

The Integral Yoga

Three Conceptions of the World

1. Buddhist and Shankarite:

The world is an illusion, a field of ignorance and suffering due to ignorance. The one thing to do is to get out of it as soon as possible and to disappear into the original Non-Existence or Non-Manifestation.

2. The Vedantic as very commonly understood:

The world is essentially divine, for the Divine is omnipresent there. But its exterior expression is distorted, obscure, ignorant, perverted. The one thing to do is to become conscious of the inner Divine and remain fixed in that consciousness without troubling about the world; for this external world cannot change and will always be in its natural state of unconsciousness and ignorance.

3. Sri Aurobindo's view:

The world as it is, is not the divine creation it is meant to be, but an obscure and perverted expression of it. It is not the expression of the divine consciousness and will, but this is what it is meant to become; it has been created to develop into a perfect manifestation of the Divine under all His forms and aspects — Light and Knowledge, Power, Love and Beauty.

This is our conception of it and the aim we follow.

24 February 1936

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The usual sadhanas have for aim the union with the Supreme Consciousness (Sat-chit-ananda). And those who reach there are satisfied with their own liberation and leave the world to its unhappy plight. On the contrary, Sri Aurobindo's sadhana

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starts where the others end. Once the union with the Supreme is realised one must bring down that realisation to the exterior world and change the conditions of life upon the earth until a total transformation is accomplished. In accordance with this aim, the sadhaks of the integral yoga do not retire from the world to lead a life of contemplation and meditation. Each one must devote at least one third of his time to a useful work. All activities are represented in the Ashram and each one chooses the work most congenial to his nature, but must do it in a spirit of service and unselfishness, keeping always in view the aim of integral transformation.

To make this purpose possible, the Ashram is organised so that all its inmates find their reasonable needs satisfied and have not to worry about their subsistence.

The rules are very few so that each one can enjoy the freedom needed for his development, but a few things are strictly forbidden: they are (1) politics, (2) smoking, (3) alcoholic drink and (4) sex enjoyment.

Great care is taken for the maintenance of good health and the welfare and normal growth of the body of all, small and big, young and old.

24 September 1953

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What we are doing now is a new thing; it has nothing to do with the past.

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We want the divine conquest of this world, the conquest of all its movements and the realisation of the Divine here.

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It can be called an adventure because it is the first time that a yoga aims at transformation and divinisation of physical life instead of escape from it.

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The Integral Yoga

We want to translate into physical terms, as perfectly as possible, the inspiration sent by the Lord for the accomplishment of His work upon earth.

And for that, each individual soul is a help and a collaborator; but each human ego too is a limitation and an obstacle.

5 April 1960

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To those who want to practise the integral Yoga, it is strongly advised to abstain from three things:

- 1) Sexual intercourse
- 2) Smoking
- 3) Drinking alcohol

12 June 1965

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The more I go, the more I know that it is in work that Sri Aurobindo's integral yoga is *best done*.

9 October 1966

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It is not what you do but the spirit in which you do it that is important for the integral Yoga.

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