2 November 1955

Mother reads from *The Synthesis of Yoga*, “The Four Aids”.

Now then, your question?

> “The process of Yoga is a turning of the human soul from the egoistic state of consciousness absorbed in the outward appearances...” I did not quite understand “the egoistic state of consciousness absorbed in the outward appearances...”

People are occupied with outward things. That means that the consciousness is turned towards external things — that is, all the things of life which one sees, knows, does — instead of being turned inwards in order to find the deeper truth, the divine Presence. This is the first movement. You are busy with all that you do, with the people around you, the things you use; and then with life: sleeping, eating, talking, working a little, having a little fun also; and then beginning over again: sleeping, eating, etc., etc., and then it begins again. And then what this one has said, what that one has done, what one ought to learn, the exercise one ought to prepare; and then again whether one is keeping well, whether one is feeling fit, etc. This is what one usually thinks about.

So the first movement — and it is not so easy — is to make all that pass to the background, and let one thing come inside and in front of the consciousness as the important thing: the discovery of the very purpose of existence and life, to learn what one is, why one lives, and what there is behind all this. This is the first step: to be interested more in the cause and goal than in the manifestation. That is, the first movement is a withdrawal of the consciousness from this total identification with outward
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and apparent things, and a kind of inward concentration on what one wants to discover, the Truth one wants to discover. This is the first movement.

Many people who are here forget one thing. They want to begin by the end. They think that they are ready to express in their life what they call the supramental Force or Consciousness, and they want to infuse this in their actions, their movements, their daily life. But the trouble is that they don’t at all know what the supramental Force or Consciousness is and that first of all it is necessary to take the reverse path, the way of interiorisation and of withdrawal from life, in order to find within oneself this Truth which has to be expressed.

For as long as one has not found it, there is nothing to express. And by imagining that one is living an exceptional life, one lives only in the illusion of one’s exceptional state. Therefore, at first not only must one find one’s soul and the Divine who possesses it, but one must identify oneself with it. And then later, one may begin to come back to outward activities, and then transform them; because then one knows in what direction to turn them, into what to transform them.

One can’t jump over this stage. One must first find one’s soul, this is absolutely indispensable, and identify oneself with it. Later one can come to the transformation. Sri Aurobindo has written somewhere: “Our Yoga begins where the others end.” Usually yoga leads precisely to this identification, this union with the Divine — that is why it is called “yoga”. And when people reach this, well, they are at the end of their path and are satisfied. But Sri Aurobindo has written: we begin when they finish; you have found the Divine but instead of sitting down in contemplation and waiting for the Divine to take you out of your body which has become useless, on the contrary, with this consciousness you turn to the body and to life and begin the work of transformation — which is very hard labour. It’s here that he compares it with cutting one’s way through a virgin forest; because as nobody has done it before, one must make
one’s path where there was none. But to try to do this without
having the indispensable directive of the union with the Divine
within, within one’s soul, is childishness. There.

I am speaking of yoga. I am not speaking of your life, of
you all, you children here. That’s different. You are here to
develop yourselves. And when you are developed and have a
precise thought of your own, a vision of your own, when you
have enough knowledge to be able to choose freely what life you
want to lead, then at that time you will take a decision.

But those who have already taken the decision, well for
them it is first of all indispensable to find their soul and unite
with their psychic being, and with the Divine who is within it.
This is an absolutely indispensable beginning. One can’t leap
over that bridge; it is not possible. It can be done very quickly if
you know how to use the help that’s given to you; but it has to
be done.

That’s all?
Has anyone anything to ask?
Pavitra is looking for his soul!

Mother, here Sri Aurobindo says: “... the same problem
has to be approached from a new starting-point.”

Yes. That’s exactly what I have just said. The problem remains
the same...

The problem...
The problem is to find one’s soul and unite with the Divine.

But, Mother, was it the same during the Vedic times also?
To find their soul and the Divine? Of course.

But they did not succeed?
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No, Sri Aurobindo says that in the Vedic age they tried to bring the spiritual life into the physical life, but he says that the means they employed, the paths they followed at that time are no longer any good now. Just imagine us before an altar making a puja!... It won’t do now, it is not suitable.

Is their goal and ours the same?

I think so.

In any case, there were several ages in the earth’s history in which there was given a kind of example, as a promise, of what would be there one day. These were called the golden ages. But certainly there were times in which a more or less complete representation of what had to be was as though lived out. Only it was just a demonstration, an example, which the world was completely unfit to take up as a realisation.

It was only to say: you see, this is how it will be, but not like this in all its details, like this in essence. And I think it did not last very long. In any case the memory of the thing is very limited, very localised and extremely short. There was an intensity, there was a great beauty in the expression, but it was something as though altogether independent of the whole of terrestrial life: an example... almost an example which is not to be followed, which cannot be followed, and which was always accompanied by a promise: “It will be like this”... a promise which has been repeated in very different words, of the New Earth or the Divine World or a New Creation, etc.

And I think it was perhaps at the beginning... not exactly the beginning of humanity but the beginning of the conscious evolution of humanity towards a realisation. We said last time that for a very long time humanity was very static and as though undergoing a preparation so slow, so invisible that it has taken perhaps millions of years. But these promises and examples were like starting-points, like the first push given to begin the evolution of the consciousness towards a higher realisation.
I think the Vedic age was the latest. There were others before it, but of a very short duration.

Something over there?
A question?... Is that all?

Mother!

It's still that fellow asking questions!
What do you want to know?

When Vivekananda spoke of “the essential unity which would find its perfect state”, did he think about it vaguely or...

Vivekananda, as far as I know, was not much for a material realisation. He belonged rather to the order of those who want to escape from life, cure themselves of this illness.

But at the end of his life he was sorry he had not succeeded.

I had once read something, I don’t know where now, because it was in France, it was a translation in a book, perhaps one of those theosophical books which make translations of Indian things. I had read an incident recounted about Vivekananda who had been deeply shocked and had scolded a disciple because the latter had told him: “Oh! Look how magnificent is the sunset!” This had shocked him deeply. I remember I read this in France and it struck me; I still remember it because it seemed to me... it was his remark that seemed scandalous to me! He said, “Oh! Is it beautiful? If you appreciate the beauty of Nature you will never attain the Divine.” I don’t know, by the way, whether this was true or had been invented by the one who narrated it, I know nothing about it. I am only saying I had read it and that it struck me so much that many times when I look at the sunset or...
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sunrise or a lovely effect of light I still recall this and tell myself, “Why! Such a dissociation... how strange that one can’t live the spiritual life if one admires Nature!”

So if it is true that he was like that, he was certainly at the other end of our programme. I am telling you I don’t know whether it is true, but still, I am giving it to you for what it’s worth. And all that I read about him was like this: that he had a deep contempt for all physical things, that he took them at the most as a means of self-development and liberation — nothing more.

_Mother, you said that the Vedic age was like a promise.
A promise to whom?

To the Earth and men.

They left a kind of oral document of their experience. It was transmitted — and this was the promise.

They used an imaged language. Some people say that it was because they wanted it to be an initiation which would be understood only by the initiates. But it could also be an absolutely spontaneous expression without a precise aim to veil things, but which could not be understood except by those who had the experience. For it is quite obviously something that is not mental, which came spontaneously — as though it sprang from the heart and the aspiration — which was the completely spontaneous expression of an experience or knowledge, and naturally, an expression which was poetic, which had its own rhythm, its own beauty and could be accessible only to those who had an identical experience. So it was veiled of itself, there was no need to add a veil upon it. It is more than likely that it happened like that.

When one has a true experience which is not the result of a preliminary thought constructing and obtaining the experience by a special effort, when it is a direct and spontaneous experience, an experience that comes from the very intensity of the
aspiration, it is spontaneously formulated into words. When it is
total and complete enough, it is formulated into words... which
are not thought out, which are spontaneous, which come out
spontaneously from the consciousness. Well, it is more than
likely that the Vedas were like that. But only those who have
had the experience, had the same state of consciousness, can
understand what it means.

There are those sentences which seem absolutely banal and
ordinary, in which things seem to be said in an almost childish
way and which are written out or heard and then noted down,
like that. Well, when read with an ordinary consciousness, they
seem sometimes even altogether banal. But if one has the ex-
perience, one sees that there is a power of realisation and a
truth of expression which give you the key to the experience
itself.

But it seems obvious that the modern equivalent, at present,
of the Rishi of the olden days... even his spontaneous Vedic
expression will be very different in its formulation. For the ter-
restrial development and human development change the condi-
tions of expression. The way of saying of those times and the way
of saying today cannot be the same; and yet the experience can
be the same experience of something which cannot be thought
about but comes as its living expression.

Mother, were the Vedic Rishis men who had evolved to
that state or were they special manifestations?

What do you mean? Whether they were evolutionary beings or
involutionary beings?

They were probably... no... they were surely involutionary
beings. But the body was the result of evolution.

But it is absolutely certain that they were involutionary be-
ings, that is, beings who had come down from higher regions
and used these bodies, who had identified themselves with these
bodies.
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This is it, what I said the other day, you know, that what has changed the course of terrestrial and human development totally is bodies becoming perfected enough to be able to serve as instruments for beings of higher regions who have come to incarnate in them in order to use them. And it seems obvious that the Rishis were of these—if not all at least those who were the leaders, those who were at the head. But very probably they formed a group which must have had its own realisation, very independent of the surroundings. They lived, besides, quite isolated, if what is reported is correct.

(Silence)

That’s all?... Nothing more? No?

Mother, will the evolution continue or will it be replaced by involution? That is...

Yes, I understand... But what I don’t understand is the point of your question—whether the process of terrestrial development will continue by an evolution...

... or whether it will be replaced by an involution.

Yes... but there is one thing you forget. That Sri Aurobindo has said that each new species which appeared upon earth was the result of an involution. So there has always been the combination of the two. A double work: a work that goes from below upward, and an answer which comes from above downward.

Mother, isn’t the evolution the inherent Divine manifesting himself? Then why is it necessary?

Involution or evolution?

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Evolution. That is, for example, there was first the evolution of the animal mind. So it was said that the mind was already...

In principle...

Hidden, in principle.

In principle, yes. And what prepares it is this: you see, it has been called by all kinds of names: a divine spark, a Presence, etc., which is infused in the darkness of matter in order to start the evolution. But there is something else: there is a descent and identification of beings, of conscious beings, individualities, in the forms produced by the evolution — and so there is a union which takes place between beings of higher regions and the forms evolved by this divine Presence. And the identification takes place between this immanent godhead and this being which comes down. You see, it is when the psychic being, for instance, identifies itself with a personality of a higher order, a divine emanation, a vibhuti who comes to get identified with a psychic being — that is it, this is the thing. But it is not just this one or the other. One does a work of this kind, as I say, a work of development from within outwards; and the other is something which comes down and takes possession of what the first has prepared.

Usually these are individual phenomena. These identifications are individual phenomena. Usually, I don’t say that it is impossible for it to be a collective phenomenon; but still, usually they are individual phenomena.

However, it is enough to have the experience and one understands. It becomes very clear.

So, one must not speak, one must act.
There we are. That’s all?
Good night, my children.