

# the ascent<sup>®</sup>



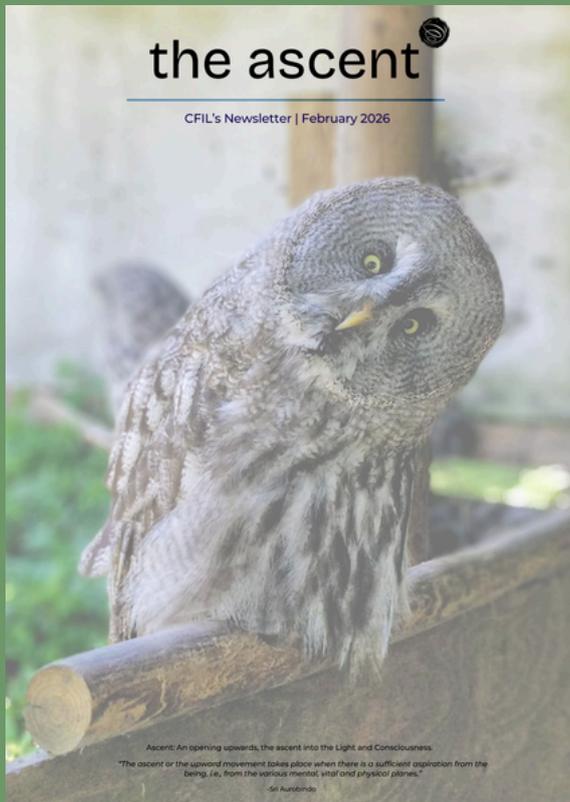
CFIL's Newsletter | February 2026



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

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

-Sri Aurobindo



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**We** are happy to place before you the 7th edition of *The Ascent* for the month of February as our collective journey continues.

A great deal has transpired across the world in the month of February. We are witnessing a changing world like never before, and what is alarming is the rate of change. Our effort at The Centre for Integral Learning remains rooted in the changeless psychic being, even as we lead ourselves into the future that is yet to be born. After all, as The Mother said, we are here not to do easy things.

As we now transition into summer, it has a direct impact on our bodies and physical capacities. This will be our first experience of summer at the new campus, and we feel almost ready for it.

The first article, *"Love for Learning — Keeping the Flame of Curiosity Alive,"* explores the essence of education as nurturing the power of questioning and awakening a genuine love for learning, rather than merely filling minds with information. Curiosity should therefore be the guiding principle of all educational practices, from curriculum to teacher training.

In the *"India, that is Bharat"* series, the passage presents India's triple message—psychical, spiritual, and moral—affirming that an inner spiritual reality is the true basis of the material world and that all souls share an essential oneness. From this unity arises love as the highest law of life, with joy and delight as the ultimate aim of human evolution.

In the *Symbolism* series, we begin with the first of the four powers of the Mother—Maheshwari. This series may be understood as a guiding principle or a path around which life may be organized; it is in this spirit that we share The Mother's symbol. The content is presented as it has been given to us by The Mother.

At *The Integral School*, we invite you to glimpse the life and learning unfolding on our campus.

*"Invitation to Notice"* offers a fact for us to ponder—the decline of our attention span.

*"Reflections and Trends"* gives us a sobering reality check on how AI-enabled applications are being used even to raise our children. What does this trend reveal?

We also introduce a new feature from this issue onward—*"The Integral Vocabulary."* Here, we will define a term used in the "integral scheme of things." Clarifying these words will help our community understand one another better by reducing differing interpretations of common terms.

As we move slowly toward the close of the current academic year, we still have over a month of school time ahead of us. We are sure to make the most of it to the fullest extent possible.

-Editor

# Love for Learning – Keeping the Flame of Curiosity Alive

The power of questioning—is central to any educational effort worldwide. The true purpose of education is to awaken in the learner a love for learning rather than simply filling the mind with information. Curiosity should be the leitmotif of educational literature, exercises, curricula, teacher education and so on.



Let us focus on curiosity. “Insatiable”—curiosity, unending curiosity, persistent curiosity. Curiosity is inherent to human nature from birth.

So, how is this curiosity lost? What kills it? As we go through schooling, we start living in a question-answer paradigm, creating a pattern of dependency. We’re busy answering questions that aren’t even ours. Our focus shifts to finding answers to fit an examination framework. Rarely do we question our answers as much as we answer our questions. Most of our lives are spent structuring answers to maximize scores or grades. We accept what’s given, we live the word not the real.

Is there a way to keep the flame of curiosity alive in our children? Here are some suggestions:

## Move Away from “Telling”

As adults, we know a lot, so when a child asks a question, we often respond immediately. But the child may not be seeking an answer; they may just want to deepen their inquiry. The child might be looking for your full attention rather than an answer. Giving attention and counter-questioning can keep the fire of curiosity alive.

## Embrace a Variety of Experiences

We often limit ourselves to familiar foods, places, and people, causing our minds to become accustomed to certain stimuli. When we fall into patterns, we stifle Curiosity. Exposing ourselves to diverse experiences stimulates curiosity by presenting something novel and unfamiliar.

## Limit Textual Learning

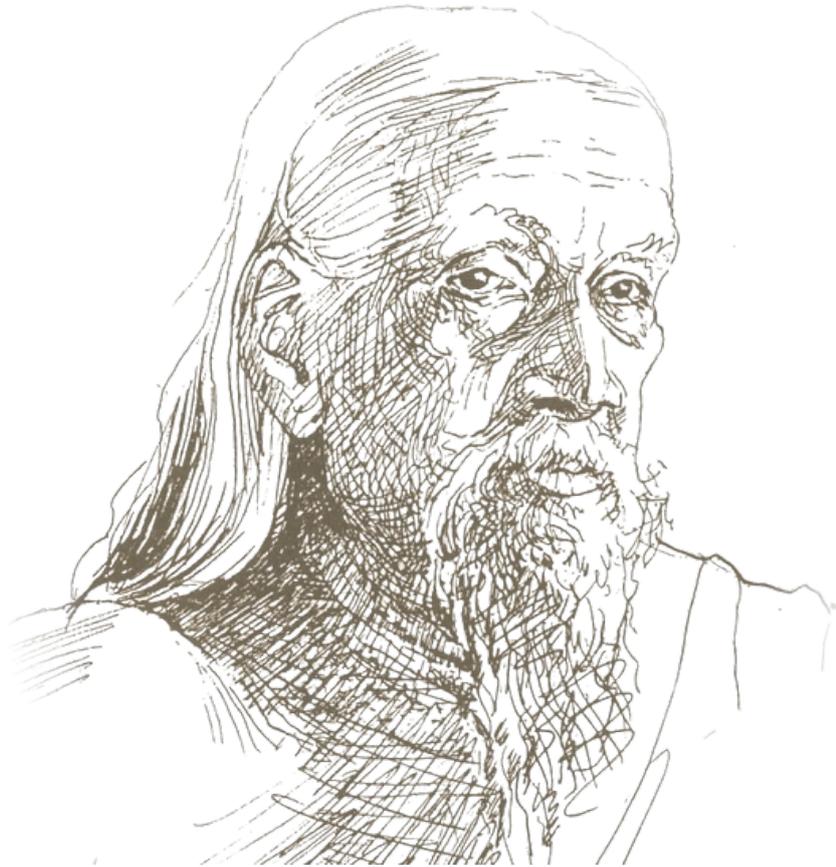
We are submerged in text—books, screens, everywhere. Reducing our exposure to information and text helps keep questioning alive. The process is more important than conclusions.

## Shift from Teaching to Facilitating

Nothing can be taught; all knowledge lies within, waiting to emerge. Inquiry is key. The teacher/parent should become a facilitator, a guide, a friend on the journey of knowing. Moving from the “teacher-student” paradigm to a “co-learner” approach encourages questioning. Instead of asking questions as an expert to “test” a child’s knowledge, the facilitator says, “Let’s learn together.” The child is always seeking a curious human being behind the façade of the teacher or a parent.

–Editor

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

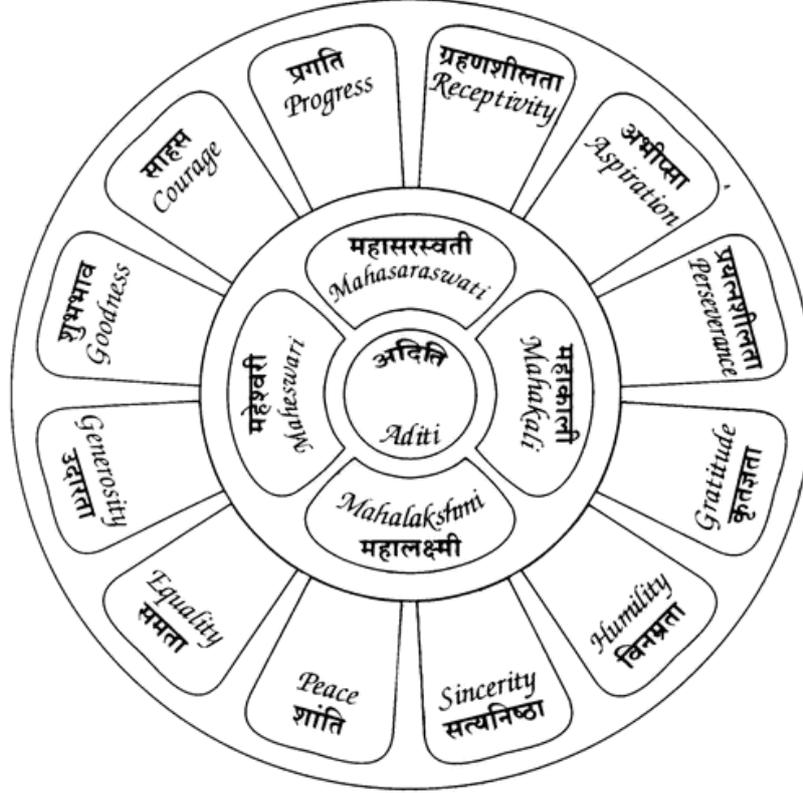


"We have here, very briefly put, the triple message for India, psychical, spiritual and moral. India believes in and has the key to a psychical world within man and without him which is the source and basis of the material. This it is which Europe is beginning dimly to discover. She has caught glimpses of the world beyond the gates, her hands are fumbling for the key but she has not yet found it. Immorality proved and admitted, it becomes easier to believe in God. The spiritual message is that the universal self is one and that our souls are not only brothers, not only of one substance and nature, but live in and move towards an essential oneness. It follows that love is the highest law and that to which evolution must move. Ananda, joy and delight, are the object of the *lila* and the fulfilment of love is the height of joy and delight.

Self-sacrifice is therefore the fundamental law. Sacrifice, says the Gita, is the law by which the Father of all in the beginning conditioned the world, and all ethics, all conduct, all life is a sacrifice willed or unconscious. The beginning of ethical knowledge is to realise this and make the conscious sacrifice of one's own individual desire. It is an inferior and semi-savage morality which gives up only to gain and makes selfishness the basis of ethics. To give up one's small individual self and find the larger self in others, in the nation, in humanity, in God, that is the law of Vedanta. That is India's message. Only she must not be content with sending it, she must rise up and live it before all the world so that it may be proved a possible law of conduct both for men and nations."

# Symbolism

## The Mother's Symbol



## श्री माताजीका प्रतीक

In the symbolism series, we will first take up the four aspects of the Mother. Four of her leading power and personalities have stood in front in her guidance of this universe and in her dealings with the terrestrial play.

### Maheshwari

Imperial Maheshwari is seated in the wideness above the thinking mind, will and sublimate and greatens them into wisdom and largeness or floods with a splendour beyond them.

For she is the mighty and wise. One who opens us to the supramental infinities and the cosmic vastness, to the grandeur of the supreme Light, to a treasure house of miraculous knowledge, to the measureless movement of the Mother's eternal force.

Tranquil is she and wonderful, great and calm for ever. Nothing can move her because all wisdom is in her; nothing is hidden from her that she chooses to know; she comprehends all things and all beings and their nature and what moves them and the law of the world and its times and how all was and is and must be. A strength is in her that meets everything and masters and none can prevail in the end against her vast intangible wisdom and high tranquil power. Equal, patient and unalterable in her will she deals with men according to their nature and with things and happening's according to their force and the truth that is in them.

-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 January.



February was joyfully engaging for the children in **Progress**. With plenty of open space to explore, our little learners eagerly moved, played, and discovered new activities each day. Daily physical routines included running multiple rounds on the ground, catch-ball, dodgeball, and hurdle jumping. Activities such as cone racing, tug of war, and sandpit play added excitement while developing coordination, concentration, and observation skills.

The children also enjoyed a field trip to Gandipet, where they played group games like Ice Water and Out-Out. As part of their farming activity, they sowed Bhindi (okra) seeds and took responsibility for watering them regularly.

In learning sessions, children practiced number formation from 1-20 using stones, counting sticks, and simple addition with paper balls. Language activities included tracing alphabets and playful word games, while art sessions entailed paper crowns, stem painting, tile pattern painting, and crafting a paper Shiva Lingam.



This month was about steady growth and creative exploration for **Courage**. In Mathematics, the children strengthened their understanding of place value – working with 100s, 10s and 1s – while practising mental addition and subtraction, identifying patterns, and solving missing number exercises.

Language sessions focused on reading short sentences aloud daily and writing them down, gently improving fluency and handwriting skills. Storytime remained a cherished ritual, and as a special group exercise, the children built a story together – one sentence at a time – resulting in a beautifully woven tale that sparked imagination and collective creativity.

The month was also rich with artistic expression. The children enjoyed colouring intricate mandala designs, engaging in paper crafts, and completing a cardboard weaving project using wool to create their own handcrafted pouches.



February balanced practical learning and meaningful integration for **Aspiration**. In English, the children deepened their understanding of simple present and simple past tenses, distinguishing between regular and irregular verbs. Reading comprehension and dictation strengthened listening and writing skills, while a lively spelling game featuring silent letters added a playful challenge.

Mathematics focused on measurements of capacity and weight. Using measuring cups, students explored real-life applications by calculating daily milk consumption and even preparing a birthday budget to understand pricing, quantity, and total expenditure.

The month's project centred on "Community Helpers," encouraging discussions on equality of work and the value of living in community. Through role-play, storytelling ("Saving the Old Apple Tree"), and the vegetable vendor game integrating weights and pricing, learning became experiential. Craft sessions included basket weaving and origami, while Tamil and Telugu learners progressed to forming one-, two-, and three-letter words.



it was a month of inquiry, creativity, and experiential learning for **Gratitude**. In their continued exploration of the Solar System, students studied the planets in depth and brought their understanding to life by creating a detailed pop-up model featuring planets, the Moon, satellites, a supernova, and an eclipse. Each child embodied a planet, joyfully expressing their identities – “I’m wearing red because I am Mars,” or “You must run faster, you are Mercury!” – blending imagination with scientific learning.

Through the farming project, students nurtured their farm beds with daily care and keen observation, celebrating the sprouting of *methi*, radish, and coriander. Discussions on water sources and conservation culminated in creating a small pond model.

In Mathematics, Geometry was introduced through polygons identified in everyday surroundings, while Telugu sessions included designing a yearly calendar and plant name boards, enriching both language skills and creative expression.



February was a vibrant and creative month for Humility. The children began with a theatrical performance from the great epic, The Mahabharata, captivating the audience with their expressive storytelling. Artistic exploration continued through eco-printing, where dried leaves and flowers were used to create unique paintings and nameplates. Students also experimented with canvas painting and learned to knit baskets using plastic wires.

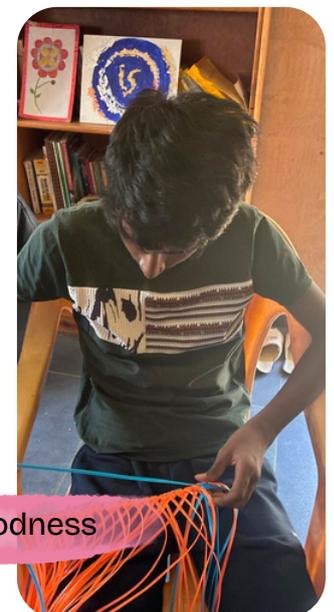
As part of their ongoing learning projects, the group completed jewellery pieces for the Indus Valley Civilization project and began constructing a miniature model of the ancient settlement. The celebration of Mother’s birthday was another special moment, as children created thoughtful charts to honour her life and teachings.

Science lessons focused on plant study through leaf collection, flower dissection, and identifying venation, while Mathematics explored measurement, area, and perimeter through hands-on activities and reflective assessments.

It was a month of integration for **Goodness**— where creativity, physicality, and conceptual understanding met seamlessly .

In Mathematics, the children explored integers, factors, and area, expressing their learning through art-based displays. They also constructed miniature cubes and cuboids to visually represent algebraic expansions, deepening their grasp of abstract concepts through hands-on engagement. Pattern-making in grids further strengthened logical thinking and design awareness.

Craft sessions introduced basket weaving with plastic wires, focusing on repetitive patterns and patience in process. Students also completed striking abstract artworks using coloured foil papers. Their study of the Mahabharata continued with deeper readings, alongside detailed life-sized Warli art depictions of scenes from Kurukshetra. With access to a new long-jump space, physical training became a daily pursuit, bringing balance between intellectual exploration and embodied movement.



## Invitations to notice



The average attention span has dropped from  
~12 seconds (2000) to ~8 seconds today.

Source: Microsoft Canada Attention Study

What are we becoming when we can no longer attend?

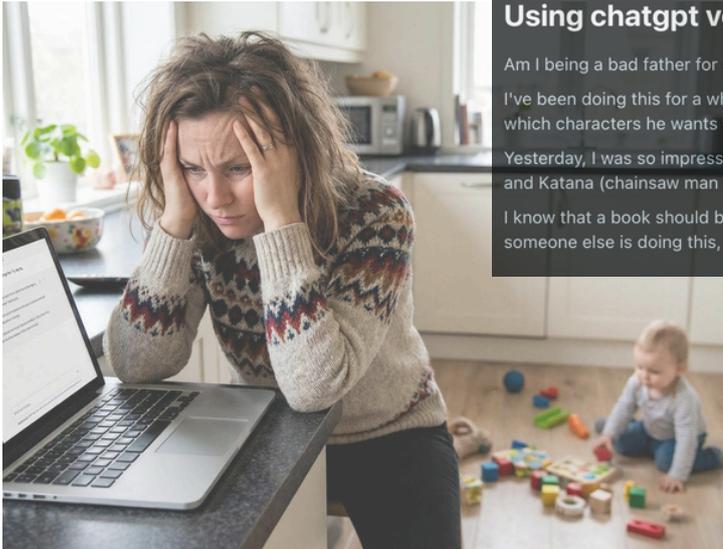
Attention—a state of being *sthita* (*not moving*) in the mind and body—  
What future awaits us if it cannot endure even for eight seconds?

## Parents Using ChatGPT to Rear Their Children

Would you trust an AI chatbot with your children?

By **Sharon Adario** / Published **Nov 16, 2025 9:43 AM EST**

source credit: <https://futurism.com/artificial-intelligence/parents-chatgpt-rear-children>



Parenthood and parenting are contrasting.

While parenthood could be socially or culturally nudged, parenting remains a conscious choice. They are not analogous.

Parenting has a lot to do with growth and evolution; it is natural. It is to know the child in his or her complexities; it is to be fully awakened to the moment, to be present, to 'see' the child growing right in front of your 'eyes'. It is choosing to look at your child as an individual with his or her own unique destiny, his or her unique truth of being; choosing to step aside and allow another life and being to blossom into its fullness. And these are not easy choices to make. The responsibility of nurturing and bringing up a child seems enormous.

The life that we live today, with our priorities, is making it profoundly challenging for 'parenting to survive', let alone 'parenting for evolution and growth'.

Parenting to survive means how do I take care of the present moment challenges, which may translate to the child being cranky, being obdurate, not listening, health issues, and so on. While my struggle as a parent is to take care of the 'immediate situation', I find no time and space to think about 'parenting for evolution and growth' - which is concerned with how does the child become the next version of himself or herself. These challenges for survival have opened our societies to placating young children by hooking them to one screen or the other, one activity to the other, one class or the other.

What must parents do  
to move from  
'parenting for survival'  
to 'parenting for  
evolution and  
growth'?  
Think.

Editor

# The Integral Vocabulary



## Observation

**ob·ser·va·tion**

*Noun*

The ability to notice details through all the six senses with full concentration and interest.

## A Parable



Shoichi was a one-eyed teacher of Zen, sparkling with enlightenment.

He taught his disciples in Tofuku Temple.

Day and night the whole temple stood in silence.

There was no sound at all.

Even the reciting of sutras was abolished by the teacher.

His pupils had nothing to do but meditate.

When the master passed away, an old neighbor heard the ringing of bells and  
the recitation of sutras.

Then she knew Shoichi had gone.



# Centre for Integral Learning

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CFIL's Expressions:



The  
Integral School



The  
Integral Commune



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