

The Restoration of Wholeness

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Abstract: Wholeness is an innate state, a quality which is lost with our exposure to the world. Our life is spent in efforts to restore the state of wholeness in us. The world takes from us our tranquility and balance. Yet it is only from this giving of us that we can recover our lost self. That which takes also gives.

Integration is a process which takes place in time and space. It is a developmental experience that admits of degrees, failures and regenerations. The integral self is not a finished perfect product. The self is born in nature and to nature. As such, it can mature, shine and bring itself to fruition only through trials and tribulations. Without the loss of wholeness we would never even have a vision of what constitutes wholeness; nor would we aspire after its retrieval. Creation is an evolutionary process which travels a path with many perils and also rewards. The journey to integration is difficult when we separate ourselves from our fellow humans and other forms of life or see ourselves as different from the soil and air and water that make us.

Once we see ourselves in all that surrounds us and recognize them in ourselves uniting is not hard any longer. When we unite with the world we achieve a united, harmonious, whole self within as well.

Key Words: Integral Philosophy, Integration, Wholeness

Introduction

Integralism, as I see it, is a restoration of wholeness. It is a process, never a finished product. At birth, our wholeness is shattered. Yet the inner being retains its vision of wholeness, a sense of completion and peace that comes with it. Then begins the arduous journey that we call life, which is an unceasing attempt to restore to itself the wholeness that is lost.

To be born is to be exposed; exposed to the elements, exposed to rejection, to abandonment, to needs that must be attended to. Thus it is that the baby howls when it exits the mother's womb. The world invades it. The parents rush to give it what it is crying for, to restore to it the divine peace of satisfaction. They rock it to sleep, give it the nectar of milk that will quieten it, are overjoyed to see that innocent smile on its sweet face for the first time. They believe they have given the baby back its wholeness.

Two things have happened when this has taken place. True, the baby has been made to feel at peace with itself. Its face is blissful. But in the process of restoring the baby's wholeness, the

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parents have had to undergo the loss of their wholeness. Sleepless nights, unending feeding and changing of diapers, hardly any time to cook or grab a meal or take a shower, the piling up of dishes in the sink and filth on the floor, the fear of getting late at work, tension between husband and wife have taken a toll on father and mother. They are distraught. They have taken a chunk out of themselves and given it to the baby in order to arrive there where the baby has been restored to wholeness.

The disintegrated parents know that the baby's contentment is only temporary. They know that this search for wholeness will be a life-long process. Each time their child experiences loss of wholeness their own being will be struck and mutilated. Yet they know that wholeness can still be sought and restored back. They also know that they themselves will never be whole until their child is whole. So they develop strategies to repair the self, of those they love and their own selves. Those who do not have a strategy are wiped out by the strict Darwinian principle of struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest.

Integralism is such a strategy. It tries to ensure the preservation of the species. The system we are born with and into, our physical, mental and social apparatus and the environment in which they function, work as wholes do. A whole is made up of parts that must work in codependence to keep the whole in a viable and optimal condition. Any severing of the whole into disconnected parts will at once make it less survivable. In a competitive nature, the disabled system will succumb to further disintegration and dysfunction unless healing has restored it to the state of wholeness. A dismembered leg does not serve the purpose of running, walking or helping us to stand any more. If we replace it with an artificial leg, some wholeness is restored to the body, but if there is a need to run, the one with the artificial leg is more likely to meet an unkindly fate. Unless of course, there is help from a soul that recognizes the hapless one as a kin, perceives the basic bond between lives, and gives the disabled member assistance.

This sense of oneself as a unified whole made up of several members who belong together, the urgency to preserve it as such, the felt loyalty and the obligation to maintain the unit, observable even amongst roaches and ants, is programmed into our system. The gestures it generates are social behaviors which are geared towards preservation. Additionally, the eco-systems which constitute our environment in nature also function as wholes. Loss of balance in the environmental order makes our survival a questionable issue. Floods and cyclones are phenomena we must learn to work around until nature around us has regained a new transformed wholeness. As nature transforms, the beings it sustains undergo transformation. An awareness of the essential connectivity of all things that are, however rudimentary, is conducive to survival. It gives birth to traits like endurance, patience, hope, helpfulness. All of these qualities tend to promote continuation, regeneration and emergence of newer mutually supportive integral wholes. To abandon the sense of wholeness is to perish. Turmoil and disruption are meaningful only if they are seen as tools to bring in greater harmony. In the end, the team spirit assures a healthy and prosperous existence. It is common knowledge that self-expansion starts to occur from very early stages in our life.

We identify ourselves with our body, our room environment, our family, our schools, our towns, nations, the world and even the rest of the animate and inanimate world. We build bonds with the animals and have them as pets. We form associations with our homes, cars, furniture,

books, kitchenware, clothes etc. They can grow to be like companions to us. We leave, but they stay on. We see a relative permanence in them. Slowly this process of self-expansion can envelope the whole world. We can be trained to see the rest of humankind as our brothers and sisters, be hurt by their suffering, outraged by their dehumanization, to take pride in their accomplishments. When many or most of us have achieved this stage, it is reasonable to hope that world peace is not far away. The aspiration to unite and be whole once again can be nurtured to attain this stage.

The aspiration to unify presupposes the preexistence of wholeness and peace. Strife and unrest signal a loss to us. Hence it is that we see the creator, who precedes creation, as whole, peaceful. The process of creation disrupts the peace but at the same time unleashes the pursuit of recovery of wholeness and peace. Many religions play with the idea of the original One becoming two and then engaging in the game of multiplication as being of the essence of Nature.

This has been applied not just towards earthly forms, but towards divinity as well, as in the Hindu concept of *ardhanaariswar* according to which the one spirit divided itself into male and female deities and together they form a whole. They always coexist. The whole continues to be a value even though the bifurcation is considered a necessary step for multiplication. In spite of variety adding spice to creation, the memory of the original unity remains a constant. Indeed we are born with the capacity to perceive objects as wholes. The skill gets better and better as we grow. When we see a face, we do not see the eyes, nose, the ears, the head separately, but the whole face. The gestalt is embedded in our perceptive process. When our power to hold on to the whole is lost we lapse into a pathological condition and await healing.

On a larger scale, wholeness is achieved when we are able to see ourselves in others and the others in us. We are one with the waters, the hills, the meadows, the birds and all other creatures when we see them in ourselves, when we realize our environment nourishes us and is as precious as family. We are also able to see ourselves in them when we see them subject to the same laws of nature as we are: coming into being, growing and eroding, transforming into many shapes and existents. When we reflect on that, we are protective of nature. When we are able to see ourselves in all that is, there is no escape from feeling friendship and compassion for all. This inspires us to give of us to them in the same way that parents deplete themselves to fill the child's cup. There is a cost involved. Sacrifices have to be made. But in the end, restoring the whole in others always makes us whole again.

It is from this perspective that it is possible to say that no life has ever been given in vain and no injustice has ever been borne fruitlessly. It is in this sense that we can believe that Christ died on the cross an unfair death so that we could be in heaven. It is in this sense that Mahadeva is Nilkantha or blue in throat as he drank all poison so humankind could be spared its pangs. It is in this sense that the Lord Buddha was reborn numerous times so he could save suffering lives.

Wholeness cannot be bottled up but must be shared and the process of sharing involves giving, losing, creating and regaining of further wholeness, further spreading of well-being. Does this rise and fall of wellness take away from the value of the integral state of mind? The lack of finality is a negativity only if we see the unchangeable as the supreme value. The eternal, the

permanent has always had an attraction for us. But the permanent in itself really has no value. What would come of us if war, hatred, misperceptions were to become permanent?

Without change there would be no reform, no progress. Unity, wholeness, an integral self are unstable quantities, rendered so by the inherent weight of their qualities in interaction with each other. The mantra of integralism has a dynamic quality within it. It is never petrified. Even after the flesh and bone that housed the integral spirit find eternal Nirvana in the death of its earthly vessel, their words continue to generate new actions, create new turmoil and churn the elements of creation in the path of producing more integral selves.

Pain is real. Disorder is real. To deny that is to dishonor those who have experienced it. But the bleakness of failure can be transformed into a positive when we are able to see through the eyes of the pained and speak through the mouths of the tortured and promise betterment of conditions. Suffering can only be a means to an end, never an end in itself. To the extent that we function as but parts of a whole we will suffer and create more suffering. It is possible, however, to rise above the partitioned self. It requires work and often assistance and support from stronger selves. The Bhagavad Geeta's yogic self which remains imperturbable in weal and woe alike is of no value unless it can be put to use to raise more of its kind. If the yogic self is locked up in isolation to maintain its serenity, then its value is limited to itself. Either it must come out of its shell to actively distribute itself amongst others in need of it or it must allow others to come to it to draw from its radiating peace. Either way, the yogic self will have to lose some to give some and add to the value of life.

Philosophers Aurobindo Ghosh and Haridas Chaudhuri had made this issue to be a central part of their integral philosophies. Both philosophers had stressed that being contained within it becoming as an inherent mode. What is, tends to become all that it could be. The drive to self-realization pushes being forward and makes it seek to manifest all the possibilities its being harbors within itself. The coming into being of all existents appears like a manifestation of a great spirit moving forward to birth its infinite possibilities in infinite shapes and forms. At no stage can we say that the emergence of new possibilities has died, that fountainhead of newer vistas has exhausted itself. Thus there is always hope for the future to open up fresh paths, newer landscapes. We may usher into ourselves the wholeness that we sought to embrace but we do not get to make it a permanent resting place. We draw upon it, make it a part of our being and then move on to put our strength to work where it is needed. Transcending conflict and attaining wholeness is something we carry with us for future applications. As Chaudhuri aptly pointed out, transcendence itself must be transcended and the process of self-expansion is boundless.

The more we expand ourselves, the greater is the happiness as the hatred and hostility diminish in the same proportion as the increase in the feeling of affinity and compassion. With each step of self-expansion our being is transformed as it has merged with a new being. Only the principle of inclusion can stop collision in a world that is en route to endless multiplication. The expanding whole, if it is based on perceived kinship, sooner or later generates mutual friendship and allows existents to coexist within the new system. The expanding whole provides a more spacious platform to the beings concerned to consider all the players involved in the field and allow for exchange of their perceptions of ways to be in order to create an environment that is safer, more harmonious. Aurobindo Ghosh's Purna (Integral) Yoga had this rare vision as its

soul: that after I am a whole within, united in my body, mind and spirit, I remain in it and absorb it in myself and then descend again into the moving stream of Nature with my heightened strength to contribute as needed. United within and united without, integral within and integrated with the fellow existents is the core of Aurobindo and Chaudhuri's theory and practice of integral philosophy.

In this context it is important to remember three dimensions of all becoming:

Firstly, all change happens in the medium of time. The maturation of a seed to spring forth newness out of itself can only occur in time. Time is programmed into the being of all animate and inanimate objects, so much so that a seed can germinate even in the absence of several other environmental conditions necessary for a normal planting, as in beans and bulbs sending off shoots in early spring even as they sit on our kitchen shelves, drawers and even refrigerators, just because it was that particular time of the year. In inanimate nature, passage of time is recorded in events that take place cyclically, events that must occur simply because a certain period of time has gone by leading to certain formations or positions of earthly and other celestial bodies. Space and Time are partners entangled in the game of all becoming.

Secondly, since all change happens in time, degrees and steps are important marks in all becoming. Changes happen slowly, sometimes imperceptibly. This is of the essence of evolution. Even the cases we designate as emergents and mutants, their appearance may appear to be sudden leaps into creation, as unpredictable, as chance, but in reality they have causes of their own that lead to them. Their suddenness and unpredictability is a name for our own ignorance tied to our contemporary times and the specific spaces we inhabit. With the crossing of our specific time-space boundaries, we gain access to newer positions which grant us access to newer visions which in turn make possible newer understandings. If an expanding whole seems to be falling apart and the systems contained within it appear to be irreconcilable, may be in time they will slowly, by degrees, evolve a system which will allow for their integration, creating a habitat where several systems can function together. The possibilities are endless and so is the scope for hope. An individual's job is to keep hope alive and actively participate in the process of making the world a better place to be.

Thirdly, what are we to make of the merciless law of nature that life can survive only on life? Even if we turn to vegetarianism, we are plucking leaves and fruits off of living plants and depriving the young ones of cows and goats of their rights to mother's milk. Even the dry leaves on the ground serve some purpose in nature other than those of the human beings. How are we to defend the taking of antibiotics and the use of bleach to kill in our war on the deadly viruses? Are there some units that we cannot include in our self-expansion process? Here again, I think we ought to apply the principles of time and degrees. In each such crisis, we can hope that in future, either our own system or that of the hostile system will evolve features and forms that will render us less and less hostile to each other, that we will grow immune to the adverse effects we have on each other. After all, who can set the limits to the possibilities?

A study of integral yoga must take note of the significant difference between the yoga of Patanjali (Bryant, 2009) and that of Aurobindo (1999, 2005) and Chaudhuri (1965, 1977). In the Yoga Sūtras Patanjali had defined yoga as *citta vritt nirodha* (sūtra 1.2), which roughly translates

as the stopping of the natural propensities of the mind or building a dam to withstand the advance of the mind's natural inclinations. This prescription shows *vritti* in a negative light whereas linguistically and historically it is not so. *Vritti* has a secular and a positive connotation. It means the natural qualities or character of any being, those which enable the object to survive. The *vritti* of a being is its dharma, that which sustains the being or the pursuit of which makes the being survivable, makes it feel fulfilled. It is somewhat similar to what Plato understood by the concept of "function", that species specific function by performing which alone a member of that species could be contented and happy.

Like barking in the case of a dog. *Vritti* thus has a positive import. *Vritti* is also understood to mean livelihood which is essential for survival. A monthly pension is also designated a *vritti*. *Chhatravritti* means scholarship, that which enables a student to survive and excel. The mantra for worship of the mother goddess specifically says: *Ya Devi sarvabhuteshu vritti rupen samsthita namastasyai namastasyai namastasyai namo namoh* (Our salutations to the Devi who is instilled in each creature as its way to live, Devi Mahatmya, Chandi, Devimantra (stotra 21). *Vritti* is what mother nature has equipped us with for survival in the struggle for existence. To exercise *nirodha* or preventive control against *vritti* would be to cripple the being. It would be an act of aggression against mother nature. Derivatively, *Vrita* is understood to mean someone who has been accepted as an honorable person. *Vriti* means *varana* or welcoming. It further means that which surrounds a being to protect it, like a fence or the outer skin of a flower. *Vritta* means circular or a mandala. *Vrittastha* means *prakitistha* or encircled, safely lodged in one's own nature and normal, natural. To be drunk or be grief-stricken would be to be *aprakitistha* or not acting normally as the person has been confused or dislodged from the natural self.

Thus Patanjali's definition of yoga as *cittavrittinirodha* takes the shunning of nature as its point of its departure. Yoga is seen as a relentless and uninterrupted long practice that cultivates *vairagya* (detachment) and *vitrishna* (cessation of longing, recoil, a natural abhorrence or loathing) towards our natural propensities. *Vairagya* or dispassion/detachment is defined as *drishita* (seen)-*anushravika* (heard) *vishaya* (objects) *vitrishnasya* (repugnance) *vashikara* (taming, subduing) *samjna* (definition) *vairagyam* (dispassion, detachment) (sutra 1.15). It aims at rooting out the nature-given nature and replacing it with a being that we have made to be our second nature. We are ordered to stay in this new self, be grounded in it. From *Vritti* (nature) via *abhyasa* (practice of) *vairagyam* (detachment) to *savija samadhi* (meditative stage still pregnant with seeds or samskaras or imprints of nature) to *nirvicara* (void of discrimination, non-dual, devoid of multiplicity or diversity, sterile oneness) *adhyatma* (spirituality) *prasadah* (taste of divinity) is the route of Patanjali's yoga (Sutra 1.47). For him, truth and wisdom lie only here: *Ritam* (truth) *bhara* (filled) *tatra* (there) *prajna* (wisdom) (Sutra 1.48).

By contrast, integral yoga seeks not to eliminate nature from its path of integration. It is inclusive of the earthly and the sensory world that is Nature, of *Maya* (illusion) and *Leela* (play) as divine forces at play in creation. It thinks of conflict, pain and turmoil as essential ingredients in the process of transformation of being. It is not a journey towards a non-dual, distinction-less self-sameness but it is set upon achieving unity in the middle of diversity. It finds wholeness to be the original, natural state of being and aims at restoring the balance whenever it is off. It treats turbulence as a natural, necessary condition of the process of self-development and hence it treats every conflict, every error with care, compassion and reverence as a stage in the self-

manifestation of the spirit of Nature. It is more in tune with the twenty eight stotras of the Devi Mantra in Devi Mahatmya which enumerate all of the following (stotras 7 to 26) as a seat of the Devi:

Table 1: Twenty Eight Stotras of the Devi Mantra

<i>cetana</i> or consciousness	<i>buddhi</i> or the intellect	<i>nidra</i> or sleep/rest
<i>kshudha</i> or hunger	<i>chhaya</i> or shade	<i>shakti</i> or strength
<i>trishna</i> or thirst, craving	<i>khshanti</i> or forgiveness	<i>jati</i> or multiple species
<i>lajja</i> or modesty	<i>shanti</i> or peace	<i>shraddha</i> or reverence
<i>kanti</i> or form	<i>Lakshmi</i> or grace, prosperity, wealth	<i>vritti</i> or livelihood, dharma
<i>smriti</i> or past impressions, memory	<i>daya</i> or compassion	<i>tushti</i> or contentment
<i>matri</i> or the mother	<i>bhranti</i> or error, confusion, lost, disoriented	

In the end the mantra celebrates the Devi as residing in all of our senses (*indriyanam adhisthatri*) in the form of ever-present consciousness (*citirupen*). The Devi Mantra is recited in the Durga Puja which is an inseparable part of the Bengali Hindu tradition. Both Aurobindo and Chaudhuri were sons of Bengal. No wonder they carried within the core of their being the reverence for Nature.

Searching the roots of the word ‘integral’ takes us back to the sheepherder days of Europe and the times of the emergence of the tango dance. The opposite of integrate is often said to be segregate, which means to set apart from the flock. Sheep are gregarious animals; they tend to live in flocks, which are integrated wholes. Greg (stem of Latin grex) means flock. So when a sheep is lost, it is segregated, torn apart from its flock. The sheepherder tries to reunite it to its flock. It was whole to begin with, then it loses its wholeness and the task ahead is to restore it to its wholeness.

A study of the history of tango reveals some thought processes that can be of interest to students of integral philosophy (Denniston, 2007). In Spanish *tener* and *tengo* mean to have and to hold in one’s hands, the Latin being *teneo*. *Tangere* means to touch. “*Noli me tangere*”, meaning “Touch me not”, are the famous words ascribed to Jesus as being said by him to Mary Magdalene when she recognized him after resurrection and proceeded to touch him. Many have felt that there is something forbidding about touching. Touching may be seen as violating privacy, as going against conservation and preservation, as a denial of one’s basic right to be left alone. The phrase ‘*Noli Me Tangere*’ subsequently was borrowed by the notable Filipino nationalist author Jose Rizal as the title of his novel *Noli Me Tangere* (Rizal, 2006) in which he protested the Spanish colonization of his country. A colonizing people take away from the purity and wholeness of the original state of the country and its inhabitants when they establish their own invasive settlements. Rizal got his inspiration for writing the book from Harriet Stowe’s novel Uncle Tom’s Cabin which illustrated how the white colonizers stripped the African slaves of their natural state of wholeness.

Tango as a form of dance involves partners holding hands and holding each other in close proximity. There is something about touching that has been held to be impure in many cultures. In India one had to take a bath if one inadvertently touched a person of a lower caste. Hence the term “untouchable”. The fear of impurity traveling via touch was so much that one had to wash oneself even if the shadow of an untouchable was traversed. This fear is reflected in words like “contagious” (“*tag*” meaning to touch” in Latin”) which indicate that some germs spread through touch so precautions against such diseases include avoidance of touch. It is pertinent here to mention that *Noli Me Tangere* was also used to refer to cancer of the eyelid to state that the eye is not for touching. Jose Rizal was an ophthalmologist who was aware of this disease of the eye and the phrase *Noli Me Tangere* must have come readily to him. Even today, eye ailments and drugs use “Do not touch me” as a catchy phrase for their advertisements.

The idea that touching was morally impure had thrived in Europe until as late as the early and mid-nineteenth centuries. Prior to the introduction of the tango, dance in Europe was mainly *contra-danza*, in which partners stood facing each other, making lineal movements and only occasionally touching each other’s hands. It was similar to English country-dancing. There were circular forms of dancing as well which too involved no touching. The introduction of *Waltz* was the first advance made towards dancing that involved close holding of partners. It was around 1850 that the Opera of Paris first introduced *Waltz* as a risky venture but it turned out to be successful. *Waltz* was followed by *Polka*. The European elite was gradually relenting upon its idea that social touching while dancing was not morally condemnable. During the introduction of the tango in Argentina around 1880, men often had to dance with men to avoid social stigma or the unavailability of socially acceptable women in Argentina at the time. Such male and male partnership had nothing to do with homosexuality. It was the avoidance of morally impure and socially unsanctioned behavior by men and women towards each other. Tango involving men and women as partners was danced mostly in brothels in the early days. By 1930, however, tango had gained respectability and the rich Argentinians had introduced it to Europe as an acceptable and enjoyable dance.

Why was touching considered to be not desirable? It was not simply because touching could spread germs. It was also because touching could “take away” from things as well as “give” to things. If we touch a delicate flower or a lettuce leaf frequently, it will noticeably wilt. If we hold a baby for long periods of time it may interfere with the baby’s free growth. Perhaps our body heat takes something away in such cases. Perhaps it is like sleeping on a sofa where the free movement of one arm is impeded and the body does not feel fully rested after the sleep. Touch does take away from wholeness in some cases and in such instances wholeness is seen as the natural condition. But touch also gives. It gives comfort, it nourishes. It expresses caring. Yes, it can arouse improper sexual arousal in men and women, but where sexual closeness is desired by the partners, touch can be deemed divine. Thus touch has restorative and creative qualities as well. If what was whole has been made to be less than whole, touch can restore it back to wholeness. Thus it can act as an essential ingredient in the process of integration, in the creation and preservation of integral lives.

The word ‘integrate’, though used as the opposite of ‘segregate’, unlike the latter, does not have its roots in “greg”, which means group or flock. It is broken down to in (in the sense of no,

non)-tegr(touch)-ate(to cause). It means to cause not to touch. That would be a way to preserve the natural state of wholeness of the object concerned.

Tangere, teg, tegere, tag, tect, tact, texi are related words that can mean touch, feel, hold, try, reach, handle, evaluate, estimate, measure etc. in different contexts (Morwood, 1998). They refer explicitly or implicitly to the skin. The Sanskrit word for skin is *twak*, showing how ancient the concern is about touch. It is curious to note that *teg* and *tect* can also mean protective cover, like a shell enclosing a nut to keep it whole or a shell protecting a tortoise. A million other instances can be found in nature of how covers are intended to protect the pristine quality of things. Hence to pro-*te*ct is to work for the preservation of the cover enveloping the original wholeness of things and to de-*te*ct is to take away the cover and expose it to the outside world.

The prefix “in” too can have not just a forbidding import but may also mean to preserve something in its essential state. It has an inclusive and an exclusive sense. Hence in-tegr-ate can also mean to cause something to remain protected in its original state of wholeness. Do not touch or play with the cover for it sheaths the essential quality of the object, that which makes it viable, its sacred soul, that is. In this context Bahman Shirazi’s words appear very relevant. In his article *Integral Education: Founding Vision and Principles* (Shirazi, 2011), he remarks that balance and harmony are the ultimate laws of life. The observation can be made into a very pursuable goal in life if we remember that only harmony can bring balance in any given situation. However, it is also worth its while to remember that while harmony is an important goal to pursue, balance, on occasions may not be so. In matters of love and compassion, we can on occasion witness grand extravaganza. Aurobindo Ghosh spoke of Leela or playfulness as the source of the bursting forth of all creation. Leela, the divine’s pleasure, the delight the divine takes, in endlessly expressing itself in multitudinous forms is also termed *Ichchha* or the creator’s pleasure. It applies also to the child’s play, the sheer delight a child takes in playfully releasing its energy and create objects of fantasy out of its limitless imagination. Hence the word *Leela-khela*; Hence also the name *Ichchhamayee Tara* for the Goddess and the name *Ichhamati* for the ever-flowing river at the border of West Bengal and East Bengal (Bangladesh). Its dharma is to flow on and on and make its path and bring life to the elements that form its bank. It knows not what it does, cares not what pitfalls may arise on its path. Absorbed in its creativity it continues to flow. Perhaps this is what Aurobindo meant when he thought of the Infinite losing itself in the finite, leaving itself concealed in the finite that it generates out of itself. Perhaps it is not appropriate to call the created finite. For each finite conceals within itself the imprint of the infinite which gives it its original wholeness the loss or impairment of which stirs in it the unrest causing it to launch upon the journey to restore its wholeness to itself. Shirazi also states that people have an innate potential for wholeness and an urge to attain it. He maintains that all human beings have a right to be whole because wholeness is at the core of all human beings and that therefore healing can occur only if wholeness has been restored to someone suffering. I could not agree more with these forceful assertions. Only, I would like to extend the area of these affirmations from the human realm to all that is, to being as such. *Sat* or simple being transforms into *chit* or consciousness which in turn rises to the experience of *ananda* or joyfulness.

To believe in integralism is to be dynamic. It is not to be locked away in an eternal state of stagnation. It is to believe that wholeness is a natural state of all that is, that which makes being, be at its best. However, it also looks upon losing of wholeness in the process of creation and life

playing itself out as equally natural. It further believes that the restoration of wholeness is dharma for disintegration is the darkest hour and must be turned around to be productive of new integration. This is of the essence of Faith and Hope. This is made possible by the sharing of wholeness by those who have attained it, by self-erosion, by self-exposure, by giving of oneself at the cost of losing oneself. This is what Charity is. Fortunately, such self-giving not only restores wholeness to others, but also leads to regaining it for oneself.

*If I were an incense stick,
I must burn to give off fragrance.
If I were a lamp,
I must be lit and have to burn to give light.*
—Rabindranath Tagore (1967)

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