

God shall grow up while the wise men talk and sleep:

Savitri, Book I, Canto IV



If you live closed up in yourself, without acting, you may live in a completely subjective illusion; the moment you externalise your action and enter into contact with others, with circumstances and the objects of life, you become aware absolutely objectively of whether you have made progress or not, whether you are more calm, more conscious, stronger, more unselfish, whether you no longer have any desire, any preference, any weakness, any unfaithfulness – you can become aware of all this by working.

The Mother



Jada-Chetan

(Matter-Spirit)

Painting by Bindu Popli
www.binduartaaura.com

To rise into the new consciousness, the first condition is to have enough modesty of mind to be convinced that all that you think you know is nothing in comparison to what yet remains to be learnt.

The Mother

From The Editor's Desk,

This 'PCP special' issue of MĀSA gives a peek into two residential study programmes held at SACAR in the last few months. As our readers are aware, since August 2008, SACAR has been offering several online study programmes in collaboration with IGNOU. These distance programmes have one or more 4-to-7-day-long on-campus study periods which are held at SACAR. The brief reports and students' comments included here give a taste of the overall experience our students have during their time at SACAR.



Personal Contact Programme

June 2009

In June 2009, we organized a 5-day residential study programme for a small group of SACAR-IGNOU students from the October 2008 batch.

The programme incorporated several lecture-discussion sessions on significant topics of interest to students who had been studying selected aspects of Sri Aurobindo's thought for two semesters.



The small size of the group permitted paying considerable individual attention to each student's academic progress and the future study options they must pursue in order to complete their degree (MA, MPhil or PhD). A visit to Auroville was also arranged, and the last day of the PCP included a cultural programme in which all students enthusiastically participated.



See more photographs on next page!

**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT
SACAR-IGNOU
PROGRAMMES**

Click:

sacar.in/ignou/mainpage.html

**To apply, e-mail:
suhasmehra@gmail.com**

**Deadline for applications for
Feb 2010 session:**

December 15, 2009

More memories from June 09 PCP!



Some heart-felt comments shared by the participants of the June '09 PCP:

The organized way of giving assignments and the immediate feedback by SACAR faculty is laudable.

Every detail is coordinated in terms of academics and there is an attention to detail which is heartening.

You tell us clearly that the individual progress is most important. The quality [of work] has to be seen from that point of view, this is very encouraging.

It is so interesting to see the other students knowing that each one of us represents something unique and important for the work of Mother and Sri Aurobindo. We should have a reunion in some years to see what each has grown into and learn from that (our group-soul reunion).



*What men call knowledge,
is the reasoned acceptance
of false appearances.
Wisdom looks behind the
veil and sees.*

Sri Aurobindo

*The aim of
education is not to
prepare a man to
succeed in life
and society, but to
increase his
perfectibility to its
utmost.*

The Mother

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Come join us for a two-day interactive seminar at SACAR

November 20-21, 2009

Theme: Yoga in Daily Life

(Human relationships in sadhana, control of fear and anger, and other such topics of wide interest will be taken up in the seminar)

Seminar Cost: Rs. 360 per person
(includes seminar fee, lunch and tea for 2 days)

For participants wishing to stay at SACAR Scholars Home, the total cost is Rs. 700 per person, which includes seminar fee, non-A/C room and full-day meals.

Time: 9:00AM-12:30PM & 3:00-5:00PM

For registration, contact:

beloome@gmail.com

Limited seats, register early!

(Breakup of full cost is as follows: seminar fee: Rs. 200, lunch & tea: Rs 80 per day; lodging: Rs. 100 per day; full-day meals: Rs. 150 per day).

**Personal Contact Programme
July 2009**

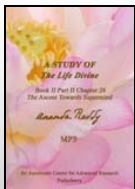
Immediately after the June '09 PCP our team got busy planning the next PCP for the August '09 batch of students. This orientation PCP seminar for 20 new students – enrolled at various levels of study from certificate to PhD – was held between July 29 and August 4.

The programme included general sessions detailing information about the structures of students' programmes, and about the ways in which Mother's and Sri Aurobindo's teachings about Integral Education are being implemented at SACAR through its pedagogical practices. Relevant academic policies were also discussed.



Demonstration and practice sessions for online learning were included to help prepare students for this new mode of learning via distance. Students were also given opportunities to procure their textbooks and other required study materials.

NEW CD FROM SACAR



More than 12 hours of deep deliberation by Ananda Reddy on Sri Aurobindo's chapter

The Ascent Towards Supermind

(The Life Divine, Book II, Part II, Ch. 26)

When I read a wearisome book through and with pleasure, yet perceived all the perfection of its wearisomeness, then I knew that my mind was conquered.

Sri Aurobindo

The programme incorporated a variety of learning activities including lecture-discussions, films, group discussion, student presentations, Q & A sessions, and reflective and critical writing sessions. Every day the morning programme started with an invocation to the Divine Mother (rendered by Deepshikha) and the afternoon sessions opened with a small meditation with Mother's music. This created a concentrated ambience for sincere study and learning.

The essay writing sessions and student presentations emphasized the value of reflective learning as well as the significance of developing written and verbal expression as part of a well-rounded educational experience.

The programme design allowed plenty of interactions among students and between students and facilitators. Lunch and tea breaks also served as opportunities to socialize in a relaxed way. While almost all the lecture sessions included some discussion time, separately scheduled Q & A sessions allowed students to delve deeper into the topics and ask the presenters for further elaborations and clarifications.



The programme also included visits to the Ashram, some other places of historical and spiritual interest near the Ashram, and also Matrimandir in Auroville. Students also had an opportunity to have meals at the Ashram Dining Hall. The programme ended with an informal cultural programme in which almost all the students participated. Sitting in the SACAR courtyard we enjoyed songs, dance, Vedic chanting, drama, story-telling and poetry recitation.

The topics covered by the panel of speakers included: Sri Aurobindo's Philosophical Roots, Sri Aurobindo & The Mother as Our Inspiration, An Outline of Integral Yoga, Sri Aurobindo on Indian Culture, Cycles of Social Growth, Principles of Integral Education, Free Progress Method, Sri Aurobindo's Vision of Future Poetry, Relevance of Sri Aurobindo for Today and Tomorrow, Fundamentals of Integral Philosophy, Concept of Consciousness, A New Perspective on Sri Aurobindo's Literature, Basics of Integral Yoga Psychology, and Yoga in Daily Life.

Students were asked to keep daily journals of their impressions and reflections, which they submitted on the last day of the programme.



Impressions and comments from July 2009 PCP participants

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It was lovely experience, charged with some kind of positive force.



Learning in a natural environment, nothing artificial about it.



I felt a combination of the Intellect and the Heart.



There was great openness -- open mindedness and also personal care.



A beautiful invocation in the morning, and once again I feel the warmth of the entire SACAR faculty, patient, attentive and affectionate.

The intellectual atmosphere at SACAR is very motivating. No space for mediocrity and lots of space for inner growth.

I can only feel gratitude for all the SACAR team, for the pains they have taken to make us physically, psychologically, and intellectually comfortable, and for the amount of self-giving they have shown, the constant energy they have put into it. Teacher-student is one of the most exciting experiences in the process of growing up, maturing, being happy about learning, and I'm so glad and privileged to have entered into this relationship with SACAR.

The ambience of the lecture hall with the photographs of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo smiling from two sides of the projection screen is serene. Also the fact that it is not air-conditioned and allows natural air and light is a treat for someone like me. I also liked the idea of leaving the slippers outside; it felt like one was going to do something as sacred as entering a temple! The gesture helped in invoking the qualities of devotion and humility so important in something like higher studies.

The program is designed well. It is varied, which didn't make it monotonous. We were listening to talks, writing essays, making presentations, watching movies, exploring Auroville and the Ashram departments, walking on the beach, and all the activities seamlessly flowed into one another.

Essay writing was like stretching the rusted intellectual muscles. They did begin to work after a lot of coercing and cajoling. It was a good idea because it served as a warm up for the course ahead and made us get rid of the well-known "writer's block".

The group discussions and presentations revealed how each one of us with some minor shades of difference is basically looking forward to this course to not only understanding Sri Aurobindo intellectually but living him in life. I enjoyed both participating in the discussions as also listening to and making the presentation.

Lovely intellectual feel, stimulating, simple, friendly and clear, but also fun and playful.

The cultural program brought out hidden talents of all and ended the PCP on a joyous note! Overall a fabulous seven-day event....It was the most enjoyable study program that I have ever undertaken. Certainly, one of those things that I will look back to fondly for my entire life!

The knowledge that I have a very knowledgeable community to bank on makes me feel very confident.

I am all prepared to start the programme. The online classroom demonstration and the practice sessions were of good help.

Interacting with facilitators and getting to know them has motivated me enough to continue the study program via distance.

The homely atmosphere of SACAR and Scholars' Home was the plus point of the residential programme.



The programme is very thorough and gives all of us the right way to proceed in learning Sri Aurobindo's works.

Good quality programmes should definitely have rigorous elements forcing the students to apply themselves to the task. The quality of this seminar was of high order including participation from the colleagues.

The seminar was immaculately planned and provided the rigour adequate for both certificate and Ph.D. program. It has kept us involved and occupied with something to do all the time.

We could experience the love and affection that 'the Mother' showered on her children. We felt very cared for. It greatly enhanced our knowledge and also gave the confidence to speak and discuss Sri Aurobindo and His Works.

