The Real Awakener

Lights on the Path

Words of the Mother – 7

Price : Rs. 15/-

Contents

I. Questions and Answers, July – August 1954 6

1. The Converted Vital Being – An "Inner Warrior" 6
2. The Difficulties on the Way of Achieving An Exclusive Self-opening to the Divine Power 6
3. Physical Mind's Stupidity and the Habit of Doubting Everything 10
4. Serious Consequences of Mistakes Made Knowingly ... 11
5. In Spiritual Life Nothing is More Difficult to Handle than Success – the Fulfilment of Ambition 12
6. Mental Arrogance – Human Mind Essentially Arrogant by its Very Nature 15
7. How Difficulties Become Opportunities for Progress By the Touch of the Divine Grace 15
8. The Destiny of Those Who Revolt Against the Divine 18
9. Mental Formations and Sexual Desires 21
10. Sri Radha and the Supremely Important Distinction Between Pleasure and Ananda 21
11. The Value of a Self-imposed Discipline 22

II. Questions and Answers, Sep – Oct 1954 23

1. How to Establish Peace and Silence in the Mental Being 23
2. The Prison of the Sense of One's Own Person 25
3. Aspiration and Desire 27

4. The Nature of Spiritual Experiences 28
5. People Gifted With Occult Faculties, and Spiritual Life 29
6. The Relativity of All Mental Perceptions and Knowledge 32
7. Weakness in Social Relations 34
8. Passion is not a Weakness of the Heart 35

III. Questions and Answers, Nov – Dec 1954 36
1. What is the Physical Opening? 36
2. Mother, Why is it Better to Concentrate in the Heart? 36
3. Can One have Faith Through Aspiration? 37
4. Self-mastery Through Ascetic Methods 38
5. A Perfect Definition of Spiritual Experience 39
6. Hostile Forces, Possessions and Psychic Being 40
7. Never Ever Leave the Path Once You are on It 44

IV. Questions and Answers, Jan – Feb 1955 47
1. Who Can Know the Future? 47
2. People's Preoccupation With Pessimistic and Troublesome Thoughts 48
3. Questioning Increases Troubles and Difficulties 48
4. We Have Many Egos Inside Ourselves 49
5. Perils of Boasting 50
6. Consequences of Committing Suicide 51
7. No Experience Can Ever Be Repeated 52

8. Nature of Desire and its Source 53
9. The Mother on the Different Parts of Being 55
10. Attachment to Money is a Calamity 58
11. Development and Refinement of the Senses 60

V. Questions and Answers, March – April 1955 63
1. What is Sleep? 63
2. The Psychic Opening in the Physical Consciousness 64
3. Great Incarnated Beings and the Work of the Psychic Being 65
4. How to Get Rid of a Difficulty Permanently 65
5. Reincarnation and the Psychic Being 68
6. How to Use the "Light of Truth" to Dissolve a Wrong Movement in the Being 70
7. How to Eliminate a Difficulty by Transforming It 73
8. The True Self and the Psychic Being 74
9. The Subliminal and the Psychic Being 75
10. How One has Visions 77



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, July – August 1954

1. The Converted Vital Being – An "Inner Warrior"

"The vital turned completely to the Divine is like a warrior. It has even the appearance of a warrior. The vital is the place of power and it is this power which impels it to fight, which can fight and conquer, and of all things this is the most difficult, for it is precisely these very qualities of fighting which create in the vital the sense of revolt, independence, the will to carry out its own will. But if the vital understands and is converted, if it is truly surrendered to the divine Will, then these fighting capacities are turned against the anti-divine forces and against all the darkness which prevents their transformation. And they are all-powerful and can conquer the adversaries. The anti-divine forces are in the vital world; from there, naturally, they have spread out into the physical, but their true seat is in the vital world, and it is the converted vital force which has the true power to vanquish them. But of all things this conversion is the most difficult."[1]

2. The Difficulties on the Way of Achieving An Exclusive Self-opening to the Divine Power

"Instead of self-opening we could put receptivity, something that opens in order to receive. Now, instead of opening and receiving from all sides and from everyone, as is usually done, one opens only to the Divine to receive only the divine force. It is the very opposite of what men usually do. They are always open on the surface, they receive

all the influences from all sides. And then this produces inside them what we might call a *pot-pourri* (*Mother laughs*) of all kinds of contradictory movements which naturally create countless difficulties. So here, you are advised to open only to the Divine and to receive only the divine force to the exclusion of everything else. This diminishes all difficulties almost entirely. Only one thing remains difficult. It is... One can do it and, unless one is in a state of total alchemy, well, it is difficult to be in contact with people, to speak to them, for example, to have any kind of exchange with them without absorbing something from them. It is difficult. If one is in a kind of... if one is in an atmosphere that's like a filter, then everything that comes from outside is filtered before it touches you. But it is very difficult; it requires a very wide experience. That is why, also, people who wanted the easiest path went into solitude to sit under a tree, did not speak any more and saw nobody; for this helps to diminish undesirable exchanges. Only, it has been noticed that these people begin to become enormously interested in the life of little animals, the life of plants, for it is difficult not to have any exchange with anything at all. So it is much better to face the problem squarely and be surrounded by an atmosphere so totally concentrated on the Divine that what comes through this atmosphere is filtered in its passage.

And then again, even when this has been done, there is still the problem of food; as long as our body is compelled to take in foreign matter in order to subsist, it will absorb at the same time a considerable amount of inert and unconscious forces or those having a rather undesirable consciousness, and this alchemy must take place inside the body. We were speaking of the kinds of consciousness

absorbed with food, but there is also the inconscience that's absorbed with food – quite a deal of it. And that is why in many yogas there was the advice to offer to the Divine what one was going to eat before eating it (*Mother makes a gesture of offering, hands joined, palms open*). It consists in calling the Divine down into the food before eating it. One offers it to Him – that is, one puts it in contact with the Divine, so that it may be under the divine influence when one eats it. It is very useful, it is very good. If one knows how to do it, it is very useful, it considerably reduces the work of inner transformation which has to be done. But, you see, in the world as it is, we are all interdependent. You cannot take in the air without taking in the vibrations, the countless vibrations produced by all kinds of movements and all kinds of people, and you must – if you want to remain intact – you must constantly act like a filter, as I was saying. That is to say, nothing that is undesirable should be allowed to enter, as when one goes to infected areas, one wears a mask over the face so that the air may be purified before one breathes it in. Well, something similar has to be done. One must have around oneself so intense an atmosphere in a *total* surrender to the Divine, so intensified around oneself that everything that passes through is automatically filtered. Anyhow, it is very useful in life, for there are – we spoke about this too – there are bad thoughts, bad wills, people who wish you ill, who make formations. There are all kinds of absolutely undesirable things in the atmosphere. And so, if one must always be on the watch, looking around on all sides, one would think only of one thing, how to protect oneself. First of all, it is tiresome, and then, you see, it makes you waste much time. If you are well enveloped in this way, with this

light, the light of a perfectly glad, totally sincere surrender, when you are enveloped with that, it serves you as a marvellous filter. Nothing that is altogether undesirable, nothing that has ill-will can pass through. So, automatically, these things return where they came from. If there is a conscious ill-will against you, it comes, but cannot pass; the door is closed, for it is open only to divine things, it is not open to anything else. So it returns very quietly to the source from where it came.

But all these things are... One can learn how to do them through a kind of study and science. But they can be done without any study or science provided the aspiration and surrender are absolute and total. If the aspiration and surrender are total, it is done automatically. But you must see to it that they are total; and besides, as I was saying just now, you become very clearly aware of it, for the moment they are not total, you are no longer happy. You feel uneasy, very miserable, dejected, a bit unhappy: "Things are not quite pleasant today. They are the same as they were yesterday; yesterday they were marvellous, today they are not pleasing!" – Why? Because yesterday you were in a perfect state of surrender, more or less perfect – and today you aren't any more. So, what was so beautiful yesterday is no longer beautiful today. That joy you had within you, that confidence, the assurance that all will be well and the great Work will be accomplished, that certitude – all this, you see, has become veiled, has been replaced by a kind of doubt and, yes, by a discontent: "Things are not beautiful, the world is nasty, people are not pleasant." It goes sometimes to this length: "The food is not good, yesterday it was excellent." It is the same but today it is not good! This is the barometer! You

may immediately tell yourself that an insincerity has crept in somewhere. It is very easy to know, you don't need to be very learned, for, as Sri Aurobindo has said in *Elements of Yoga*: One knows whether one is happy or unhappy, one knows whether one is content or discontented, one doesn't need to ask oneself, put complicated questions for this, one knows it! – Well, it is very simple.

The moment you feel unhappy, you may write beneath it: "I am not sincere!" These two sentences go together:

"I FEEL UNHAPPY."

"I AM NOT SINCERE."

Now, what is it that is wrong? Then one begins to take a look, it is easy to find out..."[2] (7-7-1954)

3. Physical Mind's Stupidity and the Habit of Doubting Everything

"…the truth is that the physical mind is truly completely stupid! You can prove it very easily. **It is constructed probably as a kind of control, and in order to make sure that things are done as they ought to be. I think that this is its normal work.... But it has made it a habit to doubt everything.**

I think I have already told you about the small experiment I made one day. I removed my control and left the control to the physical mind – it is the physical mind which doubts. So I made the following experiment: I went into a room, then came out of the room and closed the

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

door. I had decided to close the door; and when I came to another room, this mind, the material mind, the physical mind, you see, said, "Are you sure you have locked the door?" Now, I did not control, you know... I said, "Very well, I obey it!" I went back to see. I observed that the door was closed. I came back. As soon as I couldn't see the door any longer, it told me, "Have you verified properly?" So I went back again.... And this went on till I decided: "Come now, that's enough, isn't it? Closed or not, I am not going back any more to see!" This could have gone on the whole day. It is made like that. It stops being like that only when a higher mind, the rational mind tells it, "Keep quiet!" Otherwise it goes on indefinitely.... So, if by ill-luck you are centred there, in this mind, even the things you know higher up as quite true, even things of which you have a physical proof – like that of the closed door, it doubts, it will doubt, because it is built of doubt. It will always say, "Are you quite sure this is true?... Isn't it an idea of yours?... You don't suppose it is like that?" And it will go on until one teaches it to keep quiet and be silent."[3] (14-7-1954)

4. Serious Consequences of Mistakes Made Knowingly

"There is a very big difference between the mistake made through ignorance which one will not make again as soon as one knows it is a mistake, and the mistake made knowing that it is a mistake. And this, indeed, is called *obstinacy!* And this is more serious, it is even very serious! **It veils the consciousness very much, veils it so much that after some time one no longer knows at all that one is making mistakes. One makes them thinking that one doesn't. One gives so many excuses and justifications for**

everything one does, that one ends up by believing that one is no longer making any mistakes at all. Then, here, it becomes very serious, because one is incorrigible!"[4]

5. In Spiritual Life Nothing is More Difficult to Handle than Success – the Fulfilment of Ambition

"Mother, what does "an egoistic faith... tainted by ambition" *mean?*

Yes, for instance, if one wants to become somebody very important, to have a high position or attract the admiration of people around him, to become a great sadhak, a great sannyasi, a great yogi, etc., somebody quite important, that is called having a faith full of ambition. You have the faith that this may happen, you have faith in the Divine, but it is for your own small personal vainglory; and this is no longer something pure, sincere and true. It is something that's entirely for personal profit. Naturally, there is no question in this of any self-giving; it is a hoarding of forces as much as it is possible for you to hoard them, that is to say, the very opposite of the true movement. This happens much oftener than one would think.... **This movement of ambition is often hidden right in the depths of the being and it pushes you, like this, from behind.... It whips you so that you get on. It is a kind of veiled pride.**

Mother, why do these people receive the force, since the Divine knows that they are not sincere?

Listen, my child, the Divine never goes by human notions in His ways of acting. You must get that well into your head, once and for all. He probably does things without what we call reasons. But anyway, if He has reasons they are

not the same as human reasons, and *certainly* He does *not* have the sense of justice as it is understood by men.

For example, you imagine very easily that a man who is craving for wealth and tries to deceive people in order to get money... According to your idea of justice, this man ought to be deprived of all his wealth and reduced to poverty. We find that usually just the opposite happens. But that, of course, is only a matter of appearances. Behind the appearances, there is something else.... He exchanges this for other possibilities. He may have money, but he no longer has a conscience. And, in fact, what almost always happens is that when he has the money he desired, he is not happy.... And the more he has, usually the less happy he is! He is tormented, you see, by the wealth he has gained.

You must not judge things from an outer success or a semblance of defeat. We may say – and generally this is what almost always happens – **we could say that the Divine gives what one desires, and of all lessons this is the best! For, if your desire is inconscient, obscure, egoistic, you increase the unconsciousness, the darkness and egoism within yourself; that is to say, this takes you farther and farther away from the truth, from consciousness and happiness.** It takes you far away from the Divine. And for the Divine, naturally, only one thing is true – the divine Consciousness, the divine Union. And each time you put material things in front, you become more and more materialistic and go farther and farther away from full success.

But for the Truth that other success is a terrible defeat.... You have exchanged truth for falsehood!

To judge from appearances and apparent success is

precisely an act of complete ignorance. Even for the most hardened man, for whom everything has apparently been successful, even for him there is always a counterpart. And this kind of hardening of the being which is produced, this veil which is formed, a thicker and thicker veil, between the outer consciousness and the inner truth, becomes, one day or another, altogether intolerable. It is usually paid for very dearly – outer success.

(*Mother's voice becomes extremely deep.*) **One must be *very* great, *very* pure, have a *very* high and *very* disinterested spiritual consciousness in order to be successful without being affected by it. *Nothing is more difficult than being successful. This, indeed,* is the true test of life!**

When you do not succeed, quite naturally you turn back on yourself and within yourself, and you seek within yourself the consolation for your outer failure. And to those who have a flame within them – if the Divine really wants to help them, if they are mature enough to be helped, if they are ready to follow the path – blows will come one after another, because this helps! It is the most powerful, the most direct, most effective help. If you succeed, be on your guard, ask yourself: 'At what price, what cost have I bought success? I hope it is not a step towards...'

There are those who have gone beyond this, those who are conscious of their soul, those who have given themselves entirely, those who – as I said – are absolutely pure, disinterested, and can succeed without its affecting and touching them; here, then, it is different. *But one must be very high to be able to bear success.* **And after all, it is perhaps the last test which the Divine gives to anyone: 'Now that**

you are noble, you are disinterested, you have no egoism, you belong only to me, I am going to make you triumph. We are going to see if you will hold out.' "[5]

6. Mental Arrogance – Human Mind Essentially Arrogant by its Very Nature

"I don't know a human being who does not have mental arrogance. There are those who have a little, there are those who have much, there are those who are entirely made up of it.... **The mind, by its very nature, is something essentially arrogant. It fancies that it can know, it imagines that it can judge, and it spends its time passing judgments on everything – within you, on yourself, on others, on all things!…**

…you can observe yourself, catch yourself at least a hundred times a day, with a mind which decides everything, knows everything, judges everything, knows very well what is good, what bad, what is true, what false, what is right.... And also how one should act, what this person should have done, how to resolve that problem.... All men know, you see.... If they were at the head of governments, for instance, they would know very well how to manage everything! But people don't listen to them... that's all! You have only to look at yourself, you will see, you will catch yourself all the time.... Not to speak of those who have long ago decided about all the errors God has committed and how the world would be if it were they who had been commissioned to make it!"[6]

7. How Difficulties Become Opportunities for Progress By the Touch of the Divine Grace

"…Well, this is something quite obvious. You have

made a big mistake, you are in great difficulty: then, if you have faith, if you have trust in the divine Grace, if you really rely on It, you will suddenly realise that it is a lesson, that your difficulty or mistake is nothing else but a lesson and that it comes to teach you to find within yourself what needs to be changed, and with this help of the divine Grace you will discover in yourself what has to be changed. And you will change it. And so, from a difficulty you will have made great progress, taken a considerable leap forward. This, indeed, happens all the time. Only, you must be truly sincere, that is, rely on the Grace and let It work in you – not like this: one part of you asking to be helped and another resisting as much as it can, because it doesn't want to change... this is the difficulty.

…For there is one part of the being which has an aspiration, there is one part of the being which gives itself, and there are other parts – sometimes a small part, some times a big one which hides nicely, right at the bottom, and keeps absolutely quiet so that it may not be found out, but which *resists* with *all* its might, so as not to change.

And so one wonders... with, "Oh, I had such a beautiful aspiration, I had so much goodwill, I had such a great desire to change, and then, see, I cannot! Why?" Then, of course, your mental arrogance comes in and says, "I didn't get the response I deserved, the divine Grace doesn't help me, and I am left all alone to shift for myself", etc., etc.

It is not that. **It is that hidden somewhere there is a tiny something which is well coiled up, in there, *doubled up, turned in* upon itself and well hidden, right at the bottom, as at the bottom of a box, which refuses to**

stir. (*Mother speaks very softly.*) So when the effort, the aspiration wane, die down, this springs up like that, gently, and then it wants to impose its will and it makes you do exactly what you did not want to do, what you had decided you would not do, and which you do without knowing how or why! Because that thing was there, it had its turn – for small things, big things, for the details, even for the direction of life.

There are people who see clearly, who know so well what they ought to do, and who feel that they can't.... They don't know why. It is nothing else but that. There is a little spot which doesn't want to change and this little spot awaits its hour. And **the day it is allowed, through laxity, fatigue, somnolence, through a little inertia, allowed to show itself, it will show itself with all concentrated, accumulated energy, and will make you do, will make you say, make you feel, make you act *ex-act-ly* contrary to what you had decided to do!** And you will stand there: "Ah, how discouraging this is!..." Then some people say, "Fate!" They think it is their fate. It is not fate, it is themselves!... It is that they don't have, haven't used, the light, the searchlight. They have not turned the searchlight into the small hidden corners of their being, they haven't discovered what was well hidden. They have left it there, and then have done this (*Mother turns away her head*) so as not to see it. How many times one suddenly feels one is on the point of catching something, "Hup!" It hurts a little.... It is troublesome.... So one thinks of something else, and that's all! The opportunity has gone. One must wait for another occasion, again commit a few stupidities, before being able to find an opportunity to catch the thing by the tail, like

this, or by the ear or the nose, and hold it firmly and say, 'No! You won't hide any longer now, I see you as you are, and you must either get out or change!'

One must have a strong grip and an unshakable resolution. As in our Japanese story of the other day, that soldier who had a knife in his knee in order to make sure of not falling asleep... and when he felt very sleepy, he turned the knife in such a way that it hurt him still more. One must have something like that. This, *this* is determination: to know what one wants and to do it."[7]

8. The Destiny of Those Who Revolt Against the Divine

"There were people here who had a great aspiration, but who for some reason or other revolted and went away. And these are the ones who are specially against the Ashram. But then, could we say that one day they will come back?

…There are those who die, those who return. Usually it is something known, almost decided. One could say with certainty, *these will die.* **They will die, they will die, that is to say, they cut themselves off from their soul. They may have – as I said a while ago – a life that is quite... that seems to be altogether successful. They are not necessarily unhappy physically, far from it; sometimes, on the contrary, everything turns out successfully for them. And then, on the other hand, there are perhaps others under a special grace, who, in their adventure meet the worst rebuffs, and after some time they realise that they have been foolish, idiotic, stupid. And then... they come back.** It depends on people. In fact, when they are successful it means that they are condemned; when they do not succeed, well, it is that the Grace has not left them.

But mostly it will be after their death that there will be a difference, because **those human beings who have allowed adverse forces to take hold of them and govern their lives, as soon as they leave their body, they are just swallowed up, that's all!** They have already cut off the connection with their psychic being, so their psychic being often has gone somewhere far off already in other worlds... and so, their vital being, which is the receptacle for these forces, as soon as it leaves the body will be quite simply swallowed, and that's all. And so they will really die for good. That won't make much difference in the world. It won't change things much.

Sweet Mother, what will swallow them up?

A still greater vital being! (*Laughter*) You see, they have in them an emanation of adverse vital forces, and the being or power which has emanated this force has done so in order to make use of the body, to make it do in the material life exactly the things it wanted to do. But now, when there is no longer a body left, it is no longer interesting.... You see, it was this body which was meant to do a certain number of things to act against the divine action. Once the body has disappeared, the emanation is withdrawn and all the force that was with it, and it is swallowed up again for another opportunity.

They spend their time doing this. They emanate and then reabsorb when it pleases them, at times before death... that is, this hastens death a bit. **It leaves the being like a kind of rag, powerless, lifeless, without anything.... This happens; it makes them absolutely mad.** Or else, when they die in some sort of catastrophe, as it happened during

the war, suddenly... hup! It acts like a cupping-glass, it absorbs everything, swallows up everything again for another occasion. It looks for this, for what is ready to receive it, and it makes it... There is always someone who is open to receive it, and who immediately believes himself a very superior being; because it gives this, it gives people the feeling that they are truly, exceptionally remarkable... they are capable of seeing the faults of things which others don't see; their judgment is more sane than that of hundreds of other individuals. Besides, they have decided, they are among those who have decided what the creation ought to be like and who try to make it so, to put things in their place as they ought to be.

I had these... people who, in a moment of lucidity or sincerity, a second of sincerity, had asked to be freed from the hostile emanation which made them act. And then, in that moment of sincerity this emanation went out of them, and without hurting the body it could be caught and destroyed. That has happened several times.

Then for some days the being is so happy... and it feels free, feels good, feels luminous.... And then suddenly, it tells itself, "But I no longer have any power! I don't know any longer, can't do anything any longer, I am altogether an ordinary being!" And then, "But this is not at all good, it was much better before!" And so, as these adverse forces are countless – these entities exist in thousands and thousands, you see, they are there swarming around people, only waiting for an opportunity to be able to rush into someone – immediately one reabsorbs one's dose and becomes once again what one was before, sometimes worse. And so the comedy begins all over again."[8] (21-7-1954)

9. Mental Formations and Sexual Desires

"People who have desires add to the mental formation a kind of small envelope, a vital shell which gives it a still greater reality. These people are usually surrounded by a number of tiny entities which are their own formations, their own mental formations clothed with vital force, which come all the time to strike them to try to make them realise materially the formations they have made.

You have perhaps read the books of Maurice Magre; there are some in the library. He describes this; he had come here, Maurice Magre, and we spoke and he told me that he had always noticed – he was highly sensitive – **he had always noticed that people who have sexual desires are surrounded by a kind of small swarm of entities who are somewhat viscous and rather ugly and which torment them constantly, awakening desire in them. He said he had seen this around certain people. It was like being surrounded by a swarm of mosquitoes, yes! But it is more gross, and much uglier still, and it is viscous, it is horrible, and it turns round and round the person and gives him no peace, and it awakens in him the desire that has formed these entities and they batten on it. It is their food. This is absolutely true.** His observation was quite correct. His vision was very true. It *is* like that."[9] (11-8-1954)

10. Sri Radha and the Supremely Important Distinction Between Pleasure and Ananda

"**…she is a powerful help in the Work. For, of all the aspects of the Mother, this is the one which has the**

greatest power for the transformation of the body. Indeed, the cells which are able to vibrate to the contact of divine joy, to receive and preserve it, are regenerated cells on the way to becoming immortal. But **the vibrations of divine joy and those of pleasure cannot lodge together in the same vital and physical system. So one must have *totally* renounced experiencing all pleasure in order to be in a state to receive the Ananda.** But very few are those who can renounce pleasure without, by the very fact, renouncing all participation in active life and plunging into a rigorous asceticism. And among those who know that it is in active life that the transformation must take place, some try to see pleasure as a more or less warped form of Ananda, and thus justify in themselves the quest for personal satisfaction, creating in themselves an almost insuperable obstacle to their own transformation."[10]

11. The Value of a Self-imposed Discipline

"If you impose a discipline upon yourself and if it isn't too stupid, it may help you. A discipline, I tell you – disciplines, tapasyas, all ascetic disciplines are, as ordinarily practised, the best means of making you proud, of building up in you such a terrific pride that never, never will you be converted. It will have to be broken down with hammer-strokes.

The first condition is a healthy humility which makes you realise that unless you are sustained, nourished, helped, enlightened, guided by the Divine, you are *nothing at all.* There now. When you have felt that, not only understood it with your mind, but felt it down to your very body, then you will begin to be wise, but not before."[11] (25-8-1954)

* * *

II. Questions and Answers, Sep – Oct 1954

1. How to Establish Peace and Silence in the Mental Being

"It is quite certain that to create absolute silence is of all things the most difficult, for many things of which one was not aware, become *enormous*! There were all kinds of suggestions, movements, thoughts, formations which went on as though *automatically* in the outer consciousness, almost outside the consciousness, on the frontiers of consciousness; and as soon as one wants to be absolutely silent, one becomes aware of all these things which go on moving, moving, moving and make a lot of noise and prevent you from being silent. That is why it is better to remain very quiet, very calm and at the same time very attentive to something which is above you and to which you aspire, and if there is this kind of noise passing like that around you (*Mother moves her hands around her head*), not to pay attention, not to look, not to heed it. If there are thoughts which go round and round and round like this (*gestures*), which come and go, do not look, do not pay attention, but concentrate upwards in a great aspiration which one may even formulate – because often it helps the concentration – towards the light, the peace, the quietude, towards a kind of inner impassiveness, so that the concentration may be strong enough for you not to attend to all that continues to whirl about all around. But if suddenly you say, "Ah, there's some noise! Oh, here is a thought!", then it is finished. You will never succeed in being quiet. Have you never seen those people who try to stop a quarrel by shouting still louder than the ones who are

quarrelling? Well, it is something like that."[12]

* * *

"First of all, you must want it.

And then you must try and must persevere, keep on trying. What I have just told you is a very good means. Yet there are others also. You sit quietly, to begin with; and then, instead of thinking of fifty things, you begin saying to yourself, "Peace, peace, peace, peace, peace, calm, peace!" You imagine peace and calm. You aspire, ask that it may come: "Peace, peace, calm." And then, when something comes and touches you and acts, say quietly, like this, "Peace, peace, peace." Do not look at the thoughts, do not listen to the thoughts, you understand. You must not pay attention to everything that comes. You know, when someone bothers you a great deal and you want to get rid of him, you don't listen to him, do you? Good! You turn your head away (*gesture*) and think of something else. Well, you must do that: when thoughts come, you must not look at them, must not listen to them, must not pay any attention at all, you must behave as though they did not exist, you see! And then, repeat all the time like a kind of – how shall I put it? – as an idiot does, who repeats the same thing always. Well, you must do the same thing; you must repeat, "Peace, peace, peace." So you try this for a few minutes and then do what you have to do; and then, another time, you begin again; sit down again and then try. Do this on getting up in the morning, do this in the evening when going to bed. You can do this... look, if you want to digest your food properly, you can do this for a few minutes before eating. You can't imagine how much this helps your digestion! Before

beginning to eat you sit quietly for a while and say, "Peace, peace, peace!" and *everything* becomes calm. It seems as though all the noises were going far, far, far away (*Mother stretches out her arms on both sides*) and then you must continue; and there comes a time when you no longer need to sit down, and no matter what you are doing, no matter what you are saying, it is always "Peace, peace, peace." Everything remains here, like this, it does not enter (*gesture in front of the forehead*), it remains like this. And then one is always in a perfect peace... after some years.

But at the beginning, a very small beginning, two or three minutes, it is very simple. For something complicated you must make an effort, and when one makes an effort, one is not quiet. It is difficult to make an effort while remaining quiet. Very simple, very simple, you must be very simple in these things. It is as though you were learning how to call a friend: by dint of being called he comes. Well, make peace and calm your friends and call them: 'Come, peace, peace, peace, peace, come!' "[13] (8-9-1954)

2. The Prison of the Sense of One's Own Person

"**If you need a personal motive in order to do something, it means that you are still entirely in your ego, you understand. So long as it is necessary, one has to remain in it. Only, you must not then think that you can go fast. It takes a very long time, sometimes several lives, sometimes a great number of lives.** If you need personal reasons for doing things, you have only to wait till you grow out of it and understand that it is not for a personal reason that you must do things.

For example, it is not for a personal reason that you must want perfection, it is not for a personal reason that you must want union with the Divine, it is not for a personal reason that you must want the supramental transformation. If it is for your own good and for a personal reason, well, follow your path; I tell you, you will get there – after a certain number of lives."[14]

* * *

"This sense of one's own person becomes a kind of cage, a prison which shuts you in, prevents you from being true, from knowing truly, acting truly, understanding truly. It is as though someone had put you in a very hard shell and you were compelled to stay there.

This is the first sensation you have. Afterwards you begin to tap against the shell in order to break it. Sometimes it resists very long. But still, when you begin to feel this, that what you believed to be yourself, the person doing things and for whom they are done, the person who exists and makes you what you are, yes, when you pass from this to the consciousness that this is a prison preventing you from being truly yourself, then you have made great progress, and there is hope. You feel yourself stifled, crushed, absolutely shut up in a prison without air, without light, without an opening, and then you begin pushing from inside, pushing, pushing, pushing so that it may break.

And the day it breaks, the day it opens, suddenly, you enter the psychic consciousness. And then you understand. And then, truly, if you have a sense of humour, you laugh; you realise your stupidity."[15]

3. Aspiration and Desire

"…if you have an aspiration, say, suddenly you think of the possibility of progress and have an aspiration for progress; but if a desire is mixed with your aspiration, you will have the desire to progress for the powers this will give you or the importance it will give you or the improvement in your living conditions. You go and immediately mix all kinds of little very personal reasons with your aspiration. And to tell the truth, very few people have a very pure aspiration. An aspiration, a will to progress, just that; it stops there. Because one aspires for progress and then, there we are, let us not go farther. We want progress. But usually there get mixed up with it all kinds of desires for the results of this progress. And so desire comes in, you see; this brings exactly what he says, a consciousness which is impure and muddy, and inside this nothing higher can come. This must be completely eliminated to begin with. If one looks at oneself very sincerely, very straightforwardly and very severely, one very quickly perceives that very few things, very few movements of consciousness are free from being mixed with desires. Even in what you take for a higher movement, there is always... no, happily not always, but most often there is a desire mixed. The desire of the sense of one's importance, if only this, that kind of self-satisfaction, the satisfaction of being someone superior.

This is of course much better than those who want to become yogis in order to astound their neighbours and exercise authority over others, and so that others may be full of admiration and of respect for them. How many things are truly *pure*? Pure aspiration? You must have already

attained a very high level, that level I spoke of, on which one can look at oneself with a smile, a slightly ironic smile, and have the feeling that one was so small, so small, so small, so petty, so *insignificant* and so *foolish*. After that things go better. But for what a *long* time *all* the movements are always turned back upon themselves! You start off in a sweep, as though you were springing forward in the face of this universe, and you turn back upon yourself, expecting a small result, a small satisfaction, a very tiny satisfaction, even if it be just your own self-appreciation: 'Oh, what a fine aspiration I had!'

There you are."[16] (27-9-1954)

4. The Nature of Spiritual Experiences

"**…in the normal course, to the degree that you progress inwardly, every step that you take towards the true consciousness is accompanied by a certain number of experiences corresponding to it which allow you to understand the situation you are in: this of course is normal.** It ought to be like that.

But these usually are not such sensational experiences as to be made much of. People often have all of a sudden an illumination of consciousness, an inner indication, an unusual perception. But when they are not turned exclusively towards the desire to have experiences, they don't attach much importance to it. Sometimes they don't even attach enough importance. The indication came, showed them something, but they were not even aware of it. Yet it is not these things which give you the impression that you are living in a wonderful world. These things are quite normal.

Suddenly an opening in the mind, a light that comes, one understands something which he did not before. You take that for a very natural phenomenon. But it is a spiritual experience – or the clear seeing of a situation, the understanding of what is happening in oneself, of the state one is in, the indication of the exact progress one ought to make, of the thing that's to be corrected. This too is an experience and an experience that comes from within; it is an indication given to you by the psychic. People take this also as quite a natural fact. They do not attach any importance to it.

Usually people mean by "experience" either altogether extravagant phenomena, levitation and things like that, or else sensational visions: being able to see the future or seeing at a distance or maybe ordinary things like being able to tell where a lost object can be found or all kinds of little tricks like that. This is what people call 'experiences'."[17]

5. People Gifted With Occult Faculties, and Spiritual Life

"Well, usually people who have these faculties are not well educated, but for some reason they are born with a gift, as some are born musicians, others painters, and others scientists. These are born clairvoyants, and so it may be, when they are in need they use this faculty to earn their living, and they spoil it completely. If they happen to be in comfortable circumstances and do not need to earn their living, then they become famous among their friends. In any case, this is always an opportunity for a certain kind of commercialism. There are very few who can have these gifts

without using them either to make a name for themselves or to earn money. But these gifts are not of a very high level. One can have them without having a very spiritual life. They do not depend at all on an inner spiritual height. One should not mistake them for signs of progress.

Besides, one thing is certain: those who do not have these faculties and want to acquire them, for instance the capacity of foresight, foreseeing what is going to come, which is analogous to prophecy, the capacity to know events before they happen – as I said, there are people who have this spontaneously because of some peculiarity from birth – and if one wants to acquire them himself, that is to say, enter into contact with regions where these things can be seen – and not by chance or accidentally or without having any control over the thing, but on the contrary to see them at will – then this indeed means a *formidable* work. And that is why some people attach a very great value to these things. But they have some value only when they are under one's control, done at will and the result of an inner discipline. In this case, yes, because this proves that you have entered into contact with a certain region where it is difficult to enter consciously, at will, and permanently. It is very difficult, it requires much development. And then, for you to be sure of what you have seen... because I haven't told you that with these people who make a profession of their clairvoyance, it becomes... I said "commercialism", but it is worse than that, you know, it is a fraud! When they do not see anything, they invent. When they make a profession of it, and people come to ask them something about the future, and they can see nothing at all, they are obliged to invent something, otherwise they would lose their reputation and

their clientele. So this becomes a deception, you see, a falsehood, fraud or falsification.

But when one wants to have a pure, correct information, to be in contact with the truth of things, and see in advance – not according to one's petty mental construction, but how things are decreed, in the place where they are decreed and the time when they are decreed – then that requires a *very great* mental purity, a *very great* vital equilibrium, an absence of desire, of preference. One must never want anything to be of one kind or another, for this falsifies your vision immediately.

All who have visions usually deform them, *all*, almost *without exception*. I don't think there is one in a million who doesn't deform his vision, because the minute it touches the brain it touches the domain of preferences, desires, attachments, and this indeed is enough to give a colouring, a special look to what you have seen. Even if you have seen correctly, you translate it wrongly in your consciousness. This truly asks for a great perfection. But you can have perfection without the gift of vision. And the perfection can be as great without the gift as with it. If it interests you specially, you can make an effort to obtain it. But only if it interests you specially. If you lay great store by knowing certain things, you can undertake a discipline; you may undertake a discipline also in order to change the functioning of your senses. I think I have already explained to you how one can hear at a distance, see at a distance, even physically; but this means considerable effort, which perhaps is not always in proportion to the result, because these are side issues, not

the central, the most important thing. **These are side issues which may be interesting, but in itself this is not the spiritual life; one may have a spiritual life without this.** Now, the two together can give you perhaps a greater capacity. But for this too you must tell yourself, "If I ought to have it – if I take the true attitude of surrender to the Divine and of complete consecration – if I ought to have it I shall have it. As, if I ought to have the gift of speech, I shall have it." And in fact, if one is truly surrendered, in the true way and totally, at every minute one is what one ought to be and does what one ought to do and knows what one ought to know. This... but naturally, for this one should have overcome the petty limitations of the ego, and this does not happen overnight. But it can happen."[18]

6. The Relativity of All Mental Perceptions and Knowledge

"…if you say that there is nothing in the universe that is not the work of the Divine, which is essentially true, though not true here, then you say, "Good. It is the Divine who organises everything; consequently it is He who has organised the difficulties also." But this is indeed a very childish way of putting things – oversimple. Only, as I said at the beginning, "If it helps you to think in this way, think in this way." You see, thought is so approximate a thing, it is so far from *the* truth... it is only a kind of vague, incomplete, confused reflection, full of falsehood, even at its best. So, in truth, it is the moment to be practical and tell yourself, "Well, I shall adopt this thought if it helps me to progress." But if you think that it is the absolute truth, you are sure to go wrong, for there is not a single thought which is the absolute truth.

Ah, yes, we are going to put into the books of the lending library of the University one of Sri Aurobindo's short reflections, which is wonderful – I had it printed today – in which he says that **any teaching, however great it may be, however pure, noble, true it may be, is only one aspect of the Truth and not the Truth itself (I am commenting, the text* is not exactly this), it is not the entire Truth.** Well, that is it. Whatever your thought may be, even if it is very high, very pure, very noble, very true, it is only a very tiny microscopic aspect of the Truth, and consequently it is not entirely true. So in that field one must be practical, as I said, adopt the thought for the time being, the one which will help you to make progress when you have it. Sometimes it comes as an illumination and this helps you to progress. So long as it helps you to make progress, keep it; when it begins to crumble, not to act any longer, well, drop it, and try to get another which will lead you a little farther.

Many miseries and misfortunes in the world would disappear if people knew the relativity of knowledge, the relativity of faith, the relativity of the teachings and also the relativity of circumstances... to what extent a thing is so relatively important! For the moment it may be capital, it may lead you to life or to death – I am not speaking of physical life and death, I am speaking of the life and death of the spirit – but this is for the moment; and when you have made a certain progress, when you have grown a few years older from the spiritual point of view, and you look back on this thing, this circumstance or idea which perhaps

* *"But thought nor word can seize eternal truth." – Sri Aurobindo*

has decided your life, it will seem so relative, so insignificant to you... and you will need something much higher to make new progress.

If one could always remember this, well, one would avoid much sectarianism, much intolerance, and annul all quarrels immediately, because a quarrel means just this, that one thinks in one way and the other in another, that one has taken one attitude and the other another, and that instead of trying to bring them together and find out how they could be harmonised, one puts them over against each other as one fights with one's fists. It is nothing else.

But if you become aware of the complete relativity of your point of view, your thought, your conviction of what is good, to what an extent it is relative in the march of the universe, then you will be less violent in your reactions and more tolerant."[19] (6-10-1954)

7. Weakness in Social Relations

"There is a great weakness in social relations, a *very* great weakness; and that is why, in fact, one gets angry and gets carried away and says things one should not say. If one were not weak, one would never be violent. Weakness and violence are two things that go together. He who is truly strong is never violent. This is something one should always remember. Violence is *always* a sign of a weakness somewhere. Of course, one sees a man with bulging muscles who is very strong, knocking down another with all his might, and one says, "He is strong!" It is not true. He has muscles, but morally he is very weak. So, he may be strong here and weak there. Usually this is what happens. …

Agitation, violence, anger, all these things are always, without exception, signs of weakness. And especially when one gets carried away in one's speech and says things one should not say, *this* indeed is the sign of a frightful mental weakness – mental and vital – frightful. Otherwise you may hear all the insults in the world, people may tell you all possible stupidities; if you are not weak, you may perhaps not smile outwardly, for it is not always good taste to smile, but deep within you, you are smiling, you let it pass, it does not touch you.... Simply, if your mind has formed the habit of being quiet as it is recommended here, and you have the perception of truth within yourself, you can hear anything at all. It does not even produce the semblance of a vibration – everything remains absolutely immobile and quiet."[20] (13-10-1954)

8. Passion is not a Weakness of the Heart

"…it is a disorder of the vital. (*Silence*) The feeling comes from the heart and then the vital gets hold of it and turns it into a passion. (*Silence*) And one step farther, and it becomes a madness."[21] (20-10-1954)

* * *

III. Questions and Answers, Nov – Dec 1954

1. What is the Physical Opening?*

"That's when the physical body opens to the divine influence and receives the divine forces.

For example, you see, there's a moment when the divine forces come and penetrate all the cells. To begin with, it is the physical consciousness, the body consciousness which opens first to the influence of the Divine and understands and wants nothing else but *this*, the divine Presence, the divine influence. There are also the body's feelings, and the very cells of the body, which can open to receive the force. For instance, when at a certain moment one feels a kind of very intense vibration spreading through the whole body and at that time one feels filled with a strength, an unusual force, a consciousness also, and all things become clear and perceptible, then that's an opening of the body; it is when the body knows, you see, and has succeeded in opening to the influence."[22]

2. Mother, Why is it Better to Concentrate in the Heart?*

"…it is better because if you concentrate there, deeply enough, it is there that you enter into contact with the psychic for the first time; while if you concentrate in the head you have to pass later from the head to the heart to be able to identify yourself with the psychic being. And if you

---

** The titles marked with an * are from the original. All the unmarked titles in the text are from the editor.*

concentrate by gathering the energies, it is better to gather them here, because it is in this centre, in this region of the being that you find the will to progress, the force of purification, and the most intense and effective aspiration. **The aspiration that comes from the heart is much more effective than that from the head.**"[23]

* * *

"Is the psychic being in the heart?

Not in the physical heart, not in the organ. It is in a fourth dimension, an inner dimension. But it is in that region, the region somewhat behind the solar plexus, it is there that one finds it most easily. The psychic being is in the fourth dimension as related to our physical being."[24] (3-11-1954)

3. Can One have Faith Through Aspiration?*

"What? Faith through aspiration? I think so, because it is rare to have it spontaneously, to be born with it. Very few people have this good luck to have a spontaneous faith. But if one is very sincere in one's aspiration, one gets it. Aspiration can bring everything, provided it is sincere and constant. One always has a tiny element of faith within oneself, whether it be faith in what one's parents have said or in the books one has studied. After all, all your education is based upon a faith of this kind. Those who have educated you have told you certain things. You had no means of checking, because you were too young and had no experience. But you have faith in what they told you and you go forward on that faith. So everyone has a tiny bit of faith, and to increase it one can use one's aspiration."[25](10-11-1954)

4. Self-mastery Through Ascetic Methods

"No! You cure nothing. You only give yourself the illusion that you have progressed, but you cure nothing. The proof is that if you stop your ascetic methods, the thing is even stronger than before; it comes back with a vengeance. It depends upon what you call ascetic methods. If it is not to indulge in satisfying all your desires, this indeed is not asceticism, it is common sense. It is something else. Ascetic methods are things like repeated fasting, compelling yourself to endure the cold... in fact, to torture your body a little. This indeed gives you only a spiritual pride, nothing more. It masters nothing at all. It is infinitely easier. People do it because it is very easy, it is simple. Just because the pride is quite satisfied and the vanity can get puffed up, it becomes very easy. One makes a great demonstration of one's ascetic virtues, and so considers oneself an extremely important personage, and that helps one to endure many things.

It is much more difficult to master one's impulses quietly, composedly, and to prevent them from showing themselves – much more! – without taking ascetic measures. **It is much more difficult not to be attached to the things you possess than to possess nothing. This is something that has been known for centuries. It requires a much greater quality not to be attached to the things one possesses than to be without any possessions or to reduce one's possessions to a strict minimum.** It is much more difficult. It is a much higher degree of moral worth. Simply this attitude: when a thing comes to you, to take it, use it; when for one reason or another it goes away, to let it go and not regret it. Not to refuse it when it comes, to know how

to adapt yourself and not to regret it when it goes.

Even if defects come?

It is not a question of defects, I am speaking of material things. Defects are not things which come, they are things one carries in oneself. I am speaking of material things. I am speaking of asceticism, you understand.

Asceticism is an altogether material discipline. Defects – don't think they come from outside; one has enough of them inside one without needing to borrow them from elsewhere. And in fact, if one did not carry them in oneself, one could not become aware of them in others. It is because the seed of all this is in oneself that one is in contact with them. And when we say that great waves of passion pass through people, and that they are not generated in them but pass through them, it is perfectly true. But if there was someone absolutely immune from all possibility of passion, they could pass by for centuries, he wouldn't even feel them. He could see them, see them passing, as one sees a storm passing in the sky, but he would feel nothing at all. When the vibrations inside oneself answer the vibrations from outside, it means that they are there; otherwise no vibration can enter."[26]

5. A Perfect Definition of Spiritual Experience

"**It is something which puts you in contact with a consciousness higher than the one you usually have.** You have a certain feeling about yourself, you are not even aware of it, it is for you your ordinary condition, you understand. Well, **if suddenly you become conscious within of something very different and much higher,**

then, whatever it may be, this will be a spiritual experience. You may formulate it with a mental idea, you may not formulate it; you may explain it to yourself, you may not; it may last, it may not, it may be instantaneous. But when there is this essential difference in the consciousness and when, naturally, the quality that comes is very... much higher, clearer, purer than what one usually has, then one can call this a spiritual experience; this means that there are thousands of different things which can be called spiritual experiences.

Should we aspire to have a spiritual experience?

I think it is wiser to aspire to make progress or to be more conscious or to be better or do better than aspire for a spiritual experience; because that might open the door to more or less imaginary and falsified experiences, to movements of the vital which take on the appearance of higher things. One may deceive oneself by having an aspiration for experiences. In fact, the experience must come spontaneously, as the result of inner progress, but not for itself or in itself."[27] (15-12-1954)

6. Hostile Forces, Possessions and Psychic Being

"When a being is possessed by a hostile force, what becomes of his psychic?

It depends on the degree of the possession. Usually it is something progressive. First there is an influence under which one comes, and comes in a fragmentary way, not even totally in his being, but in certain parts and for a time. This is the first stage. The second: the influence becomes permanent and there is one part of the being which

deteriorates, which is constantly under this influence and expresses it. After this, the being which has cast this influence tries to enter that part. Then, usually, this produces a conflict, a kind of inner battle. People have fits, sometimes even nervous morbid fits. In trying to resist, the two parts of the being come constantly into conflict, and this produces great imbalance, even physical imbalance. But if one doesn't know how to resist and doesn't succeed in shaking off the hold, then gradually the being that has seized upon a part of the person acts like an octopus and spreads its tentacles like that, slowly and everywhere; and finally it is a total possession. **At the moment of the total possession, either the possessed person becomes completely unbalanced or he becomes a kind of monster and his psychic being leaves him.**

These cases are extremely rare, fortunately. Usually, in the human being the psychic is strong enough to be able to resist, and the most frequent case is that of constant conflict between the two parts, until the psychic being, if it is strong enough and knows how to lean on a greater strength than its own, is capable of rejecting this influence and freeing itself. It is only in an extreme case of a total possession that the psychic being goes away. But these are extremely rare cases, extremely rare. **It sometimes happens that a child is still-born, that is, just at the moment of birth it dies or a few minutes later, or an hour or two later, you see, just at that time. In these cases it happens that it is the psychic being which has decided not to use this body. But if, for example, the doctor who is looking after the case is a clever man or the nurse a clever person and they can bring back life into the body by artificial**

respiration or such means, most often it is a hostile being which gets hold of this body. There have been cases like that, children who seemed to be dead, that is, the psychic being had left the body, and before it had died completely, a vital being had entered and taken its place. Such cases have been known. And these beings are demons. In life they become veritable demons. There are not many of them.

There are beings of the vital, but of a higher kind, emanations of Asuras, for example, who have decided for one reason or another that they would try to be converted, not to be antidivine, and manage to enter into relation with the Divine. They know that the best way is to identify themselves with a human body in order to be under the control of a psychic being. And they incarnate in human bodies, but not with the intention of driving out the psychic being, on the contrary, to try to submit to the influence of the psychic being and be converted by it. These cases also are not frequent, but still they have been known, and in these cases these human beings are gifted with very exceptional capacities, but usually they also have very exceptional difficulties, because the power which has incarnated in them is one which was, at least, if it is not still so, a hostile power; and, you see, it is difficult to get rid of all these movements of revolt immediately; sometimes it takes a whole lifetime to succeed in doing it.

Some of these asuric beings have tried to convert themselves and not succeeded. They ought to have left the body they had chosen, because they could not convert themselves. It was too difficult a task for them, it demanded

too great an effort.

But all these cases about which I have just spoken to you are very rare ones, you see. We can't say that such things happen and are met with at every turn: a gentleman who is the incarnation of an adverse force or another who is possessed. Such cases are very rare, very rare.

But the case of an influence – being under an influence and expressing it – this, unfortunately, is very frequent, especially with people who undertake yoga without being sufficiently purified beforehand, or otherwise with egoistic intentions; to people who begin to do yoga for reasons of ambition or vanity it happens very often that they put themselves under the influence of certain adverse forces.

And there are also many people who are under certain influences in a way... how to put it?... one can't call it accidental, but... for example, there are psychic beings who choose a certain environment to incarnate in because they think that there they will have the experiences they want, and owing to some circumstances in this environment there is a hostile influence at work; so the body they put on is to a certain extent under this hostile influence and they have to fight against that terribly all their life. They can at a particular moment, as I said – if they know how to rely on greater forces than their own – they can conquer and gain a great victory. It is a great victory to get rid of the influence of an adverse force. It is truly a victory which goes beyond the individual's own person and has a repercussion on the whole terrestrial state. Each victory gained like this by an individual over a hostile force influencing him, is a long step

forward to the day when the earth will be completely free of the presence of hostile forces. It represents a great progress for the earth."[28]

* * *

"Now, when people are divided in their mind, and in one part of their mind aspire for the truth and transformation and in another don't want them, and not only resist but revolt – which happens often – this indeed creates a terrible inner cerebral struggle, first mental and then cerebral, and this may bring about a serious mental imbalance.

There are cases in which it is precisely the opening to a suggestion, an adverse influence, an opening which is the result of a wrong movement – a movement of revolt or of hatred or of violent desire. **One can, in a wrong movement, open oneself – in a rage, for example – one can open to an adverse force and bring in an influence which could end up by a possession.** At the beginning these things are relatively easy to cure if there is a conscious part of the being and a very strong will to get rid of this bad movement and this influence. One succeeds easily enough, relatively speaking, if the aspiration is sincere; but if one looks on the thing with complacency and tells oneself, "Ah, it is like that, it can't be otherwise", then this becomes dangerous. One must not tolerate the enemy in the place. As soon as one notices his presence, one must throw him out very far, as far as one can, pitilessly."[29]

7. Never Ever Leave the Path Once You are on It

"…when you are on the path, do not ever leave it. Wait

a little, you can hesitate as long as you want before taking it; but the minute you set your foot on it, it is finished, don't leave it. Because this has consequences which can even extend to several lives. It is something very serious. That is why, besides, I never push anyone to enter the path of Yoga. You are quite a number of children here; I have never asked anyone – only those who came to me and told me, "I want it." And to these also, unless I am absolutely sure of them because it is written in their destiny that they have come for that, I always say, "Think about it, think, be quite sure that this is what you want and nothing else." And when they have reflected and decided, it is finished. **One should no longer move away, one should go straight to the end. I mean, one should not leave the path any more. One should go forward at all costs and try not to stop too often on the way, because it is easier to continue even if it is hard, you see, than to begin all over again when one has stopped.** A much greater effort is needed to get going again than to continue on the way. And you see, logically I should not say it, but I have already warned all who are here, I have told them, "Don't ever take lightly all the circumstances of each day, all the tiny little things of life, all the small events, you know; never take all this lightly." Never react with your lower being. Each time you are told to do something or not to do it – you are not told this very often, but each time you are told, before reacting think a little, try to find in yourself the part which reacts. Do not react just like that with what is most commonplace in you. Enter within yourself, try to find the best in yourself and with this you must react. *It is very important, it is very important.*

There are people who mark time for years because they

haven't done this. There are others who seem to fly, so fast do they go, because they pay attention to this. And those who don't do that throw the blame always on the Divine. They accuse the Grace. They tell her, "It is You who deceived me, it is You who put me into difficulty, it is You who made me stumble, it is You who are a monster", not exactly in these words, but their thought is like this. And so, naturally, they make their case worse because they push away even the help they could have had in their difficulty. There we are.

I could tell you many more things, but it will come gradually. In any case, if you can keep within yourself a confidence, a candid trust which does not argue, and the sense of... yes, it is truly a kind of trust that what is done for you, in spite of all appearances, is always the best thing to lead you in the quickest way possible out of all your difficulties and towards the goal... if you can keep that strong in you, well, your path will become tremendously easier.

You will tell me that it is very difficult to keep it, but children keep it very well. They must have truly come upon particularly detestable parents to lose it; but if their parents are simply good enough, they keep this very well. Well, it is this attitude; if you can tell yourself, "Good, perhaps the divine Grace deserves our confidence", simply this, nothing else, you will avoid many difficulties, many. In fact this avoids many difficulties even in ordinary life, and many worries. And particularly here, if you can do that, well, you will see things which seemed formidably difficult dissolving suddenly like clouds."[30] (22-12-1954)

* * *

IV. Questions and Answers, Jan – Feb 1955

1. Who Can Know the Future?

"…people are neither conscious enough nor pure enough to do what they should do, exactly as they should do it, with full knowledge of the result; for the result, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, is not what they desire – or if it is what they desire, it is modified, it is mixed, diluted, there are differences, differences enough not to be fully satisfactory. So if one knew ahead exactly what was going to happen, one would remain seated, quietly, and would do nothing any longer. One would say, "Good, if this must happen, it is good, I have nothing more to do." That is why one doesn't know. **But he who can act in all circumstances in full knowledge of the cause, knowing what the result of his action will be, and at the same time can do a certain thing which is sometimes even in contradiction with this result, that person indeed can know.** But I don't think there are many like that. In ordinary life people say that for someone to realise something, he ought always to aim much farther than the goal he has to attain; that all who have realised something in life, all the great men who have created, realised something, their aim, their ambition, their plan was always much greater, vaster, more complete, more total than what they did. They always fell short of their expectation and hope. It is a weakness, but it comes from what I said, that unless one has a very great ideal before him and the hope of realising it, one doesn't put out all the energies of the being and therefore doesn't do what is necessary to attain even the nearest goal,

except, as I said, when one can act with the clear vision that "this is what ought to be done" and without the slightest worry about the consequences and the result of what one does; but this is difficult."[31]

2. People's Preoccupation With Pessimistic and Troublesome Thoughts

"**If you observe yourself, if you... how to put it?... if you catch yourself thinking – well, if you do it suddenly, if you look at yourself thinking all of a sudden, spontaneously, unexpectedly, you will notice that nine times out of ten you are thinking something troublesome. It is very rarely that you are thinking about harmonious, beautiful, constructive, happy things, full of hope, light and joy; you will see, try the experiment.** Suddenly stop and look at yourself thinking, just like that: put a screen in front of your thought and look at yourself thinking, off-hand, you will see this at least nine times out of ten, and perhaps more. (It is very rarely, very rarely that one has in the whole day, suddenly, a dazzling thought about what is going to happen or the state one is in or the things one wants to do or the course of his life or world circumstances – it depends, you see, on your preoccupation). Well, you will see, it is almost always foreseeing a bigger or smaller, more or less vast catastrophe."[32] (5-1-1955)

3. Questioning Increases Troubles and Difficulties

"For instance, when the guru tells you to do something, if you begin to ask, "Why should I do it? What is the necessity of doing it? Explain to me what I must do. Why do I have to do it?" This is called questioning.

To resist means to try to evade the order and not accomplish it. So naturally this increases the difficulties very much. There is the explanation later. **Sri Aurobindo says that this was the reason why an absolute unquestioning surrender was demanded; no argument was allowed in those days. You were told, "Do this"; it had to be done. You were told, "Don't do it"; it had not to be done, and nobody had the right to ask why.** If one didn't understand, so much the worse for him.

It's not like that here. You have the right to ask all that you want. Only, it is true that there are times when it doesn't help. If one begins to argue in his mind, "Why have we been told to do this? Why are we told not to do that?" and so on, this does not help. It increases difficulties very much, it hardens the consciousness, it puts a thick shell over it and so prevents it from being receptive."[33]

4. We Have Many Egos Inside Ourselves

"One has many egos inside oneself. One becomes aware of them when one begins to destroy them: when one has destroyed an ego, that which was most troublesome, usually it creates a kind of inner cyclone. When one comes out of the storm, one feels, "Ah, now it is over, everything is done, I have destroyed the enemy inside me, all is finished." But after a while, one notices that there is another, and another still, and yet again another, and that **in fact one is made of a heap of little egos which are absolutely a nuisance and which must be overcome one after another.**"[34] (12-1-1955)

5. Perils of Boasting

"How many times, you know, when someone boasts... it may be very childishly... but **when someone boasts about something: "Oh, I am sure of that, I shall never make that mistake", immediately I see a hostile formation passing there, like that, and it enters by the little hole made by the boasting. It enters within, like that, and then penetrates, and so prepares everything for you to do exactly what you didn't want to.** But this is an amusement, it is certainly not to help you to progress. (*Mother laughs*) But if you know how to take it, it does help you to progress. You say, 'Good, another time I won't boast.'

And as these forces are very conscious on the mental and vital plane, one doesn't even need to pronounce the words. If the thought... for example, if you have worked well to correct something, either a bad habit or a material weakness, anything, you have worked hard to correct this thing, and as you have worked well you have succeeded to a certain extent. Then, if simply mentally you state that you have succeeded, the next minute it begins again. It is... you see, you must not even think, it is not a question of saying, the question is simply of thinking: "Why, it was like that before, and now it is like this. Ah, it is fine!" Finished. The next minute it begins again.

And this is certain, because there are witnesses all around you who are notoriously malicious, and this amuses them terrifically. Sometimes I actually even hear them laughing when someone says something frankly. I hear a little laugh like that. Oh, it amuses them very much. And the next minute or the next day, crash! It is undone."[35] (19-1-1955)

6. Consequences of Committing Suicide

"Why does one suffer when one commits suicide?

Why does one commit suicide? Because one is a coward.... When one is cowardly one always suffers.

In the next life one suffers again?

The psychic being comes with a definite purpose to go through a set of experiences and to learn and make progress. Then if you leave before its work is finished it will have to come back to do it again under much more difficult conditions. So all that you have avoided in one life you will find again in another, and more difficult. And even without leaving in this way, if you have difficulties to overcome in life, you have what we usually call a test to pass, you see; well, if you don't pass it or turn your back upon it, if you go away instead of passing it, you will have to pass it another time and it will be much more difficult than before.

Now people, you know, are extremely ignorant and they think that it is like this: there is life, and then death; life is a bunch of troubles, and then death is an eternal peace. But it is not at all like that. And usually when one goes out of life in an altogether arbitrary way and in an ignorant and obscure passion, one goes straight into a vital world made of all these passions and all this ignorance. So the troubles one wanted to avoid one finds again without even having the protection which the body gives, for – if you have ever had a nightmare, that is, a rash excursion in the vital world, well, your remedy is to wake yourself up, that is to say, to rush back immediately into your body. But when you have destroyed your body you no longer have a body to protect

you. So you find yourself in a perpetual nightmare, which is not very pleasant. For, to avoid the nightmare you must be in a psychic consciousness, and when you are in a psychic consciousness you may be quite sure that things won't trouble you. It is indeed the movement of an ignorant darkness and, as I said, a great cowardice in front of the sustained effort to be made."[36] (26-1-1955)

7. No Experience Can Ever Be Repeated

"One can never have the same experience twice because one is never the same person twice. Between the first experience and the second, even if one hour has passed, you are no longer the same man and you can never reproduce identically the same thing. If you take care to become more conscious, more sincere, more concentrated, the experience you have will be different, but it may be deeper and more clear. But if you cling to something you have had and want to reproduce the same thing, you will have nothing at all, because you can't have the same thing and you are in a state in which you refuse to have a new experience, for you are attached to the past one. And usually when one has had an experience which was a revelation, something altogether important, one doesn't want to leave it, one is afraid of not having it any longer, and so, in this movement of clinging to something, one prevents oneself from progressing and puts oneself in conditions in which one can't have the next experience.

Well, this has to be understood, because **it is an absolute fact: one can never have the same experience twice.** There may be similar experiences, very close, and

particularly some which appear similar, but these experiences... if one is absolutely sincere, impartial and like a blank page, he will perceive that there is a difference, sometimes an essential one, between the two, though in appearance they seem very close. But the more ready you are to leave behind all that you have experienced, in order to be able to go towards something better and higher, the faster you will go; the more you drag the heavy weight of all the past which you don't want to get rid of, the slower is your advance. All the past should always be simply like a stepping-stone or a ladder, something to lead you farther; it should not have any other use except to push you forward. And if you can feel this and always turn your back on what is past and look at what you want to do, then you go much faster, you don't waste time on the way. **What makes you lose time is always this clinging to what has been, to what is, what seemed to you beautiful and good in what is past.** This must only help you, you must not reject it, but it must help you to go forward, it must simply be something on which you lean to take a step forward."[37] (2-2-1955)

8. Nature of Desire and its Source

"Sweet Mother, is desire contagious?

Ah, yes, very contagious, my child. It is even much more contagious than illness. If someone next to you has a desire, immediately it enters you; and in fact it is mainly in this way that it is caught. It passes from one to another... **Terribly contagious, in such a powerful way that one is not even aware that it is a contagion.** Suddenly one feels something springing up in oneself; someone has gently put it inside.

Of course, one could say, "Why aren't people with desires quarantined?" Then we should have to quarantine everybody. (*Mother laughs*)

Where does desire come from?

The Buddha said that it comes from ignorance. It is more or less that. It is something in the being which fancies that it needs something else in order to be satisfied. And the proof that it is ignorance is that when one has satisfied it, one no longer cares for it, at least ninety-nine and a half times out of a hundred. I believe, right at its origin it is an obscure need for growth, as in the lowest forms of life love is changed into the need to swallow, absorb, become joined with another thing. This is the most primitive form of love in the lowest forms of life, it is to take and absorb. Well, the need to take is desire. So perhaps if we went back far enough into the last depths of the inconscience, we could say that the origin of desire is love. It is love in its obscurest and most unconscious form. It is a need to become joined with something, an attraction, a need to take, you see.

Take for instance... you see something which is – which seems to you or is – very beautiful, very harmonious, very pleasant; if you have the true consciousness, you experience this joy of seeing, of being in a conscious contact with something very beautiful, very harmonious, and then that's all. It stops there. You have the joy of it – that such a thing exists, you see. And this is quite common among artists who have a sense of beauty. For example, an artist may see a beautiful creature and have the joy of observing the beauty, grace, harmony of movement and all that, and that's all. It stops there. He is perfectly happy, perfectly satisfied, because

he has seen something beautiful. An ordinary consciousness, altogether ordinary, dull like all ordinary consciousness – as soon as it sees something beautiful, whether it be an object or a person, hop! "I want it!" It is deplorable, you know. And into the bargain it doesn't even have the joy of the beauty, because it has the anguish of desire. It misses that and has nothing in exchange, because there is nothing pleasant in desiring anything. It only puts you in an unpleasant state, that's all.

The Buddha has said that there is a greater joy in overcoming a desire than in satisfying it. It is an experience everybody can have and one that is truly very interesting, very interesting."[38]

9. The Mother on the Different Parts of Being

"Sweet Mother, can the psychic express itself without the mind, the vital and the physical?

It expresses itself constantly without them. Only, in order that the ordinary human being may perceive it, it has to express itself through them, because the ordinary human being is not in direct contact with the psychic. If it was in direct contact with the psychic it would be psychic in its manifestation – and all would be truly well. But as it is not in contact with the psychic it doesn't even know what it is, it wonders all bewildered what kind of a being it can be; so to reach this ordinary human consciousness it must use ordinary means, that is, go through the mind, the vital and the physical.

One of them may be skipped but surely not the last, otherwise one is no longer conscious of anything at all. The

ordinary human being is conscious only in his physical being, and only in relatively rare moments is he conscious of his mind, just a little more frequently of his vital, but all this is mixed up in his consciousness, so much so that he would be quite unable to say "This movement comes from the mind, this from the vital, this from the physical." This already asks for a considerable development in order to be able to distinguish within oneself the source of the different movements one has. And it is so mixed that even when one tries, at the beginning it is very difficult to classify and separate one thing from another.

It is as when one works with colours, takes three or four or five different colours and puts them in the same water and beats them up together, it makes a grey, indistinct and incomprehensible mixture, you see, and one can't say which is red, which blue, which green, which yellow; it is something dirty, lots of colours mixed. So first of all one must do this little work of separating the red, blue, yellow, green – putting them like this, each in its corner. It is not at all easy.

I have met people who used to think themselves extremely intelligent, by the way, who thought they knew a lot, and when I spoke to them about the different parts of the being they looked at me like this (*gesture*) and asked me, "But what are you speaking about?" They did not understand at all. I am speaking of people who have the reputation of being intelligent. They don't understand at all. For them it is just the consciousness; it is the consciousness – "It is my consciousness" and then there is the neighbour's consciousness; and again there are things which do not have

any consciousness. And then I asked them whether animals had a consciousness; so they began to scratch their heads and said, "Perhaps it is we who put our consciousness in the animal when we look at it," like that..."[39]

* * *

"Well, if the psychic guides the mind, the mind will act in a psychic way. Then it will be a remarkable mind, absolutely harmonious and doing the right thing in the right way.

But the vital – it is the same thing, exactly the same phenomenon for the vital. The vital as it is at present is said to be the cause of all the troubles and all the difficulties, the seat of the desires, passions, impulses, revolts, etc., etc. But if the vital is entirely surrendered to the psychic, it becomes a wonderful instrument, full of enthusiasm, power, force of realisation, impetus, courage.

And then there remains the poor physical... The poor physical being has been accused of all the misdeeds. In the days of old it was always said that it was impossible, one could do nothing with something so inert, so obscure, so little receptive. But if it too was surrendered to the psychic it also would do the right thing in the right way, and then it would have a stability, a quietude, an exactness in its movements which the other parts of the being don't have, a precision in the execution which one can't have without a body. You have only to see when the body is just a little out of order, when it is ill, how many things you can no longer do, even with a strong will, a great concentration of the vital and the mind. Even when one has the precise knowledge of what ought to be done, if the body is out of order one can no longer do it."[40] (9-12-1955)

10. Attachment to Money is a Calamity

"**The more money one has the more one is in a state of calamity, my child. Yes, it is a calamity.**

It is a catastrophe to have money. It makes you stupid, it makes you miserly, it makes you wicked. It is one of the greatest calamities in the world. Money is something one ought not to have until one no longer has desires. When one no longer has any desires, any attachments, when one has a consciousness vast as the earth, then one may have as much money as there is on the earth; it would be very good for everyone. But if one is not like that, all the money one has is like a curse upon him. This I could tell anyone at all to his face, even to the man who thinks that it is a merit to have become rich. It is a calamity and perhaps it is a disgrace, that is, it is an expression of a divine displeasure.

It is infinitely more difficult to be good, to be wise, to be intelligent and generous, to be more generous, you follow me, when one is rich than when one is poor. I have known many people in many countries, and the most generous people I have ever met in all the countries, were the poorest. And as soon as the pockets are full, one is caught by a kind of illness, which is a sordid attachment to money. I assure you it is a curse.

So the first thing to do when one has money is to give it. But as it is said that it should not be given without discernment, don't go and give it like those who practise philanthropy, because that fills them with a sense of their own goodness, their generosity and their own importance. You must act in a sattwic way, that is, make the best possible

use of it. And so, each one must find in his highest consciousness what the best possible use of the money he has can be. And truly money has no value unless it circulates. For each and every one, money is valuable only when one has spent it. If one doesn't spend it... I tell you, men take care to choose things which do not deteriorate, that is, gold – which does not decompose. Otherwise, from the moral point of view it rots. And now that gold has been replaced by paper, if you keep paper for a long time without taking care of it, you will see when you open your drawer that there are small silver-fish which have regaled themselves on your paper-rupees. So they will have left a lace-work which the bank will refuse.

There are countries and religions which always say that God makes those whom He loves poor. I don't know if that is true; but there is one thing which is true, that surely when someone is born rich or has become very rich, in any case when he possesses much from the point of view of material riches, it is certainly not a sign that the Divine has chosen him for His divine Grace, and he must make honourable amends if he wants to walk on the path, the true path, to the Divine.

Wealth is a force – I have already told you this once – a force of Nature; and it should be a means of circulation, a power in movement, as flowing water is a power in movement. It is something which can serve to produce, to organise. It is a convenient means, because in fact it is only a means of making things circulate fully and freely.

This force should be in the hands of those who know how to make the best possible use of it, that is, as I said at

the beginning, people who have abolished in themselves or in someway or other got rid of every personal desire and every attachment. To this should be added a vision vast enough to understand the needs of the earth, a knowledge complete enough to know how to organise all these needs and use this force by these means.

If, besides this, these beings have a higher spiritual knowledge, then they can utilise this force to construct gradually upon the earth what will be capable of manifesting the divine Power, Force and Grace. And then this power of money, wealth, this financial force, of which I just said that it was like a curse, would become a supreme blessing for the good of all."[41] (16-2-1955)

11. Development and Refinement of the Senses

"One can… very well make a very deep study of taste and have a very detailed knowledge of the different tastes of things, of the association between ideas and taste, in order to acquire a full development – not positively vital, but a development of the senses. There is a great difference between this and those who eat through greediness, who think all the time about food. You see, for them eating is the most important thing; all their thoughts are concentrated on it, and they eat not because they need to eat but through desire and greed and gluttony.

In fact people who work in order to develop their taste, to refine it, are rarely very much attached to food. It is not through attachment to food that they do it. It is for the cultivation of their senses, which is a very different thing. It is like the artist, you know, who trains his eyes to appreciate

forms and colours, lines, the composition of things, the harmony found in physical nature; it is not at all through desire that he does this, it is through taste, culture, the development of the sense of sight and the appreciation of beauty. And usually artists who are real artists and love their art and live in the sense of beauty, seeking beauty, are people who don't have many desires. They live in the sense of a growth not only visual, but of the appreciation of beauty. There is a great difference between this and people who live by their impulses and desires. That's altogether something else.

Usually all education, all culture, all refinement of the senses and the being is one of the best ways of curing instincts, desires, passions. To eliminate these things does not cure them; to cultivate, intellectualise, refine them, this is the surest means of curing. To give the greatest possible development for progress and growth, to acquire a certain sense of harmony and exactness of perception, this is a part of the culture of the being, of the education of the being. It is like the people who cultivate their intelligence, who learn, read, think, compare, study. These people's minds widen and they are much vaster and more understanding than those who live without mental education, with a few petty ideas which sometimes are even contradictory in their consciousness and govern them totally because these are the only ones they have and they think these are unique ideas which should guide their life; these people are altogether narrow and limited whereas those who are trained and have studied – this at least widens their minds and they can see, compare ideas and see that all possible ideas are there in the world and that it is a pettiness, an

absurdity to be attached to a limited number of ideas and consider them the exclusive expression of truth.

Education is certainly one of the best means of preparing the consciousness for a higher development. There are people with very crude and very simple natures, who can have great aspiration and attain a certain spiritual development, but the base will always be of an inferior quality, and as soon as they return to their ordinary consciousness they will find obstacles in it, because the stuff is too thin, there are not enough elements in their vital and material consciousness to enable them to bear the descent of a higher force.

To eat through greediness and a passion for food is something completely different from studying the different tastes and knowing how to compare them, combine them and appreciate them."[42] (23-2-1955)

* * *

V. Questions and Answers, March – April 1955

1. What is Sleep?

"Sleep can be a very active means of concentration and inner knowledge. **Sleep is the school one has to go through, if one knows how to learn his lesson there, so that the inner being may be independent of the physical form, conscious in itself and master of its own life. There are entire parts of the being which need this immobility and semi-consciousness of the outer being, of the body, in order to be able to live their own life, independently.**

Only, people don't know, they sleep because they sleep, as they eat, as they live – by a kind of instinct, a semi-conscious impulse. They don't even ask themselves the question. You are asking the question now: Why does one sleep? But there are millions and millions of beings who sleep without ever having asked themselves the question why one sleeps. They sleep because they feel sleepy, they eat because they are hungry, and they do foolish things because their instincts push them, without thinking, without reasoning; but for those who know, sleep is a school, an excellent school for something other than the school of waking hours.

It is another school for another purpose, but it is a school. If one wants to make the maximum progress possible, one must know how to use one's nights as one uses one's days; only, usually, people don't at all know what to do, and they try to remain awake and all that they create is a physical and vital imbalance – and sometimes a mental

one also – as a result.

The physical and all material physical parts should be absolutely at rest, but a repose which is not a fall into the inconscient – this is one of the conditions. And the vital must be in a repose of silence. Then **if you have these three things at rest, the inner being which is rarely in relation with the outer life, because the outer life is too noisy and too unconscious for it to be able to manifest itself, can become aware of itself and awaken, become active and act upon the lower parts, establish a conscious contact. This is the real reason for sleep, apart from the necessity that, in the present conditions of life, activity and rest, rest and activity must alternate.**

The body needs rest but there are very few people, as I said, who know how to sleep. They sleep in such conditions that they don't wake up refreshed or are hardly rested at all. But this is an entire science to learn."[43] (2-3-1955)

2. The Psychic Opening in the Physical Consciousness

"…One can find the psychic through each part of the consciousness: you can find a psychic behind the physical... you can enter into contact with the psychic directly through the physical consciousness, directly through the vital consciousness, directly through the mental consciousness. It is not as though you had to cross all the states of being in order to find the psychic. You can enter the psychic without leaving your physical consciousness, through interiorisation, because it is not an ascent or gradation. It is an interiorisation, and this interiorisation can be done without passing through the other states of being, directly."[44]

3. Great Incarnated Beings and the Work of the Psychic Being

"…The present being, whatever it may be, and whoever may be within it, always has a psychic being. You see, usually it depends on the degree of evolution of the psychic being but still every psychic being which is in a body has states of being formed in the present formation. Its work is always to transform these; it is as though this were the part of the universe given to him for his work of transformation. And even if he has a vaster mission than that of his own person, unless he does this work in his person he cannot do the other... You cannot change the outer world unless you begin by changing yourself. This is the first condition; and for everyone, great and small, old and young – old, I mean those who have lived very long, and young those who haven't lived very long – it is always the same work. This is why life upon earth for a psychic being is the opportunity to progress.

The duration of earthly life is the time of progress. Outside earthly life there is, so to say, no progress. It is in earthly life that there is the possibility and the means of progress. But for all conscious beings it is the same thing, not only for those you call incarnated. It is for everyone the same thing. One must first begin with the work on himself. When one has done the work on himself, one can do it on others; but the first thing to do is to do it on oneself."[45] (9-3-1955)

4. How to Get Rid of a Difficulty Permanently

" *'The subconscient is the main cause why all things repeat themselves and nothing ever gets changed except in*

appearance. It is the cause why people say character cannot be changed, the cause also of the constant return of things one hoped to have got rid of for ever.... All too that is suppressed without being wholly got rid of sinks down there and remains as seed ready to surge up or sprout up at any moment.'

But it is not hopeless, because if it were hopeless never could we attain physical transformation.

There.

Now, questions.

Sweet Mother, how should we reject something in the vital so that it doesn't enter the subconscient?

Ah!

There is a great difference between pushing back a thing simply because one doesn't want it and changing the state of one's consciousness which makes the thing totally foreign to one's nature. Usually, when one has a movement one doesn't want, one drives it away or pushes it back, but one doesn't take the precaution of finding within oneself what has served and still serves as a support for this movement, the particular tendency, the fold of the consciousness which enables this thing to enter the consciousness. If, on the contrary, instead of simply making a movement of reprobation and rejection, one enters deeply into his vital consciousness and finds the support, that is, a kind of particular little vibration buried very deeply in a corner, often in such a dark corner that it is difficult to find it there; if one starts hunting it down, that is, if one goes within, concentrates, follows as it were the trail of this movement to its origin, one finds something like a very tiny serpent coiled up, something at times quite tiny, not bigger than a

pea, but very black and sunk very deeply.

And then **there are two methods: either to put so intense a light, the light of a truth-consciousness so strong, that this will be dissolved; or else to catch the thing as with pincers, pull it out from its place and hold it up before one's consciousness. The first method is radical but one doesn't always have at his disposal this light of truth, so one can't always use it. The second method can be taken, but it hurts, it hurts as badly as the extraction of a tooth;** I don't know if you have ever had a tooth pulled out, but it hurts as much as that, and it hurts here, like that. (*Mother shows the centre of the chest and makes a movement of twisting.*) And usually one is not very courageous. When it hurts very much, well, one tries to efface it like this (*gesture*) and that is why things persist. But if one has the courage to take hold of it and pull it until it comes out and to put it before himself, even if it hurts very much... to hold it up like this (*gesture*) until one can see it clearly, and then dissolve it, then it is finished. The thing will never again hide in the subconscient and will never again return to bother you. But this is a radical operation. It must be done like an operation.

You must first have a great deal of perseverance in the search, for usually when one begins searching for these things the mind comes to give a hundred and one favourable explanations for your not needing to search. It tells you, "Why no, it is not at all your fault; it is this, it is that, it is the circumstances, it is the people, these are things received from outside – all kinds of excellent excuses, which, unless you are very firm in

your resolution, make you let go, and then it is finished; and so, after a short time the whole business has to be started again, the bad impulse or the thing you didn't want, the movement you didn't want, comes back, and so you must begin everything over again – till the day you decide to perform the operation. When the operation is done it is over, one is free. But, as I said, you must distrust mental explanations, because each time one says, "Yes, yes, at other times it was like that, but this time truly, truly it is not my fault, it is not my fault." There you are. So it is finished. You must begin again. The subconscient is there, the thing goes down, remains there, very comfortably, and the first day you are not on your guard, hop! it surges up again and it can last – I knew people for whom it lasted more than thirty-five years, because they did not resolve even once to do what was necessary.

Yes, it hurts, it hurts a little, that's all; afterwards it is finished. So there we are."[46]

5. Reincarnation and the Psychic Being

"**The more evolved the psychic is, the nearer it is to its complete maturity, the greater the time between the births.** There are beings who reincarnate only after a thousand years, two thousand years.

The closer one is to the beginning of the formation, the closer are the reincarnations; and sometimes even, altogether at the lower level, when man is quite near the animal, it goes like this (*gesture*), that is, it is not unusual for people to reincarnate in the children of their children, like that, something like that, or just in the next generation. But

this is always on a very primitive level of evolution, and the psychic being is not very conscious, it is in the state of formation. And as it becomes more developed, the reincarnations, as I said, are at a greater distance from one another. When the psychic being is fully developed, when it no longer needs to return to earth for its development, when it is absolutely free, it has the choice between no longer coming back to earth if it finds that its work lies elsewhere or if it prefers to remain in the purely psychic consciousness, without reincarnating; or else it can come when it wants, as it wants, where it wants, perfectly consciously. And there are those who have united with forces of a universal order and with entities of the Overmind or elsewhere, who remain all the time in the earth atmosphere and take on bodies successively for the work. This means that the moment the psychic being is completely formed and absolutely free – when it is completely formed it becomes absolutely free – it can do anything it likes, it depends on what it chooses; therefore one can't say, "It will be like this, it will be like that"; it does exactly what it wants and it can even announce (that has happened), at the moment of the death of the body, what its next reincarnation will be and what it will do, and already choose what it is going to do. But before this state, which is not very frequent – it depends absolutely on the degree of development of the psychic and the hope formulated by the integral consciousness of the being – there is still the mental, vital and physical consciousness, united with the psychic consciousness; so at that moment, the moment of death, the moment of leaving the body, it formulates a hope or an aspiration or a will, and usually this decides the future life."[47]

6. How to Use the "Light of Truth" to Dissolve a Wrong Movement in the Being

"Mother, here it is said that the light of truth is not always at one's disposal...

It is always there; but one can't always use it.

But if...

It is always there; it is everywhere; but it is not at your disposal in the sense that you don't know how to make use of it.

But if one went to you to ask how?

Ah! But one must not ask personal questions. Of course if you ask me, "What should *I* do?" – anyone at all among you – I shall tell you, **'My children, it is very easy, you have only to call me, and then when you feel the contact, well, you put it upon the thing till that part has understood.'**

But here too you must know, it hurts a little; I am warning you, you see, because the thing is clinging somewhere, and in order to pull it out you must have courage; and when you put the light of truth, well, it burns, sometimes it smarts, you see; you must know how to bear it. The sincerity must be sufficient to... instead of shutting yourself up again and saying, "Oh! It hurts", you must open very wide and receive fully.

Some people have all kinds of little things like this in their head, dark little things. Some people have them here (*Mother points to the heart*), others have them lower down, for each one it depends... but for each one it is the same thing, it is always... I am saying this because it is very remarkable

that if one does the work – whoever it may be – the result is always the same, wherever it may be, whether in the head or the chest or in all the centres of consciousness, if one pushes the investigation far enough, step by step, step by step, untiringly, one always reaches something; from far it looks like a pea... like the peas... a little black pea; but if one draws near carefully enough – it depends on the degree of concentration – one perceives that it is like a very tiny... serpent, the size of a microbe, but it is very small, all coiled up like that, rolled upon itself like that. Then one takes it by the tail and pulls it out.

Sweet Mother, are there as many serpents as bad movements?

Yes, precisely! (*Laughter*) That makes a lot, quite an army. When it is in the head it is troublesome, because it is still more difficult to discover them, and one is so full of wrong ideas that it is very difficult to put any order in there. Where it is easiest to find and cure is here (*Mother shows the centre of the chest*), but it is there that it hurts most; however it is the place where one finds it most easily and cures it most radically. Lower down in the vital it is more obscure and entangled – it is quite muddled. It is all mixed up and there are many of these things – when they are there, there are many. You must put some order there first before finding them. There are some which are entangled like this (*gesture*). For example, many people have the tendency to fly into a rage – suddenly it takes possession of them. Pouff! They get terribly angry. It is here that one must look for the cause; and here it is all entangled, like this, all mixed up, and one must go very deep and very fast because this spreads with the swiftness of a flood; and when it has spread, it is quite a

mass of... like a black smoke which rises and burdens the consciousness, and it is very, very difficult to put any order in there. **But when one feels that the fury is going to rise up, if one hurries there immediately like that in the vital centre, and goes there with a torch which lights up well, one can find the corner. If one finds the corner, hop! one does this, gets hold of it, and it is finished, the anger falls instantaneously, even before one has had the time to say a word. I give this example; there are hundreds of others. All affairs of feelings, vanity, ambition, passion – passion... yes, but still not only material passion: I mean (I don't like to use the word because it is a travesty, but still) what men call love – all that, it is there one finds it, all attachments, all sentimentality, all this, it is in there.**

And in the head?

Ah! **In the head it is all the perversions of thought, all the treacheries – treacheries, there is a huge number of them: one betrays one's soul so often and so persistently, it is frightful – all the decisions, the points of view and favourable explanations, as I was telling you, and then a kind of habit of criticising... What one doesn't want to hear, when there is something higher which makes you feel your fault, there is a habit of immediately finding an explanation and a severe criticism of the idea or thought; or else some people turn it into ridicule; there are people who immediately oppose it with another idea or some commonplace notion or other. You can't imagine the bazaar there is in the head! It is something terrible.** If you were to look really objectively at what is going on in there, it is frightful –

before you put some order, see clearly, arrange all that, see that two contradictory ideas are not lined up parallel.

I know a large number of people who shelter in their minds contradictory ideas, not organised or synthesised – there is no question of a synthesis for them – but like... an almost fraternal cohabitation among things which are mortally opposed, that is, ideas which cannot lodge together. You can arrange them in a vast synthesis but that of course is a work of a higher order; yet two things, two ideas which have absolutely contradictory consequences in action and are absolutely contradictory explanations of the same fact... and these two things are there, side by side, they are even sometimes so close that one feels they are joined and live together without being troubled by the ridiculousness of their association."[48] (16-3-1955)

7. How to Eliminate a Difficulty by Transforming It

"Here Sri Aurobindo says: "As for the things in our nature *that are thrown away from us by rejection but come back, it depends on where you throw them. Very often there is a sort of procedure about it." What is this procedure, Sweet Mother?*

It is what he describes later. He explains afterwards that what is in the mind is thrown out into the vital, what is in the higher vital is thrown out into the lower vital, and what is in the lower vital is thrown out into the physical, and what is in the physical is thrown out into the subconscient. He says it – all this.

But I thought there was a procedure for rejection?

No, this is the procedure, to reject always into a lower part of the being, and finally the last refuge, he says, is in

the inconscient; and in order to get rid of something, to tell the truth, you must go right into the inconscient; if one pursues it there, it cannot go lower down. So there is only one solution for it, to transform itself.

Can't one transform it without going further?

One can. But it is quite difficult. But one can do it, because rejecting is not the best method. You see, to do this (*gesture*) is the easiest way; something troubles you, you do this (*gesture*), as you do for flies; but it is a little as with the flies, it takes a round and then comes back.

But what is necessary is what I explained to you last time in detail: to find out why it comes, why it is there, and change it – the cause itself. Then it no longer returns, there is no affinity any longer.

Things come to you because they have an affinity. There is something to which they can cling, a kind of sympathy somewhere, which may not be very conscious or very open, but there is one. And if it were not there, the thing would no longer come. There is a whole set of things which never come to bother you any longer, once you have changed the essential points in your nature."[49] (23-3-1955)

8. The True Self and the Psychic Being

"…The true self is what is also called the truth of the being. It is the divine element which is your individual reality. It is the divine element which makes you a separate individuality, and it is at the same time a fragment of the one Being and naturally the one Being itself; that is, while being a particular aspect which makes you an individual, it is an integral part of the One which makes you only an

objectivisation of the One.

This is the true self. The psychic being is a terrestrial formation. It is human beings who have a psychic being which has been developed upon earth and by earthly life and which is a projection of the divine Consciousness into Matter to awaken Matter out of its inertia so that it takes the path back to the Divine.

But in certain cases the true self is found in the psychic being, that is, it dwells in the psychic being – but not always.

There is always a divine Presence in the psychic being, but it is the divine Presence which was at the origin of the psychic formation, it is an emanation from the divine Consciousness; whereas the true self is not a terrestrial formation. It precedes the terrestrial formation."[50] (30-3-1955)

9. The Subliminal and the Psychic Being

"When one dreams, one goes very often into his subliminal being, and there things are almost the same and yet not absolutely the same; there is a great resemblance and yet there is a difference; and usually this is greater. One has the impression of entering into something that's vaster; and, for example, one feels that one can do more, that one knows more, one has a power and clear-sightedness which one doesn't have in the ordinary consciousness; one has the impression while dreaming that one knows many more things than when one is awake. …

Has the subliminal a contact with the psychic?

Not directly, not more directly than the outside being.

If externally, in your ordinary consciousness you have a contact with the psychic, that also has a contact with the psychic, or rather one can put it the other way round: if that has a contact with the psychic, it helps you to have a contact with the psychic, but not necessarily, not always; it depends on the degree of development of the being. It is not necessarily more enlightened, more balanced – no. It is more subtle, it is less dull than our outer consciousness. Our external consciousness is so dull, it has no depth; as our outer understanding has no depth, our sensations have no depth; all this is something as though flat. So here it is fuller, but not necessarily more true.

Then why is it the most important?

Because it is internal. This is what supports the outer. The outer is only an appearance of this. As I said, in a dream when one goes there, one knows things which one doesn't know, one can do things, one is in touch with things which one doesn't know in the waking consciousness, because it is too superficial.

It is like the inside of something. The outside is the expression of that, but an altogether surface expression. So naturally it looks the same; in any case more than a resemblance, it has an identity with what we see of it from outside. We see the form, don't we, the expression; well, this expression has necessarily an analogy – more than an analogy – an identity with what is inside. **So if, externally, we see that someone is absolutely ignorant of his psychic being, it is impossible that internally he is quite conscious of it; he can be closer, but he cannot be conscious of the psychic without its being reflected**

outside. Therefore, if it is not reflected outside, it means that it is not truly established within."[51]

* * *

"**The world as we see it and our outer consciousness are the result of something which is behind, which Sri Aurobindo calls the subliminal. And this itself, as he says, is set in motion by impulses which come from the subconscient below and the superconscient above, and so it is as though it were assembled there, and once it is organised there it is expressed in the outer consciousness, the ordinary consciousness.**"[52] (6-4-1955)

10. How One has Visions

"One can have visions even while remaining active. Some people have visions even amidst activity. Vision is another plane of perception which awakes. It is the senses in the mind or vital or physical which wake up and manage to pass their experiences to the outer consciousness. It is as though one had another pair of eyes behind these, eyes which could see in the vital instead of seeing in the physical. And this is always there. Only, as one is concentrated on the most material life, one doesn't notice it. But some children have the two conjointly, they see even physically all kinds of things which are not physical. Usually they are told that they are saying stupid things; so they stop speaking about them. But they don't see just this, only physically, they see other things behind. One can have visions with closed eyes, one can have visions with open eyes…"[53] (27-4-1955)

* * *

List of References:

1. *CWM 6, Page 203*
2. *CWM 6, Pages 213-16*
3. *CWM 6, Pages 224-25*
4. *CWM 6, Page 237*
5. *CWM 6, Pages 237-40*
6. *CWM 6, Pages 241-42*
7. *CWM 6, Pages 242-44*
8. *CWM 6, Pages 245-48*
9. *CWM 6, Page 279*
10. *CWM 6, Page 292*
11. *CWM 6, Page 302*
12. *CWM 6, Pages 309-10*
13. *CWM 6, Pages 313-14*
14. *CWM 6, Page 331*
15. *CWM 6, Pages 332-33*
16. *CWM 6, Pages 337-38*
17. *CWM 6, Pages 352-53*
18. *CWM 6, Pages 353-55*
19. *CWM 6, Pages 357-59*
20. *CWM 6, Pages 372-73*
21. *CWM 6, Page 377*
22. *CWM 6, Pages 388-89*
23. *CWM 6, Page 389*
24. *CWM 6, Page 392*
25. *CWM 6, Pages 394-95*
26. *CWM 6, Pages 428-30*
27. *CWM 6, Page 432*
28. *CWM 6, Pages 434-36*
29. *CWM 6, Page 438*
30. *CWM 6, Pages 444-45*
31. *CWM 7, Pages 2-3*
32. *CWM 7, Page 4*
33. *CWM 7, Page 8*
34. *CWM 7, Page 11*
35. *CWM 7, Pages 18-19*
36. *CWM 7, Pages 23-24*
37. *CWM 7, Pages 34-35*
38. *CWM 7, Pages 37-38*
39. *CWM 7, Pages 42-43*
40. *CWM 7, Page 44*
41. *CWM 7, Pages 54-56*
42. *CWM 7, Pages 57-59*
43. *CWM 7, Pages 70-71*
44. *CWM 7, Page 74*
45. *CWM 7, Page 76*
46. *CWM 7, Pages 83-85*
47. *CWM 7, Pages 86-87*
48. *CWM 7, Pages 88-90*
49. *CWM 7, Pages 95-96*
50. *CWM 7, Pages 105-06*
51. *CWM 7, Pages 108-10*
52. *CWM 7, Page 111*
53. *CWM 7, Page 129*

CWM : Collected Works of the Mother

(All the quotations from the writings of the Mother are copyright of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry – 605 002)

RNI NO. RAJENG/2002/9480

Name of the Publisher: Peoples awakening and Service organisation
Name of the Printer : Peoples awakening and Service organisation
Name of the Owner : Peoples awakening and Service organisation
Printed at : Sri Aurobindo Divine Life Press
Seth Rambilasrai Kothi, Khetan Mohalla
Jhunjhunu - 333 001, Rajasthan
Published at : Mira Ambica Bhawan, Khetan Mohalla,
Jhunjhunu - 333 001, Rajasthan
email: sadlecjjn@rediffmail.com
URL : www.sadlec.org
Editor : Anjana Dharnidharka