“But this is not the standpoint from which the true significance of the spiritual evolution in man or the value of spirituality can be judged or assessed; for its real work is not to solve human problems on the past or present mental basis, but to create a new foundation of our being and our life and knowledge. The ascetic or other-worldly tendency of the mystic is an extreme affirmation of his refusal to accept the limitations imposed by material Nature; for his very reason of being is to go beyond her; if he cannot transform her, he must leave her. At the same time the spiritual man has not stood back altogether from the life of humanity; for the sense of unity with all beings, the stress of a universal love and compassion, the will to spend the energies for the good of all creatures, are central to the dynamic outflowering of the spirit: he has turned therefore to help, he has guided as did the ancient Rishis or the prophets, or stooped to create and, where he has done so with something of the direct power of the Spirit, the results have been prodigious. But the solution of the problem which spirituality offers is not a solution by external means, though these also have to be used, but by an inner change, a transformation of the consciousness and nature.

“If no decisive but only a contributory result, an accretion of some new finer elements to the sum of the consciousness, has been the general consequence and there has been no life-transformation, it is because man in the mass has always deflected the spiritual impulsion, recanted from the spiritual ideal or held it only as a form and rejected the inward change. Spirituality cannot be called upon to deal with life by a non-spiritual method
or attempt to cure its ills by the panaceas, the political, social or other mechanical remedies which the mind is constantly attempting and which have always failed and will continue to fail to solve anything. The most drastic changes made by these means change nothing; for the old ills exist in a new form: the aspect of the outward environment is altered, but man remains what he was; he is still an ignorant mental being misusing or not effectively using his knowledge, moved by ego and governed by vital desires and passions and the needs of the body, unspiritual and superficial in his outlook, ignorant of his own self and the forces that drive and use him.... Only a spiritual change, an evolution of his being from the superficial mental towards the deeper spiritual consciousness, can make a real and effective difference. To discover the spiritual being in himself is the main business of the spiritual man and to help others towards the same evolution is his real service to the race; till that is done, an outward help can succour and alleviate, but nothing or very little more is possible.”

The Life Divine, SABCL, Vol. 19, pp. 883–85

Sweet Mother, how can someone who hasn’t much spiritual capacity best help in this work?

I don’t know whether one can say that anyone has much or little spiritual capacity. It is not like that.

To live the spiritual life, a reversal of consciousness is needed. This cannot be compared in any way with the different faculties or possibilities one has in the mental field. It may be said of someone that he hasn’t much mental, vital or physical capacity, that his possibilities are very limited; in that case it may be asked how these capacities may be developed, that is, how new ones may be acquired, which is something rather difficult. But to live the spiritual life is to open to another world
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within oneself. It is to reverse one’s consciousness, as it were. The ordinary human consciousness, even in the most developed, even in men of great talent and great realisation, is a movement turned outwards — all the energies are directed outwards, the whole consciousness is spread outwards; and if anything is turned inwards, it is very little, very rare, very fragmentary, it happens only under the pressure of very special circumstances, violent shocks, the shocks life gives precisely with the intention of slightly reversing this movement of exteriorisation of the consciousness.

But all who have lived a spiritual life have had the same experience: all of a sudden something in their being has been reversed, so to speak, has been turned suddenly and sometimes completely inwards, and also at the same time upwards, from within upwards — but it is not an external “above”, it is within, deep, something other than the heights as they are physically conceived. Something has literally been turned over. There has been a decisive experience and the standpoint in life, the way of looking at life, the attitude one takes in relation to it, has suddenly changed, and in some cases quite definitively, irrevocably.

And as soon as one is turned towards the spiritual life and reality, one touches the Infinite, the Eternal, and there can no longer be any question of a greater or smaller number of capacities or possibilities. It is the mental conception of spiritual life which may say that one has more or less capacity to live spiritually, but this is not at all an adequate statement. What may be said is that one is more or less ready for the decisive and total reversal. In reality, it is the mental capacity to withdraw from ordinary activities and to set out in search of the spiritual life which can be measured.

But so long as one is in the mental field, in this state, as it were, on this plane of consciousness, one can’t do much for others, either for life in general or for particular individuals, because one doesn’t have the certitude oneself, one doesn’t have the definitive experience, the consciousness has not been
established in the spiritual world; and all that can be said is that
they are mental activities which have their good and bad sides,
but not much power and, in any case, not this power of spiritual
contagion which is the only truly effective power.

The only thing that is truly effective is the possibility of
transferring to others the state of consciousness in which one
lives oneself. But this power cannot be invented. One cannot
imitate it, cannot seem to have it; it only comes spontaneously
when one is established in that state oneself, when one lives
within it and not when one is trying to live within it — when
one is there. And that is why all those who truly have a spiritual
life cannot be deceived.

An imitation of spiritual life may delude people who still
live in the mind, but those who have realised this reversal of
consciousness in themselves, whose relation with the outer being
is completely different, cannot be deceived and cannot make a
mistake.

It is these people the mental being does not understand. So
long as one is in the mental consciousness, even the highest,
and sees the spiritual life from outside, one judges with one’s
mental faculties, with the habit of seeking, erring, correcting,
progressing, and seeking once again; and one thinks that those
who are in the spiritual life suffer from the same incapacity, but
that is a very gross mistake!

When the reversal of the being has taken place, all that is
finished. One no longer seeks, one sees. One no longer deduces,
one knows. One no longer gropes, one walks straight to the
goal. And when one has gone farther — only a little farther
— one knows, feels, lives the supreme truth that the Supreme
Truth alone acts, the Supreme Lord alone wills, knows and does
through human beings. How could there be any possibility of
error there? What He does, He does because He wills to do it.

For our mistaken vision these are perhaps incomprehensible
actions, but they have a meaning and an aim and lead where they
ought to lead.
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(Silence)

If one sincerely wants to help others and the world, the best thing one can do is to be oneself what one wants others to be — not only as an example, but because one becomes a centre of radiating power which, by the very fact that it exists, compels the rest of the world to transform itself.