Making Sense of Modern Education
(A 4 week online course for teachers and parents)

Introduction and course description:

People – parents, teachers, educators, students – cutting across class and rural urban divides, are dissatisfied with the education system. There are variations in the stated reasons for the dissatisfaction but at the core the issue has commonalities. Despite many sincere attempts to improve the system over the past 70 years, we have not achieved much and seem to be going around in circles.

This is so because the problem lies in the framework, or rather the paradigm, within which the system is located. Paradigms and frameworks have the power to influence and put blinkers on our perception, so that we see only from within the framework boundaries, of which we are unaware. This works well for us as long as the paradigm is founded on Truth but if the paradigm itself is fraught with fundamental flaws then we need to step out of the particular framework and work from outside to put things right.

Irresolvable conflicts and contradictions are inherent in the present paradigm. 'Development' is in conflict with the environmental crisis staring us in the face, a crisis difficult to ignore any longer. Education is supposed to prepare people for employment but AI and large-scale automation is in direct conflict with employment opportunities. Freedom is taught as a value but we have no control over even the food we eat, the water we drink, or the air we breathe. We want honest, kind, compassionate human beings but we know that to survive we need to be aggressive and competitive. This is only the tip of the iceberg. All of us feel the unknown and invisible pressure which seems to be in the air encouraging us to act and behave in an inauthentic manner robbing us of our *sahajta*.

In the 4 week interactive course we will help you self-reflect, to examine the (hidden) assumptions embedded within each of us which mold our perceptions. Our hope is that by the end of the course you will go beyond to a new way of seeing and evaluating your inner and outer worlds. We call it the master paradigm.
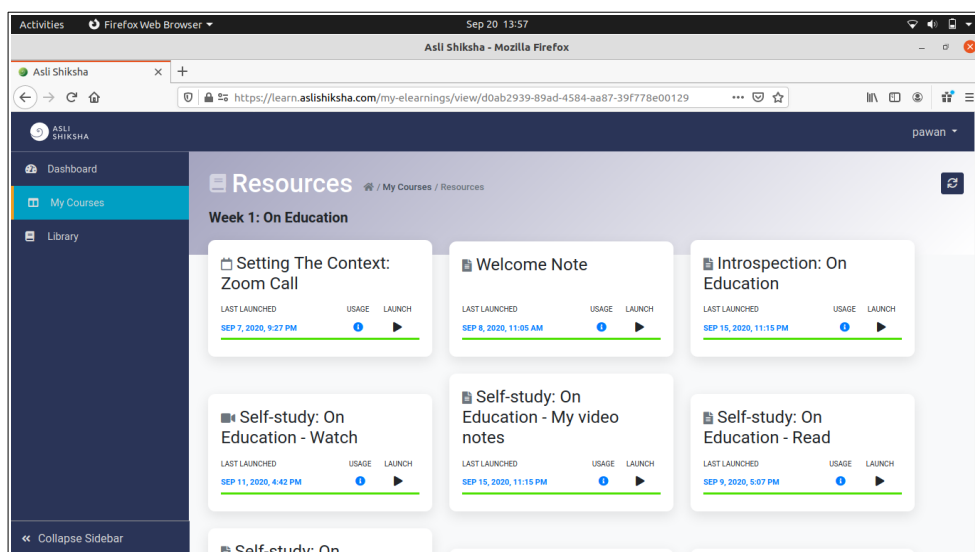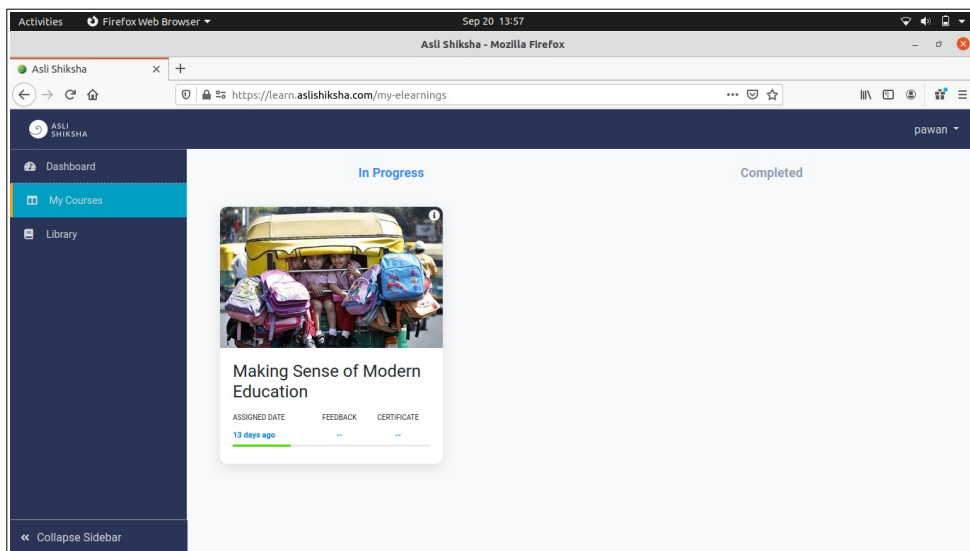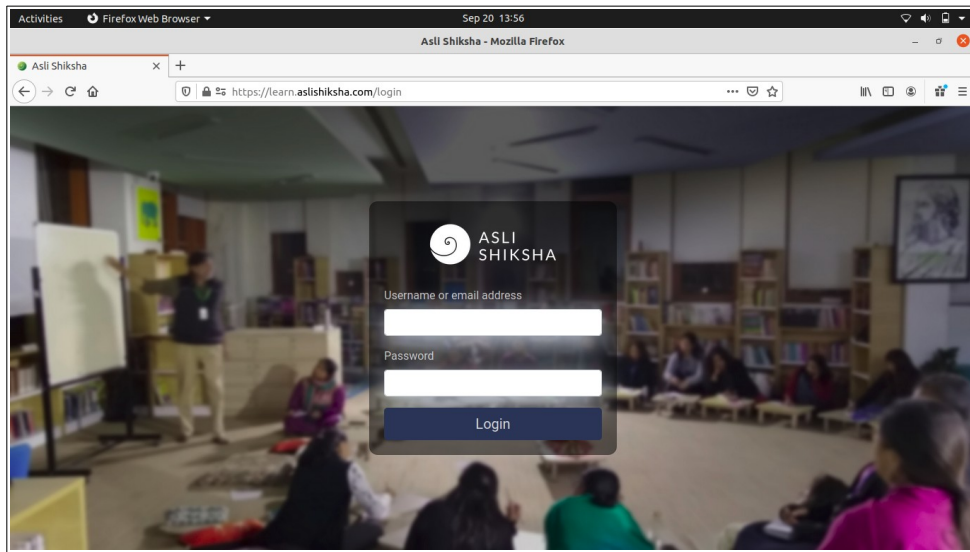
Who is the workshop for?

The course is designed for parents, teachers, educators concerned with the state of education and who have experienced dilemmas and conflicts. The course is based on the premise that education is meant to illuminate or reveal the Truth lying within each one of us rather than something that is imparted from outside. **This is not a training program that will address the 'How'**. This course will focus on the 'What' and the 'Why' and will encourage you to reflect within to seek the answers.

Course details:

The course runs for **4 weeks from Monday, October 12th to Saturday, November 7th, 2020.** When you register, you get a login and password to access the course. The self-paced course runs from within a proprietary Learning Management System (LMS) that guides you through the content. The only fixed times are 2-hour weekend zoom calls with all participants. This is for winding up the weekly learnings, free discussions and doubt clearance. Both the course facilitators will be available on these calls. The daily interactions, question/ answers etc. happen on a WhatsApp group chat. The weekly program flow includes watching the initial video/ audio presentations, reading the relevant material, completing assignments (that are designed to let you contemplate on the connection of course material to your lives rather than test knowledge) and take part in the discussions. The total **time investment from your side is around 8-10 hours per week,** at your own convenience.

Please WhatsApp/ call 9633983530 or write to learn@aslishiksha.com to register
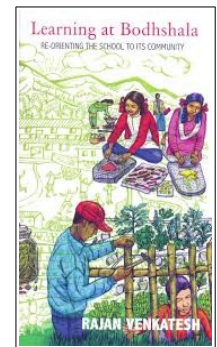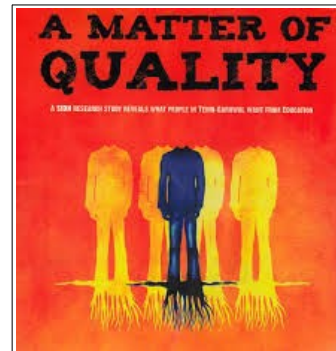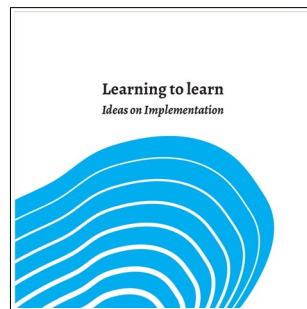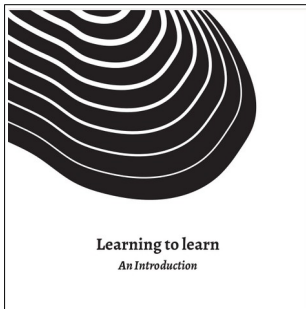
The first cycle of this program between 7th September and 3rd October is running well and has 30 participants. The feedback has encouraged us to start the second cycle from 12th October. We are now restricting the number of participants to 25. Here are some screens from the course:

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Fees:

The fee for the online course is **Rs 6,500 (Rs Six thousand five hundred only)** per participant. This includes the cost of the following books published by SIDH and Asli Shiksha that are sent to the participants at the end of the course (If you are not in India, we will send you the PDF's or send the books to an Indian address you choose). Learning to Learn- An Introduction, Learning to Learn - Ideas on Implementation, A Matter of Quality and Learning at Bodhshala.

Facilitators:

Pawan Kumar Gupta, BTech, IIT Delhi, 1976

Pawan is a well known speaker, author and thought leader on education. He is the co-founder of SIDH, an NGO that has, over the years, run 35 village schools and published more than 40 books in Hindi and English. He has worked in close collaboration with, and is deeply influenced by, many renowned scholars and spiritual leaders like Dharampal, SN Goenka, Baba Nagaraj, Samdhong Rinpoche and Ravindra Sharma. His life-journey has given him valuable insights into the impact of modernity on our society.

Arun Elassery, BTech, IIT Kharagpur, 1988

Arun is an author and the co-founder of Asli Shiksha, an education start-up based in Bangalore. He is the author of 'The laughing onion' a picture book for children published by Eklavya. A regular column on alternative schools he wrote appeared in the Teacher Plus magazine. He is collaborating with Pawan Gupta on writing a series of books on education. The first two books on the philosophy and practice of self-learning are published. He has 20 years of experience in e-learning and education and was a 'Wipro Education Fellow' from 2010 to 2016. Arun's three children have grown up without going to school.

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Testimonials: *(On the introductory workshop that led to the design of this online course)*

A very engaging and enlightening capsule which introduced a novel way of looking at the times we live in. The facilitators are well read, well traveled, have a wealth of life experience and tell great stories.
Ajay, Businessman and ex-operations head at a large corporate after serving 25 years in the Indian army.

We had an absolutely wonderful three-day session with Pawanji & Arunji, exploring elements - some known, others unknown, some fresh insights as well as re-examined old notions and patterns, within us and around us.
Kirti, Research and Resources facilitator, Shiv Nadar School, Noida

The session was very intense. I was truly exhausted with the questions buzzing around in my head but I wanted only to listen because it made more sense than speaking. The universe has conspired to make me attend this.
Aparna, Early years teacher at Shiv Nadar School, Noida

I feel blessed, grateful and refreshed having attended the workshop at SIDH. The quick immersion into the setting, the authentic expression, harmony and mutual respect in the Samvaad were special.
Manan, Finance professional with an MBA from IIM Lucknow and extensive international work experience.

The workshop was an amazing experience that transformed some of my basic perspectives. In the perfect ambience of SIDH, we looked at Modernity and how it is impacting us, our families and society.
Prithviraj, Teacher in an alternative school in Bangalore and ex-businessman in the training industry.

The workshop helped me understand how everything in life is interconnected. This paradigm shift seeped in during the 'Samvaad' in which everyone contributed. As a teacher, the workshop was very useful for me.
Manjunath, Teacher in an alternative school in Bangalore and ex-software engineer.

The Samvaad started with our helplessness within the problems of modernity and it was frightening. When the alternatives were presented, I saw that many of our *dwand* can be resolved by a changed perspective.
Smriti, Homeschooling mother of three children.

The workshop explained the in-built design issues with the modern systems and how that's affecting us in so many subtle ways. At the same time it opened a new paradigm of possibilities, leaving me very hopeful.
Shubham, Graduated from IIT Delhi in 2018 and works at BCG Consulting.

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