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*Sweet Mother, here Sri Aurobindo writes: “And yet there is in the heart or behind it a profounder mystic light...”*

*Sri Aurobindo, The Synthesis of Yoga, SABCL, Vol. 20, p. 140*

What is this mystic light?

It is love.

*But after that, Sri Aurobindo continues: “which, if not what we call intuition — for that, though not of the mind, yet descends through the mind — has yet a direct touch upon Truth and is nearer to the Divine than the human intellect in its pride of knowledge.” Is there a relation between this mystic light and intuition?*

It is not intuition. It is knowledge through love, light through love, understanding through love. Sri Aurobindo says that it is not intuition, for intuition belongs to the intellect — at least in its expression, the expression of intuition is intellectual. While this is a kind of direct knowledge almost by identity, which comes from love.

*And “the inner oracle”?*

The oracle? That is the power of divination, of foresight, of understanding symbols, and that is in the psychic being. Prophets, for example, do not prophesy with the mind, it is through a *direct* contact, beyond emotions and sentiments. Sri Aurobindo even says that the Vedas, particularly, were not written with the mind and through the head. The form of the hymn welled up spontaneously from the psychic being, along with the words.
Questions and Answers

Mother, if someone has the psychic contact, does that mean that he has this power?

More or less, yes. The more perfect the contact, the greater the power.

It also depends on the outer possibilities of the being. But I have already explained that to you several times, I have already told you that when one enters into contact with one’s psychic, certain faculties develop spontaneously. For instance, there are people with no intellectual education who suddenly get quite a remarkable power of expression, which comes in this way, spontaneously, through the inner contact with the psychic being.

Sri Aurobindo speaks here of “secular refrigeration”.

What!

He writes: “It is indeed by the religio-ethical sense that the law of universal goodwill or universal compassion or of love and service to the neighbour, the Vedantic, the Buddhistic, the Christian ideal, was created; only by a sort of secular refrigeration extinguishing the fervour of the religious element in it could the humanitarian ideal disengage itself and become the highest plane of a secular system of mental and moral ethics.”

Ibid., p. 142

Yes, this is the materialistic and purely physical thought which freezes and congeals the emotions, takes away all the warmth of the soul, all the fervour, all the ardour of the feelings and the religious consciousness, and makes you coldly reasonable.

Mother, if the heart can be the means of a more direct knowledge, what is the role of the intellect as an intermediary of knowledge?
As an intermediary, did you say?

For the true role of the mind is the formation and organisation of action. The mind has a formative and organising power, and it is that which puts the different elements of inspiration in order, for action, for organising action. And if it would only confine itself to that role, receiving inspirations — whether from above or from the mystic centre of the soul — and simply formulating the plan of action — in broad outline or in minute detail, for the smallest things of life or the great terrestrial organisations — it would amply fulfil its function.

It is not an instrument of knowledge.

But it can use knowledge for action, to organise action. It is an instrument of organisation and formation, very powerful and very capable when it is well developed.

One can feel this very clearly when one wants to organise one’s life, for instance — to put the different elements in their place in one’s existence. There is a certain intellectual faculty which immediately puts each thing in its place and makes a plan and organises. And it is not a knowledge that comes from the mind, it is a knowledge which comes, as I said, from the mystic depths of the soul or from a higher consciousness; and the mind concentrates it in the physical world and organises it to give a basis of action to the higher consciousness.

One has this experience very clearly when one wants to organise one’s life.

Then, there is another use. When one is in contact with one’s reason, with the rational centre of the intellect, the pure reason, it is a powerful control over all vital impulses. All that comes from the vital world can be very firmly controlled by it and used in a disciplined and organised action. But it must be at the service of something else — not work for its own satisfaction.

These are the two uses of the mind: it is a controlling force, an instrument of control, and it is a power of organisation. That is its true place.
Questions and Answers

_Sweet Mother, can one realise the Divine through love alone?_

Oh! yes, my child, certainly. It is even the most direct way.

One can realise the Divine, that is to say, identify oneself with the Divine, become fully conscious of the Divine and be an instrument of the Divine. But naturally, one does not realise the integral yoga, for it is only along one line. But from the point of view of identification with the Divine it is even the most direct path.

_But without mental development one won’t be able to express the Divine?_

One cannot express Him intellectually, but one can express Him in action, one can express Him in feelings, one can express Him in life.

(Silence)

_Sweet Mother, sometimes when one feels depressed it lasts quite a long time; but when one feels a special kind of joy, it does not last._

Yes, that is very true.

_Then what should one do to make it last longer?_

But it is not the same part of the being that has the depression and the joy.

If you are speaking of pleasure, the pleasure of the vital is something very fleeting, and I think that in life — in life as it is at present — there are more occasions for displeasure than for pleasure. Pleasure in itself is extremely fleeting, for if the same vibration of pleasure is prolonged a little, it becomes unpleasant or even repulsive — exactly the same vibration.
Pleasure in itself is something very fugitive. But if you are speaking of joy, that is something altogether different, it is a kind of warmth and illumination in the heart, you see — one may feel joy in the mind also, but it is a kind of warmth and beatific illumination occurring somewhere. That is a quality which is not yet fully developed and one is rarely in the psychological state that's needed to have it. And that is why it is fugitive. Otherwise joy is constantly there in the truth of the being, in the reality of the being, in your true Self, in your soul, in your psychic being, joy is constantly there.

It has nothing to do with pleasure: it is a kind of inner delight.

But one is rarely in a state to feel it, unless one has become fully conscious of one's psychic being. That is why when it comes it is fugitive, for the psychological condition necessary to perceive it is not often there. On the other hand, one is almost constantly in an ordinary vital state where the least unpleasant thing very spontaneously and easily brings you depression — depression if you are a weak person, revolt if you are a strong one. Every desire which is not satisfied, every impulse which meets an obstacle, every unpleasant contact with outside things, very easily and very spontaneously creates depression or revolt, for that is the normal state of things — normal in life as it is today. While joy is an exceptional state.

And so, pleasure, pleasure which is simply a pleasing sensation — if it lasts, not only does it lose its edge, but it ends up by becoming unpleasant; one can't bear it long. So, quite naturally it comes and goes. That is to say, the very thing that gives you pleasure — exactly the same vibration — after a short while, doesn't give it to you any longer. And if it persists, it becomes unpleasant for you. That is why you can't have pleasure for a long time.

The only thing which can be lasting is joy, if one enters into contact with the truth of the being which holds this joy permanently.
Questions and Answers

*Mother, in the heart there is a double action: the action of vital impulse and that of pure emotion. What makes this mixture possible?*

How does this mixture come about?

*For both have their seat in the heart, don’t they?*

Not in the same place.

It is not our physical heart, you understand. It is this centre here (*Mother points to the middle of the chest*). But there are various depths. The more you come to the surface, the more is it mixed, naturally, with vital impulses and even purely physical reactions, purely physical sensations. The deeper you go, the less the mixture. And if you go deep enough, you find the feeling absolutely pure, behind. It is a question of depth.

One throws oneself out all the time; all the time one lives, as it were, outside oneself, in such a superficial sensation that it is almost as though one were outside oneself. As soon as one wants even to observe oneself a little, control oneself a little, simply know what is happening, one is always obliged to draw back or pull towards oneself, to pull inwards something which is constantly like that, on the surface. And it is this surface thing which meets all external contacts, puts you in touch with similar vibrations coming from others. That happens almost outside you.

That is the constant dispersal of the ordinary consciousness.

For instance, take a movement, an inspiration coming from the psychic depths of the being — for it comes even to those who are not conscious of their psychic — a kind of inspiration coming from the depths; well, in order to make itself perceptible it has to come to the surface. And as it comes to the surface, it gets mixed with all sorts of things which have nothing to do with it but which want to make use of it. As, for instance, all the desires and passions of the vital which, as soon as a force from the depths rises to the surface, catch hold of it for their
own satisfaction. Or else people who live in the mind and want to understand and evaluate their experience, to judge it: then it is the mind that seizes upon this inspiration or this force which rises to the surface, for its own benefit, for its own satisfaction — and it becomes mixed, and that spoils everything. And this happens constantly; constantly surface movements creep into the inspiration from the depths and deform it, veil it, defile it, ruin it completely, deforming it to such an extent that it is no longer recognisable.

Why do these external impulses, when they come in contact with the inspiration rising from within, spoil everything, instead of being transformed?

Ah! excuse me, it is a reciprocal movement. And it depends on the proportion. The inspiration from within acts, of course. It is not that it is completely absorbed and destroyed, it isn’t that. Necessarily, it acts but it becomes mixed, it loses its purity and original power. But all the same something remains, and the result depends on the proportion of the forces, and this proportion is very different depending on the individual.

There comes a time when one deliberately calls the deep inner inspiration and surrenders to it, when it can enter almost completely pure and make you act in accordance with the Divine Will.

The mixture is not unavoidable; it is only what usually happens. And the proportion is very different according to the individual. With some, when the psychic within takes a decision and sends out a force, it is quite visible, it is visibly a psychic inspiration. One can at times see a sort of shadow pass which comes from the mind or the vital; but these are interventions of no importance which cannot at all change the nature of the psychic inspiration, if one does not let them have the upper hand.

None of these things is irremediable, for otherwise there would be no hope of progress.
Questions and Answers

At the end of the previous talk, Mother commented that the students and sadhaks were “not very rich in questions”. Thereafter, they began to send her written questions, which one of them read aloud:

_It is said: “Follow your soul and not your mind which leaps at appearances.” How to practise this in everyday life?_

Why, what is the problem? What is the difficulty?

_How to put this advice into practice, this recommendation to follow one’s soul and not one’s mind?_

This is a purely individual matter.

The first condition is to receive inspirations from the soul — exactly what we were just speaking about — for if one does not receive them, how can one follow one’s soul? The first condition is to be a little conscious of one’s soul and receive its inspirations. Then, naturally, it goes without saying that one must obey them instead of obeying the reasoning intellect.

But how to do it? By what method?... This is something purely personal. Each one must find his own method. The principle is there; if one wants to apply it, for each one the method is different. It all depends on the extent to which one is conscious of the inspirations from the soul, on the degree of identity one has with it.

So one can’t give the same remedy for everybody.

Is that all?

_The more you give, the more you receive,” it is said. Does this apply to physical energy? Should one undertake physical work which seems beyond one’s capacity? And what should be one’s attitude while doing this kind of work?_
If one did not spend, one would never receive. The great force a child has for growth, for development is that he spends without stint.

Naturally, when one spends, one must recuperate and must have the time that is needed to recuperate; but what a child cannot do one day, he can do the next. So if you never go beyond the limit you have reached, you will never progress. It is quite obvious that people who practise physical culture, for example, if they make progress, it is just because they gradually exceed, go beyond what they could do.

It is all a matter of balance. And the period of receptivity should be in proportion to the period of expenditure.

But if one confines oneself to what one can do at a given moment... First of all it is impossible, for if one doesn’t progress, one falls back. Therefore, one must always make a little effort to do a little more than before. Then one is on the upward path. If one is afraid of doing too much, one is sure to go down again and lose one’s capacities.

One must always try a little more, a little better than one did the day before or the previous moment. Only, the more one increases one’s effort, the more should one increase one’s capacity of receptivity and the opportunities to receive. For instance, from the purely physical point of view, if one wants to develop one’s muscles, a progressive effort must be made by them, that is to say, a greater and greater effort, but at the same time one must do what is needed: massage, hydrotherapy, etc. to increase at the same time their capacity to receive.

And rest. A rest which is not a falling into the inconscient — which generally tires you more than it refreshes — but a conscious rest, a concentration in which one opens oneself and absorbs the forces which come, the universal forces.

The limits of the body’s possibilities are so elastic! People who undergo a methodical and scientific training, rational, systematic, arrive at absolutely startling results. They demand things from their bodies which, naturally, without training it
would be quite impossible to do. And certainly, they must gradually go beyond what they could do, not only from the point of view of perfection, but also from the point of view of strength. If they have that fear of doing more than they are able, of overdoing things, they will never progress. Only, at the same time one must do what is necessary for recuperating. That is the whole principle of physical culture. And one sees things which for an ignorant and untrained man are absolutely miraculous, performed by bodies which have been methodically trained.

What should be done to remember the Mother constantly? Should one repeat Her name, remember Her physical form or think or feel that She is the Divine? Is gratitude for the Divine a form of remembrance?

All this is good. And many other things are good. And it depends on what each one can do.

It is a little too personal a question, isn’t it?

It depends on each one, it is the same thing. If one generalises, it makes no sense any longer. To remember, you must not forget, that’s all!

Can there be a collective form of discipline which is self-imposed?

But very often it happens that people form groups and make rules for themselves. That is a discipline which is self-imposed. It constantly happens. All societies, secret or other, and all initiation groups have always done things like that: they make rules which they impose upon themselves and usually follow very strictly. And there are even terrible penalties and quite disastrous consequences when, after having taken the oath, one wants to leave the discipline. This happens constantly in the world.

One could discuss the effectiveness, that would be another thing. But in any case, the question is not “whether one can do
“it” — it does happen, it is something which has been happening since the most ancient times. Always man has tried to form groups in one way or another and impose laws on these groups.

And if it is a mystic group, they are mystic laws.

Perhaps they are imposed on those who want to enter the group; then they are not self-imposed, are they?

But one enters the group freely, and therefore one accepts them. Usually, in those groups the first thing they do is to tell you, “These are the laws, the rules of the group, do you accept them or not?” If you don’t accept them, you don’t enter; if you accept them, it is you who impose them on yourself. You are not forced into a group like that! It is not like being subject, for example, to the atavism of the family in which you are born. That is imposed from outside. You are born in a family and are subject to the atavism, the laws of a rigid family atavism, which is imposed from outside. For, almost universally, the permission of the one who is brought into the world or his acceptance is never asked: you are brought here by force, the environment is imposed on you by force, the laws of the atavism of the milieu by force, and indeed you do what you can with them — the best you can, let us hope! But when it is a group of friends or a society, unless you have no personal will and are carried away by someone else whom you obey, it is you yourself who decide whether you accept these laws or not.

It is obvious that the question becomes a little more subtle when it is a matter of religion, for that is a part of the imposition on the child before he is born. If he is born in a religion, that religion is imposed upon him. Obviously, according to the true rules, there is an age when, supposedly, after having been instructed in the religion in which you are born, you choose to be in it or not. But very few people have the capacity for individual choice. It is the custom of the family or the environment in which they live, and they follow it blindly, for it is more comfortable
than reacting; one is born into it and one is almost forced to follow that religion. One must have a very considerable strength and independence of character to come out of it, for usually you have to break through with much commotion and that has serious repercussions on your life.