Special AUM 2022 Workshop on Collective Yoga
Saturday, August 13

This special AUM 2022 Workshop on Collective Yoga will be a participatory experiment for those who are interested in working with others with the aspiration to create a field of collective oneness. It will feature short presentations by three groups who will talk about their experiences in collective sadhana (spiritual practice), alternating with small-group discussions that will offer a safe and conducive space for sharing insights and personal experiences.

Presentations will be recorded and available for later viewing; small-group discussions will not be recorded.

Please read this document and the other two documents being sent out with AUM registration, and come to this workshop only if you are:

- Able to attend the whole session
- Prepared to listen and contribute deeply
- Willing to observe the “best practices” for circle discussions and Zoom technology (see pp. 3–4).

This workshop requires a separate registration from the main AUM program. Zoom links will be sent to participants upon registration

- Main AUM registration: https://AUM2022mainprogram.eventbrite.com
- Saturday workshop registration: https://AUM2022collectiveyogaworkshop.eventbrite.com
- For additional AUM 2022 program and schedule details, visit: https://www.collaboration.org/aum/2022/
A few small steps toward collective consciousness

Sri Aurobindo writes:

The practice of Yoga brings us face to face with the extraordinary complexity of our own being, the stimulating but also embarrassing multiplicity of our personality, the rich endless confusion of Nature.... The most disconcerting discovery is to find that every part of us—intellect, will, sense-mind, nervous or desire self, the heart, the body—has each, as it were, its own complex individuality and natural formation independent of the rest; it neither agrees with itself nor with the others nor with the representative ego which is the shadow cast by some central and centralising self on our superficial ignorance. We find that we are composed not of one but many personalities and each has its own demands and differing nature. Our being is a roughly constituted chaos into which we have to introduce the principle of a divine order.

When we practice individual sadhana, we try to order and transform these, the many personalities within us, by bringing them under guidance of our deepest self—the soul or psychic being. In collective sadhana, we face the same personalities, but embodied externally in other people. Yet the process of ordering and transformation is the same: to unify multiple elements around the divine center, the evolving psychic being of the individual or the collective.

However, when we come together, despite our aspirations, we are generally in an externalized state of consciousness. Faced with a plethora of ideas, opinions, feelings, desires, and resistances in a group, how can we step back to sense a deeper unity in diversity? How can we experience harmony and mutuality with those who are different from us? How can we know oneness when we all disagree?

In this workshop we will try out a few simple techniques the presenters have found to be helpful in the daunting process of collective yoga. Our goal is not to theorize with high mental idealism about a far-off “gnostic collectivity,” but to work with some tiny but practical steps that might help us deal with physical, vital, and mental currents in group situations—to work from where we are under the exigencies of our present human nature.

This workshop will be an experiment, the adventure of a few first steps toward a new collective consciousness. Success may not be possible, but neither is failure. Perhaps we will make some discoveries. Perhaps we will stumble. But as Sri Aurobindo says, “By your stumblings the world is perfected.”
Best practices for “circle” discussions at AUM 2022

To help foster a vibrational field that supports collective aspiration for higher consciousness and receptivity to spiritual experience, please observe the following “best practices” for breakout groups:

- **During the initial short group meditation:**
  - Quiet the mind and go deep within.
  - Touch your soul-nature.
  - Expand your sense of identity to include others in the group.
  - Aspire that the group may open to the Divine presence.

- **During the group discussion:**
  - Listen deeply, attentively, and with an open heart.
  - Share your own thoughts and experiences; allow your inner voice to speak.
  - Take three breaths after the previous speaker. Silence between speakers helps us move from surface awareness to a deeper soul-consciousness.
  - Step back” into equality and peace as you speak and when holding space for others.

- **Caveats:**
  - For extroverts and those who have a robust vital energy: Don’t dominate the conversation. Time your remarks and hit your own “shutoff switch” so that others can have a chance to speak.
  - For introverts and those who are sensitive: Speak up. Your contribution matters. It is essential to the integrality of the whole.
  - For those with strong opinions: Do not judge others, give advice, or present yourself as an expert to whom others must listen to get the “correct” understanding.
  - Do not teach others. If you need to refer to the metaphysics or written words of Sri Aurobindo or the Mother, consider sharing how these help you with your spiritual practice or experience of the world.
Best practices for using Zoom at AUM 2022

To minimize technological disturbances, please observe the following “best practices” for using Zoom at AUM 2022:

• Leave your video ON during all conference proceedings so others can see you. This creates a sense of community and connection. If you need to momentarily turn off your video due to an interruption such as children entering the room or having to leave the room yourself, turn OFF your video. To turn your video on or off, click the video icon on your Zoom screen:

![Start Video](image1) ![Stop Video](image2)

• Arrange the space in which you’re seated in a way that will not be distracting to other participants, as you will be onscreen.

• Mute your microphone when you’re not talking to avoid static and background noise. Unmute when you want to speak. To turn your microphone on or off, click the mute icon on your Zoom screen:

![Unmute](image3) ![Mute](image4)

• In the Q&A session that follows a speaker presentation, use the “raise hand” icon if you want to ask the speaker a question. To find this option, click the “Reactions” button on your Zoom toolbar.

![Reactions](image5) ![Raise Hand](image6)

Thank you, and hope to see you at AUM 2022!