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*New Race*

*Blessings*

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# NEW RACE

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From the editor's desk...

Dear Readers,

Darshan greetings to all!

The Mother once said: "If the growth of consciousness were considered as the principal goal of life, many difficulties would find their solution. The best way of not becoming old is to make progress the goal of our life." (CWM, Vol.12, p.123) It has been our observation that most of the learners who are attracted to SACAR courses are primarily motivated by this aspiration to progress and grow in consciousness through a sincere and systematic study of Sri Aurobindo's works. This is amply reflected in many of their written assignments like responses to discussion questions, essays, and learning journals, which convey their attempts at ongoing synthesis of their growing intellectual understanding with personal introspection, deep reflection, and observations of life and existence within and around them.

The present issue of *New Race* presents a collection of such works submitted by some of our learners studying different aspects of Sri Aurobindo's thought. Readers will find in this issue some selected excerpts from a course on *The Psychology of Yoga* in which learners share their understanding and reflections on the many selves that constitute our being and how to harmonize and integrate these many parts of the being. The three essays by Gauri Bahuguna, and Deepali Gupta represent an interesting range of topics that interest our learners, from the diverse and inter-related areas of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy, yoga, psychology and cultural studies.

Readers will also find in this issue an article by Georges Van Vrekhem, which has been included in his memory and honour. Georges was truly a remarkable bhakta-scholar, one whose life and work will continue to inspire all the children of the Mother, young and old.

Till next time....

*Beloo*

## THE WEB OF YOGA



To be one in all ways of thy being with that which is the Highest, this is Yoga.

To be one in all ways of thy being with that which is the All, that is Yoga.

To be one in thy spirit and with thy understanding and thy heart and in all thy members with the God in humanity, this is Yoga.

To be one with all Nature and all beings, this is Yoga.

All this is to be one with God in his transcendence and his cosmos and all that he has created in his being. Because from him all is and all is in him and he is all and in all and because he is thy highest Self and thou art one with him in thy spirit and a portion of him in thy soul and at play with him in thy nature, and because this world is a scene in his being in which he is thy secret Master and lover and friend and the lord and sustainer of all thou art, therefore is oneness with him the perfect way of thy being.

*Sri Aurobindo, (SABCL, Vol.17, p. 41)*

## KNOWING OUR MANY SELVES

Excerpts from an online discussion on the topic



### **Organisation of the Being around the Psychic**

*Photo credit: [www.blossomlikeaflower.com](http://www.blossomlikeaflower.com)*

The following discussions took place in an online course titled 'The Psychology of Yoga' facilitated by Larry Seidlitz.

Class members included: *Lauran, Oeendrilla Guha, Rigved Das, Suchitra Mishra, Todd Wilson, Vaishali Jain, Warren Dupuy*

For the particular weeks selected for this compilation, class members read sections from A. S. Dalal's book titled, "Our Many Selves: Practical Yogic Psychology."

### **Topic: Consequences of the Complexity of Our Nature**

Following question was posed to the class members for discussion and reflection:

*What consequences derive from the complexity of our nature, from the fact that we have these different personalities and tendencies within us?*

The responses from the learners in the class and some additional clarification/comments provided by the facilitator are given below.

## Todd Wilson:

For the consequences stemming from the complexity of our nature, there are numerous answers and one could ponder far and wide, concluding with a book or dissertation. Pondering them would be a practice similar to *neti, neti*, yet an embracing and confronting of the threads that are collectively the fabric of our nature. This course has already been a catalyst for this level of pondering and the complexity, like the cosmos, pulls one in to adventure and explore, seeking to differentiate and ascribe, untie and loosen, the intimate mental, vital and physical comings and goings and all with varying levels of wraithlike presence. Mark this as one consequence—an unfathomable range to explore. After some small scale dabbling in the complexity of the multiplicity, I understand the history of going to the hills and mountains to explore the inner terrain and limit the external stimulation that is often a distraction. Thus, a second consequence would be the practice of Yoga and the system that was developed and passed on by the ancient Rishis. A third is the beautiful truth that we are composite beings, evolutionary accumulations who constitute the swirling antecedents of this planetary system ascending from unconscious beginnings towards Being. I claim this in the positive; however, our lineage is also our greatest source of slog and friction to unite our will and being with the Divine. Sri Aurobindo states that “[t]he practice of Yoga brings us face to face with the extraordinary complexity of our being, the stimulating but also embarrassing multiplicity of our personality, the rich endless confusion of our Nature” (Dalal, p.8). He goes on to claim that during the practice of Yoga, “[t]he most disconcerting discovery is to find that every part of us—intellect, will, sense-mind, nervous or desire self, the heart, the body—has each, as it were, its own complex individuality and natural formation independent of the rest” (p.9). We are, therefore, beings without union. But we are grand accumulations of selves.

And in regards to the fact of our multiple and different personalities and tendencies within us, there is, in the words of the Mother, a possible army of allies or an army of foes. Through Yoga, one has the opportunity and instruments to gather the complexity and multiplicity under one banner and align or at least cluster the selves of the physical, vital, mental as well as the higher selves that await our ascension. Both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother are pronouncedly clear that this is a superlative task, yet the initial psychological bombardment and confusion stems from our singular attention to the “physical vitality and physical mind” (*Ibid.*, p.10). Identifying the sources of the ideas, desires, suggestions, motives, etc. and stepping back from the impact zone is very helpful for delineation and recognition. As I mentioned earlier in reference to the course being a catalyst, the task, the text and readings have been incredibly insightful and practical. Just yesterday as I was walking, I was also listening to the poetry of Walt Whitman on a portable music device and was engrossed in thought about a few of the lines. While in thought, listening and walking, I found myself suddenly turning to locate an upcoming jogger

a few feet from me. Immediately, I realized that my physical body was acting alongside the mental, realizing as well that my thought stream was unbroken by the turning. The experience immediately connected with the current readings as well as adding to a growing awareness of my many selves—I am grateful for the guidance and support for this expanding awareness.

### **Lauran:**

In response to the question, ‘what consequences derive from the complexity of our nature, from the fact that we have these different personalities and tendencies within us?’ I would respond by first acknowledging that they act as a distraction even as they are our field of action. Sri Aurobindo writes in *The Synthesis of Yoga*, “Therefore the mental Pursha has to separate himself from association and self-identification with this desire-mind. He has to say, “I am not this thing that struggles and suffers, grieves and rejoices, loves and hates, hopes and is baffled, is angry and afraid and cheerful and depressed, a thing of vital moods and emotional passions. All these are merely workings and habits of Prakriti in the sensational and emotional mind.” (CWSA, Vol.23, p.352)

Past that and once into the fray there is the tension between the desires and ideals, hopes and ambitions of the different personalities that need to be rectified, understood, and held together to create a, “complete, coordinated, conscious organized action,” as the Mother so clearly articulates in the passage cited in *Our Many Selves* (p.3).

And yet as I understand it this is also our field of work. Even as we need this play of forces which help create ego toward self-awareness and the capacity to know the Divine personally and consciously we also are put in a position at some point to move beyond them. It looks as if moving beyond them includes organizing them to some extent or perhaps to be more true to the truth, letting them be organized within us.

So the consequences are the distractibility, the inherent tensions between the personality forces, the much needed coordination of their impulses and energies as well as the necessity to develop the concentration and aspiration to move beyond them into a wider, truer, finer experience of the Divine.

On a lighter note I’m looking forward to understanding and being able to discriminate between the different aspects of my nature. I wonder if naming these characters would help like Seven of Nine on Star Trek Voyager who was part of the Borg Collective. I could have One of L, Two of L, or maybe One of Vital, Two of Vital, One of Mental, Two of Mental and so on. Getting all those names straight could be a task in itself and then what would happen when you get those marriages between the vital and the physical and then the offspring that head into the subtle bodies? Would that be One of Vital once removed or a marriage where the parties hyphenate their names like One and Two of

Mental-Vital, or would it be Vital-Mental? I'm starting to confuse myself just thinking about it.

### **Warren Dupuy:**

The consequences are that these different personalities do not usually agree with each other. As the Mother says: "One of them might wish to make some progress, to become more and more perfect, to get a deeper knowledge of things, to realise more and more, to proceed towards the perfection of the being, while another one may simply want to have fun and enjoy itself as much as it can." (*Dalal*, pp.6-7)

What results from this is "conflicts, friction, inner disorder" in one's life (p.7).

### **Rigved Das:**

Different personalities in us try to dominate each other at every instant, thereby creating conflict and fall from the state of harmony. Self with different personalities can be looked upon as a large corporation (or nation) with different departments, where each department has set targets and objectives for achieving the organisation's goals. However in longer run, the organisation's goal is lost and individual departments are busy fulfilling their own objectives. For example, every big organisation has a vigilance department, the purpose of which is to stop pilferage of organisation's wealth. So the objective of this department is to be vigil, however with passage of time, one can see that this department becomes suspicious and begins to doubt each and every employee, thereby creating hindrance to smooth working of the organisation. Similar is the case with all the other departments like material management, finance and accounting, operations and even human resource department. When I look at myself, I find all these faculties or departments present in me too. I have certain skills, which help me in earning my bread and butter (Operations Department), because of greed (Finance Department) I work more and earn more, because I earn more I spend more, incur unnecessary expenditure (Materials Management), and indulge myself into unnecessary actions and so on. In this process I have completely forgotten the basic purpose of being here, that is realizing, being one with the Divine and making this life Divine.

Unlike self, these large organisations, which have been successful in business for a long time, develop a structured system of seeking approval or sanction from the right authority, which in most of the cases is the CEO or Head of the Organisation. The success of the organisation in achieving the ultimate goal largely depends on the CEO's wisdom. Unfortunately, in our case the CEO, the self, is silent spectator. If we are able to invoke that self, our



CEO in us, and take his sanction or approval for our actions, I think we will be able to reach our goal of making this life divine.

So, the first consequence of these different personalities in us is conflict. Second consequence, by understanding these conflicts one feels the requirement of the CEO the self, and thus we labour to invoke it. To invoke the self, a two-word mantra by the Divine Mother works very well and apt. She says "Be Conscious".

### **Lauran:**

Hello Rigved! I like your analogy of an organisation with its different departments and how it relates to our inner personality tensions. I will say though that an organisation is a step forward when you think about it. At least in an organisation there is some semblance of a common goal. Some of us haven't even gotten that far. Sometimes my experience is more like that of a kindergarten class!

After spending several hours trying to solve a computer problem I feel the tension of not having read or studied or even thought much about the Divine during that time and I feel the less for it. Contrary to the other day when I was doing some outdoor work and was attempting to stay present to Peace as I worked and found the effort agreeable to the task.

I often find simpler tasks to be easier to practice conscious awareness than more complex ones and I wonder how people who have highly mental, interactive work can practice the yoga without a lot of frustration.

### **Oeendriila Guha:**

Dear Rigveda, I enjoyed reading what you wrote about the compartments in our being. It is so original.

### **Vaishali Singhal:**

Pursuing this course has enriched my knowledge about myself comprising of different personalities within. As far as the complexity of our Nature is concerned, this question is close to an earlier question: Describe some of the personalities within yourself, which was tough for me to pen down. However, it has surely helped me to observe myself closely than ever.

In our ordinary lives, a person is unable to distinguish between his mind, higher mind, outer being, inner being, inmost being and all other parts and planes of the being. For him, every part is more or less one & the same. Now, when someone is ignorant of the parts themselves, how



would he know the quality and nature of each part, the ignorance of which creates many troubles for him in his attempt to understand his personality. Sri Aurobindo says, "Everything has a physical part—even the mind has a physical part; there is a mental physical, a mind of the body and the material. So the emotional being has a physical part. It has no location separate from the rest of the emotional. One can only distinguish that when the consciousness becomes sufficiently subtle to do so." (*Dalal*, p.15) These lines describe the complexity of human personality.

As Sri Aurobindo says, "In the ordinary life people accept the vital movements, anger, desire, greed, sex, etc. as natural, allowable and legitimate things, part of the human nature. Only so far as society discourages them or insists to keep them within fixed limits or subject to a decent restraint or measure, people try to control them so as to conform to the social standard of morality or rule of conduct. Here, on the contrary, as in all spiritual life, the conquest and complete mastery of these things is demanded." (*Ibid.*, p.32)

Apart from the different parts and planes of our Being, the primary qualities of our Nature (gunas) are three in number: Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Sattva is pure and binds the soul through attachment with happiness and knowledge. Rajas is full of passion and Tamas is the darkness and crudeness in man.

These gunas exist in all human beings in various degrees of concentration and combination. Depending upon their relative strengths and combinations, they determine nature of individuals, their actions, behaviours, attitudes and their attachments to the objective world in which they live. The primary purpose of the gunas is to create bondage, through desire for sense objects, leading to attachment with them and keep the beings under perpetual control of Prakriti. The three gunas compete among themselves for supremacy while they exist. When Sattva is predominant, human body radiates the illumination of knowledge. When Rajas is dominating, greed and striving for selfish activities would appear. When Tamas increases, darkness and ignorance increases too. It is pathetic when confusion and anxiety occur because a person is unable to understand the workings of his own mind and body. At times the Rajas guna increases and Sattva guna decreases, which creates negative feelings in the person and he may create problems for himself as well as for the society.

There are also many positive sides of our complex nature. If one is aware about the minute working of one's own body, it can be helpful in curing disease too since any disease enters the nervous or vital-physical sheath of the subtle consciousness and if one is conscious of one's subtle body, one can prevent the disease from entering the physical body.

Also, it is only the true knowledge of these parts that can lead us from ignorance to knowledge. If one understands the different planes of consciousness, they lead a clear path to the highest which is Sachchidananda.

Finally, I would sum up by saying that the list can be end-less about the pros and cons of the complexities of our nature but we must understand the objective of our human birth and make our best to reach closer to that Divine.

### **Lauran:**

Vaishali, your summation sentence is for me the gem even as the rest of your answer reflects its shine. To move through the day caught up in who's this and who's that and the why and the wherefore of it all can sometimes reduce me to tears. But when I remember that I can "let go, and let God", as the saying goes I can be returned to an equilibrium.

I appreciate your well thought out contemplations.

### **Larry Seidlitz:**

Yes, Vaishali has summarized some important points, and given us some good reflections. I'm not sure if it is possible to sort of organize all these different parts in a mental way, with our mental will, though that too may play a part. Now what we would like is simply to get a general mental picture of the different parts of our nature. Then, as life goes on, we will begin to see, "oh, this impulse is coming from that part" (e.g, physical vital) or "this thought is coming from that part" (e.g., mental vital). Gradually we develop a bit more differentiated view of ourselves. Moreover, this may help us to get a bit of detachment from it, to observe as a semi-detached observer or witness the different parts of us acting. That is a movement towards the mental *purusha*. From there we may begin to exercise a quiet will or formulated intention for a certain unwanted movement to quiet down (without struggle). That is a beginning of mastery.

### **Suchitra Mishra:**

Dear Todd, I really appreciate your passionate words and your attempt to connect Sri Aurobindo's philosophy to our day to day life. The experience you narrate regarding listening to Whitman and suddenly being aware of the approaching jogger is very striking in the sense that we are not always mindful of such instances which are reminders of our more than one plane of existence.

Here is my response to the question.

The complexity of human nature could be approached as a complement rather than a burden. For as Sri Aurobindo says, "Man is a transitional being" and through all the complexity of his nature human consciousness is evolving to reach that highest level where he will be united with the Divine. But as we exist today, there are layers of personalities, selves, or we can say personae, and deep down sits the *chaitya purusha*, the psychic being. As Sri Aurobindo points

out: "The ordinary mind knows itself only as an ego with all the movements of the nature in a jumble and, identifying itself with these movements, thinks 'I am doing this, feeling that, thinking, in joy or in sorrow etc.' The first beginning of real self-knowledge is when you feel yourself separate from the nature in you and its movements and then you see that there are many parts of your being, many personalities each acting on its own behalf and in its own way" (Dalal, p.5). Because of this ego or the overpowering grip of nature we tend to accept a given emotion, say, love, anger, hatred or envy as the expression of our real self and get attached to our emotion. In our ignorance we suffer as we mistake our outer being and the inner being as our inmost being, the soul. We live and act in the physical, vital and mental plane and our consciousness is not yet prepared to know Him who is in us and who is manifesting Himself in all of our actions and emotions. The Upanishads describe the two birds sitting on the tree of life—one which partakes of the fruits of action and the other which does not. With the beginning of self knowledge man begins to identify himself not with ego but with his psychic being, the soul. With this knowledge he knows what part of his being, physical, vital or mental is responsible for his actions and emotions and thereby remains detached from the pain and pleasure that result from them. The man who lives only in the surface and knows himself as only the Prakriti is a jumble of desires and trivial thoughts. But the moment the separation takes place between Prakriti and the Purusha, man becomes aware of the depth of his being. As Dalal quotes from Sri Aurobindo, "We then perceive 'the extraordinary complexity of our own being, the stimulating but also embarrassing multiplicity of our personality, the rich endless confusion of Nature.'" (p. xviii)

Sri Aurobindo does not negate the outer rings of the concentric system of our being. What is important is to realize the multiplicity of our unique self and to know one self as the purusha and not the clamouring nature.

### **Topic: Becoming Conscious and Harmonizing the Being**

Following questions were posed to the class members for discussion and reflection:

- What does it mean to "become conscious" as described in the text? How does one do this?
- What does it mean to "harmonize and unify the being," as described in the text? How does one do this?
- What follows are the responses from the learners in the class and some additional clarification/comments provided by the facilitator.
- *What does it mean to "become conscious" as described in the text? How does one do this?*

## Lauran:

Becoming conscious is becoming aware of oneself, according to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, and that means becoming aware of our thoughts, our feelings and our actions and their motivations. We do this by first having a will to do it and then in practice by observing, standing back from each and every impulse and thought and desire and looking closely at it.

We pursue this with an aim of harmonizing and unifying our being, which if I understand correctly means bringing all the aspects of ourselves to revolve, unite, identify and/or unify with the psychic being, our personal touch of the Divine within that can guide, nourish and direct.

One suggested method for this process is after observing and investigating a behavior or a thought we put it in the light of the Divine and see if it “measures up”. Is it consistent with Divine will, intention and direction for our lives? The Mother says that at first our imagination may not be up to the task of imagining just what the Divine wills, but it is a start. After that a decision must be made to accept or reject or transform the thought, feeling, desire or intention.

As an example, this morning I made an effort to watch my thoughts more closely as the tasks I had before me were simple ones and allowed room for this observation with no encumbrance. I watched the mind engage in fanciful conversation, sometimes expressing strong opinion or judgment and I would stop the thought and say, “that is not my concern”, or “those judgments are not for us to make” or “this is a form of gossip and is to be avoided”.

I can be very pragmatic and I have a list of several things I intend to accomplish today and after reading what the Mother said about putting my next choice before the Divine I was rather halted. I was confronted with just how awkward that is to do. I could feel the “desires,” the “pulls” to get up after reading and plow headlong into the next task and then the next but now I was stumped and simply sat still for a moment.

Her words of thinking of the Divine and the ‘Eternal’ had the effect of bringing a startling stillness. I knew I was facing something quite different than I was accustomed to. It was thinking on the Eternal that made me realize that I sincerely look to learn these things we are studying, even as I go in and out of that commitment by way of action, the inner will is there and so I decided rather than run to the next task I would sit and formulate the answers to the questions posed for this week’s readings while they were fresh in my mind. I wondered that by putting these “learnings” on paper I would deepen them into my consciousness and so affect the rest of the day and the way I may approach these tasks ahead. That may not be exactly what the Divine had in mind but I’m going to trust it was an improvement over what I would have done prior to the reading and in effect gave me an opportunity to practice the very lesson at hand.

**Oeendril:**

Dear Luran,

What you experienced is the human dilemma. I wish to share the Mother's answer to the question –

“How can we find the Divine within ourselves?” She says, “First of all, you must begin to seek Him, and then that must be the most important thing in life. The will must be constant, the aspiration constant, the preoccupation constant, and it must be the only thing you truly want. Then you will find Him. But of course, if in one's life one thinks of Him for five minutes and is busy with other things for three-quarters of an hour, there is not much chance of success. Anyway, it will take many lifetimes. It must not be a pastime. It must be the exclusive preoccupation of one's being, the very reason of one's existence.” (*Darshan message*, 21 February 2012)

**Larry Seidlitz:**

Luran, I was very touched by what you wrote. You have hit upon a fundamental idea or practice, and put it into action. And it had a profound effect. Oeendril, that is a marvelous quote from the Mother!

**Todd Wilson:**

In simplest terms, a person becomes aware of the changes that he or she needs to make. These changes are not cosmetic or superficial, rather they are results of initial and then deeper inquiries into one's true nature. These results or findings lead one along the path towards harmony and unity, for each new layer of results and findings reveals what is in the way of becoming more conscious.

A person must develop a willingness to change and persevere beyond the initial will to change. Moment to moment, and day to day, the person must be an aspirant and exude earnestness for all that leads toward the ultimate end of humanity. In the words of the Mother, a person must be “in constant contact with [the] true centre of consciousness” (117). Doing so requires a diligence and marriage to the effort.

**Suchitra Mishra:**

In his poem “Essay on Man” Pope writes: “Know then thyself presume not God to scan, / The proper study of mankind is man”. The writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother very lucidly and convincingly explain the meaning of becoming “conscious” and the ways and means to attain this state of self consciousness. It is

a bitter truth that most of us live without becoming aware of our true selves and the purpose of our existence or our relation with the Divine. Sri Aurobindo says it is never too early or too late to become conscious. There is a moment when it happens and after that moment everything changes in a positive direction. The Mother says: to know oneself perfectly is to control oneself perfectly, and that is the science of living. Most of the human beings are not conscious about their words or actions. They cannot explain why do they utter certain words or why do they do certain actions. Hence the first step towards becoming conscious is to know what we say and what we do. We must consciously distinguish right speech and right action from that of the wrong ones. We must know when we say or do things which are not Divine. This conscious exercise of analyzing our speech and action will prepare us to proceed closer to our inmost being. At this stage it is important to understand that human beings are not separate individualities. There are forces and vibrations which act and react upon them. Individual beings act strangely, quite in contrast to their individual nature when they are among the mass. Sometimes a certain place or environment also provokes people to act in a certain manner. There are also suppressed desires which play havoc with our consciousness. Therefore, instead of living on the surface we should delve deep into our being. To become conscious of oneself is to be individualized in collectivity and to know the truth of one's being. We are conscious only about an insignificant part of our being. Once we become conscious of the psychic being at the centre, all our outer parts will be harmonized to this centre and with the practice of Yoga we can direct all our speech and action as per the will of the Divine in us.

### **Warren Dupuy:**

To become conscious is to start understanding one's true nature and origin, to stay in a consciousness of Purusha with an understanding of the ego and the composition of the being. Being able to understand the purpose of life and to advance toward it. To unveil the consciousness within and open ourselves to the power above so as to create a unification with the divine through this introspective process.

It means that one has to get knowledge of one's own being and to study very carefully all movements so as to allow only the Divine ones and to reject the undivine. Only acting on one's knowledge, becoming aware of our true nature, our destiny and staying constantly willed toward the Divine which has to be the sadhak's only aim and only preoccupation.

### **Rigved Das:**

Becoming conscious means becoming aware of the separate physical, vital and mental being in us. Otherwise we generally tend to refer all of them as mind.



Once we are aware and realize that there are these three separate entities, one should start observing their movements and play. This observation should be as stated by SA "But one must observe these things without being despondent or thinking "it is hopeless" or "I cannot change". Once this observation is attained, now the time comes for the change of prakriti or the nature. So in nutshell as I understand, being conscious is watching and observing the inner and outer movements of the nature as a third person, who himself is not involved with it. This third person is actually the true self who watches.

How to do it? In *Our Many Selves*, Dalal quotes the Mother, "To be in this state of attentive observation, you must have, so to say, antennae everywhere which are in constant contact with your true centre of consciousness. You register everything, you organise everything and, in this way, you cannot be taken unawares, you cannot be deceived, mistaken, and you cannot say anything other than what you wanted to say. But how many people normally live in this state? It is this I mean, precisely, when I speak of 'becoming conscious' " (p.17).

In the above sentence, I feel she has intentionally dropped few words, for us to experiment and derive. She actually says, if you do this, I am there with you. That is how I have taken it. This mantra works very well with me, mostly in the hours of difficulty. During difficult situation, the murmuring, the chanting of her name intensify as well deepens the level of consciousness, so the effects of being conscious are felt or seen very clearly.

### **Vaishali Jain:**

To be conscious means to be fully aware and awake, to know one's inner and outer being, to know one's actions, thoughts, feelings, movements. Being conscious means to be knowledgeable about the Self, to be conscious of one's inner truth.

It is in the absence of consciousness in us that the negative forces enter into us and govern us. If we are awake to our nature, its movements, motives and impulses, the forces, hidden and apparent, we can control ourselves and change ourselves. It is only through consciousness that we can differentiate the good from bad, right from wrong, the Divine from the undivine.

To be conscious, one must learn to distinguish amongst the different parts of the being & their respective activities. One must be clearly aware of the origin of the movements, desires, impulses and reactions. This can be done only through much of patience, perseverance and sincerity.

One must try to eliminate whatever contradicts the truth of our existence, one which is not divine and that harms us. Only by this way can we organize ourselves around the Psychic centre.



This is a lifelong process and it needs lot of determination and will power. To get the results, one must constantly clean one's soul. The Mother says, "..... to become conscious of anything whatever, you must will it." (Dalal, p.126)

To will it is a constant, sustained, concentrated aspiration, an almost exclusive occupation of the consciousness. One must also become aware of the goal or purpose of life for which one is living.

*What does it mean to "harmonize and unify the being," as described in the text? How does one do this?*

### **Todd Wilson:**

One must locate the psychic being and "arrange" all else around it as a hub or nucleus. Holding the center allows for harmony & oneness as the periphery will continue to whirl; however, one is no longer acting from the buzzing, whirring locales of the outer planes. For just as becoming conscious requires one to act in earnest at all times toward changing, it also leads one to a changeless space where all the rest of one's being can orbit without causing rampant disturbances and eventually fall away or become purified.

From the central inner space and from the "unique Person" that truly is each person, one begins to transform the "points" of disharmony that surround the psychic being. One must therefore move towards the psychic being and begin to allow the Person to "impose" itself on the aggregation that is the normal human state. This imposition can be perfectly done, states Sri Aurobindo, only when one "goes within and finds whatever central being is by its predominant influence at the head of all [one's] expression and action" (134). The finding, though, is fraught with false centers—circles within circles—and one must pull the center from the center until the soul radiates.

### **Suchitra Mishra:**

Dalal quotes from Sri Aurobindo: "Man is in his self a unique Person, but he is also in his manifestation of self a multi-person; he will never succeed in being master of himself until the Person imposes itself on his multi-personality and governs it" (p. 134) To harmonize and unify the being is to organize the different parts or the multi-personality of the being around the psychic being. As we have seen in the concentric system of our being the psychic being or the *chaitya purusha* is enshrined at the inmost circle surrounded by the outer circles of the vital, physical and mental. Man in his ignorance gets stuck to the outer planes of his being and remains unaware of the Divine in him. But a human being cannot give in to the automatism of Nature. Sooner or later he has to surpass the attractions of the impulses and desires and hear the call of the *purusha* in him and give the correct expression of the will of the Divine presence. The first step to harmonize

and unify one's being with the psychic being or the Divine is to discover within oneself a "luminous consciousness". Then one has to be conscious of what is not in tune with this consciousness and arrange the inner individualities, the multi-personalities, only as the manifestation of the Divine at the centre of the being.

### **Warren Dupuy:**

To harmonize and unify one's being means to listen and act on the divine influence. To carry out one's vital, mental, bodily activities with the only influence of the divine, the soul and psychic being. To allow the central being to have a free space to exercise its influence on the rest of the whole being, in other words, to create a mental, vital silence, to detach and dis-identify with the body, vital and mental so as to allow the divine to take up the work and the existence directly.

One does this through a constant aspiration to the Divine, acting always from one's knowledge based on its highest consciousness. It is a gradual process which requires at first acting on one's mental knowledge to enter the best possible attitude, to act from the inner centre and to give oneself to the Divine entirely without any demand. This is can be done through setting up daily habits of meditation, readings and self reflection.

### **Rigved Das:**

Dalal quotes from the Mother, "The centre of the human being is the psychic which is the dwelling-place of the immanent Divine. Unification means organisation and harmonisation of all the parts of the being (mental, vital and physical) around this centre, so that all the activities of the being may be the correct expression of the will of the Divine Presence" (p.130).

So the first step is identification of being and then organizing all the parts and place them in the true position in a right poise. Having done this, one has to channelize all the activities of the being in such a way that, each activity is the true expression of that divine presence in us.

The Mother says this is assiduous task and needs perseverance, sincerity and patience.

### **Vaishali Jain:**

Sri Aurobindo rightly says that, "Man is in his Self a Unique Person, but he is also in his manifestation of self a multi-person, he will never succeed being master of himself until the person imposes itself on his multi-personality and governs it but this can only be imperfectly done by the surface mental will & reason." (*Dalal*, p.134)

Now, when a man is a multi-person in himself, there arises a need to organise & create harmony in all the parts of the being to channelize it to one Supreme Truth, the ultimate goal of life. Unification means organising, harmonising all the parts of the being around this Divine Psychic centre.

Discovering the presence of a luminous consciousness within is the first step in the process. When one becomes aware of the variations in one's nature and movements, one can work to synchronise it with the inner nature which can be done through persistent efforts. One must discover the disharmonious points.

The second step is to look at the outer movements in the light of this inner consciousness and know whether both are in sync or not. We must try to harmonise both by making changes starting from the easiest points to the toughest.

Surrender yourself completely to the Divine and act accordingly to his Will, on His direction.

To become a conscious instrument, it is important to have inner organisation, absence of which will result into chaos and confusion.

The Mother says, "the important thing now is to find one's psyche, unite it and allow it to replace the ego, which will be compelled either to get converted or disappear." (*Dalal*, p.145)

### **Larry Seidlitz:**

All very good replies. I suppose one thing I would add that being conscious means partly to be in the present moment, carefully attentive to what is going on in and around you. When we are carried by a movement of the mind or the vital and become identified with it, then we are not conscious, or only very partially conscious. We need to stand back from these movements, detach from them, and take our poise in conscious being.

From that inner poise detached from the movements of the outer nature we can connect with the higher consciousness, feel it above us, call it down into us. It may come down into us as peace, light, harmony, delight, knowledge, power, or the presence of the Divine. Then one must be attentive to these things. This is becoming conscious with the higher spiritual consciousness.

In addition, sometimes we need to work, to focus on what we are physically doing. In these times, we must not only throw ourselves into the work, losing our consciousness in the work, but must keep the inner connection with the spiritual consciousness and bring it into the work. We keep a stream of the inner consciousness flowing into the outer work, and then the work proceeds peacefully, harmoniously, and efficiently.

# EVOLUTION AND THE ASCENT TOWARDS SUPERMIND

*Gauri Bahuguna*



## **Consciousness Turned towards the Supramental Light**

*Photo credit: Suhas Mehra*

### **Introduction**

Human life in the present is characterised by a preponderance of the rational and vital tendencies of man, and indeed all of human history has been a meandering march through primarily the three external layers i.e. the physical, vital and the mental. It is true that many ancient civilisations had seized the primordial truth in its eternal essence, long before the general mass of humanity had even risen to a level of basic comprehension of the same, but the ancient expression of the Truth was still a realisation within the outer physical crust of consciousness, held in place by rituals, convention and fixed type. Undergoing cycles of emergence, sustenance, decay, disintegration, and finally a rediscovery on a successively higher and wider plane, the eternal truth as manifest in the civilisational life of man has waxed and waned a countless number of times. Making the present the vantage point for viewing the journey of man from where it currently stands to where it may be destined to head is the central purpose of this research paper. We will look at the further evolution of human consciousness in the light of Sri Aurobindo's vision using the framework and terminology of his Yoga, and also aim at arriving at a plausible future spiritual vision for humanity as a whole.

## The Idea of Evolution

“A spiritual evolution, an evolution of consciousness in Matter in a constant developing self-formation till the form can reveal the indwelling Spirit, is then the key-note, the central significant motive of terrestrial existence” (Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, p.824). In Sri Aurobindo’s vision, all of creation is a self-manifestation of the vast, infinite Spirit or Truth Consciousness that limits itself into denser and denser grades of consciousness like mind, life and matter through the process of involution and subsequently releases itself through a progressive expression of its latent potential through a reverse cycle of evolution, finally culminating into a spiritual manhood that is a perfect and complete expression of the Godhead in man. Under this scheme of things, the lowest involute of Supreme Consciousness is the inconscient underlying matter, followed by life, mind, Higher Mind, Illumined Mind and Intuitive Mind. The last three are refined and relatively higher states beyond the ordinary mind but still are part of the Ignorance or the lower hemisphere. Overmind is an intermediary plane which connects the lower hemisphere with the higher hemisphere comprising Supermind and the triune of Sacchidananda (Truth, Consciousness, Bliss), both of which come under the region of Knowledge (*Dalal*, p.26). Consciousness in the Ignorance is characterised by a gross separation and a rigid individuality whereas in the Knowledge it becomes increasingly rarefied, finer and luminescent, there is distinctness but an underlying oneness and harmony. “These gradations may be summarily described as a series of sublimations of the consciousness... there is a succession of self-transmutations at the summit of which lies the Supermind or Divine Gnosis” (*Ibid.*, p.938). Supermind is that level of consciousness, which in essence is the Divine executive agency, the forbearer of the Divine’s will and is characterised by unity in diversity. Here, the backdrop of Sacchidananda remains unhampered even though there is the first emergence of a sense of multiple centres of consciousness.

“This terrestrial evolutionary working of Nature from Matter to Mind and beyond is a double process: there is an outward visible process of physical evolution with birth as its machinery ... and an invisible process of soul evolution with rebirth into ascending grades of form and consciousness as its machinery” (*Ibid.*, p.825). Modern science has testified to the fact of physical evolution and the traditional spiritualists have embraced the idea of soul’s evolution leading to a final release from the cycles of rebirth. But both the materialist and the spiritualist have not been able to conceive of an idea of an integral spiritual evolution in man – the very terrestrial manifestation in man of a consciousness so high and undivided that its description within the frame of matter-life-mind Ignorance is nearly impossible. However, such an evolution is not just a possibility but an inevitability given the dual involutionary-evolutionary nature of consciousness in all-that-is and the self-delight nature of Sacchidananda, his unceasing propensity towards Lila or

cosmic play. Above the world-process and right alongside it there are higher levels of consciousness that exist and often reach down to embed themselves in the lower nature creating an upward thrust in the lower elements to express and emerge as the next higher elements. At the highest level, the supramental consciousness is always at work penetrating the earthly life and lifting it upwards towards a greater light and harmony. The most conscious agency of bringing this supramental light on to the earth plane is a human soul which has evolved to a good degree within the bounds of Ignorance and by virtue of its seeking and psychic development poses to be a fit instrument of the Knowledge realm to which the supramental belongs.

### *The Psychic and Spiritual development*

As the human soul advances in terrestrial evolution, it develops a psychic being inside, which is the repository of all Truth, beauty, goodness, virtue. In time, it projects a soul personality based on the essence of many lifetimes. In order to ascend, man has to make this psychic the central authority in his being. As the mind of man transcends many of its outer limitations and gets in touch with the luminous being within, it tastes the vast, infinite, peaceful Reality beyond and undergoes transformation. Other ways in which the spiritual transformation happens is through the consecration of the heart to the Divine, the consecration of the Will to the Ishvara, the separation of Purusha and Prakriti in the different parts of our being. These approaches give to the being of man a spiritual turn and elevate his consciousness but for an integral, irrevocable transformation to take place, the being of man has to ascend to the supramental and the supramental consciousness has to descend into the being of man.

### **Ascent towards Supermind**

The higher reaches of consciousness beyond the mind cannot be grasped in their fullness by our ordinary mentality. It is only after we have had some experience of the intermediary consciousness between the mind and Supermind that we can even begin to taste the nature and true glory of Supermind. The spiritual change in us that surpasses the intellect is the starting point from which the possibility of going from spiritual to supermind arises.

In the normal course, evolutionary nature first operates within inconscience and later has to work amidst Ignorance in order to seek for the higher light and truth. But no amount of personal effort and aspiration can reach this light and truth. It is only because the higher truth is already involved in the lower principles, that this involution creates a pressure for its emergence in the lower. This holds for Supermind and its intermediary power, the Overmind, as well. While we may suppose that even through the process of the evolutionary nature, some contact with and a subsequent descent of



the Overmind might take place, this would be an extremely long and tedious process and also the illumination and intuition received from above would inevitably be subjected to the lower laws of the mind, vital and physical. So, a descent of the powers of the Superconscient is a must condition so that they may formulate themselves independently in our being. This descent, in turn, needs to be met by a complete surrender of the lower consciousness for the full transformation to take place.

“In themselves these grades are grades of energy-substance of the Spirit: for it must not be supposed, because we distinguish them according to their leading character, means and potency of knowledge, that they are merely a method or way of knowing or a faculty or power of cognition; they are domains of being, grades of substance and energy of the spiritual being, fields of existence which are each a level of the universal Consciousness-Force constituting and organising itself into a higher status. When the powers of any grade descend completely into us, it is not only our thought and knowledge that are affected – the substance and very grain of our being and consciousness, all its states and activities are touched and penetrated and can be remoulded and wholly transmuted. Each state of this ascent is therefore, in general, if not a total, conversion of the being into a new light and power of a greater existence” (*Ibid.*, p.938).

While there is no fixed order of descent or ascent in evolutionary nature and the levels in nature all interpenetrate and influence each other, for the purposes of mapping out the upward evolutionary course we take the levels after mind to be Higher Mind, Illumined Mind, Intuitive Mind, Overmind and then Supermind. The higher mind is a domain of truth ideas, idea force deriving from the Supermind where the true law of things is perceived and transmitted to the mind for further intellectual formulation. It has the qualities of universality, vastness and peace associated with it. As the higher mind descends into our being, it is met with a barrage of lower influences and so its light is mixed and compromised, nevertheless, it serves the purpose of lifting the ordinary mind beyond itself and into a higher light. Next in the series of ascension is Illumination, which is the power to see Truth, seize upon it directly as a vision and transmit its light to the lower members. Here again, the mixing of lower and higher influence happens and it is a struggle for the Light to retain its purity and express it through the mind, reason and will. Higher still, is the Intuitive Mind, which is the power to know the secret truth of things, to know the exact relation of truth to truth. This power of intuition transcends reason and when it descends into the lower being, it qualitatively changes all of one's being including reason, will, heart, life perceptions. In general, it can be said that each of these higher powers when they descend into the lower human being are met by a resistance from the Ignorance and a negation from the Inconscient and compounded still by influences from the circumconscient or



environmental obscurity. The reason for the lower forces having and asserting their power is that within evolutionary nature, each element has been given its right to existence and the force to establish, maintain and further its dominion. The only difference is that within the Ignorance, the play of forces is a clash and a struggle while in the Knowledge, the play is a mutual and multiple harmony of varied elements.

A power still stronger to meet and override the lower barriers to a relatively greater extent is the Overmind, which is the level of cosmic consciousness, of one Vast Infinite with a multitude of individualities. It is the level where one experiences oneself as the Self of all things. All thought, feeling, inspiration, action is experienced as a wave of the Universal Consciousness crashing upon one's being and individuality as merely a "field of manifestation" (*Ibid.*, p.951) for the cosmic. Yet, since the Overmind is acting within the mental plane, its action gets limited by the divisive, separative nature of the mind. Also, even though Overmind may imprint a cosmic largeness and universal consciousness upon the entirety of the seeker's being, it is not able to completely eradicate the nescience that lies at the foundation of all being in manifestation. That eradication is the work of Supermind. Thus, even though through the Overmind, the mind steps higher and is transformed, it is not able to exceed itself fully. For this transformation to be complete, a descent from the source or the Supermind is needed. Supermind is Gnosis, it is power of knowledge through identity, it is the level of consciousness which completely dwells in unity even though there multiplicity begins to get formed within its plane. It is with this final descent and the concomitant ascent that the being of man is fully occupied, owned, assumed, integrated and transformed in the spiritual light and knowledge. Here too, though, there are a few difficulties – the action of Supermind can act on any of the different parts of the being, though usually it starts from the mind or the heart, nevertheless there is a great complexity to the different parts of the being as they respond and re-adjust themselves to each other under this potent higher influence; another problem is that descent of the higher levels is not linear or in a series, it can often be simultaneous and as one level descends it paves the way or necessitates the descent of a higher one before the earlier power has fully integrated itself; a third complexity comes from the fact that often the inner being of man gets spiritualised much more rapidly than its outer being, which is in an invisible relationship with a whole host of outer influences.

## Conclusion

We have seen in this paper that man is an evolving being and that nature in her force of evolution secretly tends towards an evolution in the Spirit. The journey of spiritual transformation is long and all-encompassing and it is only with a manifold realisation that the being of man is ready for the dual action of ascent

and descent (into and by the higher realms of consciousness respectively). Of all the higher levels which come with their unique splendour and gifts, it is the Supermind, which is the last determining and absolutely transforming power of Sacchidananda, the Supreme Reality and Truth. An individual gaining the Supramental experience is not the destiny of man or the future of terrestrial evolution. It is indeed the establishment of the individual as a centre of supramental consciousness upon earth, and the existence of many such individuals, who can embody the dynamic co-creative play of Purusha and Prakriti that is the real destiny of mankind. Additionally, the establishment of Supermind on the terrestrial plane is not the leapfrog ascent into the highest but is in reality the establishment of an entire range and grades of consciousness levels on to the earth plane such that anyone aspiring to rise to the summits of divine consciousness will have the entire steps of the ascent laid out for them. The Supermind is the harbinger of the divine life on earth, a life whose nature and form will be unlike any clever contraption of the present mind of man or the narrow force of all his hitherto attempted idealism.

*The Divine Life* - The Gnostic (Supramental) consciousness is the completely self-aware, self-actualising, spontaneous, dynamic consciousness that is beyond all laws and customs and is the repository of all truth and the relations between varying truths and their mutual harmony. In being this, it is the source and the creatrix of the Divine Life and no other externalising, surface consciousness can realise or even hope to touch what the Gnostic consciousness can itself bring. The Divine Life that this consciousness brings is unlike any constructed or construed life that is the work of the analysing mind or the possessing life-force. While man may try to garner one formula after another of organising his affairs and his communal life more perfectly than before, this kind of perfection is only like a pyramid of cards that falls down under its own weight and precarious balance of forces. The only communal life that can reach the heights of man's innate possibilities and reflect the implicit truth of this universe is the life of gnostic men as they come together in a natural harmonious co-existence, united in one truth and celebratory in the diversity of this truth. Unity and plurality are the two wings of this communal living and self-knowledge and world-knowledge its dual dynamism. Each gnostic individual is different from the other and yet shares the truth of the other as part of his own one undivided self.

As we stand at this juncture of the great flux of the present times characterised by a collapse of the old and faint glimmers of new possibilities, let us open ourselves to the highest aspirations that our true inner natures merit, let us concentrate our force upon this high aspiration and seize the vast riches and miracles of the great Spirit as it works through us and upon us to realise on earth that which it cannot anywhere else, for earth is its ultimate playground of chaos and creativity.

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*If you are made of pieces which are not only different but often quite contradictory, these pieces necessarily create a division in your being. For example, you have one part in yourself which aspires for the divine life, to know the Divine, to unite with Him, to live Him integrally, and then you have another part which has attachments, desires — which it calls “needs” — and which not only seeks these things but is quite upset when it does not have them. There are other contradictions, but this one is the most flagrant. There are others, for instance, like wanting to surrender completely to the Divine, to give oneself up totally to His Will and His Guidance, and at the same time, when the experience comes — a common experience on the path when one sincerely tries to give oneself up to the Divine — the feeling that one is nothing, that one can do nothing, that one doesn't even exist outside the Divine; that is to say, if He were not there, one would not exist and could not do anything, one would not be anything at all... This experience naturally comes as a help on the path of total self-giving, but there is a part of the being which, when the experience comes, rises up in a terrible revolt and says, “But, excuse me! I insist on existing, I insist on being something, I insist on doing things myself, I want to have a personality.” And naturally, the second one undoes all that the first had done.*

*These are not exceptional cases, this happens very frequently. I could give you innumerable examples of such contradictions in the being: when one part tries to take a step forward, the other one comes and demolishes everything. So you have to begin again all the time, and every time it is demolished. That is why you must do this work of sincerity which, when you perceive in your being a part that pulls the other way, makes you take it up carefully, educate it as one educates a child and put it in harmony with the central part. That is the work of sincerity and it is indispensable.*

*And naturally, when there is a unity, an agreement, a harmony among all the wills of the being, your being can become simple, candid and uniform in its action and tendencies. It is only when the whole being is grouped around a single central movement that you can be spontaneous. For if, within you, there is something which is turned towards the Divine and awaits the inspiration and impulse, and at the same time there is another part of the being which seeks its own ends and works to realise its own desires, you no longer know where you stand, and you can no longer be sure of what may happen, for one part can not only undo but totally contradict what the other wants to do.*

*The Mother, (CWM, Vol.8, pp.284-86)*

# TOWARDS AN INTUITIVE MENTALITY IN THE YOGA OF SELF PERFECTION

*Deepali Gupta*



## **Intuitive Knowledge**

*Photo credit: [www.blossomlikeaflower.com](http://www.blossomlikeaflower.com)*

“Intuition brings to man those brilliant messages from the Unknown which are the beginning of his higher knowledge.”

*(The Life Divine, CWSA, Vol. 21, p. 73)*

## **Introduction**

Man is a transitional being and is not perfect. The highest faculty possessed by the human being as of now is a reasoning and discriminating mind. He may choose to remain within the confines of the limitations of this ability which also seems as the only inevitable choice for him, or to aspire ardently for breaking the bounds within which he is struggling with the dualities imposed by life; to be able to grasp the single truth in which the need for making choices simply vanishes and everything is illumined in the shining sun of a greater knowledge. But growing beyond the reasoning mentality

for man would not be very different from the case of an animal growing into possessing the reasoning prowess of man, and one would simply recede baffled by the seeming immensity and complexity of the task with no aid to guarantee even a possibility. Sri Aurobindo brings to the aimlessly struggling humanity, knowledge of the purpose of life and a hope for the future. He enlightens humanity with a greater knowledge of the Supermind, the emergence of which in man is possible but gradual. Man has no organs in his present system for this possibility. He has only the instruments of mind, life and body which are both insufficient and incapable of attaining and manifesting the Supermind. He will have to grow in consciousness and to also evolve or adapt his existing instruments for this greater possibility. Man has to first grow beyond a reasoning mind to attain an intuitive mind as it is an intermediary between the mind and Supermind. The purpose of life for man should be to exceed the self for growing towards an intuitive mentality, a task which to his native reasoning mentality appears to be as impossibility.

### **Limitations of the Reasoning Mind**

Reason, the highest ability that man has been endowed with is not a possessor but a seeker of Truth. It relies on sense-data to grasp, process, order and represent the facts of existence. Sri Aurobindo beautifully explains the limiting nature of reason when he writes, "Its concepts start from sense-data and though like a kite it can fly high into an air of abstractions, it is held to the earth of sense by a string of great strength; if that string is broken it drifts lazily in the clouds and always it falls back by natural gravitation to its original earth basis - only so can it receive strength to go farther. Its field is the air and sky of the finite, it cannot ascend into the stratosphere of the spiritual vision, still less can it move at ease in the Infinite." (*Essays Divine and Human*, CWSA, Vol.12, p.256-57) A reasoning intellect can observe, compare, contrast, deduce, induce, infer, memorize, imagine and judge but cannot obtain a direct knowledge. Reason will have to find reason in the need to surpass itself by aspiring to be illumined in a quest for the glory of a world of truer knowledge.

### **Intuitional Knowledge and the Mind**

Sri Aurobindo writes, "Intuition is a power of consciousness nearer and more intimate to the original knowledge by identity; for it is always something that leaps out direct from a concealed identity." (*The Life Divine*, CWSA, Vol.22, p.981) Just as we know ourselves by identity and not through reasoning or observation as would be the case when we try to understand another being or an object, intuition knows things by identity. It is a state where the knower identifies itself with the known through knowledge. Intuition is yet to organize itself in the surface mind to be able to illumine it with direct knowledge. It

reaches us in flashes through our subconscious parts as a messenger from the superconscious planes but fails to make a conscious appeal to the waking mind. As of now, our surface mind recognizes reason as the one faculty apt for guiding us towards an understanding of reality and for ordering our thoughts, perceptions and actions. The reasoning mind strives to know all that is around and beyond but itself limits its sources of knowledge by not fully recognizing the less articulate parts of the being and finds it reasonable to ignore the messages received by them. The understanding aspect of the intellect, the *buddhi*, needs concrete proof for an acceptance into its own world. But there is also an 'over-standing' aspect of the mind beyond the reason by which it can serve as a recipient of intuitions and inspirations from a supramental faculty if it wills to listen to sources of information and knowledge that lie beyond the arena of the sources generally recognized for the purpose.

### **Towards an Intuitive Mentality – Methods and Challenges**

Intuition that reaches the mind at present is fragmentary and intermittent as the instruments to receive it are not suited to the purpose. More so, whatever light reaches the higher mind is laid hold upon by the lower mind and colored, interpreted and used for its own use. In the Yoga of Self Perfection one may come to know of several methods to make intuition more constant and persistent, to the extent of being effective enough to be able to transform the lower mentality by its pressure; yet Reason has to come out of its habituated mode of judging the efficacy of one method over another so that the Divine *Shakti* is able to work in us effectuating the change by using one or the other at different times to make us progress in our intuitive pursuit. Knowing the various methods will help towards enhancing our faith in the possibility of such a stupendous task and in opening our mind to the possible methods, but enabling it within us has to come from a greater power. The possible methods brought to light by Sri Aurobindo are as enumerated below:

- 1) The first method that appeals to our mind and is also a great and powerful discipline is to be able to silence the mind to achieve a state of peace and tranquility leaving thought, will and feeling to occur in us when the Divine *Shakti* wills it and to make of oneself a purified temple waiting for revelation of the Lord. In the state of a silent mind, intuition can be wider and can be received with greater receptivity and purity but it cannot seize upon the mind to transform it from its accustomed nature of obstructing, disfiguring, distorting and depreciating the incoming knowledge after a breaking of the silence.
- 2) A method suited to *bhakti* is to reject the intellect and wait for the voice from within, the *aadesa*. The secret Self within us is seated in the nervous, the emotional, the volitional, the cognitive and other higher



spiritual centres and this method must tend to intuitivise the whole nature including thought, will and feeling. But this movement cannot be complete because the heart is not the highest center of our being or directly moved by supramental sources. The intuitive light from here is intense but narrow in intensity and prone to disfigurations as imbalance, exaggeration and excitement.

- 3) The highest center of the Self is the *sahasradala*, the thousand-petaled lotus which communicates directly with the supramental. So the most direct method is to refer all thought and action to the veiled truth of the Divinity seated above the mind and to receive all as a sort of descent from above. *Siddhi* of this is when we can lift the center of conscious thought above the mind. In the words of Sri Aurobindo, "If we can feel ourselves thinking no longer with the brain but from above and outside the head in the subtle body, that is a sure physical sign of a release from the limitations of the physical mind, and though this will not be complete at once nor of itself bring the supramental action, for the subtle body is mental and not supramental, still it is a subtle and pure mentality and makes an easier communication with the supramental centres." (*The Synthesis of Yoga*, CWSA, Vol.24, p.805)
- 4) Another method suited to the thinking person is to develop the intellect not by elimination but the will to heighten it and not cherishing its limitations until it reaches a stage where it can be transcended. The supramental energy is necessary to remove the essential defects of will, thought and feeling.

## Conclusion

We may conclude that humanity instead of drifting aimlessly like a boat rowed by reason in the waters of existence, dashing now and then with islands of pleasure and pain, success and failure should look above for light to guide it towards an anchor where it is enhanced in its functionality to follow a guided path with true knowledge of itself and a direct knowledge of the surroundings and the beyond. The various methods explained to us by Sri Aurobindo are the guiding light to all those who aspire for self perfection. The methods when employed in unison by the Divine Shakti to enable a greater perfection in us should lead to the organisation of a predominantly intuitive mentality in the present imperfect one. It will lead to thought being heightened and full of concentrated light, power and accuracy. Will and feelings will also be intuitivised, with the senses and the body consciousness not being left behind. It is important that the intuitive mind be constantly on guard and in pursuit of ever widening and heightening itself so that it does not relapse to an earlier state or gravitate downwards and this is possible by the intuitive mind itself being enlightened and transformed into the full status of the supramental.



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### MAN THE THINKING ANIMAL

A trifling unit in a boundless plan  
 Amidst the enormous insignificance  
 Of the unpeopled cosmos' fire-whirl dance,  
 Earth, as by accident, engendered man:

A creature of his own grey ignorance,  
 A mind half shadow and half gleam, a breath  
 That wrestles, captive in a world of death,  
 To live some lame brief years. Yet his advance,

Attempt of a divinity within,  
 A consciousness in the inconscient Night,  
 To realise its own supernal Light,  
 Confronts the ruthless forces of the Unseen.

Aspiring to godhead from insensible clay  
 He travels slow-footed towards the eternal day.

*Sri Aurobindo, (CWSA, Vol.2, p.593)*

## REMEMBERING GEORGES...

Ananda Reddy



*Georges Van Vrekhem at a seminar at SACAR*

Georges Van Vrekhem was a friend of SACAR. Everyone who came in his contact can indeed claim to his warmth of love. That was his wide heart full of love, sympathy and goodwill for all.

What was remarkable about Georges is that he was a man of deep devotion to the Mother and Sri Aurobindo and it stood out prominently in all his extraordinary scholarship. In all his talks and writings—which had a wide range of topics—his bhakti for the Twin Avatars, Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, was uncompromising and bold.

His crystal clear thoughts were always bathed in the luster of pure love for his Gurus. A man of silence, filled with dynamic thought, worked his way to the Mother's Door every living hour of his life.

In his memory and honour, we are pleased to publish here one of his articles, "Moments that do not Fade" from the book, *Remembering the Mother with Gratitude* published by Sri Aurobindo Centre for Advanced Research, 2005.

*"As a heart patient, I am always walking with a shadow beside me. So you live turned toward Eternity, ready at every moment".*

*- Georges Van Vrekhem*

## MOMENTS THAT DO NOT FADE

Georges Van Vrekhem

I left Belgium on the 17<sup>th</sup> of January 1970—that was 33 years ago. And then I flew to Frankfurt. Seventeenth of January, the airport was white, under the snow. And then we flew through the night on a Boeing 707 over Lhotse, one of the high mountain tops in the Himalayas – I'll never forget it, and then we landed in Bombay at 5 o'clock in the morning, 30 degrees centigrade—hot sunshine! Another world. Then Madras, in a bus. At that time, 33 years ago, it was not like it is today. Then I arrived in Pondicherry, in a state of shock. I did not even know whether my luggage was on the top of the bus or not. But luckily it was there. Then I landed in a small hotel at the seaside that is not there anymore, just next to the Ashram press. And after I put my luggage in my room, I took my jacket on my shoulder and went out to see the Ashram.

In my head the Ashram was a white building with a palm tree next to it under a blue sky. Whether the Mother was there or not, I didn't know. So I went out. There was a church there and in front of that church was a European lady talking with somebody. A very fashionably dressed lady, in shorts, well done up. So I asked her, "Where is that Ashram here somewhere?" She answered in English with an accent. I said, "Oh, you are French!" "Oh, yes," she said. "See, you go on and you come to the Consulate with the French flag, and then you go to the left and you will be at the Ashram." So I did. It was Sunday afternoon, very quiet. You didn't see many people at that time. I entered the school courtyard, the gate was open. And there I saw all these timetables signed by the Mother, that very specific signature. I said, "Where am I!" All at once a voice behind me said, "Are you looking for something?" It was the voice of a young Frenchman, John Pierre, who afterwards became Guruprasad. He is still in Auroville—Goupi. "I'll take you to the Ashram," he said. But I understood '*La Chambre*' instead of '*L' Ashram*.' So I thought, "Oh, there must be a holy room here somewhere." And I went with him. He took me across the street, through a gate. You won't believe it. There on those chairs, known so well by all of you, sat four old, grey bearded people. It looked as if that was the entrance to heaven and they were St. Peter and the other saints. Then Goupi asked somebody, "When can he come and where?" Behind me, behind my back, somebody answered. And it was the same woman's voice I heard in front of the church. And I turned around and there was that same lady, no longer in shorts and fashionably dressed, but in a white long robe, holding a plate full of flowers. I thought, "What is going on here?!" I didn't realise that I stood in the Ashram because I had understood '*La Chambre*.' So then, "You can have an appointment with the person you are looking for," and this, that, and the other.

I had the appointment, and afterwards I found a room in Goyle's New Guest House. There I heard that the Mother was still alive and that one could meet Her. You had to put your letter to Her in the box that is still there. They

told me, "You go and put your letter to the Mother in that box." For three days I turned around the central Ashram building, asking everybody, "where is that Ashram?" Even though Prithvi Singh, who was sitting there in the balcony street, said, "It is here," I didn't believe him. The entrance gate for me was too small to be the Ashram of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo. So when finally I was putting my letter in the box, a miracle happened. Behind me stood again that same Frenchman I had met before. I asked, "Where is the Ashram?" He said, "Come with me, it's here." I had seen a photo of the Samadhi and behind the Samadhi that kind of tiled roof under which is Nirodbaran's room. Therefore I had thought by myself, "If I see that, I am in the Ashram." And he took me to the Samadhi and I saw that and I knew that I was in the Ashram. And then I dropped my letter to the Mother, and She sent me in Her own handwriting an answer brought by Suresh Joshi who was Her messenger. And the answer was—I still have the letter—"You can come,"—it was in French—"You can come...*mais ce sera une entrevue silencieuse*—It will be a silent meeting." What did that mean? I had already had so much trouble in writing my letter! For what should I write—Madame? Mother? I had great inhibitions against writing Mother! I had had a mother! My mother was dead! I have kept that letter also, because the Mother had written Her answer at the bottom. She invited me to go and meet Her.

Then there was the ceremony in the guesthouse. I didn't know anything about flowers. And a whole lot of flowers were laid out before me; from those I had to choose to take some flowers to the Mother. And I was not a flower man. For me this meant nothing but sentimentality. All the guests in the guesthouse were standing behind my back to see which flowers I would choose. I failed the test miserably. I had chosen several flowers, which I had found very beautiful—but I had not chosen 'Humility', which looks more like a herb than a flower. Then Michou, whom some of you may remember, whom I met 30 years later in Montreal (a couple of years ago) and who still looks the same as in 1970, took me through the park to the Mother's room. After some time Champaklal-ji called my name and I went in. What was I to do? What do you do when you come in front of... I had a vague idea of who the Mother was... what do you do when you come in front of such a being? For in the meantime I had seen people meditating on the wall at the seaside, I had seen people on their belly at the Samadhi, I had seen people in all postures of religiosity and meditation and all that—I felt very much disoriented and insecure. So I went through that door of the Mother's room, known to all of you and what did I see? I saw that very thin arm of the Mother resting on the armrest of Her chair. And I went in front of Her... and the rest I cannot tell, because I don't know. And when I came to myself again, there was the Mother, smiling, giving me one packet of blessings and then another one.

Then after sometime when I had left the Mother's room, 'it' started working. In the body, in the spine, in the subtle body. And since I didn't want to be in the guesthouse with all those visitors at that time (I was a brand new visitor myself), I walked by the seaside for a couple of hours, with tears in my eyes. Then I lay

down, with the tears in my eyes. Something had happened. I am such a naive fellow that everything that has happened in my life, spiritually, I understood only long afterwards. And I am happy for this, because if you interpret things at the very moment you distort them. You give them a fixed shape in your thought. You know where I got the explanation of what happened between the Mother and me on the 29<sup>th</sup> of January, 1970? I got it in the Temple of Freemasons in Ghent, a town in Belgium. I had given a talk in that Temple and after the talk I had conversations with many of those Freemasons. There were judges, professors, lawyers, priests, doctors, and they were extremely interested. And when I told them about that experience, one of them said, "Oh! This is the initiation." Later I read that the Mother said in one of Her conversations, "What I call initiation is when a person meets me and recognises me." I suppose that in those very seconds of eternities I had recognised something, which I knew from long ago and which is always with me.

Everybody at the guest house was having a ring. Everybody had to buy a ring with the Mother's symbol! A ring with a red stone, a ring with a diamond, a ring like this, a ring like that... And I also had to have a ring. And the next time when I went to see the Mother on my birthday, end of March that same year, I took my ring with me. I didn't dare to talk because, remember, "*Ce sera une entrevue silencieuse,*" –our meeting would be silent meeting – or so I supposed. So I handed Her that ring. I presented it to Her and She looked at it. And I held my ring finger of the left hand like this, for Her to put the ring on it. This is one of the very few times that the Mother talked to me. She said, "*A ce doigt – là?* On THAT finger?" I nodded dumbly without knowing why I held up that finger. And She put that ring on that finger and the ring is still there. It is the only one I have ever worn in my life. Afterwards I asked Her son Andre, with whom I had a good contact, "Why did the Mother ask, "On THAT finger?" "I'll ask Her," he said. So he asked Her and then I got the answer. I know that you all are curious to know the answer, it meant – 'Mystic Marriage'.

I had a return ticket valid for one year. The time had come when I had to make a decision. In those days India was not what it is today. After all I was 35 years old. I had been a journalist, working in the school, the manager of a theatre. Compare all that with the job the Mother gave me – "Go to Nandanam with the New Group children." You have no idea how idiotic I felt the first time I was walking with two six year old boys holding my hands on either side, going to Nandanam. Afterwards I saw that it had been the ideal occupation for me. So the time had come for me to decide whether to stay or go back. Actually I had already made up my mind – I wanted to go back. To the Belgian beer and the cheese and the steak with chips. So I wrote to the Mother that the time has come and I feel I have to go back. She didn't say anything. To Andre She said, "Let him come." Again stupid as I am, I didn't realise the meaning of such a significant gesture of Hers who was so busy all the time. I went, sat in front of Her and then the smile came and the blessings. Later I went downstairs and said, "Okay! I am going! I am free!" So I went to the guest house where I had

been staying at that time. During the next one hour I went through a battle. I even dare to say I was attacked! And when Dining Room time came, I went to the Dining Room, (I often talked to Günther, whom some of you may know, he is still there) and I said to Günther, "I am staying." And I am still here!

In 1972 the first stone of the Matrimandir was laid. It still was the age of the bicycles—not yet the high season of the two wheelers, motorcycles, scooters, scooties etc. or of cars, buses. It was still cycling time. Auroville, Matrimandir is quite far from Pondicherry. 5 o'clock in the morning, puffing up the JIPMER hill, no, thank you very much! But I have seen that when I have to do something, somebody comes and tells me. That time who was it that came, sent by the Divine? Dick Hawk, the American tennis player, who in the meantime has left his body and who was a friend of mine. "Georges, hello, we are going to the first stone-laying ceremony of the Matrimandir." I say, "Okay." We rode up the hill, parked our bicycles. The order was being maintained by the captains of the Physical Education Department at that time. So, very obediently I went to stand where people like me were expected to stand. Then I didn't move anymore. Why? Because there was like a helmet of Force pressed on my head which meant that I just stood there and underwent that Force. The Mother was in Her room physically, but the Force She had put there was so strong. Since then I have never had any doubt about Auroville. People ask so often and say, "How is Auroville?" I say, 'Excellent, it can't be better.'" "Ah! But we hear all these things and all these stories and so many incredible scandals are happening. And you say it couldn't be better?" I say, "Yeah! I am sure it couldn't be better." Number one: people who are on a visit know a hundred times more than me, for they go around and I don't. Number two: it is my faith that the Mother has founded Auroville and takes care of it. If She hadn't done that for all these years, it wouldn't have been there anymore. The circumstances are so difficult that Auroville would not be there anymore. People do not realise what a miracle, what a wonder it is that it is still there and developing. Number three: since a couple of years I have had a kind of an experience which I can tell here, as we are among brothers and sisters, otherwise I wouldn't have even said all these personal things. A friend from a boarding school in Belgium, where I was studying forty years ago, had rediscovered me and I him. He came to India. He came to Pondicherry and wanted to see something of Auroville. I had to show him the Matrimandir, of course. But as I am a heart patient, I don't go inside. I am like Moses: I am halted on the border of the Promised Land! So I said to my friend, "You go up, please. I am sitting here, no problem." For me, if the Force is there, it is also here. The Ashram has become so busy that, usually, I remain sitting on my motorcycle under the Balcony and have my five minutes of concentration there. The very stones are drenched by the Force in the streets where Sri Aurobindo has been living and where the Mother has given so many Darshans. Therefore, no problem for me, inside or outside the walls. My friend went up and I sat down and closed my eyes. I saw red and golden light. Very active. I thought, "Oh, oh, the sun is shining in my eyes." It was the time of



the sunset. I opened my eyes. The sun was behind me. Since that day, when I go to the Matrimandir, I hesitate to close my eyes because it is as if I were asking, "Let me see that again." But every time I do close my eyes, I see that light, red and golden. If you have read the Mother's Conversations you would know what light that is. The same strong Force must have been there when the first stone of the Matrimandir was laid. Being humans, we are so small. And when you take up the Yoga, you go into yourself more and more, and more, and sometimes I am horrified by the littleness of the human being that I am, especially because we know the great perspective of what one has to become.

Then came the time of the last Darshan. I had six darshans with the Mother, personal encounters. When it was my birthday, end of March 1973, She had physical difficulties, if we may call it like that, and I could only see Her a few days later, which means it was in the very last days when She still saw people. So I was standing there. As I said in the beginning, somewhere I must have known that splendid Being that is the Divine Mother. Now She had become in Her physical body the Mother most of us have seen, and in me there was something that didn't accept that physical condition. Yes, something in me realised what She was going through, what She was working on, and from my terrace in the Rue Suffren I did *pranam* to the Mother in the Yoga; but when I saw Her in that battered body... there was something in me that revolted. I was standing there at the end of the line in Her room and there were people in front of Her trying to look into Her eyes, doing this, doing that. And in my small ignorant being there was something that revolted. But suddenly, something happened: the Mother sitting became upright, as it were, and looked towards me. At once I became peaceful and full of Her presence. And then when my turn came to stand in front of Her, She gave me flowers and my birthday card. And She said, "*Bonne Fête*". And with the birthday card and the flowers in my hands I bowed down with the intention to touch Her feet. But my hands were slowed down; in my movement my hands were slowed down so that they touched very lightly, which made me suppose that She must have suffered a lot just by rough, albeit very devotional touches of some hands. And when my hands touched Her feet, Her hand fell on my head, blessing me. There are so many people who read about the Buddha, about Christ, about Krishna and who think—if only I had been living at the time they were on earth, if only I could have met them, if only I could have been blessed by them. I have been blessed, like so many among you, by the Divine Mother. And that... remembering moments like that is by itself, I suppose, a whole Yoga.

Then one morning my French—Tamil neighbour on Rue Suffren came and knocked on the window of my room upstairs. "*La Mère est morte!*" he shouted. "*La Mère est morte!*" I got up... (I get up very late, I go to bed very late, I sleep very late—I have never taken up the Indian habit, that's why I am very late here!) I got up very quietly, just knelt down and said, "Let Thy will be done." And never anything has changed in my relation with the Mother, physically there or not there. Of course, practically speaking, Her physical presence meant a



great difference, especially for an institution like the Ashram. But as far as I am concerned, nothing has changed in the least.

That was then. Now the situation is different. Let us never forget that the Supermind has come down and has been there in the atmosphere of the earth since 1956. Hasn't the Mother said and repeated, "A New World is born"? She said, "*Un nouveau monde ist né est né, est né.*" She repeated this later in one of Her most lyrical talks, and She said to the children of that time, "Please, every morning when you wake up, remember that a new world is born." Brothers and sisters, do we believe that? Are we living according to that? There has been so much confusion after Sri Aurobindo left His body, after the Mother left Hers, and we see so much friction (let us call it like that) in the present day.

Do we still believe that? If what the Mother said was true and if the Supermind is what it is supposed to be, the birth of the New World must have been absolutely true. The world is going in the right direction. It cannot go any other way.

Number two: on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1969, the Mother had one of Her great experiences. She reflected very carefully on it for days and came to the conclusion that it was the consciousness of the Intermediary Being, what She called "*la conscience du surhomme.*" This is an aspect of the Supramental Being to help all those who are turned towards the Mother and Sri Aurobindo. It is there, now, for that. She said that it is a very compassionate, very strong consciousness. We can all invoke it, we can all be open to it, and if we are turned towards Sri Aurobindo and the Mother it must be there with us. All Consciousness is a Being, every Being is a Consciousness—whether big or small, very big or very, very small.

Number three: Sri Aurobindo exists in a supramental body. The Mother has said this time and again. She said: "He is here. He did that. He was there. He goes into the world and helps." The supramental body of Sri Aurobindo exists; it is essentially the transformation of His former physical, vital and mental. The Mother did the Yoga in the physical when He had left His body. She continued the *avataric* Yoga. This is the wonder, the miracle of the double Avatar. Sri Aurobindo said, "It is not my intention to repeat the old fiasco." If the Avatar of the Supermind had not been a double Avatar, the work would have failed again. Sri Aurobindo said, "One of us has to go." The Mother said, "I'll go." But no, He forbade Her to go because Her body was better for the Work than His, He said. And then He performed that miracle of letting Himself become ill, and fully conscious and with His immense power—Sri Aurobindo was so much farther than is normally supposed in the literature—he descended into death. Don't forget that Sri Aurobindo, in one of the sonnets written around 1940 described how 'Thy golden Light came down into my brain...into my heart... into my feet' (from *The Golden Light*). We all know that the feet are symbols of the material. He had gone very far in the *avataric* Yoga. And the Mother took it up and continued it.

Number four, therefore, is this that the Mother exists in a supramental body. She has described Her new body. Supermind does not die. Supermind is Divinity, is immortality.

So if we take these four points together: The Supermind is there and can't go away. The consciousness of the Intermediary Being who helps all those who are turned towards Sri Aurobindo and the Mother is there. Sri Aurobindo is there and the Mother is there for all of us to invoke. But we have to go through a difficult process of self-analysis, of self-mastery. And the more you go into yourself the more you see the depths of the human incapability, of the animal in us. There was—to give an example—this Presence; years after the Mother had left Her body, as I was sitting near the Samadhi, depressed by my own limitations. It was evening, the time that the Ashramites and the Group members come to the Samadhi to do *pranam*. Normally I sat against one of the posts around the Samadhi. And on the ground fluttered a moth which probably had burnt one of its wings on a lamp somewhere. And there were all those trampling feet around the moth, and I said to myself, "See, this is exactly a picture of what I am. I am that moth, in that condition, and any moment somebody may step on it and crush it." You won't believe it. No sooner had I thought that a young girl came, took up the moth and put it on the Samadhi. There are things like that all of us could tell. All of us live in that Presence. Many surely have nicer experiences to narrate than the ones I have had.

Suppose I meet an old friend from the West one of these days, a friend whom I have not met for 45 years, and he says, "So you have been living so many years in India. Was it worthwhile?" I would answer, "Yes, it was more than worthwhile. I have found what I was looking for." Which does not mean that I am or have become what I am looking for! It is the same when I am writing my essays, my books: I feel like a student who knows practically nothing and has so much, so much to learn. And there is so much that I have received. The vision of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother gives you the basis, the ground to start on. It gives you the perspective in which you can interpret the whole of Reality. This was exactly what the Mother said many times to the teachers, "Learn everything you can learn." But if you do so from the standpoint of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, you will have a true basis of understanding. In today's confused time, it is, I think, the only way to confront the world. That is a huge gift.

The second point: feeling so clearly that one is continuing in this life something that had started in another life is such a grace.

The third point: having met the Mother personally gives you the assurance that you can go on through everything that confronts you. As a heart patient, I am always walking with a shadow beside me. So you live turned toward Eternity, ready at every moment. But as there is that absolute protection, that Presence, everything is possible. This should remain written on the blackboard in our schools and remain there: 'Everything is possible.' Because Sri Aurobindo

and the Mother have done Their incredible Yoga. And it is only by studying other things that one gets more and more to appreciate the greatness of what They have done. And They, having done that, are there, here, and everywhere. Please don't take it amiss that I have been so personal, I suppose that it is what was required of me. Thank you for your willing attention, dear brothers and sisters.

### THE GOLDEN LIGHT

Thy golden Light came down into my brain  
 And the grey rooms of mind sun-touched became  
 A bright reply to Wisdom's occult plane,  
 A calm illumination and a flame.

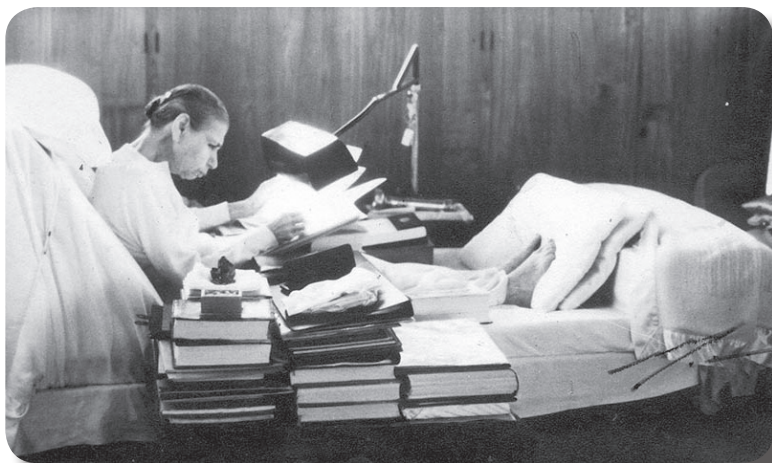
Thy golden Light came down into my throat,  
 And all my speech is now a tune divine,  
 A paeon-song of thee my single note;  
 My words are drunk with the Immortal's wine.

Thy golden Light came down into my heart  
 Smiting my life with Thy eternity;  
 Now has it grown a temple where Thou art  
 And all its passions point towards only Thee.

Thy golden Light came down into my feet:  
 My earth is now thy playfield and thy seat.

*Sri Aurobindo, (SABCL, Vol.5, p.134)*

## THERE IS NO MORTALITY



*There is no mortality. It is only the Immortal who can die; the mortal could neither be born nor perish.*

*Sri Aurobindo, Thoughts and Aphorisms,  
(CWSA, Vol.12, p.430)*

*Does a being carry his mental, vital and physical experiences from one life to another?*

Each case is different. It all depends on the degree of the individual's development in his different parts and on how well these parts are organised around the psychic centre. The more organised the being, the more consciously lasting it becomes. We can say in a general way that each person brings into his present life the consequences of his previous lives, without, however, preserving the memory of these lives. Apart from a few very rare exceptions, only when you are united with your psychic being and become fully conscious of it do you obtain, at the same time, the memory of past lives, which the psychic preserves in its consciousness. Otherwise, even in those who are most sensitive, these memories are fragmentary, uncertain and intermittent. Most often they are hardly recognisable and seem to be nothing more than indefinable impressions. And yet a person who knows how to see through appearances will be able to perceive a kind of similarity in the sequence of events in his life.

4 May 1961  
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