



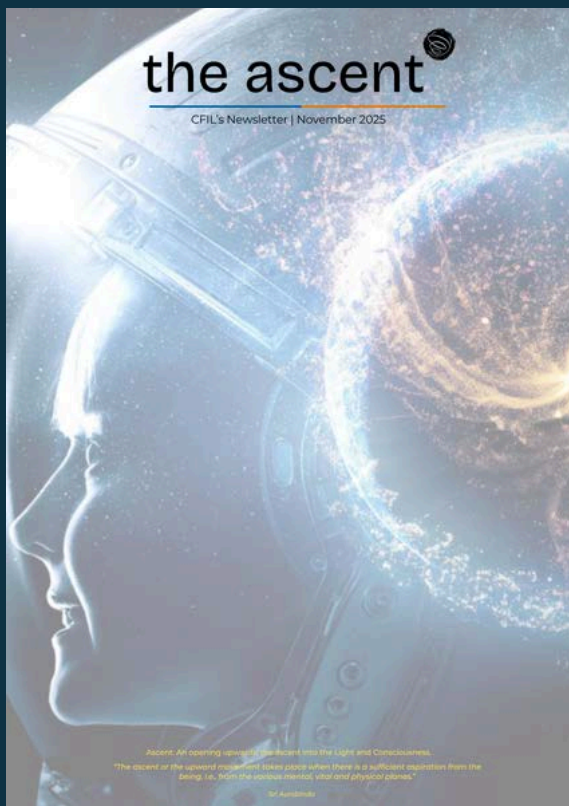
the ascent[®]

CFIL's Newsletter | November 2025

Ascent: An opening upwards, the ascent into the Light and Consciousness.

"The ascent or the upward movement takes place when there is a sufficient aspiration from the being, i.e., from the various mental, vital and physical planes."

-Sri Aurobindo



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We are glad to share the fourth edition of *The Ascent*, our monthly newsletter. We continue to bring to you our experiences, stories, and insights. We are certain that the monthly newsletters are being consumed with interest and that you look forward to each edition.

November marks concentrated focus on Sports Day practice. Sports Day is the biggest event at The Integral School, and the planning for it begins in September. We are delayed by fifteen days this year since we had to move to a new place and settle down. The delay has pushed our date to 20th December; however, our spirit has remained high as always. At The Integral School, physical education takes the topmost priority. We regard the human body as an evolving process rather than a finished product. The human body possesses tremendous capacities but is rarely allowed to evolve along the lines of its own genius. Sports Day is one such event and an opportunity to express this genius. We look forward to your presence on the 20th of December 2025.

In this edition of *The Ascent*, we have a special addition—Sri Aurobindo Mahasamadhi Day apart from two articles. The first—“Between Inheritance and Becoming”—explores our identities and what we truly want to be, given the choices that we have today. Post reading this article, one should truly take away a question to ponder—what is our essential identity?

The second article—“Who will lead our children—Technological Singularity and the role of the educator”—delves into the world of technology and the future epochs of Artificial Intelligence and what it means for an educator—why should and into what must an educator evolve to stay relevant.

In continuation to India that is Bharat—in this edition, the extract is on a complete and a comprehensive self-view and explores the dynamic spirituality in India as opposed to it being misunderstood as a passive spirituality.

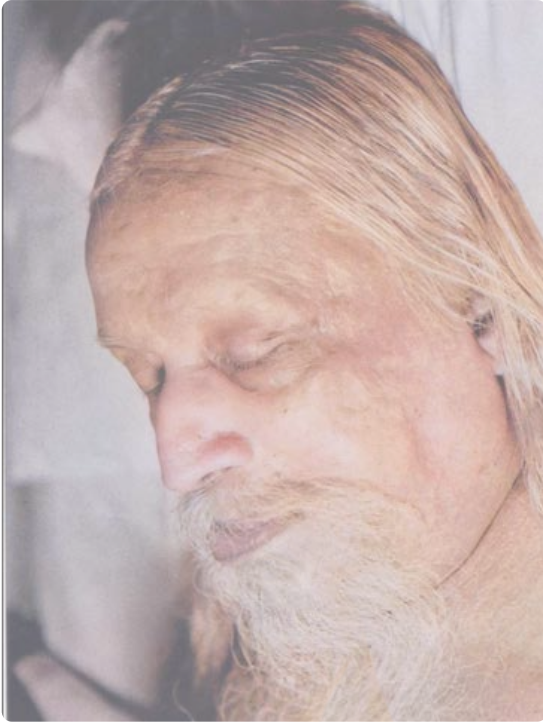
At The Integral School, here is a quick summary of what our children were up to while practicing diligently for Sports Day during the month of November

As we enter the last month of the year 2025, we carry lots of memories and turning points. We are hopeful that we will be able to connect more people to our Integral Commune and add to the list of the readers of this newsletter.

—Editor

Sri Aurobindo Mahasamadhi Day

5th December 1950



Sri Aurobindo left his body on December 5, 1950. In the words of The Mother:

"He was not forced to leave his body; he has chosen to do so."

"On 5th December 1950 at 1:26 a.m. he left his body and by morning the entire body was seen to be suffused with a golden-crimson hue, so fresh and so magnificent, lifting us from the pall of gloom to a mute wonder. This Supramental Light remained for five days at a stretch and many people witnessed the magnificent and unique phenomenon. A mortal body generally shows signs of decomposition within twenty-four hours, but for five days Sri Aurobindo's body remained intact with no signs of discoloration or decomposition. Gradually, on 9th December, the light began to fade, and in the evening the body was put in a rosewood box and laid to rest in the Ashram courtyard under the cool shade of the Service Tree."



Between Inheritance and Becoming

We are born into identities shaped by many threads—language, culture, festivals, family traditions, and geography. The language we hear first, the rituals we celebrate, the foods we eat, the cities we call home—all of these mark the earliest contours of who we are. For a long time, these inherited markers feel fixed, unquestioned. But at some point, each of us begins to notice the edges and the gaps, and the first quiet question emerges:

**“Do I accept
this as who I
am, or do I
shed it and
grow anew?”**

For me, that question has become daily, almost inescapable. I was born into a Gujarati family settled in Madhya Pradesh, married a Tamilian, and yet both of us grew up in Mumbai, feeling more *Mumbaiyah* than anything else. We moved to Hyderabad a little more than a year ago. And now, when someone asks my son—or me—“Where are you from?” The answer is layered, messy, and never immediate. I worry sometimes: will he feel floating, unrooted, untethered? Will identity seem like a series of unclaimed addresses and languages?

And yet, a deeper reflection tempers the worry: why should he be confined to a geography to define himself? Identity is more than inherited culture or birthplace. It is a lived experience. It is the community that holds him, the teachers who guide him, the friends who reflect and challenge him. In this, he is becoming something richer than any single inheritance—a human being shaped by many hands, many hearts, and many influences, choosing, exploring, and internalizing what resonates.

This tension between inherited identity and lived choice plays out in everyday life. My mother’s life revolved around cooking, feeding the home, and tending to others—a rich cultural inheritance, tied to family, rituals, and care.

I broke away from that, prioritizing work, freedom, and independence. And now, I am faced with yet another inner conflict: relying on cooks and maids has created freedom in one sense, yet dependence in another. I worry my son may never see me cook, never learn this seemingly basic, yet deeply human skill. But at the same time, I recognize that he is watching more than he realizes—watching how I navigate choices, how I live my values, how I negotiate freedom and responsibility.

Every time we break away from what we were taught, we don’t walk into certainty—we walk into new questions. There is no final answer. Just an unfolding. Each choice, each reinterpretation, becomes part of a new identity that may someday be questioned again—perhaps by our children. And that is not failure; that is life, lived, inherited, and reshaped.



We are never simply being. We are always becoming. Like crabs shedding shells, we let go of old forms, explore new possibilities, and grow. The magic lies in the vulnerable phase in between, the phase that builds character. And that character is our true identity.

And as parents, our role is not to anchor our children in any shell, but to ensure they always have the space, courage, and support to keep shedding, growing, and becoming themselves.

—Priti Seshan, *Integral Parent*

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



The need for a comprehensive self-view

"What was the ancient spirit and characteristics soul of India? European writers, struck by the general metaphysical bent of the Indian mind, by its strong religious instincts and religious idealism, by its other-worldliness, are inclined to write as if this were all the Indian spirit.

An abstract, metaphysical, religious mind overpowered by the sense of the infinite, not apt for life, dreamy, unpractical, turning away from life and action as *maya*, this they said, India; and for a time Indian in this as in other matters submissively echoed their new western teachers and masters. They learned to speak with pride of their metaphysics, of their literature, of their religion, but in all else they were content to be learners and imitators. Since then, Europe has discovered that there was too an Indian art of remarkable power and beauty; but the rest of what India meant it has hardly at all seen. But meanwhile the Indian mind began to emancipate itself and to look upon its past with a clear and self-discerning eye, and it very soon

discovered that it has been misled into an entirely false self-view.

All such one sided appreciation indeed almost invariably turn out to be false. When the renaissance of India is complete, she will have an awakening... as to the real nature and capacity of the Indian spirit."

The Dominating strain: A Dynamic Spirituality

"One thing seem at any rate certain, that the spiritual motive will be in the future of India, as in her past, the real originative and dominating strain. By Spirituality we do not mean a remote metaphysical mind or the tendency to dream rather than to act. That was not the great India of old in her splendid days of vigour-whatever certain European critics or interpreters of her culture may say-and it will not be the India of the future"

Who will lead our children?

Technological Singularity and the Role of the Educator

As we stand at the threshold of unprecedented technological change, the nature of human evolution—and consequently, education—demands a deeper reflection. The concept of Technological Singularity challenges not only our systems of knowledge but also the very essence of what it means to teach, learn, and grow as human beings.

Technological singularity has been defined as a future epoch in which technology becomes deeply embedded in the very fabric of life. It refers to a period when the pace of technological change will be so rapid and its impact so profound that human life will be irreversibly transformed.

The key idea here—irreversible transformation—implies that humanity may never again return to the way of life we currently know. These shifts are unfolding right before us, guided by a deliberate and well-laid-out trajectory toward a trans-humanistic society.

To understand this progression, it is useful to explore the six epochs (Ray Kurzweil's six epochs) of evolution as envisioned in this framework:

Epoch 1: Information existed in atomic structures, within the domains of chemistry and physics, as the Earth formed and life began to emerge.

Epoch 2: With biological evolution, information became encoded in DNA.

Epoch 3: The emergence of the brain introduced information stored in neural pathways and neural patterns.

Epoch 4: Information began to reside in hardware and software—our current stage—where what once existed in neural pathways is now transferred into digital systems.

Epoch 5: A quantum leap marks the merger of technology and biology. This convergence is seen by some as beneficial, yet it also carries profound ethical and existential risks.

Epoch 6: The culmination of this process leads to a complete takeover of biological human intelligence by non-biological intelligence—a hybrid species, profoundly algorithmized and reshaped by artificial cognition. This progression compels a crucial reflection on education and the evolving role of the educator.

Over time, the Educator's Hierarchy has evolved through distinct stages:



- Instructor (*Shikshak*): The traditional role centered on one-way transmission of information.
- Teacher (*Adhyapak*): A more interactive role focused on facilitating learning and understanding.
- Pandit: The subject-matter expert, offering depth and specialization in a given field. Today, this expertise is easily accessible through digital platforms.
- Acharya: Derived from *Acharan* (conduct), an Acharya inspires through personal example—teaching not just by words but by being.
- Guru: The highest form of educator, one who can enter a learner's consciousness and guide transformation at a deeper level.

Courage Group

When viewed alongside the six epochs, it becomes evident that the teaching profession risks obsolescence if confined to subject-matter delivery. Deep learning systems and computer-based education already address those functions.

The essential question for every educator, therefore, is this:

Will we remain at the lower levels of instruction and teaching, or will we ascend toward the higher calling of the Acharya and the Guru—where education transcends information and becomes a transformative force for consciousness?

–Editor

At The Integral School

Here's a glimpse of what our children at The Integral School explored, learned and loved in the month of November

Progress Group



November has been a delightful blend of creativity, exploration, and energetic fun for **Progress**. Our children engaged in a variety of craft activities, including vibrant branch decorations made with colorful yarn, cheerful stick-puppets, personalized name hangings, "cut and paste" collages, and beautifully designed photo frames. With Sports Day around the corner, practice sessions are in full swing. The children have embraced the excitement of hopping, crawling, zig-zag racing, Hula Hoops, and many more engaging activities, displaying enthusiasm, growing confidence and team spirit. The true highlight of November, however, has been the introduction of our new sand pit. This wonderful space encourages imaginative play, allowing children to create everything from sand castles and bird nests to a Shiva temple, tunnels and even a fort!

Courage Group

The month began with mental math sessions for **Courage**, where addition and subtraction were taught using natural materials such as leaves, sticks, stones, and objects found around the school. This hands-on approach helped children understand mathematical concepts in a fun, meaningful way while connecting with their environment. A weekly story narration class using puppets quickly became the highlight of the month. Children enthusiastically enacted characters, expressed emotions, and brought stories to life, making story-telling interactive and memorable. Alongside this, art and craft activities encouraged creativity, while time in the sandpit facilitated sensory play in a fun way. As the month progressed, the group also came together for Sports Day preparation, practicing with excitement and teamwork. Overall, November was filled with joyful learning and shared experiences our little learners.



Aspiration Group

Children in **Aspiration** worked on an exciting transport project that included crafting clay models of their favourite vehicles, solving transport-themed word games and puzzles, and reading about the evolution of transport over the years. From phonics to vocabulary, they practiced summarizing stories and forming sentences through engaging games, that led to delightful group-imagined narratives. The children also reflected on hygiene routines that support their well-being and those that need change, and began a month-long project to strengthen one personal hygiene habit, proudly recording their success stories. Artistic expression blossomed as they made palm-print crafts and personalized their cubbies with name labels in both English and their mother tongue. In Math's, they learned about even and odd numbers and practiced subtraction with 3-, 4-, and 5-digit numbers too. With ongoing Sports Day practice, November became an active, engaging, and a rewarding month that let them explore through work and play alike.



Gratitude Group

It was a month of “*practice makes perfect*” for Group **Gratitude**! Throughout the month, they focused on vigor, resilience, and building stamina through various movement activities, strengthening both body and mind while coming together to celebrate teamwork. Alongside this, the children thoroughly enjoyed learning the basics of farming. They explored roots, leaves, stems, germination, and photosynthesis in depth. Their discussions were enthusiastic and thoughtful, and they now eagerly look forward to hands-on farming, ready to apply their growing knowledge. Excitedly preparing for Sports day, the children created vibrant hand-painted paper-plate decorations, ensuring the event is a perfect collective effort—from their performance to the décor.

They also wrote imaginative pieces about *A Unique Sports Day Experience*, set in fantasy schools of their choice, whether deep in a magical forest or at a space-cadet academy. All in all, the month was a perfect balance between creative learning and immersive physical activity.



Humility Group

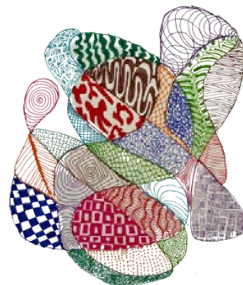
November was full of hard work and adventure for **Humility** as the children came together for Sports Day preparation. They participated with great enthusiasm, practicing relentlessly to gain mastery. From practicing *Silambam* to refining quick defense techniques in Taekwondo, the children gave their best effort, inspiring us all. As the big day approaches and their performance continues to improve, they are gaining new confidence, building endurance and flexibility, and showing remarkable control over their reflexes.

Alongside this, the learners have been engaged in meaningful projects such as creating vision boards of countries and states they would like to visit, building miniature models of the Indus Valley Civilization, and painting pots with glass colours for their microgreen and hydroponic gardening activities.

Overall, November was dedicated to juggling physical activities, creative exploration, and completing worksheets—ensuring the children show up fully and joyfully for all their learning experiences.

Goodness Group

November was filled with discovery, creativity, and teamwork for **Goodness**. In Science, the children explored the basic structure of the central nervous system, diving deeper into its key components—the human brain, nerves and the spinal cord. Through discussions and visuals, they gained a clearer understanding of how the body receives and responds to information. In Math's, the group took on a practical measurement project, measuring their classrooms, the dining area, and the “Garden of Senses” overlooking their learning space. This hands-on activity laid the foundation for an exciting group project currently in progress. To make learning more experiential, the children engaged in neurographical art, using colours for mindfulness, created intricate Warli paintings, and crafted vibrant paper-plate decorations. With Sports Day approaching, they also dedicated part of each day to energetic practice sessions, building stamina, resilience, and confidence in their performance skills.



A Parable



A great and foolish King complained that the rough ground hurt his feet, so he ordered the whole country to be carpeted with cowhide.

The court jester laughed when the King told him of his order.

"What an absolutely crazy idea, Your Majesty," he smiled.

"Why all the needless expense?

Just cut out two small pads to protect your feet!"



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