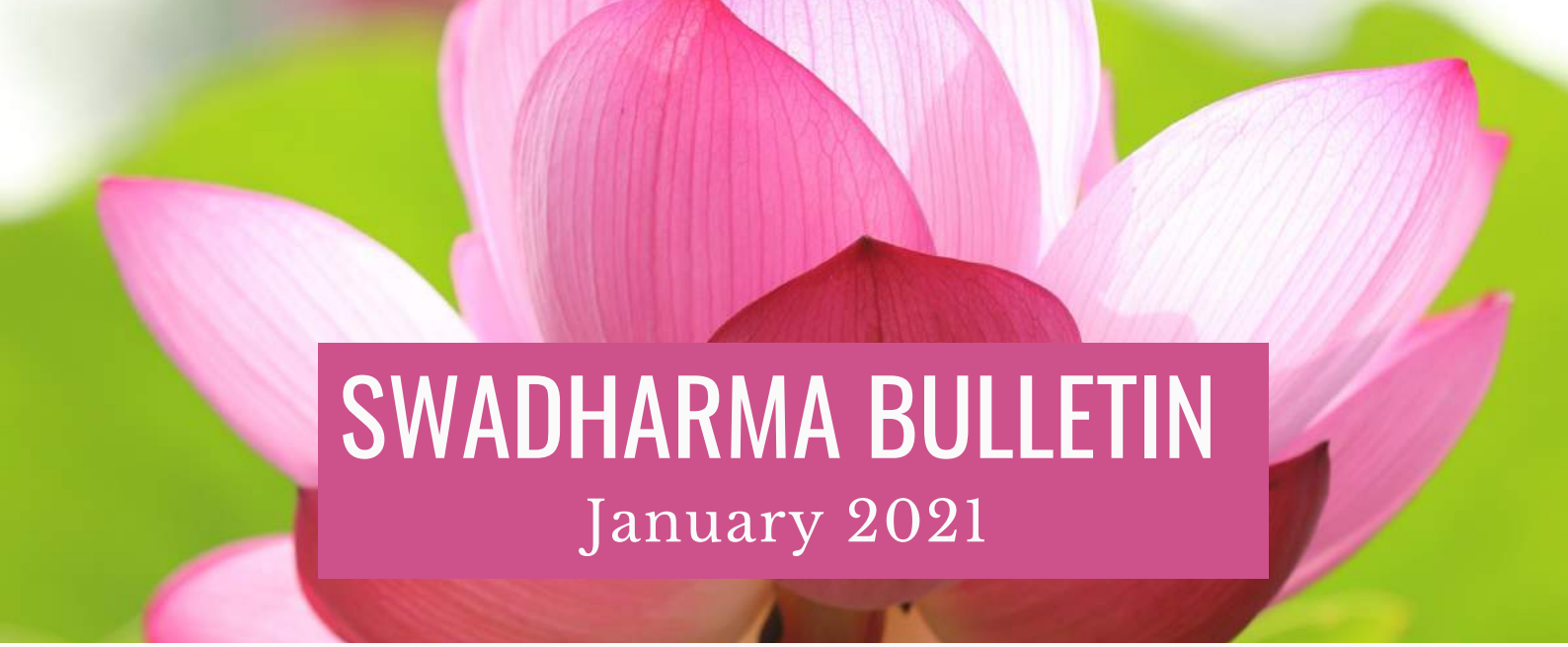
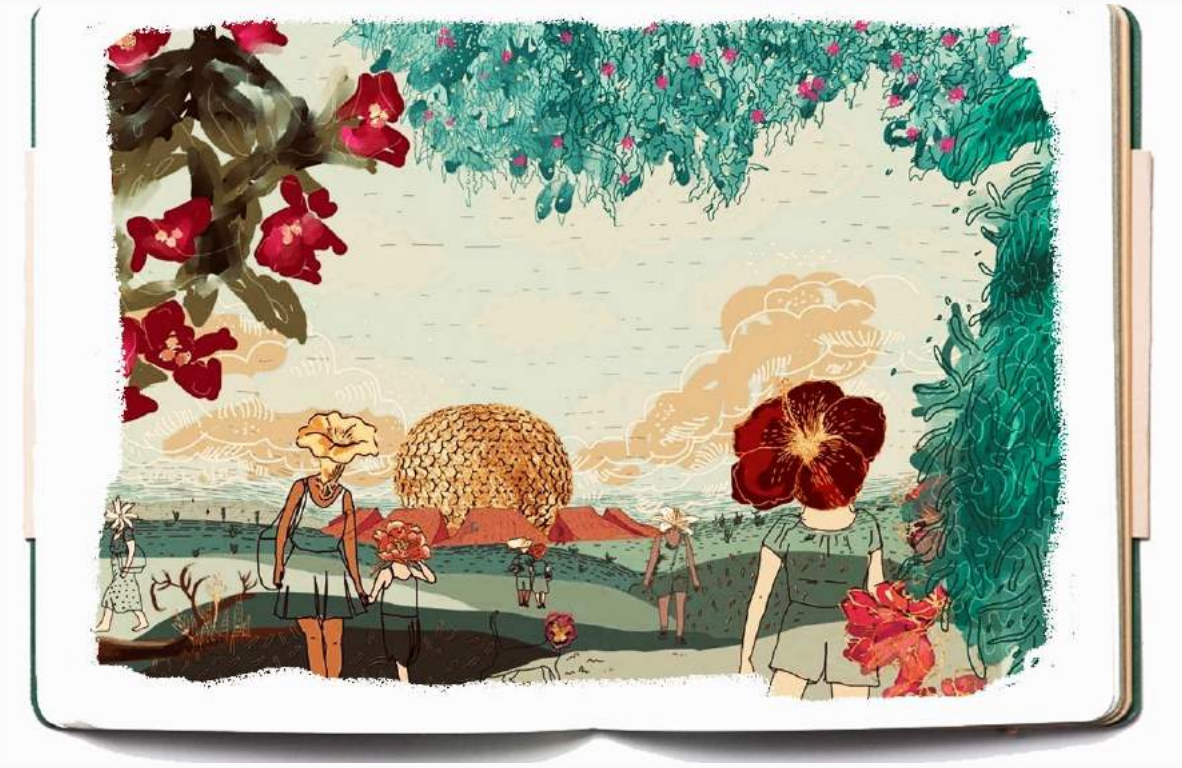


SWADHARMA BULLETIN

January 2021

FLOWERING SOULS



Here's a fantastic illustration by Nandita Sharma of a place that is dear to all our hearts

SEARCHING FOR SUNSHINE BY ISHITA

These images are part of a larger body of ongoing work called Searching For Sunshine. I am curious about people's relationship with plants and the green spaces that surround them. I interviewed people in the New York City area (which is where I live right now) who work with plants—gardeners, botanists, florists, artists, scientists—and asked them about their experiences working with the natural world and why it makes them happy.

During the course of this project, I was constantly observing my own relationship with nature and I happened to read a book by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, titled 'Metamorphosis of Plants'. It is a book about the science of growth within plants and it often reads like poetry.

"Nature expresses itself from all quarters and in all directions as it goes about its work of creation. The integrity and rising intensity of the inner impulse, the creativity which sometimes issues in complexity of form, far beyond the need of mere survival gives natural things a degree of autonomy and a measure of intrinsic value."

"Nature is destined not for particular ends but rather for the internal satisfaction of wholeness."

As an artist, this writing really resonated with me. The urge to create and explore is beyond sustenance, it fulfils something, somewhere deep inside and outside, that can't be quantified. As I grow and experiment with my own art practise, I find so much joy in looking for meaning, and life advice from the natural world. Not everything is a means to end, not everything must fall in the category of sense and logic, some things, ideas and actions exist just to be, and there is beauty in that.

RUMINGS : ABHA'S PODCAST ON VULNERABILITY

'Rumings' as we call our podcast was just an idea a couple of friends (Namita Parikh, Simone Samuel) and I had last year. It is very much a product of all the conversations we had about what we were observing, going through and also about things that mattered to us. We realised over time a lot of it had to do with mental health and wellbeing. We started it on the first Sunday of January and will continue this ritual.

My micro-project during the winter school was to be able to put offering and myself out there and to face my fears, self- doubts around it along the way. I made the podcast a part of the micro- project towards the end. We began with what Vulnerability means for us and its significance. I hope you like what you listen to.

Find the latest episode of the podcast here.
And follow Rumings on Instagram.

YEAR 2020: A BLESSING IN DISGUISE BY STANLY

Thank you.

I can only start by saying thank you for the year 2020.

Nothing has changed when the clock ticked 12 O'Clock.

Its the same life, life doesn't keep a clock or a calendar.

This year has taught some lessons.

Who are the people that I craved to meet and did meet despite all the risk of this pandemic.

What are the things I did while I had so many excuses to not do. and things I didn't do which I used to do out of obligation.

I felt the collective consciousness alive in me for a time. But that got numbed by the over stimulus of news.

I spent time with my loved ones more than any other year.

I took a lot of time to sit and to ask myself wonderful questions.

To grow and learn.

This year showed how the systems we have created for us have failed and how we need a new paradigm which is for our highest good.

We all needed a wake up call, 2020 was that alarm that ring while we all were quite comfortable asleep.

The year was tough... So am I....

I realized it was a blessing in disguise...

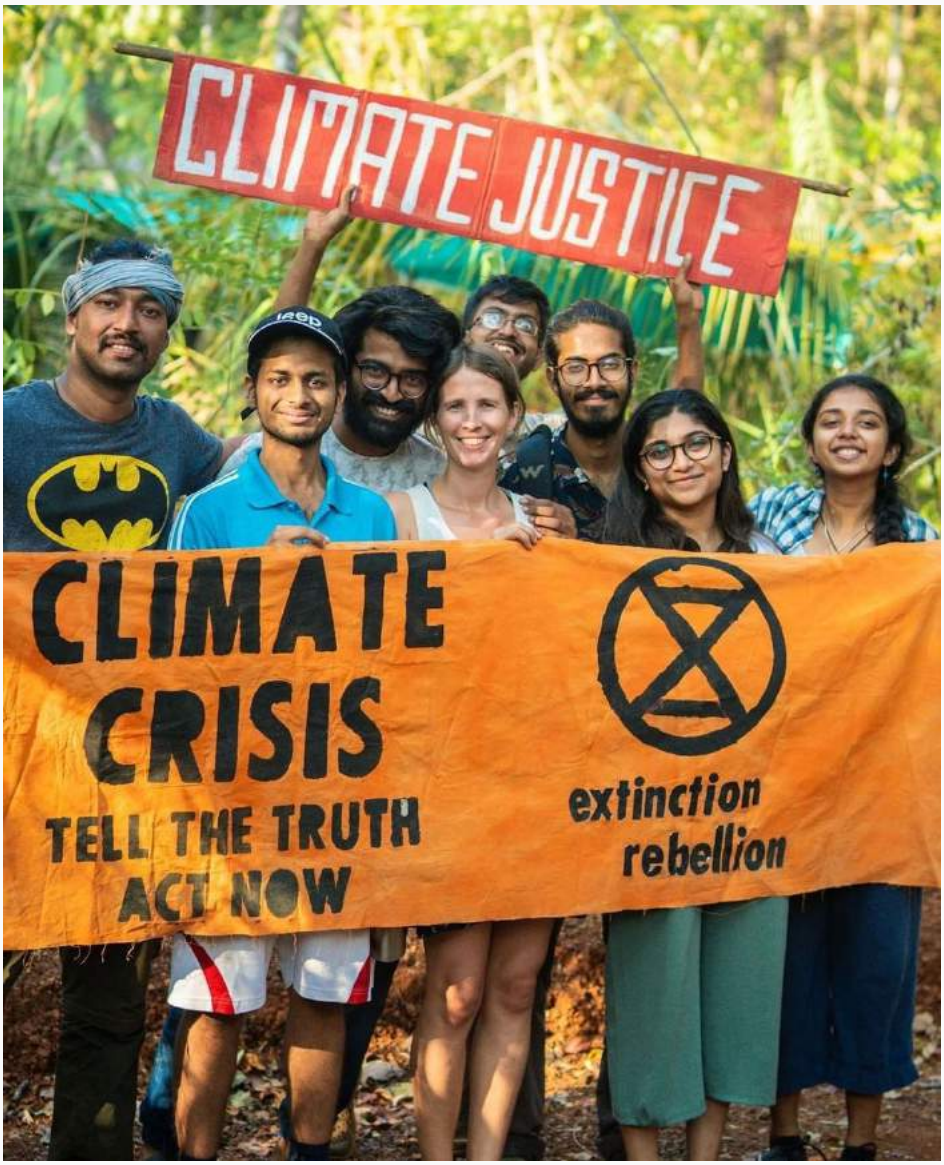
METAPHYSICS OF MONEY BY MANOJ

Recently our dear Manoj gave a talk titled "Metaphysics of Money" hosted by AURO University, Surat. Covering a wide range of topics related to money, Manoj gives us the keys to transcend the fear of money and instead use it as a force to joyfully fulfil our purpose.

You don't want to skip this one. Watch it here

ISHAN IS JOINING A MASTER'S PROGRAMME IN ENGAGED ECOLOGY AT SCHUMACHER COLLEGE

Our very own sustainability champion Ishan, Swadharma alumni from batch 2 has decided to pursue an MA - Engaged Ecology programme at Schumacher College. Ishan occasionally works with Extinction Rebellion and more recently with Degrowth.info. We did a short interview with him to find out more about the programme and his academic pursuit.



We can see Ishan (wearing a cap) in action in this picture.

Read the full Interview in the blog post here

SVADHYAYA 3.0

Svādhyāya 3.0 applications are now open! Svadhyaya is a 8 week learning journey for seekers of Integral Knowledge, who wish to embark on an inner adventure through the foundations of Integral Yoga Psychology in light of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother.

Apply now at svadhyaya.auroville.org

THE THEME OF ASPIRATION

The Integral Education Portal newsletter series was launched on August 15. The newsletter is for all lifelong learners of Integral Education. It has a theme of the month on which we send biweekly newsletters. Newsletters consist of videos, practices, quotes and short write-ups. The theme of December was Aspiration. Below is a short text from one of the newsletters:

Dear one,

What do you aspire for?

Finding and following one's aspiration is an extremely rewarding process. Even the simplest or most mundane activities, when approached from the space of aspiration, can bring immense joy while doing the activities. One need not depend on or wait for completion or success (in terms of money or fame) to experience the joy of aspiration.

Aspiration empowers a person by giving the self-born will to progress on what they must do. By focusing on and consciously holding an aspiration, one can get some direction or wisdom on what should be done.

A steady and sincere aspiration has the potential to dissolve fear of not being able to achieve something.

To read further, you can have a look at the Aspiration newsletters here: https://ie.auroville.org/tag/newsletter/. Here is a video on "Why Aspiration Matters?" - that was a part of one of the newsletters and put together by Dr Sampadananda Mishra and Surya :).

If you have not subscribed, subscribe at https://ie.auroville.org/#subscribe

COACHING CIRCLE: A NEW BEGINNING

A beautiful beginning manifested with the Swadharma Winter school 2020 that concluded in December. What began as an experiment as part of the winter school that also witnessed the first instance of the natural coming together of the two sister courses' alumni : Swadharma and Svadhyaya. The coaching circle that took birth in December birthed a very cozy community of coaches who could hold space for each other and facilitate the blooming and growth of each co-traveller in the community.

Keeping this intent going, the first coaching circle was kicked off on 15th of January 2021 with a group of 12 participants holding each other to progress in their own paths. The community witnessed a plethora of colour, creativity and blossoming love for the self where each one has picked up micro-practices and micro-projects by adding their own unique individual flavours.

From aspiring for smiling more to bringing in more discipline in life, from following a Satvik diet to letting the inner child free to the rhythm - each of these inspiring all the others and eventually also percolating in various ways to a few other practices in many ways :)

It is really humbling and inspiring to witness how each one is taking a baby step ahead, talking himself or herself to keep moving forward, battling various things every single day and yet coming out victorious through sincere perseverance and will.

Sharing some glimpses of the deeply enriching journey that is currently in progress:In case you are interested in being a part of the same, do look out for the next circle details over mail!

REFLECTIONS ON SWADHARMA WINTER SCHOOL

Coming together for Swadharma Winter School as a support group was a truly soul enriching journey. Here is a video of some of the participants reflecting on their learnings ❤

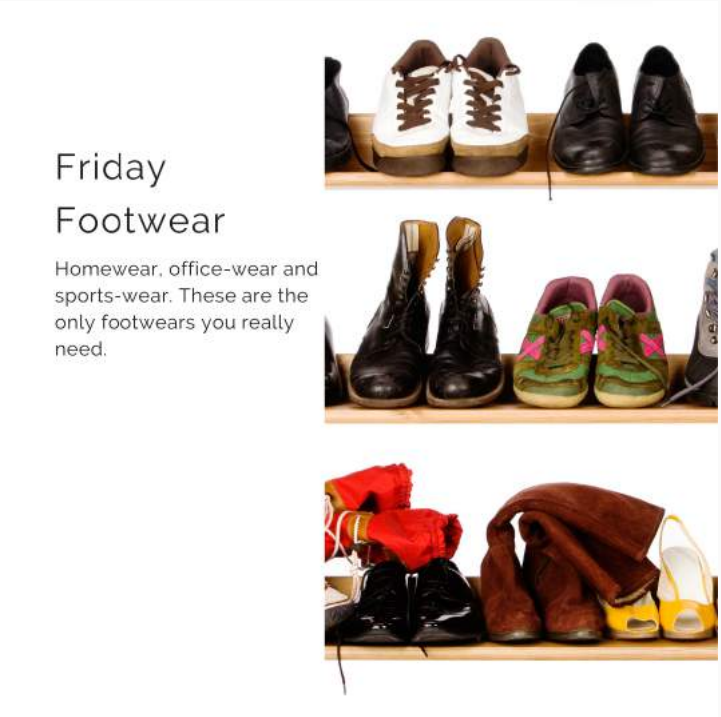
Winter School consisted of micro-practices/micro-projects and coaching circles that helped us support one other as each one took small yet giant steps towards their Swadharma

PRACTICE OF THE MONTH

Begin the new year with **Decluttering Your Spaces**, creating a way for new energy to pour in.

PRACTICE OF THE MONTH

Begin the new year with Decluttering Your Spaces, creating a way for new energy to pour in.



SHARE YOUR JOURNEY WITH US!

Share with the tribe

We invite you to share with us **Your Learning Journey**, for the Swadharma Blog. Be it your experiences, musings, practices, or breakthroughs, we would love to feature your story. You can share, in the form of articles, poems, photographs, music, art-work, etc whatever you feel is the best way for you to express. General word limit is 500 words. **Share from your heart!**

We would also love to know about your **Initiatives** and the milestones in your journey. Whether it is a new project, website, collaborations, new experiments, ventures or an initiative, share with your tribe.

Write to: swadharmablog@auroville.org.in

Thank you! Swadharma Blog Team