

IDEAL CHILD - IDEAL PARENT - IDEAL TEACHER

**Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust 2009
Published by (Late) Sri Madanlal Himatsingka on behalf of
VAK TRUST**

**Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry 605002
+91 413 2334542/2336672
vakbooks@gmail.com**

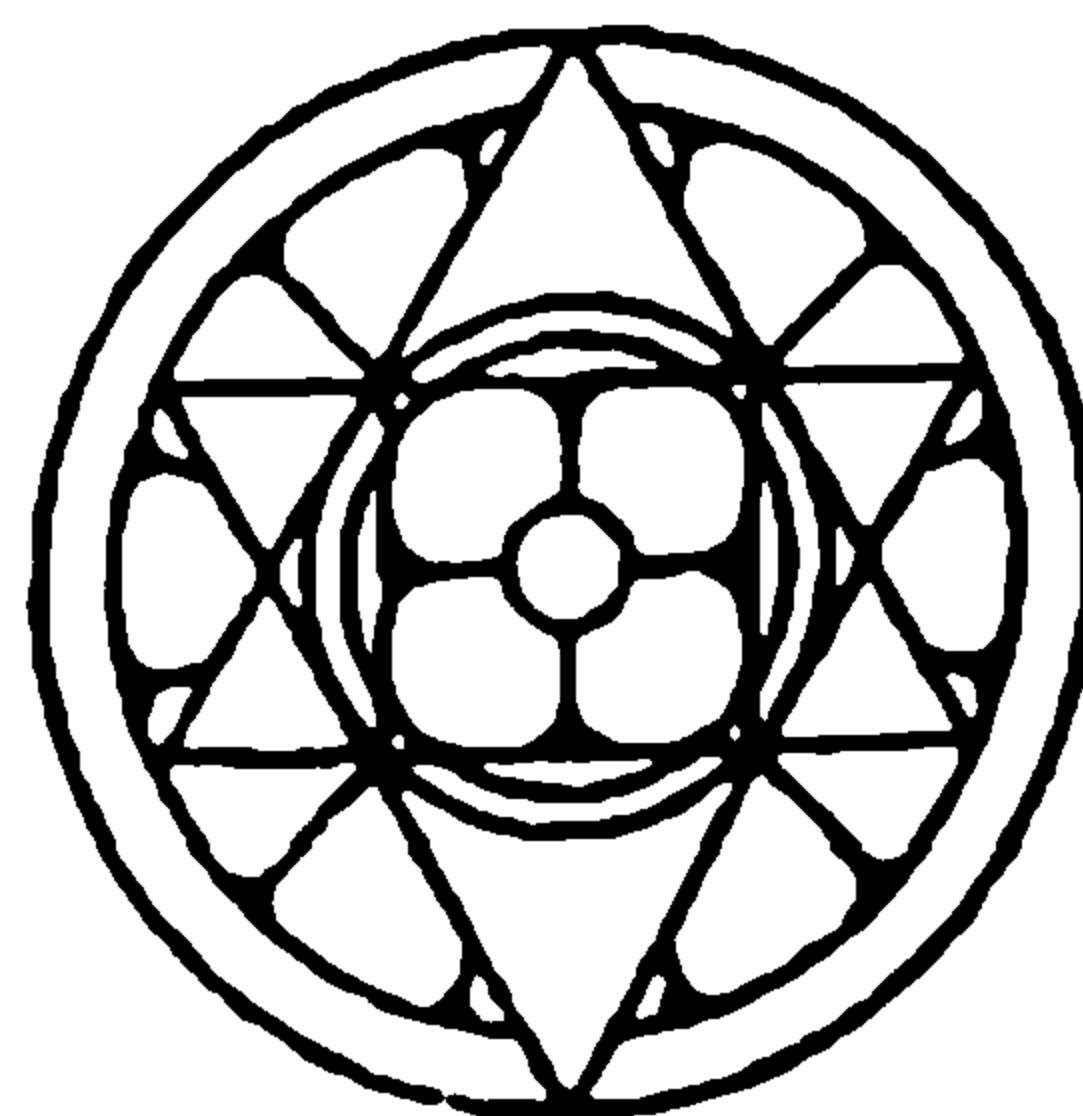
PRINTED IN INDIA

SRI AUROBINDO INTERNATIONAL CENTRE OF EDUCATION

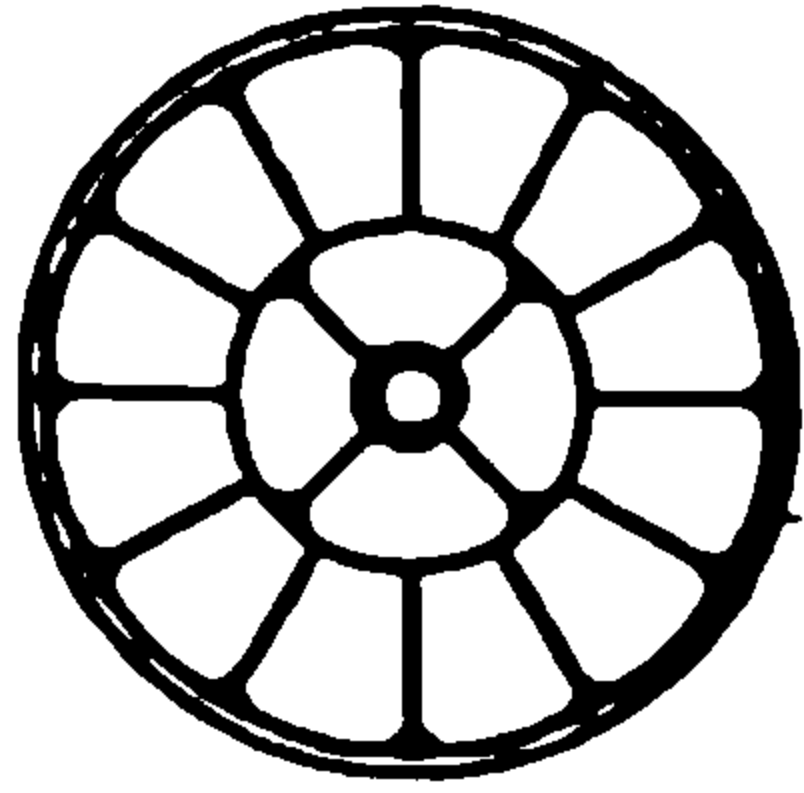
2.12.43 50th Anniversary 2.12.92-93

*The effective manifestation
of Ishwara and Ishwari
in union.*

—



SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SYMBOL OF THE CENTRE OF EDUCATION



IDEAL CHILD

The Mother

Om - namo - bhagavate.

WHAT A CHILD SHOULD ALWAYS REMEMBER

The necessity of an absolute sincerity.

The certitude of Truth's final Victory.

The possibility of constant progress with the
will to achieve.

AN IDEAL CHILD IS GOOD-TEMPERED

He does not become angry when things seem to
go against him or decisions are not in his favour.

IS GAME

Whatever he does he does it to the best of his
capacity and keeps on doing in the face of almost
certain failure. He always thinks straight and
acts straight.

Om - namo - Chagavate.

3

IS TRUTHFUL

He never fears to say the truth whatever may be the consequences.

IS PATIENT

He does not get disheartened if he has to wait a long time to see the results of his efforts.

IS ENDURING

He faces the inevitable difficulties and sufferings without grumbling.

IS PERSEVERING

He never slackens his efforts however long it has to last.

IS POISED

He keeps his equanimity in success as well as in failure.

Om - namo - Bhagavate.

4

IS COURAGEOUS

He always goes on fighting for the final victory though he may meet with many defeats.

IS CHEERFUL

He knows how to smile and keep a happy heart in all circumstances.

IS MODEST

He does not become conceited over his success; neither does he feel himself superior to his comrades.

IS GENEROUS

He appreciates the merits of others and is always ready to help another to succeed.

IS FAIR AND OBEDIENT

He observes the discipline and is always honest.

Om - namo - Chagavate.

THE IDEAL CHILD

... likes to study when he is in school,
... he likes to play when he is in the playground,
... he likes to eat at meal-time,
... he likes to sleep at bed-time,
... and always he is full of love for all those
around him,
... full of confidence in the divine Grace, full of
deep respect for the Divine.

CODE OF SPORTSMANSHIP

Keep the rules.
Keep faith with the comrade.
Keep your temper.
Keep yourself fit.
Keep a stout heart in defeat.
Keep your pride under in victory.
Keep a sound soul, a clean mind, and a healthy
body.
Play the game.

Om - namo - Bhagavate.

A GOOD SPORTSMAN

IS COURAGEOUS

ON THE FIELD he does not jeer at errors; he does not cheer at the opponent's defeat; he treats them as guests, not enemies.

IN SCHOOL he is considerate to the authorities, the fellow students, and the teachers.

IN LIFE he is respectful to others; he treats them as he would be treated.

IS MODEST

ON THE FIELD he works for the good of the team rather than individual honour; he will even sacrifice his own prestige for the team; he is a gracious winner.

IN SCHOOL he does not become conceited over his success, neither does he feel himself superior

Om - namo - Chagavate.

to his class-mates.

IN LIFE he does not “blow” about what he is going to do; he does not boast about what he has done.

IS GENEROUS

ON THE FIELD he applauds a good play of his opponents.

IN SCHOOL he appreciates another’s merits.

IN LIFE he does not ridicule the man who is “down” but encourages him. He is not afraid to voice his opinions straightforwardly and clearly.

IS GAME

ON THE FIELD he plays hard; he fights though he may be already defeated; he accepts adverse decisions; he is a good loser.

Om - name. Chapuete.

IN SCHOOL he does his work, he keeps on working in the face of almost certain failure. He has the vim to think straight, the pluck to act straight.

IN LIFE he does his part however hard it may be; he accepts reverses with a smile and tries again.

IS OBEDIENT

ON THE FIELD he observes the rules of the games.

IN SCHOOL he observes all the regulations.

IN LIFE he respects the rules which help to promote harmony.

IS FAIR

ON THE FIELD he competes in a clean, hard-fought but friendly way; he helps an injured opponent.

Om - namo - Chagavate.

IN SCHOOL he does not waste his time nor that of the teachers. He is always honest.

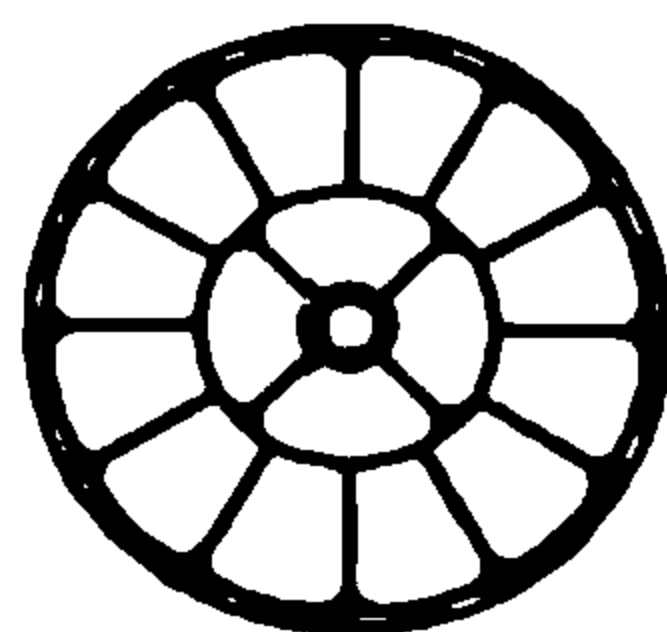
IN LIFE he sees impatiently both sides of a question.

STUDENTS' PRAYER

Make of us the hero warriors we aspire to become. May we fight successfully the great battle of the future that is to be born, against the past that seeks to endure; so that the new things may manifest and we are ready to receive them.

The Mother - 6 January 1952

Om - namo - bhagavate.



IDEAL PARENT

The Mother

SOMETHING UTTERLY NEW

Once again Nature feels one of her great impulses towards the creation of something utterly new, something unexpected. And it is to this impulse that we must answer and obey.

Part 1

Q: Sweet Mother, is it possible for the mother and father to give birth to... to ask for the soul they want?

A: To ask? For that they must have an occult knowledge which they do not usually have, But

Om - namo - Chagavate.

anyway, what is possible is that instead of doing the thing like an animal driven by instinct or desire and most of time without even wanting it, they do it at will, with an aspiration, putting themselves in a state of aspiration and almost of prayer, so that the being they are going to form may be one fit to embody a soul which they can call down to incarnate in that form. I knew people – not many, this does not often happen, but still I knew some – who chose special circumstances, prepared themselves through special concentration and meditation and aspiration and sought to bring down, into the body they are going to form, an exceptional being.

In many countries of old – and even now in certain countries – the woman who was going to have a child was placed in special conditions of beauty, harmony, peace and well-being, in every harmonious physical conditions, so that the child could be formed in the best possible conditions. This is obviously what ought to be done, for it is within the reach of human

Om - namo. Bhagavate.

possibilities. Human beings are developed enough for this not to be something quite exceptional. And yet it is quite exceptional, for very few people think of it, while there are innumerable people who have children without even wanting to.

That was what I wanted to say.

TRUE MATERNITY

Maternity is considered as the principal role of woman. But this is true only as we understand what is meant by the word maternity. For to bring children into this world as rabbits do their young – instinctively, ignorantly, machine-like, that certainly cannot be called maternity! True maternity begins with the conscious creation of a being, with the willed shaping of a soul coming to develop and utilize a new body. The true domain of women is the spiritual. We forget it but too often.

To bear a child and construct his body almost subconsciously is not enough. The work

Om - namo - Chagavate.

really commences when, by the power of thought and will, we conceive and create a character capable of manifesting an ideal.

I do not say that we have no power for realizing such a thing. Innumerable instances of this very effective power could be brought out as proofs.

I met several of these instances myself. Among them, I remember very clearly two little girls; they were twins and perfectly beautiful. But the most astonishing thing was how little like their parents they were. They reminded me of a very famous picture painted by the English artist Reynolds. One day I made this remark to the mother, who immediately exclaimed: "Indeed, it is not so? You will be interested to know that while I was expecting these, I had hung above my bed, a very good reproduction of Reynolds' picture. Before going to sleep and as soon as I woke, my last and first glance was for that picture; and in my heart I hoped: may my children be like the faces in this picture. You

Om - namo - Chagavate.

see that I succeeded quite well!" In truth, she could be proud of her success, and her example is of great utility for other women.

THE GLORIOUS WORK

With the effort, maternity becomes truly precious and sacred; indeed with this, we enter the glorious work of the Spirit; and womanhood rises above animality and its ordinary instincts, towards real humanity and its powers.

In this effort, in this attempt, then lies out true duty. And if this duty was always of the greatest importance, it certainly has taken a capital one in the present turn of the earth's evolution.

THE ADVENT OF THE DAWN

All those who feel that their heart extends further than the limits of their own person and family, that their thought embraces more than small personal interests and local conventions,

Om - namo - Chagavate.

all those, in short, who realize that they belong not to themselves, or to their family, or even to their country, but to God who manifests Himself in all countries, through mankind, these, indeed, know that they must rise and set to work for the sake of humanity, for the advent of the Dawn.

And in this momentous, endless, many-sided work, what can be the part of womanhood? It is true that, as soon as great events and works are in question, the custom is to relegate women to a corner with a smile of patronizing contempt which means: this is not your business, poor, feeble, futile creatures... And women submissive, childlike, lazy perhaps, have accepted, at least in many countries, this deplorable state of things. I dare to say that they are wrong. In the life of the future, there shall be no more room for such division, such disequilibrium between the masculine and the feminine. The true relation of the two sexes is an equal footing of mutual help and close collaboration.

Om - namo - Chagante.

THE SUPREME POSSIBILITY

And here we come back to our starting point, to our duty of true maternity. For this form meant to manifest the spiritual force capable of transforming the earth's present condition, this new form, who is to construct it if not the women?

It is no longer sufficient to form a man similar to the greatest men we have heard of or known, or even greater, more accomplished and gifted than they; we must strive to come in touch mentally, by the constant aspiration of our thought and will, with the supreme possibility which, exceeding all human measures and features, will give birth to the Superman.

THE FUTURE MAN

First of all we must be careful, in our attempt to conceive the future man or superman, not to adopt an actual type of man, perfectly or aggrandizing him. To avoid as much as possible

Om - namo - Chagavate.

this mistake we should study the teachings of life's evolution.

THE NEW AGE

Therefore, the individuals who will most help the future of humanity in the new age, will be those who will recognize a spiritual evolution as the destiny and therefore the great need of the human being, an evolution or conversion of the present type of humanity, even as the animal man has been largely converted into a highly mentalised humanity.

THE NEW RACE

And among these individuals, woman must be the first to realize this great change, as it is her special task to give birth in this world to the first specimens of the new race.

Om - namo - Chagavate.

THE SUPREME REWARD

Thus the individual, no more guided by egoistical motives, laws or customs, shall abandon all selfish aims. His rule will be perfect disinterestedness. To act in view of a personal profit, either in this world or in another beyond will become an unthinkable impossibility. For each act will be done in complete, simple, joyful obedience to the divine law which inspires it, without any seeking for reward or results, as the supreme reward will be in the very delight of acting under such inspiration, of being identified in conscience and will with the divine principle within oneself.

PART II TO EDUCATE A CHILD IS TO EDUCATE ONESELF

The education of a human being should begin at birth and continue throughout his life.

Om - namo - Chagavate.

Indeed, if we want this education to have its maximum results, it should begin even before birth.

There are other parents who know that their children must be educated and who try to do what they can. But very few, even among those who are most serious and sincere, know that the first thing to do, in order to be able to educate a child, is to educate oneself, to become conscious and master of oneself so that one never sets a bad example to one's child. For it is above all through example that education becomes effective. To speak good words and to give wise advice to a child has very little effect if one does not oneself give him an example of what one teaches. Sincerity, honesty, straightforwardness, courage, disinterestedness, unselfishness, patience, endurance, perseverance, peace, calm, self-control are all things that are taught infinitely better by example than by beautiful speeches. Parents have a high ideal and always act in accordance with it and you will see that little by little your child will reflect

Om - namo - Bhagavate.

this ideal in him and spontaneously manifest the qualities you would like to see expressed in his nature. Quite naturally a child has respect and admiration for his parents; unless they are quite unworthy, they will always appear to their child as demigods whom he will try to imitate as best as he can.

IT IS ALWAYS GOOD TO TELL THE TRUTH

With very few exceptions, parents are not aware of the disastrous influence than their own defects, impulses, weaknesses and lack of self-control have on their children. If you wish to be respected by a child, have respect for yourself and be worthy of respect at every moment. Never be authoritarian, despotic, impatient or ill tempered. When your child asks you a question, do not give him a stupid or silly answer under the pretext that he cannot understand you. You can always make yourself understood if you take enough trouble; and in spite of the popular saying that it is not always good to tell the truth,

Om - namo - Chagavate.

I affirm that it is always good to tell the truth, but that the art consists in telling it in such a way as to make it accessible to the mind of the hearer. In early life, until he is twelve or fourteen, the child's mind is hardly open to abstract notions and general ideas. And yet you can train it to understand these things by using concrete images, symbols or parables. Up to quite an advanced age and for some who mentally always remain children, a narrative, a story, a tale well told teach much more than any number of theoretical explanations.

EDUCATION OF THE BODY

All education of the body should begin at birth and continue throughout life. It is never too soon to begin nor too late to continue.

Physical education has three principle aspects: 1) control and discipline of the functioning of the body, 2) an integral, methodical and harmonious development of all the parts and movements of the body and 3)

Om - namo. Chagrate.

correction of any defects and deformities.

As soon as the child is able to make use of his limb, some time should be devoted every day to the methodical and regular development of all the parts of his body. Every day some twenty or thirty minutes, preferably on waking, if possible, will be enough to ensure the proper functioning and balanced growth of his muscles while preventing any stiffening of the joints and the spine, which occurs much sooner than one thinks.

GOOD HABIT

It may be said that from the very first days, even the first hours of his life, the child should undergo the first part of this program as far as food, sleep, evacuation, etc. are concerned. If the child, from the very beginning of his existence, learns good habits, it will save him a good deal of trouble and inconvenience for the rest of his life; and, besides those who have the responsibility of caring for him during the first

Om - namo - Bhagavate.

years will find their task very much easier.

FOOD

One must educate the child with care and teach him to distinguish his desires from his needs. He should be helped to develop a taste for food that is simple and healthy, substantial and appetizing, but free from any useless complications. In his daily food, all that merely stuffs and causes heaviness should be avoided, and above all, he must be taught to eat according to his hunger, neither more nor less, and not to make his meals an occasion to satisfy his greed or gluttony. From one's very childhood, one should know that one eats in order to give strength and health to the body and not to enjoy the pleasures of the palate.

CLEANLINESS

Another thing should be taught to a child from his early years: to enjoy cleanliness and

Om - namo - Bhagavate.

observe hygienic habits. But in obtaining this cleanliness and respect for the rules of hygiene from the child, one must take great care not to instill into him the fear of illness. Fear is the worst instrument of education and the surest way of attracting what is feared. Yet, while there should be fear of illness there should be no inclination for its either.

SLEEP

But in any case a child, whatever his activities should have a sufficient number of hours of sleep. The number will vary according to his age. In the cradle, the baby should sleep longer than he remains awake. The number of hours of sleep will diminish as the child grows. But until maturity it should not be less than eight hours, in a quiet well-ventilated place. The child should never be made to stay up late for no reason.

Om - namo - Bhagavate.

SCOLDING

Do not scold your child without good reason and only when it is quite indispensable. A child who is too often scolded gets hardened to rebuke and no longer attaches much importance to words or severity of tone. And above all, take good care never to scold him for a fault which you yourself commit. Children are very keen and clear-sighted observers; they soon find out your weaknesses and note them without pity.

When a child has done something wrong, see that he confesses it to you spontaneously and frankly; and when he has confessed, with kindness and affection make him understand what was wrong in his movement so that he will not repeat it, but never scold him; a fault confessed must always be forgiven.

NOT TO ALLOW ANY FEAR

You should not allow any fear to come

Om - namo - Bhagavate.

between you and your child; fear is a pernicious means of education: it invariably gives birth to deceit and lying.

A CHILD SHOULD BE TAUGHT TO ASPIRE FOR BEAUTY

I have said that from a young age children should be taught to respect good health, physical strength and balance. The great importance of beauty must also be emphasized. A young child should aspire for beauty, not for the sake of pleasing others or winning their admiration, but for the love of beauty itself; for beauty is the ideal which all physical life must realize. Every human being has the possibility of establishing harmony among the different parts of his body and in the various movements of the body in action.

MEDICINE

My advice is that medicines should not be

Om - namo - Chagavate.

used unless it is absolutely impossible to avoid them and this "absolutely impossible" should be very strict.

CARE OF THE CHILD

The worst of all (which men usually do) is to leave their children with servants. It is a crime. For these people have any altogether vulgar consciousness, altogether low, altogether obscure; and quite spontaneously, without wanting to do so, they let it enter the children.

THE ESSENTIAL THING

Essentially, the only thing you should do assiduously is to teach them to know themselves and choose their own destiny, the path they will follow; to teach them to look at themselves, understand themselves and to will what they want to be.

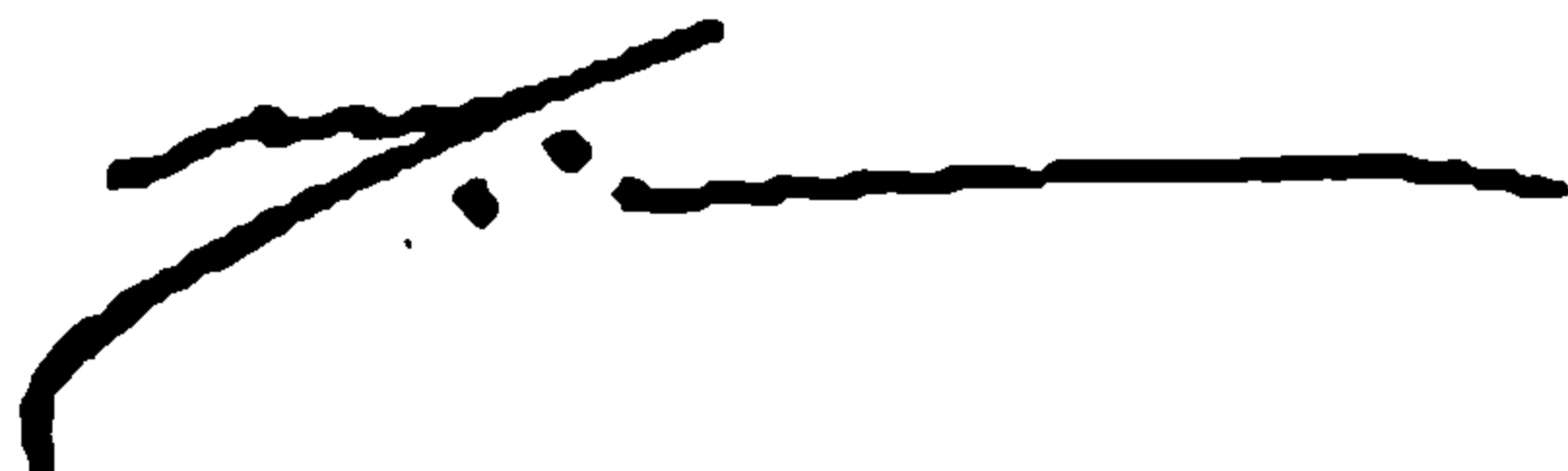
To love to learn is the most precious gift that

Om - namo - Chagavate.

one can make to a child, to learn always and everywhere.

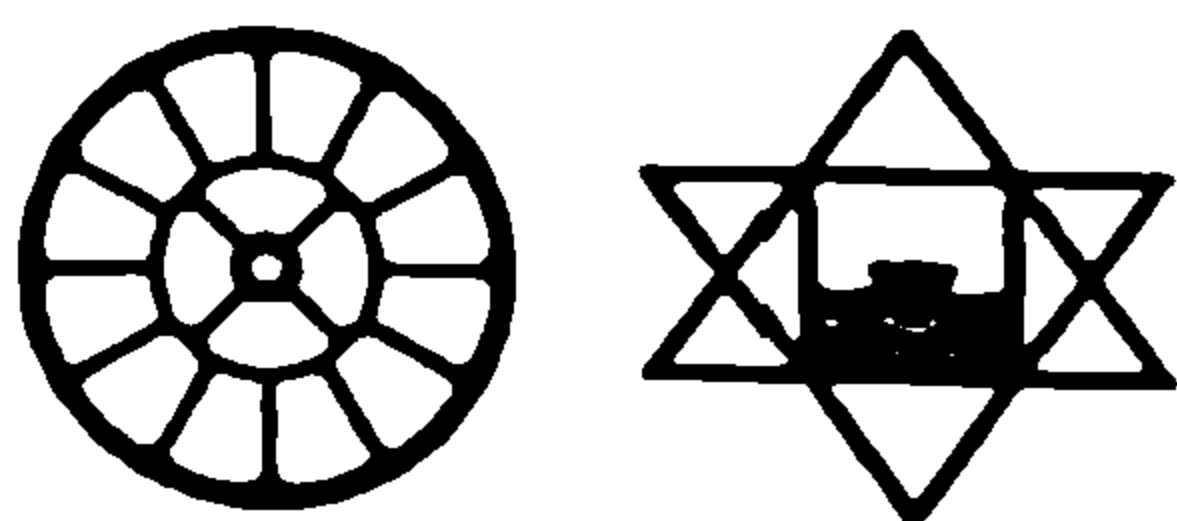
Some give Their soul to the Divine, some Their life, some offer their work, some their money. A few consecrate all of themselves and all they have - soul, life, work, wealth; these are the true children of God. Others give nothing. These whatever their position, power and riches are for the Divine purpose valueless cyphers.

This book is meant for those who aspire for an utter consecration to the Divine



1941 - 1949.

Om - namo - Chagante.



IDEAL TEACHER

The Mother & Sri Aurobindo

The chief aim of education should be to help the growing soul to draw out that in itself which is best and make it perfect for the noble use.

The new aim (of education) is to help the child to develop his intellectual, aesthetic, emotional, moral, spiritual being and his communal life and impulses out of his own temperament and capacities, - a very different object from that of the old education which was simply to pack so much stereotyped knowledge into his resisting brain and impose a stereotyped rule of conduct on his struggling and dominated impulses.

Om - namo - Chagavate.

The first principle of true teaching is that nothing can be taught. The teacher is not an instructor or task-master; he is a helper and a guide. His business is to suggest and not to impose. He does not actually train the pupil's mind. He only shows him how to acquire knowledge for himself. He does not call forth the knowledge that is within; he only shows him where it lies and how it can be habituated to rise to the surface.

The second principle is that the mind has to be consulted in its own growth. The idea of hammering the child into the shape desired by the parent or teacher is a barbarous and ignorant superstition. It is he, himself who must be induced to expand in accordance with his own nature. There can be no greater error than for the parent to arrange beforehand that his son shall develop particular qualities, capacities, ideas, virtues, or to be prepared for a prearranged career. To force the nature to abandon its own *DHARMA* is to do it permanent harm, mutilate its growth and deface its perfection. It is a selfish

Om - namo - Bhagavate.

tyranny over a human soul and a wound to the nation, which loses the benefit of the best that a man could have given it is forced to accept instead something imperfect and artificial, second-rate, perfunctory and common. *Every one has in him something divine, some thing his own, a chance of perfection and strength in however small a sphere which God offers him to take or refuse. The task is to find it, develop, it and use it.*

The third principle of education is to work from the near to the far, from that which is to that which shall be. The basis of a man's nature is almost always in addition to his soul's past, his hereditary, his surroundings, his nationality, his country, the soil from which he draws sustenance, the air which he breathes, the sights, sounds, habits to which he is accustomed. They mould him not the less powerfully because insensibly, and from that then we must begin. We must not take up the nature by the roots from the earth in which it must grow or surround the mind with images and ideas of a life which is alien to that in which it must physically move.

Om - namo - Chagavate.

If anything has to be brought in from outside, it must be offered, not forced on the mind. A free and natural growth is the condition of genuine development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Of all the domains of human consciousness, the physical is the one most completely governed by method, order, discipline, process. The lack of plasticity and receptivity in matter has to be replaced by the detailed organization that is both precise and comprehensive. In this organization, one must not forget the interdependence and interpenetration of all domains of the being. However, even a mental or vital impulse, to express itself physically, must submit to an exact process. That is why all education of the body, if it is to be effective, must be rigorous and detailed, far sighted and methodical.

Physical culture is the process of infusing consciousness into the cells of the body. One

Om - namo - Bhagavate.

may or may not know it, but it is a fact.

VITAL EDUCATION

This vital education has two principal aspects, very different in their aims and methods, but both equally important. The first concerns the development and use of the sense organs. The second is the progressing awareness and control of the character, culminating in its transformation.

Essentially, the only thing you should do assiduously is to teach them to know themselves and choose their own destiny, the path they will follow; to teach them to look at themselves, understand themselves and to will what they want to be.

To love to learn is the most precious gift that one can make to a child, to learn always and everywhere.

The first rule of moral training is to suggest and invite, not command or impose. The best

Om - namo - Chagante.

method of suggestion is by personal example, daily converse and the books read from day to day...

... Great care will have to be taken that unformed virtues are not rejected as faults. The wildness and recklessness of many young natures are only the overflowing of an excessive strength, greatness and nobility. They should be purified, not discouraged.

MENTAL EDUCATION

But a rational education means necessarily three things, first, to teach men how to observe and know rightly the facts on which they have to form a judgment; secondly to train them to think fruitfully and soundly; thirdly, to fit them to use their knowledge and their thought effectively for their own and the common good. Capacity of observation and knowledge, capacity of action and high character are required for the citizenship of a rational order of society; a general deficiency in any of these

Om - namo - Chagavate.

difficult requisites is a sure source of failure.

...whatever you may want to do in life, one thing is absolutely indispensable and at the basis of everything, the capacity of concentrating the attention. If you are able to gather together the rays of attention and consciousness on one point and can maintain this concentration with a persistent will, nothing can resist it – whatever it may be, from the most material, physical development to the highest spiritual one. But this discipline must be followed in a constant and, it may be said, imperturbable way: not that you should always be concentrated on the same thing – that is not what I mean, I mean learning to concentrate. ...materially for studies, sports, all physical or mental development, it is absolutely indispensable. And the value of an individual is proportionate to the value of his attention.

...no particular subject except language is essential, still less exclusively appropriate to any given faculty. There are types of intellect, for

Om - namo - bhagavate.

instance, which are constitutionally incapable of dealing with geometrical problems or even with the formal Machinery of Logic, and are yet profound, brilliant and correct reasoners in other intellectual spheres. There is in fact hardly any subject, the sciences of calculation excepted, which in the hands of a capable teacher does not give room for the development of all the general faculties of the mind.

The first thing that is to be taught to every human being as soon as he is capable of thinking is that he must obey reason which is a kind of super-instinct of the species. And I repeat that it is not a question of spiritual life, but the very elementary wisdom of human, purely human life. Every child must know that he is created to become a mental being, and if he is to manifest his human nature reason must govern his life and not vital impulses. That is the elementary education that should be given everywhere.

The reign of reason should not end until the

Om - namo - Bhagavate.

coming of the psychic law which manifests the Divine Will.

TEACHERS

Children have everything to learn. This should be their main preoccupation in order to prepare themselves for a useful and productive life.

At the same time, as they grow up, they must discover in themselves the thing or things which interest them most and which they are capable of doing well. There are latent faculties to be developed. There are also faculties to be discovered.

Children must be taught to like to overcome difficulties, and also that this gives a special value to life; when one knows how to do it, it destroys boredom for ever and gives an altogether new interest to life.

We are on earth to progress and we have everything to learn.

Om - namo - Chaguste.

What you should do is to teach the children to take interest in what they are doing – you must arouse in them the desire for knowledge, for progress. One can take an interest in anything – in sweeping a room, for example – if one does it with concentration, in order to gain an experience, to make a progress, to become more conscious...

Most teachers want to have good students: students who are studious and attentive, who understand and know many things, who can answer well – good students. This spoils everything. The students begin to consult books, to study, to learn. Then they reply only on books, on what others say or write, and they lose contact with the superconscient part which receives knowledge by intuition. This contact often exists in a small child but it is lost in the course of his education.

... The growth of the understanding should be stressed much more than that of memory. One knows well only what has understood. Things

Om - namo - Chagante.

learnt by heart, mechanically, fade away little by little and finally disappear; *what is understood is never forgotten*. Moreover, you must never refuse to explain to a child the how and why of things. If you cannot do it yourself, you must direct the child to those who are qualified to answer or point out to him some books that deal with the question. In this way you will progressively awaken in the child the taste for true study and the habit of making a persistent effort to know.

I have been laying stress on the stories of the Ramayana & the Mahabharata and on the songs of Kabir, Mira, etc. Is it against your way to continue these old things?

Not at all – it is the attitude that is important. The past must be a spring-board towards the future, not a chain preventing from advancing. As I said, all depends on the attitude towards the past.

Om - namo - Chakravarta.

One must have a lot of patience with young children, and repeat the same thing to them several times, explaining it to them in various ways. It is only gradually that it enters their mind.

Intelligence and capacity of understanding are surely more important than regularity in work. Steadiness may be acquired later on.

In assessing the possibilities of a child, ordinary moral notions are not of much use. Natures that are rebellious, undisciplined, obstinate, often conceal qualities that no one has known how to us. Indolent natures may also have a great potential for calm and patience.

It is a whole world to discover and easy solutions are not of much use. *The teacher must be even more hard working than the student in order to learn how to discern and make the best possible use of different characters.*

Om - namo - Chagavate.

SUCCESSFUL TEACHER

1. Complete self-control not only to the extent of not showing any anger, but remaining absolutely quiet and undisturbed under all circumstances.
2. Above all, must have the knowledge that the teacher himself must always progress if he wants his students to progress, must not remain satisfied either with what he is or what he knows.
3. Must not have any sense of essential superiority over his students, nor preference or attachment whatsoever for one or another.
4. Must know that all are equal spiritually and instead of mere tolerance must have a global comprehension or understanding.

The teacher should always be punctual and come to the class a few minutes before it begins, always properly dressed. And above all, so that his students should never lie, he must never lie himself; so that his students should never lose

Om - namo - Bhagavate.

their temper, he should never lose his temper with them; and to have the right to say to them, "Rough play often ends in tears", he should never raise his hand against any of them

These are elementary and preliminary things which ought to be practiced in all schools without exception.

One can be in psychological control of the children only when one is in control of one's own nature.

First, know thoroughly what you have to teach. Try to get a good understanding of your students and their particular needs.

Be very calm and very patient; never get angry; one must be master of oneself in order to be a master of others.

The children must be educated in an atmosphere of love and gentleness.

No violence, never.

Om - namo - Chagavate.

No scolding, never.

Always a gentle kindness and the teacher must be the living example of the virtues the child must acquire.

The children must be happy to go to school, happy to learn, and the teacher must be their best friend who gives them the example of the qualities they must acquire.

And all that depends exclusively on the teacher. What he does and how he behaves.

Up to the age of seven, children should enjoy themselves. School should all be a game, and they learn as they play. As they play they develop a taste for learning, knowing and understanding life. The system is not very important. It is the attitude of the teacher that matters. The teacher should not be something that one endures under constraint. He should always be the friend whom you love because he

Om - namo. Chagante.

helps and amuses you.

It is absolutely forbidden to hit the children – all blows are forbidden, even the slightest little slap or the so-called friendly punch. To give a blow to a child because he does not obey or does not understand or because he is disturbing the others indicates a lack of self-control, and it is harmful for both teacher and student.

Disciplinary measures may be taken if necessary, but in complete calm and not because of a personal reaction.

Never forget that a little child under six knows much more than he can express.

Example is the most powerful instructor. Never demand from a child an effort of discipline that you do not make yourself. Calm, equanimity, order, method, absence of useless words, ought to be constantly practiced by the teacher if he wants to instill them into his pupils.

Om - namo - Chagavate.

The school should be an opportunity for progress for the teacher as well as for the student. Each one should have the freedom to develop freely.

TO THE CHILDREN OF THE ASHRAM

Why are we here in the Sri Aurobindo Ashram?

There is an ascending evolution in nature which goes from the stone to the plant, from the plant to the animal, from the animal to man. Because man is, for the moment, the last rung at the summit of the ascending evolution, he considers himself as the final stage in the ascension and believes there can be nothing on earth superior to him. In that he is mistaken. In his physical nature he is yet almost wholly an animal, a thinking and speaking animal, but still an animal in his material habits and instincts.

Undoubtedly, nature cannot be satisfied with such an imperfect result; she endeavours

Om - namo - Bhagavate.

to bring out a being who will be to man what man is to the animal, a being who will remain a man in its external form, and yet whose consciousness will rise far above the mental and its slavery to ignorance.

Sri Aurobindo came upon earth to teach this truth to men. He told them that man is only a transitional being living in a mental consciousness, but with the possibility of acquiring a new consciousness, the Truth-consciousness, and capable of living a life perfectly harmonious, good and beautiful, happy and fully conscious. During the whole of his life upon earth, Sri Aurobindo gave all his time to establish in himself this consciousness he called supramental, and to help those gathered around him to realize it.

You have the immense privilege of having come quite young to the Ashram, that is to say, still plastic and capable of being moulded according to the new ideal and thus become the

Om - namo - Bhagavate.

representatives of the new race. Here, in the Ashram, you are in the most favourable conditions with regard to the environment, the influence, the teaching and the example, to awaken in you this supramental consciousness and to grow according to its law.

Now, all depends on your will and your sincerity. If you have the will no more to belong to ordinary humanity, no more to be merely evolved animals; if your will is to become men of the new race realizing Sri Aurobindo's supramental ideal; living a new and higher life upon a new earth, you will find here all the necessary help to achieve your purpose, you will profit fully by your stay in the Ashram and eventually become living examples for the world.

The Mother - 24 July 1954

Om - namo - bhagavate.

SRI AUROBINDO INTERNATIONAL CENTRE OF EDUCATION

“Sri Aurobindo is present in our midst, and with all the power of His creative genius He presides over the formation of the University Centre which for years he considered as one of the best means of preparing the future humanity to receive the supramental light that will transform the elite of today into a new race manifesting upon earth the new light and force and life. In His name I open today this conversation meeting here with the purpose of realizing one of His cherished ideals.”

The Mother 24 April 1951

Om - namo - Bhagavate.