“The method by which you will be most successful depends on the consciousness you have developed and the character of the forces you are able to bring into play. You can live in the consciousness of the completed cure or change and by the force of your inner formation slowly bring about the outward change. Or if you know and have the vision of the force that is able to effect these things and if you have the skill to handle it, you can call it down and apply it in the parts where its action is needed, and it will work out the change. Or, again, you can present your difficulty to the Divine and ask of It the cure, putting confidently your trust in the Divine Power.”

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What is this “consciousness of the completed cure”? This does not mean that there is a specific consciousness of the completed cure. It means: “To live in a state of consciousness that’s conformable to a complete cure.” How shall I explain it?... You have in your mind a picture or an image or formation which realises in itself all the necessary relations and elements for the cure to exist and be total. This is called “having the consciousness of a complete cure”. It does not mean that there is a state of consciousness which is in itself a complete cure, and that if you get this consciousness, well, you get the cure. It is not like that. Have you understood the difference?

“In some the aspiration moves on the mental levels or in the vital field; some have a spiritual aspiration. On the quality of the aspiration depends the force that answers
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and the work that it comes to do. To make yourself blank in meditation creates an inner silence; it does not mean that you have become nothing or have become a dead and inert mass. Making yourself an empty vessel, you invite that which shall fill it. It means that you release the stress of your inner consciousness towards realisation. The nature of the consciousness and the degree of its stress determine the forces that you bring into play and whether they shall help and fulfil or fail or even harm and hinder.”

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What is the difference between mental aspiration, vital aspiration and spiritual aspiration?

In what way do you aspire in the mind and in the vital or aspire spiritually?

A mental aspiration means that the thought-power aspires to have knowledge, for instance, or else to have the power to express itself well or have clear ideas, a logical reasoning. One may aspire for many things; that all the faculties and capacities of the mind may be developed and placed at the service of the Divine. This is a mental aspiration.

Or you may have an aspiration in the vital; if you have desires or troubles, storms, inner difficulties, you may aspire for peace, to be quite impartial, without desire or preference, to be a good docile instrument without any personal whims, always at the Divine’s disposal. This is a vital aspiration.

You may have a physical aspiration also; that the body may feel the need to acquire a kind of equipoise in which all the parts of the being will be well balanced, and that you may have the power to hold off illness at a distance or overcome it fast when it enters trickily, and that the body may always function normally, harmoniously, in perfect health. That is a physical aspiration.

A spiritual aspiration means having an intense need to unite
with the Divine, to give oneself totally to the Divine, not to live outside the divine Consciousness so that the Divine may be everything for you in your integral being, and you feel the need of a constant communion with Him, of the sense of his presence, of his guidance in all that you do, and of his harmonising all the movements of the being. That is a spiritual aspiration.

Mother, does aspiration come from the psychic?

Not necessarily. Each part of the being can have its own aspiration.

How can the physical manage to aspire, since it is the mind that thinks?

As long as it is the mind that thinks, your physical is something that’s three-fourths inert and without its own consciousness. There is a physical consciousness proper, a consciousness of the body; the body is conscious of itself, and it has its own aspiration. So long as one thinks of one’s body, one is not in one’s physical consciousness. The body has a consciousness that’s quite personal to it and altogether independent of the mind. The body is completely aware of its own functioning or its own equilibrium or disequilibrium, and it becomes absolutely conscious, in quite a precise way, if there is a disorder somewhere or other, and (how shall I put it?) it is in contact with that and feels it very clearly, even if there are no external symptoms. The body is aware if the whole working is harmonious, well balanced, quite regular, functioning as it should; it has that kind of plenitude, a sense of plenitude, of joy and strength — something like the joy of living, acting, moving in an equilibrium full of life and energy. Or else the body can be aware that it is ill-treated by the vital and the mind and that this harms its own equilibrium, and it suffers from this. That may produce a complete disequilibrium in it. And so on.
One can develop one’s physical consciousness so well that even if one is fully exteriorised, even if the vital goes completely out of the body, the body has a personal, independent consciousness which enables it to move, to do all kinds of very simple things without the vital’s being there, quite independently. The body can learn how to speak: the mind and the vital may be outside it, very far away, busy elsewhere, but due to the link joining them with matter, they can still find expression through a body wherein there is no mind or vital, and which yet can learn to speak and repeat what the others say. The body can move; I don’t mean that it can exert much, but it can move. It can do small, very simple things. It can write, for instance, learn how to write as it can learn to speak. It does speak: a little (how to put it?) slowly, with a little difficulty, but still it can speak clearly (sufficiently clearly) for one to understand. And yet the mind and vital may have gone out altogether, may be completely outside. There is a body-consciousness.

And so, when one has developed this body-consciousness, one can have a very clear perception of the opposition between the different kinds of consciousness. When the body needs something and is aware that this is what it needs, and the vital wants something else and the mind yet another, well, there may very well be a discussion among them, and contradictions and conflicts. And one can discern very clearly what the poise of the body is, the need of the body in itself, and in what way the vital interferes and destroys this equilibrium most often and harms the development so much, because it is ignorant. And when the mind comes in, it creates yet another disorder which is added to the one between the vital and the physical, by introducing its ideas and norms, its principles and rules, its laws and all that, and as it doesn’t take into account exactly the needs of the other, it wants to do what everybody does. Human beings have a much more delicate and precarious health than animals because their mind intervenes and disturbs the equilibrium. The body, left to itself, has a very sure instinct. For
instance, never will the body if left to itself eat when it doesn’t need to or take something which will be harmful to it. And it will sleep when it needs to sleep, it will act when it needs to act. The instinct of the body is very sure. It is the vital and the mind which disturb it: one by its desires and caprices, the other by its principles, dogmas, laws and ideas. And unfortunately, in civilisation as it is understood, with the kind of education given to children, this sure instinct of the body is completely destroyed: it is the rest that dominate. And naturally things happen as they do: one eats things that are harmful, one doesn’t take rest when one needs to or sleeps too much when it is not necessary or does things one shouldn’t do and spoils one’s health completely.

_Sometimes, Mother, when children are interested in something, they don’t want to go to bed, then what should be done? Just a few minutes earlier they said they were sleepy, and then they start playing and say they don’t want to go to bed._

They shouldn’t be allowed to play when they are sleepy. This is exactly the intrusion of vital movements. A child who doesn’t live much with older people (it is bad for children to live much among older people), a child left to itself will sleep spontaneously whatever it may be doing, the moment it needs to sleep. Only, when children are used to living with older people, well, they catch all the habits of the grown-ups. Specially when they are told: “Oh! you can’t do this because you are too young! When you are older, you can do it. You can’t eat this because you are small, when you are bigger you will be able to eat it. At this particular time you must go to bed because you are young....” So, naturally, they have that idea that they must grow up at any cost or at least look grown-up!

_“The very intensity of your faith may mean that the_
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*Divine has already chosen that the thing it points to shall be done. An unshakable faith is a sign of the presence of the Divine Will, an evidence of what shall be.*”

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A dynamic faith and a great trust, aren’t they the same thing?

Not necessarily. One should know of what stuff the faith and the trust are made. Because, for instance, if you live normally, under quite normal conditions — without having extravagant ideas and a depressing education — well, through all your youth and usually till you are about thirty, you have an absolute trust in life. If, for example, you are not surrounded by people who, as soon as you have a cold in the head, get into a flurry and rush to the doctor and give you medicines, if you are in normal surroundings and happen to have something — an accident or a slight illness — there is this certainty in the body, this absolute trust that it will be all right: “It is nothing, it will pass off. It is sure to go. I shall be quite well tomorrow or in a few days. It will surely be cured” — whatever you may have caught. That is indeed the normal condition of the body. An absolute trust that all life lies before it and that all will be well. And this helps enormously. One gets cured nine times out of ten, one gets cured very quickly with this confidence: “It is nothing; what is it after all? Just an accident, it will pass off, it is nothing.” And there are people who keep it for a very long time, a very long time, a kind of confidence — nothing can happen to them. Their life is all before them, fully, and nothing can happen to them. And what will happen to them is of no importance at all: all will be well, necessarily; they have the whole of life before them. Naturally, if you live in surroundings where there are morbid ideas and people pass their time recounting disastrous and catastrophic things, then you may think wrongly. And if you think wrongly, this reacts on your body. Otherwise, the body as it is can keep
this confidence till the age of forty or fifty — it depends upon people — some know how to live a normal, balanced life. But the body is quite confident about its life. It is only if thought comes in and brings all kinds of morbid and unhealthy imaginations, as I said, that it changes everything. I have seen instances like that: children who had these little accidents one has when running and playing about: they did not even think about it. And it disappeared immediately. I have seen others whose family has drummed into them since the time they could understand, that everything is dangerous, that there are microbes everywhere, that one must be very careful, that the least wound may prove disastrous, that one must be altogether on one’s guard and take great care that nothing serious happens.... So, they must have their wounds dressed, must be washed with disinfectants, and there they sit wondering: “What is going to happen to me? Oh! I may perhaps get tetanus, a septic fever....” Naturally, in such cases one loses confidence in life and the body feels the effects keenly. Three-fourths of its resistance disappears. But normally, naturally, it is the body which knows that it must remain healthy, and it knows it has the power to react. And if something happens, it tells this something: “It is nothing, it will go away, don’t think about it, it is over”; and it does go.

That of course is absolute trust.

Now, you are speaking of “dynamic faith”. Dynamic faith is something different. If one has within him faith in the divine grace, that the divine grace is watching over him, and that no matter what happens the divine grace is there, watching over him, one may keep this faith all one’s life and always; and with this one can pass through all dangers, face all difficulties, and nothing stirs, for you have the faith and the divine grace is with you. It is an infinitely stronger, more conscious, more lasting force which does not depend upon the conditions of your physical build, does not depend upon anything except the divine grace alone, and hence it leans on the Truth and nothing can shake it. It is very different.
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_Sometimes children ask us why we are here. What should we tell them?_

That depends upon their age, my child, and upon what they are. It depends upon their sincerity. You can’t give the same answer to everyone.

But do the tiny tots sometimes ask?... Do the youngest ask why they are here?

_Not the youngest — Purnima, Tarulata._

At that age, already it’s the age when one questions and doubts. The very tiny ones, if they ask this, it is wonderful. There is only one very simple answer to give them: “My children, it is because this is the divine will. It is due to the divine grace that you are here. Be happy, be calm, be at peace, do not question, all will be well.” And when they grow older they already begin to reason, then it is no longer so well, no longer so easy. But that depends, as I said, that depends upon how intelligent they are, how great is their opening. There are those who are predestined, who are here because they should be here. With these it is easy. You have only to tell them: “My children, it is because you belong to a future which is being built up, and it is here that it is being built.” For them it is very simple, it is true. There are those who are here because their parents are here, for no other reason. So it is difficult to tell them that, unless you tell them quite simply: “Because your father and mother are here.”

_But how can we understand?_

Ah! that indeed depends upon you. The first thing is to learn how to know by identity. That is indispensable when one has the responsibility for others. To learn how to guide other people, the first indispensable step is to know how to enter into their minds so as to know them
— not to project one’s thought, imagine what they are, but go out of oneself and enter into them, to know what is happening there. Then, in this way, one knows them because one is them. When one knows only oneself in others, that means one knows nothing. One may be completely mistaken. One imagines it is like this or that — one judges by appearances or else through mental preferences, preconceived ideas; that is to say, one knows nothing. But there is one condition in which one doesn’t even need to know, to try to know what somebody is like: one can’t do otherwise but feel what he is, for he is a projection of oneself. And unless one knows how to do that, one can never do what is necessary for people — unless one feels as they feel, thinks as they think, unless one is able to enter into them as though one were they themselves. That is the only way. If you try to know with a small active mind, you will never know anything — nor by looking at people and telling yourself: “Why, he does this in this way and that way, so he must be like that.” That is impossible.

So, the first task of those who have a responsibility — for instance, those who are in charge of educating other children, taking care of others, from rulers to teachers and monitors — their first task is to learn how to identify themselves with the others, to feel as they do. Then one knows what one should do. One keeps one’s inner light, keeps one’s consciousness where it ought to be, very high above, in the light, and at the same time gets identified, and so one feels what they are, what their reactions are, what their thoughts, and one holds that before the light one has: one succeeds in thinking out perfectly well what should be done for them. You will tell each one what he needs to hear, you will act with each one as is necessary to make him understand. And that is why it is a wonderful grace to have the responsibility for a certain number of people, for that obliges you to make the most essential progress. And I hasten to tell you that ninety-nine times out of a hundred, people don’t make it. But that is exactly why things are in such a bad way. Particularly those who have the responsibility of governing a country — this
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is the last thing they think about! They are very eager rather to keep their way of seeing and their way of feeling, and fiercely refrain from realising the needs of those over whom they rule. But indeed one can see that the result is not up to much; so far it is evident that one can’t say that governments have been remarkable institutions. It is the same thing on all levels: there are small governments, there are big governments. But the laws are the same, for all. And unless, when giving a lesson, you are able, there and then, to take in the entire atmosphere, to gather the vibrations around people, put them all together, keep all that before you, and become aware of what you can do with this stuff (with the vibrations you can spread, the forces you can give out, those which will be received, those which will be assimilated), unless you do that, mostly you too are wasting your time. In order to do the least work, one must make a lot of progress.

“The supramental does not take interest in mental things in the same way as the mind. It takes its own interest in all the movements of the universe, but it is from a different point of view and with a different vision. The world presents to it an entirely different appearance; there is a reversal of outlook and everything is seen from there as other than what it seems to the mind and often even the opposite. Things have another meaning; their aspect, their motion and process, everything about them, are watched with other eyes. Everything here is followed by the supermind; the mind movements and not less the vital, the material movements, all the play of the universe has for it a very deep interest, but of another kind.”

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In what does the supermind take interest?

It takes interest in the transformation of the world — in the descent of forces in the material world and its transformation,
its preparation so that it may be able to receive the supramental forces. And it is conscious of the difference between the world as it is and the world as it ought to be. Every moment it sees the gulf between what is and what should be, between the truth and the falsehood that is expressed. And constantly it keeps this vision of the Truth which broods over the world, so that as soon as there is a little opening, it may descend and manifest itself. And what to the ordinary awareness seems quite natural is for it usually a play of obscure, ignorant, altogether unconscious forces. And it does not find that at all natural. It finds that a detestable accident and tries with all its strength to remedy it. It seeks, looks, and if there is any receptivity anywhere, it intensifies its action. It does not see men in their outward appearance but as vibrations more or less receptive and more or less dark or luminous, and wherever it sees a light it projects its force so that it may have its full effect. And instead of treating each being like a pawn on a chess-board, a small, well-defined person, it sees how forces enter, go out, stir, move and make all things move, how vibrations act. And it sees those vibrations which ascend and lead to progress and it sees those vibrations which cast you further and further into the darkness, which make you go down. And at times someone comes to you with ready-made words which he has learnt generally from books, but nevertheless, full of aspiration and goodwill, and he is answered by a strong rebuff and told that he should try to be sincere — he does not understand. This is because the Force sees that there is no sincerity — the Force does not see the words, does not hear the words, doesn’t even see the ideas in the head but only the state of consciousness, whether the state of consciousness is sincere or not. There are other instances of people who seem to be quite frivolous and stupid and busy with useless things, and suddenly one helps them, encourages them, treats them like friends and comrades, for one sees shining in the depth of all that a sincerity, an aspiration which may have a childish form outwardly but which is there and very pure at times. And so one
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does many things for them which people don’t understand, for they cannot see the reality behind the appearance. That is why I say that it is in an entirely different way that the supermind is interested, an entirely different way that it sees, an entirely different way that it knows.

Isn’t it more important to know oneself than to try to know others?

Very important, of capital importance! Besides, that’s the field of work given to each one. It is this one must understand, that each one — this totality of substance constituting your inner and outer body, the totality of substance with which your being is built from the outermost to the inmost — is a field of work; it is as though one had gathered together carefully, accumulated a certain number of vibrations and put them at your disposal for you to work upon them fully. It is like a field of action constantly at your disposal: night and day, awake or asleep, all the time — nobody can take it away from you, it is wonderful! You may refuse to use it (as most people do), but it is a mass to be transformed that is there in your hands, fully at your disposal, given to you so that you may learn to work upon it. So, the most important thing is to begin by doing that. You can do nothing for others unless you are able to do it for yourself. You can never give a good advice to anyone unless you are able to give it to yourself first, and to follow it. And if you see a difficulty somewhere, the best way of changing this difficulty is to change it in yourself first. If you see a defect in anyone, you may be sure it is in you, and you begin to change it in yourself. And when you will have changed it in yourself, you will be strong enough to change it in others. And this is a wonderful thing, people don’t realise what an infinite grace it is that this universe is arranged in such a way that there is a collection of substance, from the most material to the highest spiritual, all that gathered together into what is called a small individual, but at the disposal of a central
Will. And that is yours, your field of work, nobody can take it away from you, it is your own property. And to the extent you can work upon it, you will be able to have an action upon the world. But only to that extent. One must do more for oneself, besides, than one does for others.

Is it possible to know others before knowing oneself?

Nothing is impossible. One can’t say it is not possible. But if one is unaware of certain movements in oneself, it is certainly an anomaly to be conscious first of these in others. It is an anomaly. It may exist. There may be people so decentralised that they are more sensitive about others than in themselves. But still, usually they are considered a little morbid. This does not give them a very great inner equilibrium, they become unbalanced. There are people who are all at sea, they are like a cork upon the waves: it goes here and there, jumps this way and that. They have no line of consciousness.... It is not an enviable state. I don’t think, truly, sincerely I don’t think that it is possible to help anyone unless one has already helped oneself first. If you are unconscious, how do you expect to bring consciousness into others! This seems to me an insoluble problem. That is what people usually do, but that’s no reason for approving it. This is exactly why, I believe, things go so wrong. It is like those who seeing others quarrelling rush forward and begin shouting louder than they to tell them, “Keep quiet!”

You said that to each individual is given a problem to solve. So each man upon earth has to live individually, for, in living collectively one has the difficulty of the collectivity also: it is not only one’s own difficulty.

Yes, but man happens to be a social animal, and so, instinctively, he forms groups. But that also is why those who wished to go fast and did not feel themselves sufficiently strong retired into
solitude. That is the reason, the justification of the ascetic who goes away into solitude, for he tries to cut himself off from the world. Only... there is an “only”. One can do that physically to a certain extent, up to a point, cut oneself off from physical nature—not totally. It has been noticed, for instance, that ascetics who went away to sit under a tree in the forest, in a very short while became extraordinarily interested in all the animals living in the forest: it is the need of physical relationship with other living beings. It is possible that some do not need this, but it is a fairly general rule.

But solidarity does not stop there. There is a vital solidarity and a mental solidarity which you cannot prevent. There is, after all (though men are much more individualised than animals), there is a spirit of the species. There are collective suggestions which don’t need to be expressed in words. There are atmospheres one cannot escape. It is certain (for I know this by experience), it is certain that there is a degree of individual perfection and transformation which cannot be realised without the whole of humanity having made a particular progress. And this happens by successive steps. There are things in Matter which cannot be transformed unless the whole of Matter has undergone transformation to a certain degree. One cannot isolate oneself completely. It is not possible. One can do the work, one can choose: there are people who have chosen to go into solitude and try to realise in themselves the ideal they saw—usually they reached a certain point, then stopped there, they could go no further. It has been thus historically. I was saying the other day: “There are perhaps people upon earth whom I don’t know who have realised extraordinary things” but precisely because they have isolated themselves from the earth, the earth does not know them. This is just to say that nothing is impossible. It seems doubtful, is all that I can say. But it is impossible, even if one isolates oneself physically, to do so vitally and mentally. There is the vast terrestrial atmosphere in which one is born, and there is a sort of spirit or genius of the human race; well, this genius
must have reached a certain degree of perfection for anyone to be able to go farther. It is not that one has to wait till all have done it, no; but it is as though all had to reach a certain level for one to be able to take one's spring and go farther.... Surely the individual will always be ahead of the mass, there's no doubt about that, but there will always be a proportion and a relation.

On what plane are men most united?

You mean “most interdependent”?

No, I mean a common will.

A common will? You must not mix up things. If you are telling me about the goodwill among human beings, this is in the psychic, there's no shadow of a doubt about it. But there is a kind of vital interdependence, quite considerable, more than the physical, I believe. For instance, the First World War was the result of a tremendous descent of the forces of the vital world (hostile forces of the vital world) into the material world. Even those who were conscious of this descent and consequently armed to defend themselves against it, suffered from its consequences. The world, the whole earth suffered from its consequences. There was a general deterioration from the vital point of view, I could say, which was inevitable even for those who consciously knew whence the force came, whence the deterioration came, and who could therefore fight against it consciously — they could not prevent certain effects being produced in the earth atmosphere. Naturally, men do not know what happened to them; all that they have said is that everything had become worse since the war. That was all that they could affirm. For example, the moral level went down very much. It was simply the result of a formidable descent of the vital world: forces of disorder, forces of corruption, forces of deterioration, forces of destruction, forces of violence, forces of cruelty.
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Why this descent?

Perhaps it was a reaction, for there was another Force coming down which wanted to do its work, and perhaps those forces did not want it — it disturbed their habits. It is like a government which fears that it will be thrown out and so intervenes violently in order to keep in power.