The Real Awakener

Lights on the Path

Words of the Mother – 3

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Contents

I. Questions and Answers, January 1951 5

1. Things Always End Badly 5
2. The True Guide – the Inner Guide 6
3. The Inner True Thing in Children and Plants and Animals 8
4. Modesty 11
5. Generosity 12
6. Effort Gives Joy 12
7. Effect of the Company of Liars 14
8. The Science of Living 15
9. Consciousness and its Instruments 18
10. How to Know? 20
11. Disciplining and Organising the Vital 22
12. Disciplining and Organising the Body 25
13. Repressed Desires 26

II. Questions and Answers, February 1951 28

1. How to Overcome a Difficulty? 28
2. The Most Dangerous Thing 29
3. Sincerity and the Process of Advancement in Yoga 30
4. Miracles 32
5. Sincerity and the Unification of the Being 36
6. True Freedom 38
7. The First Basis in Forming the Ashram 39
8. The Recording of All Terrestrial Happenings 39
9. The Working of the Divine Will in the World 42

10. How to Offer One's Will to the Divine? 45
11. The World is Essentially the Opposite of What it Has Become 46
12. True Meditation 47
13. Psychic and the Mind are Rarely Within One 48
14. Sincerity – the Sole Measure of the Worth of an Experience 50
15. The Difference Between Aspiration and Desire and the Psychic Being and the Soul 51
16. The Psychic Being 53
17. When it is that one is Truly Dead? 60
18. Yoga and the Reading of Ordinary Books 60
19. A Test of Sincerity 62
20. Necessity of Widening One's Consciousness 62

III. Questions and Answers, March 1951 64

1. The Psychic Being 64
2. The Truth About Possessions and Mentally Deranged People and the Story of the Being Who Possessed Hitler 66
3. What Becomes of the Vital Being After Death? 70
4. Life in a Mental Fortress 72
5. Mental and Vital Nightmares 73
6. What Happens to the Vital and the Mental Beings after Death? 74
7. Is It Possible to Get Out of the "Mental Fortress"? 75
8. How to Help the Departed? 76
9. Confidence and the Effectivity of Hygienic Measures and Cures 78



The One whom we adore as the Mother is the divine Conscious Force that dominates all existence, one and yet so many-sided that to follow her movement is impossible even for the quickest mind and for the freest and most vast intelligence. The Mother is the consciousness and force of the Supreme and far above all she creates.

– Sri Aurobindo

I. Questions and Answers, January 1951

1. Things Always End Badly

"…Generally it is believed that things always end badly in Nature. Everyone knows the story of those who have met a lamentable end after having enjoyed great success in their life; of those who had extraordinary capacities and who finally lost them; of a nation which for a long period was the model of a marvellous civilisation – the civilisation vanishes and the nation is changed into something so deplorable that one can no longer recollect what it was. **It seems that the story of the earth is a story of victories followed by defeats and not of defeats followed by victories.***

But in fact, whenever it is a question of universal and divine things, what is needed is the universal vision and divine understanding of things in order to know how the truth expresses itself. There is a kind of general pessimism which says that even if things begin well they end badly, that it is weakness, hypocrisy, falsehood and wickedness which always seem to have the upper hand. That is why those who see the world in their own personal dimension have said that the world is bad and that we have only to finish with it and get out of it as soon as possible. Teachers have taught this but their teaching only proves that their vision is too narrow and in the dimension of their human individuality.

In truth, the movements of Nature are like those of the

** Bold letters in the text, used here for emphasis, are from the Editor and are not there in the original. All the titles in bold letters are from the Editor.*

tides: they advance, they recede, advance and recede; in the universal life and even in terrestrial life, this means a progressive advance, though apparently it is cut up by withdrawals. But these withdrawals are only an appearance, as when one draws back to spring forward. You seem to be drawing back but it is simply in order to go much farther.

You will tell me that all this is very well, but how to give a child the certitude that the truth will triumph? For, when he learns history, when he observes Nature, he will see that things don't always end well.* "[1]

2. The True Guide – the Inner Guide

"There is another quality which must be cultivated in a child from a very young age: that is the feeling of uneasiness, of a moral disbalance which it feels when it has done certain things, not because it has been told not to do them, not because it fears punishment, but spontaneously. For example, a child who hurts its comrade through mischief, if it is in its normal, natural state, will experience uneasiness, a grief deep in its

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** In 1963, at the time this conversation was first published, Mother made the following remark:*

*"**After all, as long as there is death, things always end badly.** It is only victory over death which will make it possible for things not to end badly; that is when the return into the Inconscience will no longer be necessary to allow a new progress.*

"The whole process of development, at least terrestrial development, is like that. I do not know how it happens on the other planets! Traditions say that a universe is created, then withdrawn in the pralaya*, then a new one comes and so on; and according to them we should be the seventh universe, and being the seventh universe, we are that which will not return into* pralaya *but progress constantly without going back. It is because of this, besides, that there is in the human being this need of permanence and of an uninterrupted progress; it is because the time has come."*

being, because what it has done is contrary to its inner truth.

For in spite of all teachings, in spite of all that thought can think, there is something in the depths which has a feeling of a perfection, a greatness, a truth, and is painfully contradicted by all the movements opposing this truth. If a child has not been spoilt by its milieu, by deplorable examples around it, that is, if it is in the normal state, spontaneously, without its being told anything, it will feel an uneasiness when it has done something against the truth of its being. And it is exactly upon this that later its effort for progress must be founded.

For, if you want to find one teaching, one doctrine upon which to base your progress, you will never find anything – or, to be more exact, you will find something else, for in accordance with the climate, the age, the civilisation, the teaching given is quite conflicting. When one person says, "This is good", another will say, "No, this is bad", and with the same logic, the same persuasive force. Consequently, it is not upon this that one can build. Religion has always tried to establish a dogma, and it will tell you that if you conform to the dogma you are in the truth and if you don't you are in the falsehood. But all this has never led to anything and has only created confusion.

There is only one true guide, that is the inner guide, who does not pass through the mental consciousness.

Naturally, if a child gets a disastrous education, it will try ever harder to extinguish within itself this little true thing, and sometimes it succeeds so well that it loses all contact with it, and also the power of distinguishing between good and evil. That is why I insist upon this, and I say that from their

infancy children must be taught that there is an inner reality – within themselves, within the earth, within the universe – and that they, the earth and the universe exist only as a function of this truth, and that if it did not exist the child would not last, even the short time that it does, and that everything would dissolve even as it comes into being. And because this is the real basis of the universe, naturally it is this which will triumph; and all that opposes this cannot endure as long as this does, because it is That, the eternal thing which is at the base of the universe.

It is not a question, of course, of giving a child philosophical explanations, but he could very well be given the feeling of this kind of inner comfort, of satisfaction, and sometimes, of an intense joy when he obeys this little very silent thing within him which will prevent him from doing what is contrary to it. It is on an experience of this kind that teaching may be based. The child must be given the impression that nothing can endure if he does not have within himself this true satisfaction which alone is permanent."[2]

3. The Inner True Thing in Children and Plants and Animals

"For a child this is very clear, for it is a perception without any complications of word or thought – there is that which puts him at ease and that which makes him uneasy (it is not necessarily joy or sorrow which come only when the thing is very intense). And all this is much clearer in the child than in an adult, for the latter has always a mind which works and clouds his perception of the truth.

To give a child theories is absolutely useless, for as soon

as his mind awakes he will find a thousand reasons for contradicting your theories, and he will be right.

This little true thing in the child is the divine Presence in the psychic – it is also there in plants and animals. In plants it is not conscious, in animals it begins to be conscious, and in children it is very conscious. I have known children who were much more conscious of their psychic being at the age of five than at fourteen, and at fourteen than at twenty-five; and above all, from the moment they go to school where they undergo that kind of intensive mental training which draws their attention to the intellectual part of their being, they lose almost always and almost completely this contact with their psychic being.

If only you were an experienced observer, if you could tell what goes on in a person, simply by looking into his eyes!... **It is said the eyes are the mirror of the soul;** that is a popular way of speaking but if the eyes do not express to you the psychic, it is because it is very far behind, veiled by many things. Look carefully, then, into the eyes of little children, and you will see a kind of light – some describe it as candid – but so true, so true, which looks at the world with wonder. Well, this sense of wonder, it is the wonder of the psychic which sees the truth but does not understand much about the world, for it is too far from it. Children have this but as they learn more, become more intelligent, more educated, this is effaced, and you see all sorts of things in their eyes: thoughts, desires, passions, wickedness – but this kind of little flame, so pure, is no longer there. And you may be sure it is the mind that has got in there, and the psychic has gone very far behind.

Even a child who does not have a sufficiently developed brain to understand, if you simply pass on to him a vibration of protection or affection or solicitude or consolation, you will see that he responds. But if you take a boy of fourteen, for example, who is at school, who has ordinary parents and has been ill-treated, his mind is very much in the forefront; there is something hard in him, the psychic being has gone behind. Such boys do not respond to the vibration. One would say they are made of wood or plaster.

If the inner truth, the divine presence in the psychic is so conscious in the child, it could no longer be said that a child is a little animal, could it?

Why not? In animals there is sometimes a very intense psychic truth. Naturally, I believe that the psychic being is a little more formed, a little more conscious in a child than in an animal. But I have experimented with animals, just to know; well, I assure you that in human beings I have rarely come across some of the virtues which I have seen in animals, very simple, unpretentious virtues. As in cats, for example: I have studied cats a lot; if one knows them well they are marvellous creatures. I have known mother-cats which have sacrificed themselves entirely for their babies – people speak of maternal love with such admiration, as though it were purely a human privilege, but I have seen this love manifested by mother-cats to a degree far surpassing ordinary humanity. I have seen a mother-cat which would never touch her food until her babies had taken all they needed. I have seen another cat which stayed eight days beside her kittens, without satisfying any of her needs because she was afraid to leave them alone; and a cat which repeated more than fifty times the same movement to

teach her young one how to jump from a wall on to a window, and I may add, with a care, an intelligence, a skill which many uneducated women do not have. And why is it thus? – since there was no mental intervention. It was altogether spontaneous instinct. But what is instinct? – it is the presence of the Divine in the genus of the species, and that, that is the psychic of animals; a collective, not an individual psychic.

I have seen in animals all the reactions, emotional, affective, sentimental, all the feelings of which men are so proud. The only difference is that animals cannot speak of them and write about them, so we consider them inferior beings because they cannot flood us with books on what they have felt."[3] (8-11-1951)

4. Modesty

"This is to take oneself at one's true worth.

Generally people pass from an excessive appreciation of their personal value to an equally excessive discouragement. One day they say, "I am wonderful", and the next day, "Oh! I am good for nothing, I can do nothing." That is like a pendulum, isn't it? There is nothing more difficult than knowing exactly what one is; one must neither overrate oneself nor depreciate oneself, but understand one's limits and know how to advance towards the ideal set before oneself. There are people who see in a big way and immediately imagine they can do everything. There are petty officers, for example, who imagine themselves capable of winning all the battles of the world, and small people who think they surpass everybody in the world. On the other hand, I have known some people who had abilities but who spent their time thinking, "I am

good for nothing." Generally the two extremes are found in the same person. But to find someone who knows exactly where he stands and exactly where he can go, is very rare."[4]

5. Generosity

"I shall not speak here of material generosity which naturally consists in giving others what one has. But even this virtue is not very widespread, for as soon as one becomes rich one thinks more often of keeping one's wealth than of giving it away. The more men possess, the less are they generous.

I want to speak of moral generosity. To feel happy, for example, when a comrade is successful. An act of courage, of unselfishness, a fine sacrifice have a beauty in them which gives you joy. **It may be said that moral generosity consists in being able to recognise the true worth and superiority of others.**"[5] (11-1-1951)

6. Effort Gives Joy

"…It is the effort which gives joy; a human being who does not know how to make an effort will never find joy. Those who are essentially lazy will never find joy – they do not have the strength to be joyful! It is effort which gives joy. Effort makes the being vibrate at a certain degree of tension which makes it possible for you to feel the joy.

But is the effort which brings joy an effort imposed by circumstances or an effort which makes for progress?

You are mixing up two things: one physical, the other psychological. It is quite obvious that an act done because one has decided to do it and an act imposed by circumstances,

more or less favourable, do not have at all the same result. It is known, for instance, that people who follow yogic discipline often fast. Many yogic disciplines require very long fastings and those who practise them are generally very happy to do so, for that is their own choice. But take this very person and put him in circumstances where food is scarce, either because it cannot be had or because this person has no money, and you will see him in a lamentable state, complaining that life is terrible, though the conditions may be identically the same; but in one case there was the decision not to eat, whilst in the other the man did not eat because he could not do otherwise. That is obvious, but this is not the only reason.

It is only effort, in whatever domain it be – material effort, moral effort, intellectual effort – which creates in the being certain vibrations which enable you to get connected with universal vibrations; and it is this which gives joy. It is effort which pulls you out of inertia; it is effort which makes you receptive to the universal forces. And the one thing above all which spontaneously gives joy, even to those who do not practise yoga, who have no spiritual aspiration, who lead quite an ordinary life, is the exchange of forces with universal forces. People do not know this, they would not be able to tell you that it is due to this, but so it is.

There are people who are just like beautiful animals – all their movements are harmonious, their energies are spent harmoniously, their uncalculating efforts call in energies all the time and they are always happy; but sometimes they have no thoughts in their head, sometimes they have no feelings in their heart, they live an altogether animalish life. I have known people like that: beautiful animals. They were handsome, their

gestures were harmonious, their forces quite balanced and they spent without reckoning and received without measure. They were in harmony with the material universal forces and they lived in joy. They could not perhaps have told you that they were happy – joy with them was so spontaneous that it was natural – and they would have been still less able to tell you why, for their intelligence was not very developed. I have known such people, who were capable of making the necessary effort (not a prudent and calculated effort but a spontaneous one) in no matter what field: material, vital, intellectual, etc., and in this effort there was always joy. For example, a man sits down to write a book, he makes an effort which sets vibrating something in his brain to attract ideas; well, suddenly, this man experiences joy. It is quite certain that, whatever you do, even the most material work, like sweeping a room or cooking, if you make the necessary effort to do this work to the maximum of your ability, you will feel joy, even if what you do is against your nature. When you want to realise something, you make quite spontaneously the necessary effort; this concentrates your energies on the thing to be realised and that gives a meaning to your life. This compels you to a sort of organisation of yourself, a sort of concentration of your energies, because it is this that you wish to do and not fifty other things which contradict it. And it is in this concentration, this intensity of the will, that lies the origin of joy. This gives you the power to receive energies in exchange for those you spend."[6]

7. Effect of the Company of Liars

"I have known people who were very scrupulous about not telling lies, but all of a sudden, when together in a group,

instead of speaking the truth they would spontaneously tell a lie; they did not have the intention of doing so, they did not think of it a minute before doing it, but it came "like that". Why? – because they were in the company of liars; there was an atmosphere of falsehood and they had quite simply caught the malady!"[7] (13-1-1951)

8. The Science of Living

" 'It is only by observing these movements (of our being) with great care, by bringing them, as it were, before the tribunal of our highest ideal, with a sincere will to submit to its judgment, that we can hope to educate in us a discernment which does not err.'

"The Science of Living", On Education

One must be clearly aware of the origin of one's movements because there are contradictory velleities in the being – some pushing you here, others pushing you there, and that obviously creates a chaos in life. If you observe yourself, you will see that as soon as you do something which disturbs you a little, the mind immediately gives you a favourable reason to justify yourself – this mind is capable of gilding everything. In these conditions it is difficult to know oneself. One must be absolutely sincere to be able to do it and to see clearly into all the little falsehoods of the mental being.

If in your mind you go over the various movements and reactions of the day like one repeating indefinitely the same thing, you will not progress. If this reviewing is to make you progress, you must find something within you in whose light you yourself can be your own judge, something which

represents for you the best part of yourself, which has some light, some goodwill and which precisely is in love with progress. Place that before you and, first of all, pass across it as at a cinema all that you have done, all that you have felt, your impulses, your thoughts, etc.; then try to coordinate them, that is, find out why this has followed that. And look at the luminous screen that is before you: certain things pass across it well, without throwing a shadow; others, on the contrary, throw a little shadow; others yet cast a shadow altogether black and disagreeable. You must do this very sincerely, as though you were playing a game: under such circumstances I did such and such a thing, feeling like this and thinking in this way; I have before me my ideal of knowledge and self-mastery, well, was this act in keeping with my ideal or not? If it was, it would not leave any shadow on the screen, which would remain transparent, and one would not have to worry about it. If it is not in conformity, it casts a shadow. Why has it left this shadow? What was there in this act that was contrary to the will to self-knowledge and self-mastery? Most often you will find that it corresponds to unconsciousness – then you file it among unconscious things and resolve that next time you will try to be conscious before doing anything. But in other cases you will see that it was a nasty little egoism, quite black, which had come to distort your action or your thought. Then you place this egoism before your "light" and ask yourself: "Why has it the right to make me act like that, think like that?..." And instead of accepting any odd explanation you must search and you will find in a corner of your being something which thinks and says, "Ah, no, I shall accept everything but that." You will see that it is a petty vanity, a movement of self-love, an egoistic feeling hidden somewhere, a hundred things.

Then you take a good look at these things in the light of your ideal: "Is cherishing this movement in conformity with my seeking and the realisation of my ideal or not? I put this little dark corner in front of the light until the light enters into it and it disappears." Then the comedy is over. But the comedy of your whole day is not finished yet, you know, for there are many things which have to pass thus before the light. But if you continue this game – for truly it is a game, if you do this sincerely – I assure you that in six months you will not recognise yourself, you will say to yourself, 'What? I was like that! It is impossible!'

You may be five years old or twenty, fifty or sixty and yet transform yourself in this way by putting everything before this inner light. You will see that the elements which do not conform with your ideal are not generally elements which you have to throw wholly out of yourself (there are very few of this kind); they are simply things not in their place. If you organise everything – your feelings, your thoughts, your impulses, etc. – around the psychic centre which is the inner light, you will see that all inner disorder will change into a luminous order.

It is quite evident that if a similar procedure were adopted by a nation or by the earth, most of the things which make men unhappy would disappear, for the major part of the world's misery comes from the fact that things are not in their place. If life were organised in such a way that nothing was wasted and each thing was in its place, most of these miseries would not exist any longer. An old sage has said:

'There is no evil. There is only a lack of balance.'

'There is nothing bad. Only things are not in their place.'

If everything were in its place, in nations, in the material world, in the actions and thoughts and feelings of individuals, the greater part of human suffering would disappear."[8]

9. Consciousness and its Instruments

"There are two things to be considered: consciousness and the instruments through which consciousness manifests. Let us take the instruments: there is the mental being which produces thoughts, the emotional being which produces feeling, the vital being which produces the power of action and the physical being that acts.

The man of genius may use anything at all and make something beautiful because he has genius; but give this genius a perfect instrument and he will make something wonderful. Take a great musician; well, even with a wretched piano and missing notes, he will produce something beautiful; but give him a good piano, well-tuned, and he will do something still more beautiful. The consciousness is the same in either case but for expression it needs a good instrument – a body with mental, vital, psychic and physical capacities.

If physically you are badly built, badly set up, it will be difficult for you, even with good training, to do gymnastics as well as one with a beautiful well-built body. It is the same with the mind – one who has a well-organised mind, complex, complete, refined, will express himself much better than one who has a rather mediocre or badly organised mind. First of all, you must educate your consciousness, become conscious of yourself, organise your consciousness according to your ideal, but at the same time do not neglect the instruments which are in your body.

Take an example. You are in your body with your deepest ideal but you find yourself before a school class and you have to teach something to the students. Well, this light is up there, this light of consciousness, but when you have to explain to your class the science you have to teach, is it more convenient to have a fund of knowledge or will the inspiration be such that you will not need this fund of knowledge? What is your personal experience?...

You find, don't you, that there are days when everything goes well – you are eloquent, your students listen to you and understand you easily. But there are other days when what you have to teach does not come, they do not listen to you – that is, you are bored and are boring. This means that in the former case your consciousness is awake and concentrated upon what you are doing, while in the second it is more or less asleep – you are left to your most external means. But in this case, if you have a fund of knowledge you can tell your students something; if you have a mind trained, prepared, a good instrument responding well when you want to make use of it, and if you have also gathered all necessary notes and notions all will go very well. But if you have nothing in your head and, besides, you are not in contact with your higher consciousness, then you have no other recourse than to take a book and read out your lesson – you will be obliged to make use of someone else's mind.

Take games. There too you find days when everything goes well; you have done nothing special previously, but even so you succeed in everything; but if you have practised well beforehand, the result is still more magnificent. If, for example, you find yourself facing someone who has trained himself

slowly, seriously, with patience and endurance, and who all of a sudden has a strong aspiration, well, this one will beat you in spite of your aspiration unless your aspiration is very much superior to that of your adversary. If you have opposite you someone who knows only the technique of the game but has no conscious aspiration, while you are in a fully conscious state, evidently it is you who will defeat him because the quality of consciousness is superior to the quality of technique. But one cannot replace the other. The one which is superior is more important, granted, but you must also have nerves which respond quickly, spontaneous movements; you must know all the secrets of the game to be able to play perfectly. You must have both the things. What is higher is the consciousness which enables you to make the right movement at the right moment but it is not exclusive. When you seek perfection, you must not neglect the one under the pretext that you have the other.

Should one play in order to win?

When you have a three or four-year old consciousness, this is an altogether necessary stimulant. But you may have a four-year old consciousness even at the age of fifty, may you not? No, when you have a ripe consciousness you must not play in order to win. You must play for the sake of playing and to learn how to play and to progress in games and in order that your play may become the expression of your inner consciousness at its highest – it is this which is important."[9] (15-1-1951)

10. How to Know?

"For people who exercise their intelligence, the more

intelligent they are, the more do they grow aware that they know nothing at all and that with the mind one can know nothing. One may think in a particular way, judge and see in a particular way, but one is never sure of anything – and never will be sure of anything. One can always say, "Perhaps it is like that" or "Perhaps it is like this" and so on, indefinitely, because the mind is not an instrument of knowledge.

Above the thoughts, there are pure ideas; thoughts serve to express pure ideas. And Knowledge is well above the domain of pure ideas, as these are well above thought. One must hence know how to climb from thought to pure idea, and pure idea is itself nothing but a translation of Knowledge. And Knowledge can be obtained only by a total identification. So, when you put yourself in your small human mentality, the mentality of the physical consciousness which is at work all the time, which looks at everything, judges everything from the height of its derisive superiority, which says, "That is bad, it should not be like that", you are sure to be always mistaken, without exception. The best is to keep silent and look well at things, and little by little you make notes within yourself and keep the record without pronouncing any judgment. When you are able to keep all that within you, quietly, without agitation and present it very calmly before the highest part of your consciousness, with an attempt to maintain an attentive silence, and wait, then perhaps, slowly, as if coming from a far distance and from a great height, something like a light will manifest and you will know a little more of truth.

But as long as you excite your thoughts and cut them up into little bits, you will never know anything. I shall repeat this to you a hundred times if necessary, but I can assure

you that so long as you are not convinced of this you will never come out of your ignorance."[10] (20-1-1951)

11. Disciplining and Organising the Vital

"'With the collaboration of the vital no realisation seems impossible, no transformation impracticable.'

"The Science of Living", On Education

It is this which is so wonderful. I believe the vital is very conscious of its power and that is why it is important: it has that dynamic energy which makes no difficulty too difficult for it; but it must be on the right side. If it collaborates, everything is wonderful, but it is not easy to get from it this constant collaboration. It is a very good worker, it works very, very well, but in working it seeks always its own satisfaction, it wants to get something from the work, all the pleasure that can be drawn from it, all the advantage that can be had, and when this satisfaction is not given for one reason or another (there may be many reasons), it is not happy, not at all happy: "That's not fair, I work, and I am given nothing in return"; then it sulks, it does not move, it keeps mum, and at times it says, "I do not exist." Then all energy runs out from the body, you get tired, exhausted, you can no longer do anything. And all of a sudden this becomes worse, for I must tell you that the mind is very friendly with the vital – not the reasoning mind but the physical mind is very, very friendly with the vital; so, as soon as the vital begins to say, "I have nothing to do with that, I have been badly treated, I won't have anything to do with it", the mind naturally comes in to encourage it, to explain, give good reasons, and it is the same old story: "Life is not worth living, people are truly disgusting and all

circumstances are against me, it is better to leave it all", and so on. This happens very often, but at times there is a little glimmer of reason somewhere which tells you, 'Ah, enough of this comedy!'

But if this becomes very strong and you do not react in time, then you fall into despair: "Really this life is not made for people like me; I would be happier elsewhere, in heaven where everybody is very nice and one can do whatever one wants", etc., whence paradisiac conceptions – indeed I think it is these two accomplices, the mind and the vital, who have invented paradise! For if life, existence, does not conform to your desires, you begin to lament: "Oh, I have had enough of it, this world is miserable and deceitful, I want to die." Then there is a moment when this situation becomes serious; discouragement changes into revolt and depression into dissatisfaction: I speak of people who are rather ill-natured – there are people who are ill-natured (it is not their fault!) and there are people who are good-natured (it is not their fault either!) but things are like that – well, those who are ill-natured get angry, revolt, want to break and pull down everything: "You will see, they do not do what I want, they will be punished!" Then this becomes a little more serious, because the mind is always there to serve as the accomplice and it begins to have wonderful ideas of revenge – from discouragement you do one kind of stupid thing, from wickedness you do another. The stupidities of discouragement concern you personally, whilst the stupidities of wickedness concern others; and sometimes these latter stupidities are very serious. If you have a little goodwill, it is better at the time when such fits seize you to make it a rule not to stir, telling

yourself, "I am not going to move, I shall wait for the storm to pass", for in a few moments one can destroy or ruin months of regular effort.

But here I give you a consolation:

"*These crises are of less duration and are less dangerous in the case of those who have established a contact with their psychic being sufficient to keep alive in them the flame of aspiration and the consciousness of the ideal to be realised. They can, with the help of this consciousness, deal with their vital as one deals with a child in revolt, with patience and perseverance showing it the truth and light, endeavouring to convince it and awaken in it the goodwill which for a moment was veiled."*

"The Science of Living", On Education

And the last consolation. For those who are truly sincere, truly good-willed, all these fits can be changed into a means for progress. Each time that you have an attack of this kind, a sort of storm, you can change the crisis into a new progress, into one more step towards the goal. If precisely you have the necessary sincerity to look straight in the face, within you, at the cause of the fit – the wrong you have done, the wrong you have thought, the wrong you have felt – if you see the weakness, the violence or the vanity (for I forgot to tell you that the vital is much more full of vanity than the mind), if you look at all that full in the face and if you recognise honestly and sincerely that what has happened is due to your fault, then you are able to put a red-hot iron as it were on the affected spot. You can purify the weakness and turn it into a new consciousness. And you find after the storm that you have grown a little more, you have truly made a progress."[11]

12. Disciplining and Organising the Body

"It is much easier to organise the body than the vital, for instance. But the mind and the vital, with the character and temperament they have, what do they not do with this poor slave of a body! After having ill-treated it, perhaps ruined it (it protests a little, falls ill a little), this is what the two accomplices say: "What a beast is this body, it cannot follow us in our movement!" Unhappily, the body obeys its masters, the mind and the vital, blindly, without any discrimination. The mind comes along with its theories: "You must not eat that, it will harm you; you must not do that, it is bad", and if the mind is not wise and clear-sighted, the poor body suffers the consequences of the orders it receives. I do not speak of the orders it receives from the vital. The mind with its rigid principles and the vital with its excesses and outbursts and passions are quick to destroy the body's equilibrium and to create a condition of fatigue, exhaustion and illness.

"It must be freed from this tyranny; that can be done only through a constant union with the psychic centre of the being."

"The Science of Living", On Education

That is evidently the cure of all ills.

"The body has a remarkable capacity of adaptation and endurance. It is fit to do so many more things than one can usually imagine. If instead of the ignorant and despotic masters that govern it, it is ruled by the central truth of the being, one will be surprised at what it is capable of doing."

Ibid.

During the last war, it was proved that the body was capable of enduring such suffering as is normally impossible

to endure. You have surely read or heard these stories of war in which the body was made to suffer and endure terrible things, and it withstood all that, it proved that it had almost inexhaustible capacities of endurance. Some people happened to be under conditions that should have killed them; if they survived, it was because they had in them a very strong will to survive and the body obeyed that will."[12] (25-1-1951)

13. Repressed Desires

"'All the desires that have been repressed without being dissolved ... try to seek satisfaction while the will is asleep.

"And as desires are veritable dynamic centres of formation, they tend to organise in and around us an assemblage of circumstances most favourable to their satisfaction.'

…Desire belongs to the vital domain but at the core of this desire there is always a thought, and the desire becomes all the more active and dynamic when it holds in itself this power of mental formation and the power of vital realisation. The vital is the centre of dynamism of the being, of active energy, and the two combined make something very strong which has a considerable tendency towards realising itself. Besides, everything in the universe tends towards manifestation, and things which are prevented from manifesting lose, by that very fact, their force and capacity. Most of the methods aiming at self-control have indeed made use of repression, of the suppression of movements with the idea that if one continues this suppression long enough, one succeeds in killing the element that is not wanted. This would be quite true if it were a question only of the physical world,

but behind the physical world there is the subconscious world and behind the subconscious world there lies the immensity of the Inconscient. And what you do not know is this that unless you destroy within you the desire itself, that is, the seed of the formation, this formation which you are preventing from manifesting is so to say repressed in the subconscient – driven down and repressed right at the bottom – and if you go and search in the subconscient you will find that it is waiting there to do its work. That is why so many people who have for years and years been able to control an unwanted movement are suddenly taken by surprise when this movement rushes up from below with all the greater force the longer it has been repressed. Hence dreams are of great use because this movement of repression exists no longer, the conscious will not being there (for it falls asleep or goes elsewhere) and the desire repressed below leaps up and manifests itself in the form of dreams, so much so that you come to know a good many things about your own nature; that is why **it is said that man can discover in sleep and dreams his true nature; it is not his true nature, his deeper nature, which is his psychic nature, but the spontaneous, uncontrolled nature.**"[13] (27-1-1951)

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II. Questions and Answers, February 1951

1. How to Overcome a Difficulty?

"…Be perfectly sincere; do not try to deceive yourself, do not say, "I have done all that I could." If you do not succeed, it means that you do not do all that you can. **For, if you truly do "all" that you can, you will surely succeed. If you have any defect which you want to get rid of and which still persists, and you say, "I have done all that I could", you may be sure that you have not done all that you should have.** If you had, you would have triumphed, for the difficulties that come to you are exactly in proportion to your strength – nothing can happen to you which does not belong to your consciousness, and all that belongs to your consciousness you are able to master. Even the things and suggestions that come from outside can touch you only in proportion to the consent of your consciousness, and you are made to be the master of your consciousness. If you say, "I have done all that I could and in spite of everything the thing continues, so I give up", you may be already sure that you have not done what you could. When an error persists "in spite of everything" it means that something hidden in your being springs up suddenly like a Jack-in-the-box and takes the helm of your life. Hence, there is only one thing to do, it is to go hunting for all the little dark corners which lie hidden in you and, if you put just a tiny spark of goodwill on this darkness, it will yield, will vanish, and what appeared to you impossible will become not only possible, practicable, but *it will have been done*. You can in this way in one minute get rid of a difficulty which would have harassed you for years. I

absolutely assure you of it. That depends only on one thing: that you truly, sincerely, want to get rid of it. And it is the same for everything, from physical illnesses up to the highest mental difficulties. One part of the consciousness says, "I don't want it", but behind there hides a heap of things which say nothing, do not show themselves, and which just want that things continue as they are – generally out of ignorance; they do not believe that it is necessary to be cured, they believe that everything is for the best in the best of worlds. As the lady with whom I had those conversations used to say, "The trouble begins as soon as you want to change." A great French writer has repeated this and has made out of it his pet theory: "Misery begins when you want to perfect yourself; if you do not wish to perfect yourself, you won't have any misery!" I may tell you that this is absolutely wrong, but there are, all the same, things in you that want absolutely to be left alone, not to be disturbed in any way: 'Oh! What a nuisance you are, leave us alone!' "[14]

2. The Most Dangerous Thing

"**…there is not a thing more dangerous than to teach others.** You know just a little and you begin to teach others, and you are immediately compelled to say more than you know, because people put questions to you which you cannot answer, unless you are a hero of silence. In the world, those who want to pass themselves off as spiritual teachers – when people come and ask them something they do not know, they invent it. Therefore, if in your inner discipline you begin to pretend, you may be sure of falling into the worst hole – **of all things pretence is the most ruinous.**"[15]

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"…you may be sure that as soon as there is a mental transcription, the mind always knows how to fill up the holes – it likes things to be logical, continuous; and without your knowing it, quite spontaneously it supplies elements which were missing in your experience. I do not blame anyone, I know that it is a spontaneous phenomenon. One must be extremely attentive in order to be quite exact and precise."[16]

3. Sincerity and the Process of Advancement in Yoga

"Is it not dangerous to say, "My movements are not mine, I have not to think of them"?

Yes, evidently, if you say, "I can do nothing, that belongs to Nature, the movement has to follow its natural course", you do exactly what I have told you not to do, you make use of the Divine as a fine cloak to cover the satisfaction of your desires. But the opposite movement, "I am good for nothing because such an idea has crossed my mind" is equally wrong, isn't it?

Naturally, if an impulse happens to come to you which you do not want, the first thing to do is to will that it does not come again; but if, on the contrary, you do not sincerely want it to disappear, then keep it, but do not try to do yoga. **You should not take the path unless you have resolved beforehand to overcome all difficulties. The decision must be sincere and complete.** You will notice, besides, as you gradually advance, that what you believed to be complete is not so, what you considered to be sincere is not so, and then you will progress little by little; **but to succeed you must have as total a will for progress as possible.** If you have this will and if an impulse seizes you with violence, keep the

will firm, your being must not vacillate; you must expect these things to come, but when they come, tell yourself, "Well, they come from below, I do not want them to recur, they are not mine." This is not the same thing as saying, 'Let it go, since it is Nature.'

There must already be a beginning of realisation in the vital for it to revolt against the impulses that come to it."[17]

* * *

"But is it not the vital itself which finally should take the decision to change?

I may assure you that the vital, left to itself, will never take the decision to be transformed – it is quite satisfied with itself and, over and above this, being an accomplice of the mind, the mind will furnish it with all possible explanations for whatever it does. People who live in their vital consciousness are, even when they do not say so, always very satisfied with themselves. They are also very satisfied with all that happens to them and they always say of their impulses, "How interesting it is, how interesting!" So, if you wait for the vital to take the decision, you may have to wait for a long time!

You must teach your vital that it must obey. Before feeling any satisfaction, it must understand that it has nothing else to do but obey. That is why I say that it is not very easy to begin the yoga; if you are not sincere, do not begin.

The body is very obedient; truly it tries to do its best, but it does not know whom to obey, for generally it is not in direct contact with the higher being or the psychic. Impulses

come to it directly from the mind or from the mind clothed with the vital, and it does what they desire. Before the vital takes a decision (and I have told you, it is not very easy for it to take a decision), a light must begin to dawn in the highest part of the mind, a light which puts you in touch with a higher consciousness or with your psychic, and it is upon this light that you must take your support to explain things to the mind, to the vital and finally to the body."[18]

4. Miracles

"This is a temptation that every teacher meets at each step, for the very simple reason that ordinary humanity, in a general way, not being in personal contact with the divine powers, understands nothing of what an illumined consciousness may be and asks for material proofs. It is on this demand that most religions are established and, for reasons which I may very frankly call "political", they have put at the origin of their religion a more or less considerable number of miracles as having been performed by the founders, and they have thus more or less crudely encouraged among ignorant people the taste, the necessity for seeing what they call "miracles" in order to believe in the divine power of a person. This is an extraordinary ignorance, because **it is not at all necessary to have a divine power or consciousness to perform miracles.** It is infinitely more easy to perform miracles with the help of small entities of the vital world who are material enough to be in touch with the physical world and act upon it, than to live in the consciousness of the higher regions and to work upon Nature only through the intermediary of all the other domains. It has been repeated over and over again to all human intellects that the proof of

a being's divinity is that he can raise the dead, cure maladies, and do many other things of the same kind (except making a fool wise).* Well, I guarantee that this is not a proof; it proves only one thing, that these "Masters" are in contact with the powers of the vital world and that with the help of those beings they can perform these miracles, that's all. If one relies upon that to recognise the superiority of a man, one would make a glaring mistake. Naturally, there are other religions which are established on revelations made to their founders. These revelations are more or less happy mental transcriptions of the knowledge they received. This is already of a higher order but it is not yet a proof. And I would finally say, the human demand for proofs is not at all favourable to one's development. Because the true divine power has organised the world according to a certain plan and in this plan there was no question of things happening in an illogical way; otherwise from the very beginning the world would have been illogical and it is not so. Men imagine for the most part one of two things, either that there is a material world to which they belong, that all comes from there, all returns there and all ends there – these are the unbelievers – or, the believers, most of them, that there is something which they call "God" and then the physical world, and that this physical world is the creation of that God who knows what he is doing or does what he wants; and the confusion lies in saying that everything happens by a kind of arbitrariness, natural or supernatural.

** Mother added later: This is a Mohammedan story, I believe. As it was said that Jesus raised the dead, healed the sick, made the dumb speak, gave sight to the blind, one day an idiot was brought to him, to be made intelligent and Jesus ran away! "Why did you run away?" he was asked. "I can do everything," he answered, "except give intelligence to an idiot."*

There are very few people who know that there exists in the universe an infinite number of gradations and that each one of these gradations has its own reality, its own life, its own law, its own determinism, and that the creation did not come about "like that", by an arbitrary will, in an arbitrary way but is a deploying of consciousness and each thing has evolved as a logical result of the preceding one. I am telling you all this as simply as I can, you see, it is a very incomplete expression, but if I wanted to tell you the story exactly as it is, it would be a little difficult to make you understand. Only I would like you to know my conclusion (I have already spoken about it several times, more or less in detail), it is this: each one of these numberless regions has its own very logical determinism – everything proceeds from cause to effect; but these worlds, although differentiated, are not separate from each other and, by numerous processes which we may study, the inner or higher worlds are in constant contact with the lower or external worlds and act upon these, so that the determinism of one changes the determinism of the other. If you take the purely material domain, for instance, and if you notice that the material laws, the purely material laws are altered by something all of a sudden, you ought to say that it was a "miracle", because there is a rupture of the determinism of one plane through the intervention of another, but usually we do not call this a miracle. For example, when the human will intervenes and changes something, that seems to you quite natural, because you have been accustomed to it from your childhood; you remember, don't you, the example I gave you the other day: a stone falls according to the law of its own determinism, but you wish to interrupt its fall and you stretch out your hand and catch it; well you ought to call this a "miracle", but

you don't because you are used to it (but a rat or a dog would perhaps call it a miracle if they could speak). And note that it is the same for what people call a "miracle"; they speak of a "miracle" because they are absolutely ignorant, unaware of the gradations between the will which wants to express itself and the plane on which it expresses itself. When they have a mental or a vital will, the thing seems quite natural to them, but when it is a question of the will of a higher world – the world of the gods or of a higher entity – which all of a sudden upsets all your little organisation, that seems to you a miracle. But it is a miracle simply because you are unable to follow the gradations by which the phenomenon took place. Therefore, the Supreme Will, that which comes from the very highest region, if you saw it in its logical action, if you were aware of it continually, it would seem to you altogether natural. You can express this in two ways: either say, "It is quite natural, it is like this that things must happen, it is only an expression of the divine Will", or, each time you see on the material plane an intervention coming from another plane, you ought to say, "It is miraculous!" **So I may say with certainty that people who want to see miracles are people who cherish their ignorance! You understand my logic, don't you? These people love their ignorance, they insist upon seeing miracles and being astounded! And that is why people who have done yoga seriously consider it altogether fatal to encourage this tendency; hence it is forbidden.**"[19]

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"If you use power to show that you possess it, it becomes so full of falsehood and untruth that finally it disappears. But it is not always thus, because, as I said at the beginning, when

it concerns a power like the power of healing or the power of changing an altogether external thing – of making an unfavourable circumstance favourable, of finding lost objects, all these countless little "miracles" which are found in all religions – it is much more easy and even more effective to do these "miracles" with the help of the entities of the vital world which are not always recommendable, far from it; and then these beings make fun of you. This begins very well, very brilliantly, and usually finishes very badly."[20]

5. Sincerity and the Unification of the Being

"…if you are not sincere, you will begin by deceiving yourself and you will hear nothing at all except the voice of your ego and then you will commit with assurance (thinking that it is the real small voice) the most awful stupidities. But if you are sincere, the way is sure. It is not even a voice, not even a sensation, it is something extremely subtle – a slight indication. When everything goes well, that is, when you do nothing contrary to the divine Will, you will not perhaps have any definite impression, everything will seem to you normal. Of course, you should be eager to know whether you are acting in accordance with the divine Will, that is the first point, naturally, without which you can know nothing at all. But once you are eager and you pay attention, everything seems to you normal, natural, then all of a sudden, you feel a little uneasiness somewhere in the head, in the heart or even in the stomach – generally one doesn't give it a thought; you may feel it several times in the day but you reject it without giving it any attention; but it is no longer quite the same; then, at that moment, you must stop, no matter what you may be doing, and look, and if you are sincere, you will notice a small black spot (a tiny

wicked idea, a tiny false movement, a small arbitrary decision) and that's the source of the uneasiness. You will notice then that the little black spot comes from the ego which is full of preferences; generally it does what it likes; the things it likes are called good and those it does not are called bad – this clouds your judgment. It is difficult to judge under these conditions. If you truly want to know, you must draw back a step and look, and you will know then that it is this small movement of the ego which is the cause of the uneasiness. You will see that it is a tiny thing curled back upon itself; you will have the impression of being in front of something hard which resists or is black. Then with patience, from the height of your consciousness, you must explain to this thing its mistake, and in the end it will disappear. I do not say that you will succeed all at once the very first day, but if you try sincerely, you will always end with success. And if you persevere, you will see that all of a sudden you are relieved of a mass of meanness and ugliness and obscurity which was preventing you from flowering in the light. It is those things which make you shrivel up, prevent you from widening yourself, opening out in a light where you have the impression of being very comfortable. If you make this effort, you will see finally that you are very far from the point where you had begun, the things you did not feel, did not understand, have become clear. If you are resolved, you are sure to succeed.

This is the first step towards unifying yourself, becoming a conscious being who has a central will and acts only according to this will, which will be a constant expression of the divine Will. It is worth trying.

And I may tell you from my personal experience that there is nothing in the world more interesting. If you begin

making this effort you will find that your life is full of interest – you know, of the ordinary life of people at least a third is a kind of dull boredom (I say a third, but for some two-thirds of the day is a dull boredom), and all that gets volatilised! Everything becomes so interesting, the least little thing, the least casual meeting, the least word exchanged, the least thing displaced – everything is full of life and interest."[21]

6. True Freedom

"Most people confuse liberty with licence. For the ordinary mind, to be free is to have the chance of committing every stupidity that one likes, without anybody intervening. I say one must be "absolutely free", but it is a very dangerous advice unless one understands the meaning of the words. Free from what? – free from attachments, evidently. It is exactly that. It is the story of the Buddha who answers the young man expert in all the arts, 'I am an expert in the art of self-control. If men congratulate me or praise me, it leaves me tranquil and indifferent. If they blame me, that leaves me equally tranquil and indifferent.' "[22]

* * *

"The only way of being truly free is to make your surrender to the Divine entire, without reservation, because then all that binds you, ties you down, chains you, falls away naturally from you and has no longer any importance. If someone comes and blames you, you may say, "On what authority does he blame me, does he know the supreme will?" And the same thing when you are congratulated. This is not to advise you not to profit by what comes to you from others – I have learnt throughout my life that even a little child can

give you a lesson. Not that he is less ignorant than you but he is like a mirror which reflects the image of what you are; he may tell you something which is not true but also may show you something that you did not know. You can hence profit a great deal by it if you receive the lesson without any undesirable reaction.

Every hour of my life I have learnt that one can learn something; but I have never felt bound by the opinion of others, for I consider that there is only one truth in the world which can know something, and this is the Supreme Truth. Then one is quite free. And it is this freedom that I want of you – free from all attachment, all ignorance, all reaction; free from everything except a total surrender to the Divine. This is the way out from all responsibility towards the world. The Divine alone is responsible."[23]

7. The First Basis in Forming the Ashram

"Education is a sacerdocy, teaching is a sacerdocy, and to be at the head of a State is a sacerdocy. Then, if the person who fulfils this role aspires to fulfil it in the highest and the most true way, the general condition of the world can become much better. Unfortunately, most people never think about this at all, they fill their role somehow – not to speak of the **innumerable people who work only to earn money, but in this case their activity is altogether rotten, naturally. That was my very first basis in forming the Ashram: that the work done here be an offering to the Divine.**"[24] (11-2-1951)

8. The Recording of All Terrestrial Happenings

"The capacity for visions, when it is sincere and

spontaneous, can put you in touch with events which you are not capable of knowing in your outer consciousness.... There is a very interesting fact, it is that somewhere in the terrestrial mind, somewhere in the terrestrial vital, somewhere in the subtle physical, one can find an exact, perfect, automatic recording of everything that happens. It is the most formidable memory one could imagine, which misses nothing, forgets nothing, records all. And if you are able to enter into it, you can go backward, you can go forward, and in all directions, and you will have the "memory" of all things – not only of things of the past, but of things to come. For everything is recorded there.

In the mental world, for instance, there is a domain of the physical mind which is related to physical things and keeps the memory of physical happenings upon earth. It is as though you were entering into innumerable vaults, one following another indefinitely, and these vaults are filled with small pigeon-holes, one above another, one above another, with tiny doors. Then if you want to know something and if you are conscious, you look, and you see something like a small point – a shining point; you find that this is what you wish to know and you have only to concentrate there and it opens; and when it opens, there is a sort of an unrolling of something like extremely subtle manuscripts, but if your concentration is sufficiently strong you begin to read as though from a book. And you have the whole story in all its details. There are thousands of these little holes, you know; when you go for a walk there, it is as though you were walking in infinity. And in this way you can find the exact facts about whatever you want to know. But I must tell you that what you find is never what has been reported in history – histories are always planned

out; I have never come across a single "historical" fact which is like history. This is not to discourage you from learning history, but things are like that. Events have been quite different from the way in which they have been reported, and for a very simple reason: the human brain is not capable of recording things with exactitude; history is built upon memories and memories are always vague. If you take, for example, written memories, he who writes chooses the events which have interested him, what he has seen, noticed or known, and that is always only a very small portion of the whole. When the historian narrates, the same thing happens as with dreams where you take one point, then another, then another, and at last you can have an almost exact vision of what has taken place and with a little imagination you fill up the gaps; but historians relate a continuous story; between the events or moments there are gaps which they fill up as best they can or rather as they wish, according to their mental, vital and other preferences. And that comprises the history you are made to learn. The same story, narrated in one language and in another, in one country or in another, you cannot imagine how comic it is! This is particularly true if one of the countries is interested because of its vanity, its prestige. And finally the two pictures presented to you are so different that you could believe that two different things were being spoken about. It is unbelievable. But I have noticed that even for altogether external, concrete facts where there is no question of evaluation, it is still the same thing. No human brain is capable of understanding a thing in its totality; even the most scholarly, the most learned, even the most sincere person does not see a subject – and especially many subjects – totally. He will say what he knows, what he understands, and all that he does not

know, all that he does not understand is not there, and this absolutely changes everything.

But if you can acquire this capability of entering into the terrestrial memory, I assure you it is worth the trouble. It is quite different from Yoga; it is not necessary to have a spiritual life for that, you must have a special ability.

For everything – I would repeat it to you eternally if I had the time – for everything, one must be absolutely sincere. If you are not sincere, you will begin by deceiving yourself and all your experiences will be worth nothing at all. But if you are sincere and by discipline (for it is not easy) you succeed in entering this mental memory of the world, you will make discoveries which are really worth the trouble."[25] (15-2-1951)

9. The Working of the Divine Will in the World

"Those who wish to remain in an inner peace say that everything that happens is the will of God – this is very convenient for being quiet, it is the best way, there is no better; if there is a better way, it is much more difficult. So, if your will is contradicted, you say it is the will of God; you are quiet, you have done what you could and the result is different from what you expected, and you are in peace. (Note that this is not very easy; it is quite good already, but this is not all.) **But it may also be quite possible that your will was contradicted by circumstances and yet it was right.** Then the solution is much more difficult. First, how to know that it was right?... If you are quite impartial, quiet, peaceful, and as little egoistic as possible, if you look straight in the face at what has happened and see a sort of contradiction, the impression that a light has gone out and you are in the presence

of a falsehood, you remain quite calm, but you see and understand that your will has been contradicted for some unknown reason, though in itself it **was not false, that what you had seen was the truth but it did not manifest itself for some reason or other. So you must start on the adventure of discovering the reason why your truth did not manifest itself.** This is a problem a little more difficult... but if you expand your vision sufficiently, both in height and wideness, you can immediately see the consequences your will would have had if it had been realised, and the consequences of what would have happened; and if you fling your view far enough, **you will be able to see that your will, however true it was, was a partial truth – it was not a collective, general truth, and still less a universal one – and, consequently, if this truth had been realised at that moment, it would have dislocated a certain *ensemble* and many things which form a part of the divine Work (for everything, in fact, is a part of the divine Work, the entire creation, the entire universe): one part of the whole would have been left behind.**

People always ask, "But if the Divine is all-powerful, why is it that things have not yet changed?" **This is the reason why. And mark that your idea of what ought to be is so infinitely far off from what will be, that, by this very fact, even if you try to see in the most complete way possible, you will leave behind such a large portion of the universe that it will be almost a linear realisation, and in any case so small, so narrow, that the greater part of the universe will remain unchanged.** And even if you have a very vast view of the whole, even if you can conceive of something more total and you go ahead on the path which is ready – for

it is with paths as it is with beings, some are ready – without having the patience to wait for others, that is, if you wish to realise something very close to the true Truth in comparison with the present state of the world, what will happen? – the dislocation of a certain unity, a rupture not only of harmony but of equilibrium, for there will be an entire part of the creation which will not be able to follow. **And instead of a complete realisation of the Divine, you will have a small localised realisation, infinitesimal, and nothing will be done of what finally ought to be done.**

Consequently, you should not be impatient, should not be disappointed, depressed, discouraged if the truth you have seen is not immediately realised. Naturally, it is not a question of being down-hearted or grieved or in despair if you have made a mistake, for every mistake can be corrected; from the moment you have found it is a mistake, there is an opportunity to work within you, to make progress and be very happy! **But the situation is much more serious and more difficult to overcome when you have seen something true, absolutely, essentially true, and the state of the universe is such that this truth is not yet ripe for realisation. I do not say this happens to many people, but perhaps it may happen to you, and it is then you have to have a great patience, a great understanding, and say to yourself, "It was true, but it was not completely true"**, that is, it was not a truth in harmony with all the other truths and, above all, not in keeping with the present possibilities; so we tried to realise it too quickly, and because we tried to be too quick it was belied. But do not say it was false because it was belied; say it was premature, that is all you can say – what you saw was true, but it was premature, and you must,

with much patience and perseverance, keep your little truth intact for the moment when it will be possible to realise it.

The final victory is for the most patient."[26]

10. How to Offer One's Will to the Divine?

"You can at every minute make the gift of your will in an aspiration – and an aspiration which formulates itself very simply, not just 'Lord, Thy will be done", but "Grant that I may do as well as I can the best thing to do.'

You may not know at every moment what is the best thing to do or how to do it, but you can place your will at the disposal of the Divine to do the best possible, the best thing possible. You will see it will have marvellous results. Do this with consciousness, sincerity and perseverance, and you will find yourself getting along with gigantic strides. It is like that, isn't it? One must do things with all the ardour of one's soul, with all the strength of one's will; do at every moment the best possible, the best thing possible. What others do is not your concern – this is something I shall never be able to repeat to you often enough."[27]

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"When I told you just a while ago that you must aspire with a great ardour to do the best possible, at every moment the best thing possible, you could have asked me, "That is all very well. But how to know?" Well, it is not necessary to know! **If you take this attitude with sincerity, you will know at each moment what you have to do, and it is this which is so wonderful! According to your sincerity, the inspiration is more and more precise, more and more exact.**"[28]

11. The World is Essentially the Opposite of What it Has Become

"If you look at yourself carefully, you will see that one always carries in oneself the opposite of the virtue one has to realise (I use "virtue" in its widest and highest sense). You have a special aim, a special mission, a special realisation which is your very own, each one individually, and you carry in yourself all the obstacles necessary to make your realisation perfect. Always you will see that within you the shadow and the light are equal: you have an ability, you have also the negation of this ability. But if you discover a very black hole, a thick shadow, be sure there is somewhere in you a great light. It is up to you to know how to use the one to realise the other.

This is a fact very little spoken about, but one of capital importance. And if you observe carefully you will see that it is always thus with everyone. This leads us to statements which are paradoxical but absolutely true; for instance, that the greatest thief can be the most honest man (this is not to encourage you to steal, of course!) and the greatest liar can be the most truthful person. So, do not despair if you find in yourself the greatest weakness, for perhaps it is the sign of the greatest divine strength. Do not say, "I am like that, I can't be otherwise." It is not true. You are "like that" because, precisely, you ought to be the opposite. And all your difficulties are there just so that you may learn to transform them into the truth they are hiding.

Once you have understood this, many worries come to an end and you are very happy, very happy. If one finds one has very black holes, one says, "This shows I can rise very

high", if the abyss is very deep, "I can climb very high." It is the same from the universal point of view; to use the Hindu terminology so familiar to you, it is the greatest Asuras who are the greatest beings of Light. And the day these Asuras are converted, they will be the supreme beings of the creation. This is not to encourage you to be asuric, you know, but it is like that – this will widen your minds a little and help you to free yourself from those ideas of opposing good and evil, for if you abide in that category, there is no hope.

If the world was not essentially the opposite of what it has become, there would be no hope. For the hole is so black and so deep, and the inconscience so complete, that if this were not the sign of the total consciousness, well, there would be nothing more to do but pack up one's kit and go away. Men like Shankara, who did not see much further than the end of their nose, said that the world was not worth the trouble of living in, for it was impossible, that it was better to treat it as an illusion and go away, there was nothing to be done with it. I tell you, on the contrary, that **it is because the world is very bad, very dark, very ugly, very unconscious, full of misery and suffering, that it can become the supreme Beauty, the supreme Light, the supreme Consciousness and supreme Felicity.**"[29]

12. True Meditation

"Do not fall into the very common error of believing that you must sit in an absolutely quiet corner where nobody passes by, where you are in a classical position and altogether immobile, in order to be able to meditate – it is not true. **What is needed is to succeed in meditating under all**

circumstances, and I call "meditating" not emptying your head but concentrating yourself in a contemplation of the Divine; and if you keep this contemplation within you, all that you do will change its quality – not its appearance, for apparently it will be the same thing, but its quality. And life will change its quality, and you, you will feel a little different from what you were, with a peace, a certitude, an inner calm, an unchanging force, something which never gives way.

In that state it will be difficult to do you harm – the forces always try, this world is so full of adverse forces which seek to upset everything... but they succeed in a very small measure, only in the measure necessary to force you to make a new progress.

Each time you receive a blow from life, tell yourself immediately, "Ah, I have to make a progress"; then the blow becomes a blessing. Instead of tucking your head between your shoulders, you lift it up with joy and you say, "What is it I have to learn? I want to know. What is it I have to change? I want to know." This is what you should do."[30] (17-2-1951)

13. Psychic and the Mind are Rarely Within One

"If one goes out of the body leaving it on the bed, can someone else enter it?

That can happen but it is extremely rare, once in a hundred thousand cases.

"Someone" cannot enter – a human being cannot enter the body of another unless he has quite an exceptional and unique occult knowledge and in that case he will not do it.

But if a human being does not enter, at times there are beings of the vital world who do not have a body and want to have one for the fun of the experience, and when they see that someone has gone out of the body (but he must go out very materially) and is not sufficiently protected, they can rush in to take his place. But it is such a rare thing that if you had not put the question I would not have spoken about it. Still it is not an impossibility.

People who have nightmares of this kind should always protect themselves occultly before going out of the body – it can be done in many ways. The simplest way, one which needs no special knowledge is to call the Guru or, if one knows somebody who has the knowledge, to call him in thought or spirit; or to protect oneself by making a kind of wall of protection around oneself (one can do many things, can't one?); this can prevent such beings from entering.

If you have a disposition for exteriorisation and if you follow a yoga, you are always asked to protect your sleep: by some contemplation, a mental movement, any movement – there are many ways of protecting oneself. But I think there is no such danger for you; perhaps not for everybody, but still one would have to be terribly ambitious, terribly insincere for such a thing to happen; one would have to be in relation with truly wicked entities, for, a being who lives in orderliness and truth will never rush into the body of another, that is an act of disorder and it is not done.

Is it the psychic being which goes out or some other part of the being?

If it is the psychic being which goes out, one would not be aware of it, the more so as most of the time it is not within you! **Very few people carry their psychic being within them because the dwelling-place is not ready.** What goes out is sometimes the subtle physical, this is when one sees one's body stretched out – for the physical vision to remain conscious, it must be a very material part of the being which goes out; one must go out very materially in the subtle physical body or in the most material vital. But usually it is the vital which goes out and still more often the mental being; but when it is the mind which goes out one is not aware of it at all, for the mind is like the psychic, it is very rarely within you. If you think of something or somebody, one part of your mind is immediately there – **the mind is a vagabond, it roves, it comes and goes, it enters and goes out. There are very few people who have organised their mind sufficiently to keep it within them, close-packed, and prevent it from gadding about.**

At times I seem to go out of my body and see it dead.

But that is a mere dream; probably you did not go out of your body at all. There are people who dream they are dead. But that is of no importance."[31] (19-2-1951)

14. Sincerity – the Sole Measure of the Worth of an Experience

"**…all experience has its worth only in the measure of the sincerity of the one who has it.** Some are not sincere and fabricate wonderful experiences, and they imagine they have them. I put all that aside, it is not interesting. But for sincere people who have a sincere experience, once you have

the experience of the divine presence, the whole world may tell you it is not true, and you will not budge.

If you are not sincere, you may have wonderful experiences, but these have no value either for you or for others. You should distrust your thought a good deal, for the mind is a wonderful constructor and it can give you wonderful experiences solely by its work of formation; but these experiences have no value. It is hence preferable not to know beforehand what is going to happen. For even with a great will to be sincere, the mind fabricates so much and so well that it can present to you a wonderful picture or even play for you a splendid comedy without your being aware of it, by its sheer power of formation, and it is very difficult to find out. Hence one essential condition for having true experiences: leave this machine in quietness; the less it moves, the better it is, and beware of everything it imagines for you."[32]

15. The Difference Between Aspiration and Desire and the Psychic Being and the Soul

"What is the difference between aspiration and a demand?

When you have experienced both, you can easily make the distinction. In aspiration there is what I might call an unselfish flame which is not present in desire. **Your aspiration is not a turning back upon self – desire is always a turning back upon oneself. From the purely psychological point of view, aspiration is a self-giving, always, while desire is always something which one draws to oneself;** aspiration is something which gives itself, not necessarily in the form of thought but in the movement, in the vibration, in the vital impulse.

True aspiration does not come from the head; even when it is formulated by a thought, it springs up like a flame from the heart. I do not know if you have read the articles Sri Aurobindo has written on the Vedas. He explains somewhere that **these hymns were not written with the mind; they were not, as one thinks, prayers, but the expression of an aspiration which was an impulse, like a flame coming from the heart (though it is not the "heart" but the psychological centre of the being, to use the exact words). They were not "thought out", words were not set to experiences, the experience came wholly formulated with the precise, exact, inevitable words – they could not be changed.** This is the very nature of aspiration: you do not seek to formulate it, it springs up from you like a ready flame. And if there are words (sometimes there aren't any), they cannot be changed: you cannot replace one word by another, every word is just the right one. When the aspiration is formulated, this is done categorically, absolutely, without any possibility of change. And it is always something that springs up and gives itself, whereas the very nature of desire is to pull things to oneself.

The essential difference between love in aspiration and love in desire is that love in aspiration gives itself entirely and asks nothing in return – it does not claim anything; whereas love in desire gives itself as little as possible, asks as much as possible, it pulls things to itself and always makes demands.

Aspiration always gives joy, doesn't it?

Rather a feeling of plenitude – "joy" is a misleading word; a feeling of plenitude, of force, of an inner flame which fills you. Aspiration can give you joy, but a very special joy,

which has no excitement in it.

Are the soul and the psychic being one and the same thing?

That depends on the definition you give to the words. **In most religions, and perhaps in most philosophies also, it is the vital being which is called "soul", for it is said that "the soul leaves the body", while it is the vital being which leaves the body. One speaks of "saving the soul", "wicked souls", "redeeming the soul"... but all that applies to the vital being, for the psychic being has no need to be saved! It does not share the faults of the external person, it is free from all reaction.**"[33] (22-2-1951)

16. The Psychic Being

"The other day I said that most of the time people do not have their psychic being within them. I would like to explain this in greater detail.... You must remember that the inner beings are not in the third dimension. If you open up your body you will find only the viscera of the body which are in the third dimension. The inner beings are in another dimension, and when I say that some men do not have their psychic being within them, I do not mean that it is not at the centre of their being, but that their outer consciousness is so small, so limited, so obscure that it is not able to keep a contact, not only conscious but intimate, with the psychic being which extends beyond it in every way; it is so much higher and deeper than the other outer consciousness that there is no relation either of quality or of nature between them. Religions say that you have a divine spark in you – it is well they call it a "spark", for it is so small indeed that it can be placed anywhere in the body without difficulty. But this does

not mean that it is in the body: it is within the consciousness in another dimension, and there are beings who have a contact with it, others who haven't. But if you come to the divine Presence in the atom, the image is easier to understand, for there you touch so infinitesimal a domain that you are on the border-line where you can no longer distinguish between two, three, four or five dimensions. If you study modern physics you will understand what I mean. The movements constituting an atom are, in the matter of size, so imperceptible that they cannot be understood with our three dimensional understanding, the more so as they follow laws which elude completely this three-dimensional idea. So if you take refuge there, you may say that the divine spark is at the centre of each atom and you won't be far from the truth; but I was not speaking of the divine spark, I was speaking of the being, the psychic consciousness, which is another thing. The psychic being is an entity which has a form; it is organised around a central consciousness and, having a form it has a dimension, but a dimension of another kind than the third dimension of the outer consciousness.

It is often said that children enter into possession of their psychic being when they are about seven. What does this mean exactly?

This is not correct. There are people whose psychic being watches over their formation before their birth, even before they are in the womb of their mother. There are children whose psychic being comes into contact with them at the very moment they utter their first cry. **There are also people whose psychic being comes a few hours after their birth, or some days after, or some weeks, some months, some years after or... never!**

You told me once that one must not ask a child to make a mental effort before the age of seven.

That is quite different. There it is a question only of the formation of the physical brain which develops slowly, little by little. If you ask of a brain in formation an effort beyond its capacity, you tire it, you overwork it or you make it ill.

You say that the psychic being is the same thing as the divine spark...

No, I never said that – it would be foolish! **The psychic being is organised *around* the divine spark. The divine spark is one, universal, the same everywhere and in everything, one and infinite, of the same kind in all.** You cannot say that it is a being – it is *the being*, if you like, but not *a* being. Naturally, if you go back to the origin, you may say that there is only one soul, for the origin of all souls is the same, as the origin of the whole universe is the same, as the origin of the entire creation is the same. But the psychic being is an individual, personal being with its own experience, its own development, its own growth, its own organisation; only, this organisation is the product of the action of a central divine spark.

But the day an external being (physical, mental, vital) enters into direct and constant contact with the psychic being, one may say in the same way that the *physical* being of this person is organised by the central divine consciousness. The moment you put yourself in contact with it, submit yourself to it, you are organised by it, by the central divine consciousness; one may say that the body is organised by it, but it is a *body*, not a soul. The fact of being organised by this divine spark does not make it a soul.

Is there a psychic being in the atom?

No, it is not yet there. It can be said that there is a possibility of psychic consciousness in Matter – the diffusion of the divine Consciousness had only one object: to make possible an organisation which would be under the direct influence of the Divine. That is why it passes over all the worlds of disorder.* It may hence be said that the Origin of the soul is also in the atom, in all the elements constituting the atom, but it is only the Origin.... I must tell you that when it is fully formed, the psychic being has a distinct form which corresponds to our physical form. It is not altogether similar, but it has a definite form. Every psychic being is different from another – they are not all cut out, modelled to one pattern. They are different, each has an individuality, a personality."[34]

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"Let us take a divine spark which, through attraction, through affinity and selection, gathers around it a beginning of psychic consciousness (this work is already very perceptible in animals – don't think you are exceptional beings, that you alone have a psychic being and the rest of creation hasn't. It begins in the mineral, it is a little more developed in the plant,

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** At the time of the publication of this talk, Mother added the following note for the sake of precision: "Some parts of the vital are worlds of disorder and the beings inhabiting the vital have no psychic being. The psychic being exists only upon earth, in the physical world. That is why I said in brief that the divine spark, which organises the psychic, passed over the worlds of disorder and manifested itself directly in the physical world to create there this possibility of organisation around the divine spark."*

and in the animal there is a first glimmer of the psychic presence). Then there comes a moment when this psychic being is sufficiently developed to have an independent consciousness and a personal will. And then after innumerable lives more or less individualised, it becomes conscious of itself, of its movements and of the environment it has chosen for its growth. Arriving at a certain state of perception, it decides – generally at the last minute of the life it has just finished upon earth – the conditions in which its next life will be passed. Here I must tell you a very important thing: the psychic being can progress and form itself only in the physical life and upon earth. As soon as it leaves a body, it enters into a rest which lasts for a more or less long time according to its own choice and its degree of development – a rest for assimilation, for a passive progress so to say, a rest for passive growth which will allow this same psychic being to pass on to new experiences and make a more active progress. But after having finished one life (which usually ends only when it has done what it wanted to do), it will have chosen the environment where it will be born, the approximate place where it will be born, the conditions and the kind of life in which it will be born, and a very precise programme of the experiences through which it will have to pass to be able to make the progress it wants to make."[35]

* * *

"…if… there is a couple upon earth or rather a woman who has a psychic aspiration herself and, for some reason or other, without knowing why or how, would like to have an exceptional child, answering certain exceptional conditions; if at this moment there is this aspiration upon earth, it creates

a vibration, a psychic light which the psychic being sees immediately and, without hesitation it rushes towards it. Then, from that moment (which is the moment of conception), it watches over the formation of the child, so that this formation may be as favourable as possible to the plan it has; consequently its influence is there over the child even before it appears in the physical world.

If all goes well, if there is no accident (accidents can always happen), if all goes well at the moment the child is about to be born, the psychic force (perhaps not in its totality, but a part of the psychic consciousness) rushes into the being and from its very first cry gives it a push towards the experiences it wants the child to acquire. The result is that even if the parents are not conscious, even if the child in its external consciousness is not quite conscious (a little child does not have the necessary brain for that, it forms slowly, little by little), in spite of that, it will be possible for the psychic influence to direct all the events, all the circumstances of the life of this child till the moment it becomes capable of coming into conscious contact with its psychic being (physically it is generally between the age of four and seven, sometimes sooner, sometimes almost immediately, but in such a case we deal with children who are not "children", who have "supernatural" qualities, as they say – they are not "supernatural", but simply the expression of the presence of the psychic being). But there are people who have not had the chance or rather the good fortune if one may call it that, of meeting someone, physically, who could instruct them. And yet they have the feeling that every step of their existence, every circumstance of their life is arranged by someone conscious, so that they may make the maximum progress.

When they need a certain circumstance, it comes; when they need to meet certain people, they come; when they need to read certain books, they find them within their reach. Everything is arranged like that, as if someone was watching over them so that their life may have the maximum possibilities of development. These people may very well say: "But what is a psychic being?", for no one has ever used these words in speaking to them or they have not found anybody who could explain to them all that; but for them often just one meeting is sufficient, just one look, in order to wake up; one word suffices to make them remember: 'But I knew all that!'

This is exactly what happens to a psychic being which has reached the last stage of its development. After that, it will no longer be bound by the necessity of coming upon earth, it will have completed its development and will be able to choose freely either to consecrate itself to the divine Work or go elsewhere, that is, in the higher worlds. But generally, having come to this stage, it remembers all that has happened to it and understands the great necessity of coming to the help of those who are yet struggling in the midst of difficulties. These psychic beings give their whole existence to the divine Work – this is not absolute, inevitable, they choose freely, but ninety times out of a hundred this is what they do."[36]

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"The universe is constituted in such a way that all the possibilities can be realised there: but, as I said, it is rare for one to be born several times in the same country unless it be to accomplish a special work, with a special end in view; and then it is very rare for one not to know it, for this means that

the psychic being is fully formed and has itself chosen to come back to the same country to do a special work or to continue what it had already begun."[37] (24-2-1951)

17. When it is that one is Truly Dead?

"It is only when something extremely material goes out of the body and all ties are broken that there is truly "death". And that is why (I believe we are beginning to discover it) people do not die till six or seven days after their death. That is, they are not "dead" as long as the body remains intact, but only when a part of the body begins to decompose. Hence during this period, someone who has the necessary knowledge, power and capacity may "raise" a person in such a state. I believe this explains most of the cases of "miraculous" resurrection."[38] (24-2-1951)

18. Yoga and the Reading of Ordinary Books

"Ordinary books tire me.

It is a good sign.

They give rest to the mind and have no effect on me.

No! The subconscient records everything, and if you have the impression that an ordinary book leaves no effect, it means that you are not conscious of what goes on within you. Each time you read a book in which the consciousness is very low, it strengthens your subconscient and inconscient – it prevents your consciousness from rising upward. It is as if you threw buckets of dirty water on the efforts you had made to purify your subconscient.

It is inevitable, but there are people who are not even aware that their consciousness has fallen very low.

There is a state in which a simple conversation which obliges you to remain on the level of ordinary life gives you a headache, turns your stomach and, if it continues, may give you a fever. I am speaking of course about the gossip-type of conversations. I believe that apart from a few exceptions, everybody indulges in this exercise and talks of things about which he should keep silent or chatters about other things. It becomes so natural that you are not troubled by it. But if you continue in this way, you hinder your consciousness completely from rising up; you bind yourself with iron chains to the ordinary consciousness and the work in the subconscious is not done or has not even begun. Those who want to rise up have already enough difficulties without looking for encouragements outside.

Naturally, the effort to keep the consciousness at a high level is tiring in the beginning, like the exercises you do to develop your muscles. But you do not give up gymnastics because of that! So mentally also you must do the same thing. You must not allow your mind to stoop low: gossiping degrades you and, if you want to do Yoga, you must abstain from it, that's all."[39]

* * *

"Don't you think there are enough ugly things in the world without one's giving a picture of them in books? This is something which always used to surprise me, even when I was a child – life is so ugly, so full of mean, miserable, even at times repulsive things, what is the use of imagining yet worse things than are already there? If you imagined something more beautiful, a more beautiful life, that would be worth the trouble. **People who take pleasure in writing ugly things**

show a great poverty of mind – it is always a sign of a poverty of mind. It is infinitely more difficult to tell a story beautiful from beginning to end than to write a story ending with a sensational event or a catastrophe. Many authors, if they had to write a story which ends happily, beautifully, would not be able to do it – they do not have enough imagination for that. Very few stories have an uplifting ending, almost all end in a failure – for a very simple reason, it is much more easy to fall than to rise."[40]

19. A Test of Sincerity

"If you repeat the same errors several times, you may be sure you are not sincere somewhere. When one recognises one's mistake and yet repeats it, it means that only a superficial part of the consciousness has recognised it and the rest is perfectly satisfied with it and generally justifies it. You may tell yourself without the risk of making a mistake: "If I repeat the same fault, I am not sincere." So try to be sincere."[41]

20. Necessity of Widening One's Consciousness

"You may be sure that if you find a person boring, he will also find you boring. You will never arrive at anything if you do not take the attitude of putting yourself in the place of the other, this is indispensable. When someone tells you something you do not understand, you must not say, "He knows nothing", but you must try to understand. If you want to be quite sincere, even when a child comes and tells you something you do not understand, you must not say, "This child is stupid", but 'It is I who am stupid, because I do not understand!'

There are a hundred ways of looking at a problem. If you want to find the solution, you must take up all the elements one after another, rise above them and see how they harmonise.

There is a state of consciousness which may be called "gnostic", in which you are able to see *at the same time* all the theories, all the beliefs, all the ideas men have expressed in their highest consciousness – the most contradictory notions, like the Buddhistic, the Vedantic, the Christian theories, all the philosophical theories, all the expressions of the human mind when it has managed to catch a little corner of the Truth – and in that state, not only do you put each thing in its place, but everything appears to you marvellously true and quite indispensable in order to be able to understand anything at all about anything whatsoever."[42] (26-2-1951)

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III. Questions and Answers, March 1951

1. The Psychic Being

"…the psychic being in the human being is the manifestation of spiritual aspiration; but there is a spiritual life independent of the psychic. …

What is the most effective means of awakening the psychic being?

But it is wide awake! And not only is it awake, but it acts, only you are not aware of it. It appears to you asleep because you don't perceive it!

Fundamentally, without this kind of inner will of the psychic being, I believe human beings would be quite dismal, dull, they would have an altogether animal life. Every gleam of aspiration is always the expression of a psychic influence. Without the presence of the psychic, without the psychic influence, there would never be any sense of progress or any will for progress.

Would there be a sense of beauty?

Yes. Perhaps not the highest sense of beauty, but in the vital one finds a complete sense of beauty and harmony. The beauty which is fundamental, profound, universal, constant belongs only to the psychic, but the sense of the beauty of form, of appearance, of colour, the educated, refined vital fully possesses.

And not love?

That depends on what you mean by "love"! There would not be divine love there, naturally, but all passions,

attractions, desires exist in the vital. Only, the quality of these movements has been completely changed due to the descent and diffusion of the divine Consciousness in Matter. It has awakened the possibility of true love; otherwise, all those things which are taken for love, all passions and attractions and desires – the need of devouring – all that exists very well in the vital."[43] (1-3-1951)

"Have all psychic beings the same origin?

This is how things happen. The origin of the psychic life, the divine Presence in Matter is one and the same, that's understood, but there are beings in the higher world who have never taken a body upon earth and who want to act there, have a terrestrial action. So they wait till some psychic beings attain their full development and unite with them to do some work according to their nature. Their consciousness is added to the psychic consciousness upon earth. These are beings who have never taken birth here, beings who materialised themselves more and more as the creation proceeded. They are perhaps the first emanations, beings sent into the universe for special reasons – men call them "gods" or "demi-gods". So, one of these beings may have chosen, for some special reason, a psychic being in formation – he helps it, follows its development and, when this psychic is sufficiently ready and sufficiently strong to be able to support the identification, he unites with it, identifies with it to do some work upon earth. This is not very frequent, but it has happened and still happens. You find stories in ancient traditions about gods incarnating upon earth; some mythologies speak of them. That corresponds to something true. But all psychic beings are not necessarily united with a being of the higher planes."[44]

2. The Truth About Possessions and Mentally Deranged People and the Story of the Being Who Possessed Hitler

"Have these vital beings a psychic being?

No, I said that the first thing they have to do to incarnate is to drive away the psychic being of the person whom they possess. That may happen from the very birth. There are children who are almost stillborn; they are taken to be dead and suddenly they revive – this means that a vital being has incarnated in them. I have known such cases. This may happen also in the course of an illness: someone is very ill and gradually he begins to lose contact with the psychic being, then, in a swoon or some other similar state, he cuts the contact entirely and the vital being rushes into the body. I have known cases of this kind also. Or it may be a slow action: the vital being enters into the atmosphere of the person, goes on influencing him and finally brings about illness, attacks, especially mental illness; then a time comes when the connection with the psychic being is entirely cut and the vital being takes possession of the body. There are cases of people falling very ill and coming out of the illness altogether different from what they were. Very often it is this that happens.

You have said that these beings of the vital world are attracted by the spiritual life. Why?

They are attracted, but this does not mean that they have decided sincerely to follow the spiritual life. The chief characteristic of these beings is falsehood: their nature is made of deceit. They have a power of illusion; they can take the appearance of divine beings or higher beings, they can appear in a dazzling light, but truly sincere people are not deceived,

they immediately feel something that warns them. But if one likes the marvellous, the unexpected, if one loves fantastic things, if one likes to live a romance, one is likely to be easily deceived.

Not long ago there was a historical instance, that of Hitler, who was in contact with a being whom he considered to be the Supreme: this being came and gave him advice, told him all that he had to do. Hitler used to retire into solitude and remain there as long as it was necessary to come into contact with his "guide" and receive from him inspirations which he carried out later very faithfully. This being which Hitler took for the Supreme was quite plainly an Asura, one who is called the "Lord of Falsehood" in occultism, but who proclaimed himself the "Lord of the Nations". He had a shining appearance, he could mislead anybody except one who really had occult knowledge and could see what was there behind the appearance. He would have deceived anybody, he was truly splendid. Generally he used to appear to Hitler wearing a silver cuirass and helmet; a kind of flame came out of his head and there was an atmosphere of dazzling light around him, so dazzling that Hitler could hardly look at him. He used to tell Hitler everything that had to be done – he played with him as with a monkey or a mouse. He had decided clearly to make Hitler commit all possible extravagances till the day he would break his neck, which did happen. But cases like this are frequent, though on a smaller scale, of course.

Hitler was a very good medium, he had great mediumistic capacities, but he lacked intelligence and discrimination. This being could tell him anything whatever and he swallowed it all. It was he who pushed Hitler little by

little. And he was doing this as a distraction, he did not take life seriously. For these beings men are very tiny things with whom they play, as a cat plays with a mouse, till finally they eat them up.

Are mentally deranged people possessed?

Yes, unless there is a physical lesion, a defect in the formation or an accident, a congestion. In all other cases it is always a possession. The proof of it is that if a person is brought to you who is altogether mentally deranged, if he has a lesion, he cannot be cured, while if there is no physical lesion, if it is a possession, then one can cure him. Unfortunately these things happen only to people who like them; there must be in the being much ambition, vanity, combined with much stupidity and a terrible pride – it is on such things that those beings play. I have known cases like that, of persons who were partially possessed, and I succeeded in freeing them from the beings who possessed them. Naturally they felt some relief, a kind of ease for a time, but it did not last long; almost immediately it wore off and they thought: "Now I have become quite an ordinary creature, whereas before I was an exceptional being!" They used to feel within them an exceptional power, even if it was a power to do evil, and they were satisfied with it. So what did they do? They called back with all their force the power they had lost! Of course, the being that had been destroyed could not come back, but as these beings exist in thousands it was replaced by another. I have seen this happen three times consecutively in a case, so much so that in the end I had to tell the person: "I am tired, get rid of it yourself, I am no longer interested!"

In these cases what happens to the psychic being?

Generally, it goes away.

I must tell you that the beings of the vital world are immortal – they cannot die. They can be destroyed, but it is only the pure spiritual force which can destroy them. For example, in a vital battle (there are people who have a vital fighting power), the experience is always the same: if you fight in the vital world with a vital being, you can crush it, kill it, but it will be reborn always – always they form themselves again. I think herein lies the origin of the legends of hydras or monsters with many heads.

There is only one force in the world which can destroy them categorically, that is, without any chance of return, and it is a force which belongs to the supreme creative Power. It is a force that comes from beyond the supramental world – it is not at the disposal of everybody. It is a luminous force, of a dazzling whiteness, so brilliant that if ordinary eyes looked at it, they would turn blind. A being of the vital world has just to be touched by this light to get dissolved immediately – it is liquefied, like those slugs which melt in water if a little salt is put on them."[45]

"*When Hitler died, did the Lord of Falsehood pass into Stalin?*

It is not altogether like that that things happen, but it is something similar. This being did not wait for Hitler's death, it is there you make a mistake. These beings are not at all tied to a single physical presence. The being in question could very well possess Hitler and at the same time influence many others. Hitler was got rid of because he had behind him a whole nation and a physical power, and if he had succeeded it would have been a disaster for humanity, but there was no deluding

oneself about it; it was not sufficient to get rid of him in order to get rid of the force that was behind him – that is not so easy. I must tell you that the origin of these beings is prior to that of the gods; they are the first emanations, the first individual beings of the universe; so they cannot be got rid of so easily, by winning one war.

As long as they are necessary for the universal evolution they will exist. The day they lose their utility, they will be converted or will disappear.

Besides, they know that they are nearing their last hour and that is why they are doing as much damage as they can.

There were four of them. The first one has been converted, another is dissolved into its origin. Two are still living and these two are more ferocious than the others. One is known in occultism as the "Lord of Falsehood" (I have told you this) the other is the "Lord of Death". And as long as these two beings exist, there will be difficulties."[46] (8-3-1951)

3. What Becomes of the Vital Being After Death?

"What becomes of the vital being after death?

It is dissolved. Rarely does it happen otherwise. But if you have had a very strong passion, if you were divided by fixed impulses, the vital being would break up into small pieces. Instead of going off like a vapour or a liquid, it goes off by little bits. Each of these pieces of vital substance is gathered around the central impulse, the central desire, the central passion of that piece, thus creating little entities which don't have a human form but take at times an indefinite form; at times they resemble the body to which the pieces belonged,

at other times they take a form expressing the desire they represent. And naturally their sole concern is to satisfy their desire or passion and they search everywhere for the means of self-satisfaction.

Take, for instance, the passion of a miser for his fortune. He dies. His vital being is dissolved, but his passion for his money remains alive. It gathers around itself a certain number of elements to form a living and conscious entity in the vital world. If this man has in his lifetime hidden a treasure somewhere, that entity goes and installs itself just above the place where the treasure is, as if to guard it and stop people from coming near it. But there are sensitive people who, when they know that a treasure is hidden somewhere, feel the presence and say, "The treasure is there." That is the first effect. The other effect is that the entity, not wanting the treasure to be touched, always brings about some catastrophe to guard its property. It makes those who approach it ill or it causes an accident, even an assassination; any means is good for it; or if the person is very sensitive, it gives him such a fright that he goes mad.

There are also lots of little entities, quite repugnant, in very large numbers, which originate from that wretched sexual desire. If this desire (with its corresponding entities) is not dissolved at the time of death, these entities continue to exist and they come and settle in the atmosphere of sensitive persons to goad them, spur them on. These entities feed upon the vital force emanated at the time of the act and naturally their only desire is to get as much nourishment as they can. I have seen people enringed by dozens of these beings. It is a very concrete thing.... I don't know if you have heard of

Maurice Magre, the writer who had come here. He has said in one of his books that people who have a very strong sexual instinct are surrounded by a swarm of these small beings, who plague them to satisfy themselves, to feed upon the vital force. He knew the thing quite well, he had observed it. To those who are ever so little sensitive, it is very perceptible. Even the people who are tormented very often feel that the impulse comes from outside – it arouses something inside them, but they feel that the excitation comes from outside. And there are hundreds of thousands of them, for unfortunately it is one of the greatest difficulties of mankind, it is a terrible slavery."[47]

4. Life in a Mental Fortress

"There are people who spend their life organising their mind. I have known some who had made of their mind a kind of fortress, a huge construction (I am speaking of people who had uncommon mental capacities). They had made of their mind quite a big edifice, very powerful and of such a fixity, with such solid walls that they had lost all contact with the outer mental world: they lived completely within their own construction and all the phenomena of their consciousness were of their own making – they had no longer any contact with the outside mental world. They retained contact with their own vital and their body, in a way, but all the phenomena of their consciousness were lodged within their mental construction – they could no longer get out of it. Well, this happens very strongly to people who seek for a spiritual life through the classical methods of a renunciation of the material consciousness, a concentration on their inner being and identification with it. If I gave you the names of some, you

would be quite astonished. **They construct for themselves a conception in which one finds all the gradations of the mind, a construction so solid and so fixed that they become imprisoned within it and when they believe they have reached the supreme Truth, they have only reached the centre of their own mental construction.**

And they have all the experiences they used to foresee: the experience of liberation, the experience of going out of the body, the experience of identification with the Supreme, all, all, but all of their own making; this has no contact with the universal reality. Then if someone touches it, if for some reason or other someone has the power to touch it or simply to make a breach in one of the walls, at first they are completely upset, then they come to regard the force that could do this as a force of terrible destruction, a manifestation of a hostile force of the worst kind!"[48]

5. Mental and Vital Nightmares

"When there is a chaos in the brain or a local fever, a particular turmoil in the brain, an overstrain, or if there is a want of control, you let yourself be possessed by mental formations, this is what happens most often – mental formations which, most often, you yourself have made, besides. And as the control of the rational, waking consciousness has gone, all this begins to dance a saraband in the head, with a kind of raging madness; ideas get entangled, collide, fight, it is truly hallucinating. Then, unless you have the power to bring a great peace into your head, a great tranquillity, a very strong and pure light, well, it is ten times worse than a vital nightmare. The worst of a vital nightmare

consists generally in fighting with an enemy who wants to kill you, and you strike him terrible blows, and the blows never hit; you exert all your force, all your energy, and you do not succeed in touching your adversary. He is there in front of you, he threatens you, he is going to strangle you and you gather all your strength, you try to strike, but nothing touches him. When the struggle is like that, hand to hand, with a being who throws himself upon you, it is particularly painful. That is why you are advised not to go out of the body unless you have the necessary power or the purity. You see, in this kind of nightmare the force you want to use is the "memory" of a physical force; but one may have great physical strength, be a first-class boxer, and yet be completely powerless in the vital world because one does not have the necessary vital power. As for the mental nightmares, that kind of frightful saraband in the head, one has altogether the impression of going mad."[49]

6. What Happens to the Vital and the Mental Beings after Death?

"…the vital does not go to rest nor does the mental being. Generally they are dissolved. It is only if one has followed a yoga throughout his whole life, if one has taken great care to individualise, to centralise the vital and the mental around the psychic being that they remain – that happens once in ten million cases, it is very exceptional. Take the case of a philosopher or a writer who has worked considerably in his brain, tried to organise it; that then persists, but as a *capacity to think*, nothing else. There are these capacities of thinking which persist after death and they try naturally to find another physical brain in which to manifest. It is in this way that the

mind of a great thinker may identify itself with another mind and be able to express itself.

From the vital point of view, take the case of a great musician who has worked all his life to make his external being a good instrument for music; he has organised this vital power in his body for playing music; well then, his hands, for instance, are so individualised in their ability to play, that they can persist subtly even after death, with their form, a form analogous to the old physical form. They float in the vital world and are attracted by people who have similar capacities; they try to become identified with them. A person who is sensitive enough, receptive enough, can become identified with these hands and execute wonderful things, profit by all the individualisation of the past life of these hands.

Does the same phenomenon occur in the case of scientists when the results of their work are realised some time after their death?

Yes, in the case of Pierre and Marie Curie, for example, it is certain that the power of work of Pierre Curie passed into his wife at his death."[50] (10-3-1951)

7. Is It Possible to Get Out of the "Mental Fortress"?

"Is it possible to get out of the 'mental fortress'?

But there are people who do get out of the fortress! One can even send an army out of the fortress!

No, it is not the chief of the place who goes out, he clings to his fort: he orders out the soldiers. He values his fortress, for it is that which gives him the impression of existing and of being an individual.

What if one gets rid of the fortress?

Oh, but you must take care! **You had better not get rid of it unless you are able to live without a fortress – something which is infinitely more difficult to do. What men generally do, with much effort and a good deal of suffering which gives them the impression that they are heroes, is to knock down their fortress... only to enter immediately into another!** That does not make much difference from the standpoint of the Truth, but it gives them the impression of having made a great progress, because the old fortress is razed and they have built up another.

To live without a fortress is extremely difficult – people have the feeling that they are not living, that they are not individualised, that they are floating about. It is extremely difficult to live in something infinitely vast, moving, constantly changing, perpetually in progress, not to be held by anything to which one can cling, saying "I am this; this is my way of thinking." It is very difficult, one must not try it too soon; there are those whose mind gets deranged by it.

What is it that makes the mental construction?

It is the mental ego which makes the construction and it clings to it desperately."[51]

8. How to Help the Departed?

"…in all countries and in all religions, it is recommended that for a period of at least seven days after someone's death, people should gather and think of him. Because when you think of him with affection (without any inner disorder, without weeping, without any of those distraught passions), if you can be calm, your atmosphere becomes a kind of beacon

for him, and when he is attacked by hostile forces (I am speaking of the vital being of course, not the psychic being which goes to take rest), he may feel altogether lost, not know what to do and find himself in great distress; then he sees through affinity the light of those who are thinking of him with affection and he rushes there. **It happens almost constantly that a vital formation, a part of the vital being of the dead person (or at times the whole vital if it is well organised) takes shelter in the aura, the atmosphere of the people or the person who loved him.** There are people who always carry with them a part of the vital of the person who is gone. That is the real utility of these so-called ceremonies, which otherwise have no sense.

It is preferable to do this without ceremonies. Ceremonies are, if anything, rather harmful, for a very simple reason: When you are busy with a ceremony, you think more about that than about the person. When you are busy with gestures, movements, with the following of a ritual, you think much more of all that than of the person who is dead. More over, people perform these ceremonies most of the time for that very reason, for they are almost always in the habit of trying to forget. **The fact is that one of the two principal occupations of man is to try to forget what is painful to him, and the other is to try to seek amusement in order to escape boredom.** These are the two principal occupations of humanity, that is, humanity spends half of its time in doing nothing true.

And when people get bored (some do not absolutely need to keep busy, or they have the misfortune of being rich) they do silly things!"[52] (12-3-1951)

9. Confidence and the Effectivity of Hygienic Measures and Cures

"One thing that is now beginning to be recognised by everyone, even by the medical corps, is that hygienic measures, for example, are effective only to the extent that one has confidence in them. Take the case of an epidemic. Many years ago we had a cholera epidemic here – it was bad – but the chief medical officer of the hospital was an energetic man: he decided to vaccinate everybody. When he discharged the vaccinated men, he would tell them, "Now you are vaccinated and nothing will happen to you, but if you were not vaccinated you would be sure to die!" He told them this with great authority. Generally such an epidemic lasts a long time and it is difficult to check it, but in some fifteen days, I think, this doctor succeeded in checking it; in any case, it was done miraculously fast. But he knew very well that the best effect of his vaccination was the confidence it gave to people.

Now, quite recently, they have found something else and I consider it wonderful. They have discovered that for every disease there is a microbe that cures it (call it a microbe if you like, anyway, some sort of germ). But what is so extraordinary is that this "microbe" is extremely contagious, even more contagious than the microbe of the disease. And it generally develops under two conditions: in those who have a sort of natural good humour and energy and in those who have a strong will to get well! Suddenly they catch the "microbe" and are cured. And what is wonderful is that if there is one who is cured in an epidemic, three more recover immediately. And this "microbe" is found in all who are cured.

But I am going to tell you something: **what people take**

to be a microbe is simply the materialisation of a vibration or a will from another world. When I learned of these medical discoveries, I said to myself, "Truly, science is making progress." One might almost say with greater reason, "Matter is progressing," it is becoming more and more receptive to a higher will. And what is translated in their science as "microbes" will be perceived, if one goes to the root of things, as simply a vibratory mode; and this vibratory mode is the material translation of a higher will. If you can bring this force or this will, this power, this vibration (call it what you will) into certain given circumstances, not only will it act in you, but also through contagion around you."[53] (14-3-1951)

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List of References:

1. *CWM 4, Pages 22-23*
2. *CWM 4, Pages 24-25*
3. *CWM 4, Pags 26-28*
4. *CWM 4, Page 29*
5. *CWM 4, Page 26*
6. *CWM 4, Pages 31-33*
7. *CWM 4, Page 37*
8. *CWM 4, Pages 38-40*
9. *CWM 4, Pages 40-42*
10. *CWM 4, Pages 46-47*
11. *CWM 4, Pages 50-52*
12. *CWM 4, Pages 53-54*
13. *CWM 4, Pages 58-59*
14. *CWM 4, Pages 73-75*
15. *CWM 4, Page 75*
16. *CWM 4, Page 77*
17. *CWM 4, Pages 77-78*
18. *CWM 4, Pages 78-79*
19. *CWM 4, Pages 82-85*
20. *CWM 4, Page 86*
21. *CWM 4, Pages 87-89*
22. *CWM 4, Page 90*
23. *CWM 4, Page 91*
24. *CWM 4, Page 93*
25. *CWM 4, Pages 110-11*
26. *CWM 4, Pages 115-17*
27. *CWM 4, Page 117*
28. *CWM 4, Pages 119-20*
29. *CWM 4, Pages 118-19*
30. *CWM 4, Pages 121-22*
31. *CWM 4, Pages 128-30*
32. *CWM 4, Page 135*
33. *CWM 4, Pages 136-37*
34. *CWM 4, Pages 139-41*
35. *CWM 4, Pages 143-44*
36. *CWM 4, Pages 145-47*
37. *CWM 4, Page 148*
38. *CWM 4, Page 142*
39. *CWM 4, Pages 152-53*
40. *CWM 4, Page 155*
41. *CWM 4, Pages 156-57*
42. *CWM 4, Pages 157-58*
43. *CWM 4, Pages 165-66*
44. *CWM 4, Page 184*
45. *CWM 4, Pages 184-87*
46. *CWM 4, Page 188*
47. *CWM 4, Pages 191-92*
48. *CWM 4, Pages 193-94*
49. *CWM 4, Pages 194-95*
50. *CWM 4, Pages 195-96*
51. *CWM 4, Pages 199-200*
52. *CWM 4, Pages 204-05*
53. *CWM 4, Pages 209-10*

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