the ascent

CFIL's Newsletter | October 2026



Ascent: An opening upwards, the ascent into the light and consciousness.
" The Ascent or the upward movement takes place when there is a sufficient aspirtaion from the being, i.e., from the various mental, vital and physical planes. "

— Sri Aurobindo

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We hope you enjoy reading our October newsletter.

The cover image depicts the hidden and inherent capacities of consciousness that are latent in us. It is a visual depiction of all the abilities and capacities that are inherent in human consciousness, waiting for their awakening and expression in work and life.

The main article, **'The Powers that Education Leaves Unawakened**,' discusses the main purpose of education, which is to bring forth the latent mental, physical, and vital capacities hidden deep within our consciousness.

Let's Celebrate, written by one of our children at The Integral School, throws light on why taking time out to celebrate is good for us.

In **India, that is the Bharat** series—The Group and the Individual. Sri Aurobindo talks about how nature moves towards harmony through a prolonged struggle between opposing forces, producing compromise and mutual understanding that can prepare the way for true oneness. In human society, this struggle appears between the freedom and development of the individual and the authority and development of the collective, whether it takes the form of a family, a nation, or all humanity.

In **Invitation to Notice**, we see how learning through questions can deepen curiosity, exploration, and memory—yet textbooks and exams often reward conformity to predetermined answers.

In **reflection and trends**, we remind ourselves that as ultra-processed foods replace home cooking, they may erode regional tastes, inherited food knowledge, and the relationships formed around preparing meals.

The month of October marks the beginning of the sports day preparation. Our children become physically and mentally ready for the rigor of daily practice. We also look forward to beginning our long-due farming practice on the campus.

We wish all our readers a joyful and prosperous Deepawali.

-Editor

The Powers That Education Leaves Unawakened



Human Perfection: The central idea for education

The Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) has de-classified hundreds and thousands of pages released by the U.S. Government and the Military recording human capabilities, such as remote viewing, telepathy, psychokinesis and many other human abilities. Unfortunately, the mainstream framework does not include them. However, there is a field called parapsychology that has demonstrated these abilities under rigorously controlled laboratory conditions, showing that such abilities are inherent in human nature and must be expressed in life according to each individual's temperament and capabilities.

What, then, should be the goal of education? Should the goal of education be to feed in information or to 'extract' these capacities in order to optimise human abilities? Fundamental reality constituting the human being is consciousness (citta)—force-citta shakti. It is this principle that must be the leitmotif of any educational endeavour across the planet.

The human being possesses in greater degree physical, mental and other capacities which I would illustrate below for the readers' reference.

Extra-ordinary physical capacities:

Aerobic endurance and running economy:

Eliud Kipchoge completed a marathon in 1:59:40.2 during the 2019 INEOS Challenge.
What it reveals: With exceptional physiology, training, pacing and nutrition, a human can sustain roughly 21.1 km/h for two hours.

Breath-hold tolerance

AIDA lists Stéphane Mifsud's 11:35 static apnoea performance.
What it reveals: Symbol of Freediving Training can markedly improve oxygen conservation, relaxation and tolerance of rising carbon dioxide.

Extreme-altitude performance

Reinhold Messner and Peter Habeler became the first confirmed climbers to summit Everest without supplementary oxygen in 1978.
Reinhold Messner and Peter Habeler became the first confirmed climbers to summit Everest without supplementary oxygen in 1978. Guinness World Records Humans can function briefly at extreme hypoxia through acclimatisation, pacing, physiology and technical skill.

Extra-ordinary mental capacities

Apart from the para-psychological abilities such as remote viewing – a mental process by which an individual perceives, communicates with, and perturbs characteristics of a designated target, person, or even event remote in space and/or time from that individual. – This definition is based on the Secret Star Gate Presentation. The declassified DIA document lists many other mental capacities, including the following:

Parallel spatial working memory

Timur Gareyev played 48 blindfold chess games simultaneously for 19 hours 9 minutes, scoring 35 wins, seven draws and six losses.
What this reveals is that Timur Gareyev played simultaneously for 19 hours and 9 minutes, achieving 35 wins, seven draws, and six losses. Guinness World Records experts can maintain many structured mental representations by using patterns, spatial schemas and long-term chess knowledge.

Mental calculation

Shakuntala Devi correctly multiplied two randomly selected 13-digit numbers in 28 seconds.
What it reveals: Humans can develop remarkable numerical representation, decomposition and calculation speed.
Remote viewing: Ingo Swann co-founded the concept of remote viewing and developed Coordinate Remote Viewing (CRV).

Among various remote viewing assignments, one is more revealing—The Jupiter Prediction: In 1973, Swann remotely viewed the planet Jupiter and described its features—including a thin atmosphere, crystals, and rings—years before NASA's Voyager probes officially confirmed the existence of Jupiter's rings.

Courage and perseverance

Persistence through repetitive labour
Dashrath Manjhi spent 22 years cutting a passage through a Bihar hill using a hammer and chisel.

What this story reveals is that a single long-term purpose can endure despite poverty, ridicule, slow progress, and severe physical labour.

Other important capacities include the ability to think critically about possibilities, the use of intuition to 'know' without conscious thought, and the skills of imagination and creativity to 'create something novel'.

Education cannot be about covering a syllabus, refering to books and answering a question to be graded. All this comes at a cost – and the cost is precious human life. It's about the right to live and explore life as one chooses, according to one's temperament and interests.

Mainstream school parents, don't you see?

Let's Celebrate!



School life can often feel like a loop—one we can't escape and that never slows down. We wake up early, go to class, study, prepare for tests and do assignments. As soon as one task is complete, another pops up. We run on autopilot most of the time, treating our daily lives as a long list of chores instead of moments to enjoy.

Why bother celebrating?

Taking a moment to celebrate isn't just about having fun or throwing a party; it can also be good for our bodies and minds. When we pause to mark a happy moment, our brains may release chemicals such as serotonin and endorphins, which are linked to positive feelings. Spending time with family and friends can help us feel connected and relaxed. When stress eases, our bodies may also produce less cortisol, a hormone involved in the stress response.

Celebrating also brings people closer. It can strengthen friendships and build a sense of community. When life feels stressful, confusing or chaotic, small moments of celebration give us something positive to look forward to. They give us time to recharge from our day-to-day lives.
Taking time to celebrate can help us perform better when we return to work. When we work hard continuously without recognising our efforts, we may start to feel tired, unfocused and frustrated. Celebrating can feel like a reward for our brains and give us fresh motivation to take on the work ahead.

What should we celebrate?

A celebration doesn't need to be a large, expensive event, and you don't have to wait for major holidays like Christmas or New Year's Eve to feel happy. Big celebrations are wonderful, but we can sometimes forget to notice smaller, personal victories.
We should celebrate personal growth and achievements, whether that means finishing long-overdue work, wrapping up a project or simply getting through a tough week. Fresh starts and better choices matter, too. Deciding to leave a bad habit behind is also a win.

Easy ways to celebrate

You don't need to spend lots of money or plan a complicated event to mark an occasion. You could plan a group activity, try something new or choose any simple way that feels meaningful to you. It's up to you how you celebrate.
In short, taking a break to celebrate can support our mental health and relationships. Whether we're spending time with friends, leaving a bad habit behind or simply finishing some work, every small celebration matters.

— Darshad Jayanthan Balaji

India, that is Bharat - It's Spirit and Mission

India and Her future: Compiled from the writings of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother

The Group and the Individual

It is a constant method of Nature when she has two elements of a harmony to reconcile, to proceed at first by a long continued balancing in which she sometimes seems to lean entirely on one side, sometimes entirely to the other, at others to correct both excesses by a more or less successful temporary adjustment and moderating compromise. The two elements appear then as opponents necessary to each other who therefore labour to arrive at some conclusion of their strife. But as each has its egoism and that innate tendency of all things which drives them not only towards self-preservation but towards self-assertion in proportion to their available force, they seek each to arrive at a conclusion in which itself shall have the maximum part and dominate utterly if possible or even swallow up entirely the egoism of the other in its own egoism. Thus the progress towards harmony accomplishes itself by a strife of forces and seems often to be no effort towards concord or mutual adjustment at all, but rather towards a mutual devouring. In effect, the swallowing up, not of one by the other, but of each by the other, so that both shall live entirely in the other and as the other, is our highest ideal of oneness. It is the last ideal of love at which strife tries ignorantly to arrive; for by strife one can only arrive at an adjustment of the two opposite demands, not at a stable harmony, a compromise between two conflicting egoisms, and not the fusing of them into each other. Still, strife does lead to an increasing mutual comprehension, which eventually makes the attempt at real oneness possible.

In the relations between the individual and the group, this constant tendency of Nature appears as the strife between two equally deep-rooted human tendencies, individualism and collectivism.



On one side is the engrossing authority, perfection and development of the state; on the other, the distinctive freedom, perfection and development of the individual man. The state idea, the small or the vast living machine, and the human idea, the more and more distinct and luminous person, the increasing God, stand in perpetual opposition.

The size of the state makes no difference to the essence of the struggle, and need make none to its characteristic circumstances. It was the family, the tribe or the city, the polis; it became the clan, the caste and the class, the kula, the gens. It is now the nation. Tomorrow or the day after it may be all mankind. But even then the question will remain poised between man and humanity, between the self-liberating person and the engrossing collectivity.

At The Integral School

A glimpse into the joyful learning, discovery and creativity that shape our children's days at The Integral School.













MOVEMENT • EXPLORATION • PLAY

Progress & Courage

Progress and Courage groups explored shapes through a playful art activity, pasting different shapes and adding their own imaginative touches. They also enjoyed building tall towers with wooden blocks. Carefully placing and balancing each block, they watched their structures take shape and supported one another as they tried to build higher without the towers falling. Along the way, they practised coordination, concentration and patience, while discovering ideas of balance and stability.

The children also began experimenting with a new game of their own making, sharing ideas and figuring out how to play together. Their conversations flowed in Telugu as they worked, played and encouraged one another. These activities offered plenty of room for creativity, teamwork and confidence to grow through hands-on exploration.

LANGUAGE • PATTERNS • CREATIVITY

Aspiration

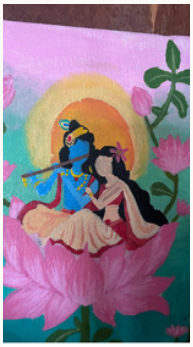
In October, the children explored homophones and homonyms through team games and began learning about the continuous tense in English. In Mathematics, they discovered palindrome numbers and words, enjoyed turning non-palindrome numbers into palindromes, and learned about the properties of addition.

As part of their plant project, the children smoothed coconut shells with sandpaper to prepare them for use as small flower pots. They also tried graphic dictation and visual memory games to strengthen their observation and concentration skills. Across these activities, they learned through discussion, problem-solving, play and hands-on making. The children watched short video episodes from Shri Krishna's life and retold the stories in their own words. They also drew pictures inspired by letters. In Telugu, they practised connecting *guninthaalu* symbols with their letters and identifying *aksharaalu.*

CURIOSITY • OBSERVATION • REFLECTION

Gratitude

In October, Gratitude group began practicing for Sports Day and continued exploring their project on insects. The children learned about ten insects, including their food habits, natural enemies and life cycles, and reflected on what insects can teach us. They watched short videos, read articles and magazine excerpts, and explored adjectives by imagining and describing unusual insect features. They also created watercolour butterflies with patterns of their own, practised sketching insect diagrams, and painted their chosen insects on canvas paper, adding each insect's name in Telugu.In English, the children practised informal letter writing, studied a parable from the newsletter and identified parts of speech. Reading and comprehension continued at each child's learning level. In Telugu, they revised earlier work, learned the names of insects and began reading a picture story. Mathematics lessons focused on revising previously covered concepts through questions suited to each child's learning needs.







PROJECTS•PROBLEM-SOLVING • PREPARATION

Humility

In October, Humility group completed the Mystical Makeover Project by arranging books on the shelves, cleaning their learning area and giving the garden its initial shape. They also prepared a day-by-day report documenting their progress.

In English, the children explored letter writing through a project that included a visit to the post office. They documented their visit and what they learned, and practiced writing formal and informal letters. They also explored inland letters, postcards and postage stamps of different denominations

In Science, the children learned about the states of matter, their properties and how matter changes from one state to another. In Social Studies, they explored weather and the factors that influence it. Mathematics worksheets focused on decimals and problem-solving, with additional practice provided in areas where students wanted support. A model question paper helped them become familiar with a formal examination format.

The children reflected on their learning and identified areas for growth. Some World Heritage Site presentations remain to be completed next month. During the Dussehra break, the group used the limited instructional time for reflection and preparation for upcoming learning.

CREATIVITY• TEAMWORK • EXPLORATION

Goodness

In October, Goodness group explored the natural world around them. They noticed and named leaf patterns on campus, collected specimens for their herbarium books, observed slides under a microscope and recorded what they saw. They also drew imaginary trees with varied leaves and branches, created floral art on canvas, and wrote short descriptions of their trees. In art, the children practiced shading, using light and dark tones to add depth to their drawings.

In English, they worked on foundational grammar and letter writing. They visited the post office, to post the letters they wrotre to one another about good news, friendship, school and new adventures. Their learning connected history and geography as they began a project on Ancient Egypt, explored hieroglyphics and located the 16 Mahajanapadas on a map of ancient India.

Goodness and Equality shared a memorable overnight school camp, complete with an indoor tent, bonfire and movie. After the Dussehra break, the children returned to Sports Day practice.

PRACTISE • PERSEVERANCE •CREATIVITY

Equality

Equality Group: Darshad and Tanmay explored several aspects of systems thinking and created a portrait of Maa Durga. They also wrote an article titled “AI: Pros and Cons” for the upcoming newsletter.

In Mathematics, they began studying triangles and learning theorem-proving techniques, focusing on understanding the reasoning behind results rather than memorising them. They also completed a Physics revision test on motion and waves.

Both students participated in the overnight camp held at school alongside Goodness Group.

Reflections and Trends



A 2025 Lancet review documents how ultra-processed foods are displacing established diets based on whole foods and meals prepared through cooking. This offers a cultural angle beyond the usual discussion of nutrition.

Reflection

As ready-made products replace cooking, what happens to regional tastes, inherited food knowledge and the relationships built around preparing a meal?

Source: https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/41270766/

Invitations to notice

Learning may depend on the question behind it



Research suggests that an interrogative state—approaching something as a question—encourages exploration, curiosity and memory formation more than simply being instructed to achieve an outcome.

Invitation to notice: Are you learning to arrive at an answer—or to enter more deeply into a question?
What purpose do textbooks and exams serve if answers must conform to a predetermined scheme?

Source: https://www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.2304881120?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Nobility

noh-BIL-uh-tee

/nəˈbɪləti/ · noun

The state or quality of being exalted in character or spirit.

A Parable



The whole village had gathered in the garden of the sculptor. They had got used to him, to the chiselling, the hammering, the chipping, and the wrapping. But today it was different. Where there had been but a huge hard boulder, now stood a living goddess, beautiful and glowing. They were speechless.

The spell was broken by a soft, wonder-struck voice:
“But how did you know that she was hiding inside?”

The sculptor smiled with a faraway look:
“Because I saw her inside.”

Centre for Integral Learning

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CFIL's Expressions:

The Integral School

The Integral Commune

integral dialogues

the ascent

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