to insure that this New Consciousness has been established in the the earth nature. They showed by Their own example that it could be done. They instructed those around Them in this path, and They set down in writing and in recording, with painstaking and meticulous care, the guidelines and

signposts for anyone who is drawn by Their brilliance to follow.

To break down the limitations of the present evolutionary structure is not an easy path as anyone making this extremely difficult attempt will attest to. Still this journey must be taken, and if the will, dedication, and sincerity are there, the difficulties will be overcome and the obstacles that look insurmountable with the help and guidance that one gets on this path are of such a force that the obstacles will either shatter or disintegrate under its pressure. This we will find out from our own experience.

Here is a quote from Sri Aurobindo's revolutionary days that at the time related to the new political and revolutionary situation that was in the process of organizing itself.

When the word of the Eternal has gone abroad, when the Spirit moves over the waters and the waters stir and life begins to form then it is a law that all energies are forced to direct themselves consciously or unconsciously, willingly or against their will, to the one supreme work of the time, the formation of the new manifest and organized life which is in the process of creation.

So now that same law holds true. The new manifest and organized Supramental world is already in the process of creation and all the energies are turning or are being turned towards the new manifestation. This is the reason for all the chaos, misdirection, violence, pollution, ignorance, and falsehood that is seeming to engulf us and even threaten our very existence.

We will either turn towards this new Truth that is seeking to manifest or Nature will turn us, and we can see already that Her way will not be gentle if we dare to resist Her intention in us. When we say that this is Her intention in us, we say it because it is as inevitable that the Supramental or Truth Consciousness become manifest out of inanimate matter and as inevitable as when mind became manifest out of life

and matter. It should be obvious that as we are constituted now, we cannot continue for very long. We know all the problems that our race is facing and we even know in a general way how to resolve these problems and yet every day these threats to our very existence loom larger and we try by the use of palliatives, nostrums and not even half-hearted solutions. These are like putting band-aids on cancer.

The new manifest and organized Supramental world is already in the process of creation and all the energies are turning or are being turned towards the new manifestation

Up until now, Nature has created the conditions under which the evolution proceeded, provided the impetus, shaped, molded, drew the subject that was being prepared for the next step. The animal did not consciously collaborate in the step to the human, the plant did not consciously collaborate to bring about the manifestation of the animal out of itself. We could say that it was unconscious evolution of the subject but a super-conscious evolution by universal Nature.

The human is the first subject of evolution conscious enough to collaborate and cooperate and become the conscious partner of Nature in Her evolutionary movement from inconscient matter to slightly conscious plant, to semiconscious animal, to not fully conscious human, to Supermentally conscious being.

If we can see the possibility, the probability, or if we are really fortunate to see the inevitability of this opportunity to collaborate in this movement,

we will find the justification for all the travail and suffering that our race has gone through since a thinking being began to inhabit the earth.

Sri Aurobindo and The Mother will take us by the hand and lead us inch by inch, step by step, mile by mile out of this world of darkness, deceit and dissolution into a new age, a new consciousness, a new species of Light, Truth and New Creation.

If we are of such an independent nature that we do not wish to take guidance from anyone, then we must look deeply inside ourselves and find the Guide or Guru that is within us all. However, this method is not without its dangers, for we may find ourselves seeing false lights and may mistake them for the Truth, or we may find ourselves listening to the voices of our own ego and mistake these for the voice of Truth. Either error could cause a long delay in our progress or even a disaster.

Let us close this article with a poem by Sri Aurobindo written at a time

when He was awaiting trial in the Alipore Jail on charges of treason and a probable death sentence.

Invitation

With wind and the weather beating
round me

Up to the hill and the moorland I go.
Who will come with me? Who will
climb with me?

Wade through the brook and tramp
through the snow?

Not in the petty circle of cities
Cramped by your doors and your walls
I dwell;

Over me God is blue in the welkin,
Against me the wind and the storm
rebel.

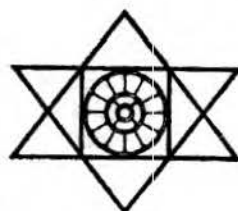
I sport with solitude here in my
regions,
Of misadventure have made me a
friend.

Who would live largely? Who would
live freely?

Here to the wind-swept uplands
ascend.

I am the lord of tempest and mountain,
I am the Spirit of freedom and pride.
Stark must he be and a kinsman to
danger
Who shares my kingdom and walks at
my side.

*Eugene "Micky" Finn lives in Buxton.
He was featured in the Fall/Winter
1989-90 issue of Collaboration. See
Center News for a report on the study
group of which he is a part.*



People

Due to the presence of Kailesh Jhaveri and Richard Pierson of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Miriam Belov arranged for a talk at the Indian Consulate in New York City at the end of September. Kailesh gave a wonderful speech entitled "Sri Aurobindo and His Relevance to the Modern World." Richard then read from *Savitri*, adding a powerful, mantric quality with his unique voice.

We would like to thank the Consul General, Mr. Rao, and especially his charming wife, Mrs. Rani Rao, for their receptivity.

Later in the month, we gathered and saw Richard and Kailesh's slide show about flowers and their messages. It is exquisite and all of us were deeply moved by the psychic resonance and beauty it conveyed.

On December 11th, Miriam will be giving a lecture at the Open Center in New York City on "The Mother and

Healing." For further information about this and about monthly meditations in New York City, call her at (212) 956-LOVE.

Seyril Schochen gave a talk and reading of passages from *Savitri* entitled "Woman of the Future" at the Spiritual Unity of Nations Conference in Boulder, Colorado on October 12. She reports that at a climatic moment during the reading, the main door of the auditorium suddenly slammed shut with a loud sound, and that members of the audience, who were not necessarily devotees, felt the presence of the Mother in the room.

The same reading was given again as a concert reading and healing meditation at the East-West Cultural Center in Los Angeles on October 27.

From a Bhakta

Aurobindo, Aurobindo,
You are my Lord,
You are my life.
I offer up my daily work and
offer up my strife.

You have made me strong in
many ways,
You have made me see my
soul.
I have a lot of love to give
While following my goal.

In days to come I will try my
best
To keep you in my mind.
The path is hard sometimes in
life,
But oh you are so kind.

So as I follow you my Lord
In spirit and in pride,
I will love you and hope to be
Forever at your side.

By Mary (Angel) Finn
Written on Sri Aurobindo's
Birthday

Projects

Solar Concentrating Architectonics

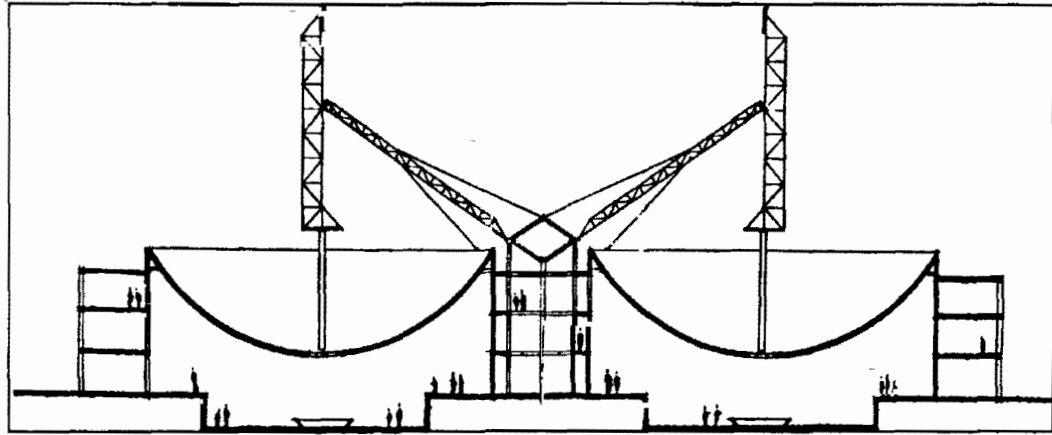
The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)—Design Arts Program recently awarded a grant titled “Solar Concentrating Architectonics” to Joel Goodman to study two, solar two-axis tracking concentrator mirror collectors, within architectural form and structure. The two solar concentrator configurations are (1) a stationary spherical segment reflector with tracking line focus receiver (solar bowl), and (2) interior heliostats, i.e. tracking primary reflectors that focus into stationary optical element receivers, within glazed solariums. Bryan Walton participated in the proposal, and is planning to do the photography of architectural models.

The origins of this study began in Auroville. In 1982, a test solar bowl collector was being constructed by John Harper and team, and Joel was asked about the architectural possibilities for solar bowls. After beginning studies in Auroville, Joel visited the French Pericles solar bowl project at CNRS-Marseille and met Dr. B. Authier (project leader). The Pericles bowl was being shipped to Recife, Brazil. Joel became a research associate and consultant to the Crosbyton Solar Power Project, the US Department of Energy funded solar bowl project at Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas.

The interior heliostats **architectonics** originates from the solar optical vision of Matrimandir. If this is a symbol of future realizations, then what could be the future realizations?

The NEA study will be for AUM latitudes; however there will be related studies for the Auroville Solar Bowl Project. Recently, Gilles of CSR in Auroville wrote expressing interest in solar bowls for a new **restaurant-cum-laundry** that is being planned.

A solar bowl concentrator roof could be interesting for Auroville and



West-East Section drawing of solar bowl concentrator roofs for restaurant, laundry, food storage, and workshops

other south India sites because a clear span roof-mirror support could be economical for 0 degree inclination apertures. Resolution of a key research issue, of back-silvered glass mirror segments adhered to cement panels is required for project advance. If **ferro-cement** panels are used, is the ion

exchange between silver, adhesive, and cement compatible for the long life of the investment?

If you interested in further information, please contact Joel Goodman, RR 1, Box 193-A, Ridgeway, Wisconsin 53582 (583) 753-2523. Contributions for a solar bowl mirror panel project can be sent to AVI-USA.

Auroville Centre for Higher Education

This project seeks to create “After School,” a centre that would supplement the present Auroville education system. It would allow older students to continue their studies up to university entrance standard within the Auroville community, rather than forcing many of them to seek education opportunities elsewhere, as is the case now.

The project’s objectives are: (1) To create within 3 years an integrated learning centre for further education in Auroville, including facilities for private study, reference, audio-visual aids, lectures, and tutorials; (2) To provide within one year the opportunity for 8-10 students to pursue further educational studies under guidance in 4-5 major disciplines; (3) To energize and further enrich the present Last School campus; (4) To attract, both from within and outside Auroville, educators willing to participate in a further education programme in the unique environment of Auroville; (5) To experiment with and evolve educational approaches appropriate to Auroville, while satisfying the highest academic standards.

The expertise **necessary** to realize such a project is available in Auroville. The coordinator, Luc Gastmans, has recently completed his ‘A’ levels,

during which he gained experience of correspondence courses. He will be assisted in running the centre by experienced Auroville educators and backed up by the Sri Aurovindo Institute of Educational Research. A number of teachers have already offered to supervise higher educational studies in English literature, French literature, mathematics, computer science, and philosophy. What is required is suitable accommodation and study materials.

At present, an incomplete building is available on the Last School campus, and it is intended to adapt and refurbish it as a centre for higher educational studies.

The fact that construction has begun on the building has been received enthusiastically in Auroville, and many kids are looking forward to being able to work there. It has also inspired a young Aurovilian, now studying in Kodaikanal, to complete his term there and return to help set up the project.

If you wish further information or to contribute in some way, contact Luc Gastmans, Auroville Centre For Higher Education, Bharat Nivas, Auroville 605 101, India or *Collaboration* (802)869-2789.

Auroville Kindergarten

The monsoon is here! The children, bright as flowers in their colorful raincoats, cheer up the wet and muddy garden despite the streaming rain. Water, water everywhere. .. but not in my classroom! Hoping this to be the last time we have to renew the roof, we had it done with keet (thatching) and straw. This way it should last up to five years or more, and by then we should have a new building. The other classrooms had to have new window-panes and a bit of cement between the tiles to make them waterproof.

On rainy days the darkness is still a problem, as there are a lot of power cuts, and we have to work by candle light. But, as if to compensate for this inconvenience, the coziness of the classrooms invites the children to really concentrate.

Lack of space in the Kindergarten has become a major difficulty. The Transition (elementary) school which

was built a few years ago, invited us to use one of their rooms. One of our teachers and nine children will move there in November. In this way, sufficient space for new children awaiting admittance into the Kindergarten will be created.

Most of the children who leave are seven years old. They know some basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic, but not yet sufficient to join Transition school fully. The school day at Transition is an hour and a half longer than in the Kindergarten, but for the time being our nine will be given special transport so they can have the same school day as in the Kindergarten. Going with their class teacher should also give them support and confidence for being among the older children. They themselves like the idea very much, and we hope this support will make up for their immaturity.

It is always a guess how many new children will need to join the Kinder-

garten in the coming year, as the number of children from newcomers and returning Aurovilians are not to be foreseen. Auroville's population is growing slowly but steadily, and with intermediate jolts that do burst the narrow seams of our improvised Kindergarten buildings. A new Kindergarten is unavoidable, necessary to house and educate those small Aurovilians coming from each and every corner of this globe.

The Foundation For World Education expressed the desire to grant seed money towards the building of a new Kindergarten. We express gratitude for this, and we hope that their initiative will be followed by many people in the USA. If you would like to help, please do so and send your cheque to AVI-USA where more information on this project is available.

Miriam Eckelmann

Certitude-Auroville

605101-Tamil Nadu-India

Center News

Boston Study Group
91 Kilmarnock Street
Boston, Ma 02215

Activities in Boston by our group seem to be on Wednesday evening. We have a reading where each person usually reads a page or two from *Savitri*.

There are basically seven to fourteen people who attend. Most choose to read, although it is not obligatory. After the reading we have a twenty minute meditation that begins with five minutes or so of **Sunil's** music, usually from *Savitri*, after which we usually discuss various aspects of Yoga. The group meets about seven o'clock and breaks up about eight-thirty or nine o'clock. We also distribute some writings by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

Eugene (Mickey) Finn

~Matagiri Sri Aurobindo
Center
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(914) 679-8322

Matagiri has had numerous visitors in the last few months. On August 15, the Patel family from Philadelphia visited and brought a sumptuous Indian lunch which they shared with us as well as with two other visitors, Helen Lee her son Todd from Connecticut. Our celebration of Sri Aurobindo's birthday was actually held on August 17, and 30 people attended, among them Sam Gorbaty from Russia who now lives in New York City (he returned to the city the day of the abortive russian coup). In this connection, we have received several letters from people in Russia requesting information about Sri Aurobindo and Auroville.

Kailas and Richard from the Sri Aurobindo Ashram paid us a second visit, and presented their slide show in flowers and their meaning in Woodstock.

Other recent visitors were Cliff and Akiko Gibson from Japan (Cliff is a former resident of Matagiri); Rusty Selhorst from North Carolina; Dana Wells and his family from New Hampshire; Hadassah **Haskale** from Israel; and Renu and Neeti Ray and their daughter from Canada (they have recently established a center there). Georges Dandrimont from France spent two weeks with us and helped us double the size of our gift shop, which sells the handmade paper from the Ashram and marbled silks as well as other items.

Mr. and Mrs. V. Subbarao of the State Bank of India in New York paid us a visit and were shown our bookstore and library. Professor **Vimala** Devi also visited and showed some of the herbal health-care products she had

developed and which are sold in Pondicherry at Auro Pharma. Several Aurovilians also "dropped in": Dee Decew, who has done work with the villagers in Auroville, spent a day and night with us; J. Raju, who had just completed a year's work at Alaska Pacific University; and Perumal, Karuna, and Auroprem, who took part in a PeaceTrees program in New York City.

Several people have also used our extensive library, which continues to grow. Among some 20 new books are *Mother's Agenda*, Vol. 7 (1966); *Talks with Sri Aurobindo*, (Vol. 4); *Vignettes of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother*; *Guidance in Work*; and *Sri Aurobindo as a Political Thinker*.

Our next major event is Mother's birthday observance, to be held on Saturday, Feb. 22, 1992. Everyone is welcome to attend, but please call or write in advance.

Eric Hughes

**East-West Cultural
Center
12329 Marshall St.
Culver City, CA 90230
(310) 390-9083
or 375-2966**

It was every bit as awe-inspiring as anticipated—the installation of Sri Aurobindo's Relics on His birthday, August 15. We were so moved, so lifted that evening, we will never forget it, not any of us. The most notable element was the power of the silence . .

You may remember our telling you in the last issue that Dr. H. Maheshwari had come to the East-West Cultural Center about the first of August. Mother had, of course, guided it well, because with Dr. Maheshwari's insight, the preparation and then the ceremony were meticulously planned and carried out to the minute.

At 7:45 p.m., the Vandanam, an invocation to Mother and the Lord, filled the building. At 7:55, the music slowly faded into silence, and those who were to do the actual installation came into the purity of Sri Aurobindo's white room.

The single light from high above shone on the white marble shrine and

the pink marble lotus. They were radiant with the prospect of receiving Sri Aurobindo's Relics. The rest of the room glowed in silent anticipation, devotees sitting, encircling the shrine, others in chairs in the garden just outside the large open doors.

At exactly 8 p.m., the cement was prepared and then applied to the mitred edges of the white marble cube which holds the sacred treasure, and to the edges of its top. With his deep devotion, Dr. Maheshwari put in place the 7-sheathed container in which Sri Aurobindo had been brought to America, and the cube was permanently sealed.

Rising from the silence, Mother's 1972 New Year music amplified the presence of the Ashram and its disciples. Then, silent meditation for 30 minutes. We were all together. You came—to join all Her other children. Afterwards, our individual pranams to Sri Aurobindo's Relics continued that union . . . and special prasad was served in the garden.

The vibration of Sri Aurobindo's force filled the night air, His power permeated everything, everyone. It does so today and will always.



Around the shrine: Debashish, Dr. Maheshwari, Stuart, Mary

As a result of His presence, the programs at the Center are amplified: detailed interest is heightened, commitment to the intense sadhana which our Supramental Yoga demands is inspired and guided. Somehow, the Center itself and the people seem beautified.

Again we extend the warm invitation for you to come, experience and share this wonder of the Divine.

Our study-program and sadhana while Dr. Maheshwari was here was the busiest and most concentrated we

have ever had. We cannot express our gratitude for all he brings. His presence and guidance are a continuing part of our lives and our work.

We were able to attend one of his lectures, which he gave at Loyola-Marymount University for the depart-



L-R:Chandi, Jayashree, Debashish, Jim, Russ, Dr. Maheshwari, Stuart, Robert, Mary & Arya, Mario

ment of philosophy, and witness his informative, sometimes humorous, profound introduction to basic Indian philosophy. He awakened the audience to realms they had never known. Then he led us with Sri Aurobindo's light into our rapidly approaching future.

Dr. Maheshwari has returned to the Ashram and from November 4th delivers a series of lectures and classes in the north of India.

On October 27, we were rewarded with Seyril Schochen's presence and the presentation of her beautiful dramatic reading, "Savitri, Woman of the Future." If you haven't heard it, a high-level treat awaits you. Her time was limited, but Seyril was able to stay for our Monday night group, "The Future Poetry," adding her welcome contributions to this meeting of poets.

**Sri Aurobindo Learning
Center, Inc.
Savitri House &
Savitri Solar Village
Baca Grande, P.O. Box 80
Crestone, CO 81131**

**Global Village Network
Conference Report**

A collage of practical information and visionary inspiration, a feast of images musical and visual, a celebration of local projects and global connections. That was the Second



The Solar Dome at Baca Grande

Annual Global Village Network Conference held in the Baca, August 15-18, 1991.

The raison d'être of these conferences is Savitri Solar Village, a project of the Sri Aurobindo Learning Center and its director, Seyril Schochen. Seyril's vision is to construct a model village on 67 acres of land at Baca Bluffs donated by the Manitou Foundation. It will be linked to Auroville, India, an international community founded by The Mother in 1968.

Participants to the conference came from Asia, Latin America and the United States. It began with the inauguration of the new Solar Dome next to the Learning Center. C.V. Devan Nair, former president of the Republic of Singapore, gave the inaugural address. In the afternoon Dr. Philip Tabb, architect of Savitri Solar Village, introduced the village site on Baca Bluffs; and Mexican priest/warrior, dancer Sonora offered a Native American ceremony, Blessing of the Earth, to dedicate the land. In the evening, Dr. Diane Thome gave the world premier of a moving electronic music work, "Into Her Embrace—Musings on Savitri."

On Friday, Kailash Jhaveri Jhaveri of Pondicherry, India, spoke of her work at the United Nations and of Auroville's international pavilions of

culture. Dr. Sartaj S. Mathur of the Indian Embassy in Washington D.C. gave a slide presentation on new products and technologies in renewable energy sources. RoseMarie and Stuart Garry put on a delightful flute and harp concert in the new dome. In the evening, Richard Peirson presented a lovely slide show of The Mother's use of flowers in her work.

Saturday's highlights included two presentations by Arvind Habbu and the Alternative Energy Fair at Crestone Creek Park. In the morning, Mr. Habbu described a mind-boggling new source of free energy about to break upon the world scene. This source of energy is based upon pioneering work in the new physics by an Indian scientist and its application by an American engineer and inventor. Mr. Habbu has been involved in this work, the Space Power Generation Project, for the last 6 years.

The Second Global Village Network Conference was a stirring, stretching, evocative celebration of currents already moving the world toward a new future. Congratulations to Seyril Schochen and the other conference facilitators.

By John Robert Cornell
From *The Crestone Eagle*, Sept. 1991

All-USA-Meeting '92

AUM '92 is a collaboration of people in different geographical locations, connected with each other and with you via phone, fax, modem, and mail. The site is Warren Wilson College in the Blue Ridge Mountains, near Asheville, North Carolina.

The program, including children's activities, will be based on your input. Begin now thinking of what you would like to discuss/share with others. Ask your kids what they want to see happen this year.

The opening sessions will be with kids and adults matching their interests with others. The center of the circle where we sit has large felt-tip markers and sheets of paper (newsprint). Everyone who wants to write a topic of a session or event they want to help happen.

Each person in the group then stands up, introduces themselves, announces what they have written, and tapes their sheet to a large blank wall. Similar topics and interests can be taped near each other. After completing this, a phase of marketplace negotiation decides how, when, and where the sessions and events will happen. It works like this: Everyone goes up to the wall and writes their name on the papers of topics they want to attend. Those who wrote the topics can decide to combine similar topics into one session. Those who wrote the topics can also note time and place when that session or event will occur. There is a lot of milling around and discussion. Though the scene looks chaotic, the process of setting a schedule usually takes about 15 minutes!

Conditions for success are that everyone knows in advance of arriving at AUM what's going to happen and have given thought to what they want to present as a session or share with others in an informal, but focused conversation.

Send your program ideas to Sally Walton, 203 Yoakum Parkway, Suite 901, Alexandria, VA 22304 [fax and phone: (703) 370-3919; E-mail: swalton@gmuvmx.gmu.edu]. Send your logistical suggestions to Vijay Raghavan, 201 Acklaen Park Drive #26, Nashville, TN 37203 [phone: (615) 292-2481; E-Mail: raghavan@vuse.vanderbilt.edu.] or Alok Aurovillian, 813 College Ave #25, Clemson, S.C. 29631 [phone: (803) 654-3413; E-mail: alok@cs.clemson.edu]