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*Does the psychic being always progress?*

There are in the psychic being two very different kinds of progress: one consisting in its formation, building and organisation. For the psychic starts by being only a kind of tiny divine spark within the being and out of this spark will emerge progressively an independent conscious being having its own action and will. The psychic being at its origin is only a spark of the divine consciousness and it is through successive lives that it builds up a conscious individuality. It is a progress similar to that of a growing child. It is a thing in the making. For a long time, in most human beings the psychic is a being in the making. It is not a fully individualised, fully conscious being and master of itself and it needs all its rebirths, one after another, in order to build itself and become fully conscious.

But this sort of progress has an end. There comes a time when the being is fully developed, fully individualised, fully master of itself and its destiny. When this being or one of these psychic beings has reached that stage and takes birth in a human being, that makes a very great difference: the human being, so to say, is born free. He is not tied to circumstances, to surroundings, to his origin and atavism, like ordinary people. He comes into the world with the purpose of doing something, with a work to carry out, a mission to fulfil. From this point of view his progress in growth has come to an end, that is, it is not indispensable for him to take birth again in a body. Till then rebirth is a necessity, for it is through rebirth that he grows; it is in the physical life and in a physical body that he gradually develops and becomes a fully conscious being. But once he is fully formed, he is free, in this sense that he can take birth or not, at will. So there, one kind of progress stops.
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But if this fully formed being wants to become an instrument of work for the Divine, if instead of retiring to repose in a psychic bliss, in its own domain, he chooses to be a worker upon earth to help in the fulfilment of the Divine Work, then he has a fresh progress to make, a progress in the capacity for work, for organisation of his work and for expression of the Divine Will. So there is a time when the thing changes. So long as he remains in the world, so long as he chooses to work for the Divine, he will progress. Only if he withdraws into the psychic world and refuses to continue doing the Divine Work or renounces it, can he remain in a static condition outside all progress, because, as I have told you, only upon earth is there progress, only in the physical world; it is not acquired everywhere. In the psychic world there is a kind of blissful repose. One remains what one is, without any movement.

*But for those who are not conscious of their psychic?*

They are compelled to progress whether they want it or not. The psychic being itself progresses in them and they are not conscious of it. But they themselves are compelled to progress. That is to say, they follow a curve. They follow an ascent in life. It is the same progress as that of the growing child; there comes a time when it is at the summit of its growth and then, unless it changes the plane of progress, unless the purely physical progress turns into a mental progress, a psychic progress, a spiritual progress, it goes down the curve and then there will be a decomposition and it will not exist any longer.

It is just because progress is not constant and perpetual in the physical world that there is a growth, an apogee, a decline and a decomposition. For anything that does not advance, falls back; all that does not progress, regresses.

So this is just what happens physically. The physical world has not learnt how to progress indefinitely; it arrives at a certain point, then it is either tired of progressing or is not capable
of progressing in the present constitution, but in any case it stops progressing and after a time decomposes. Those who lead a purely physical life reach a kind of summit, then they slide down very quickly. But now, with the general collective human progress, there is behind the physical progress a vital progress and a mental progress, so that the mental progress can go on for a very long time, even after the physical progress has come to a stop, and through this mental progress one keeps up a kind of ascent long after the physical has ceased to progress.

And then there are those who do yoga, who become conscious of their psychic being, are united with it, participate in its life; these, indeed, progress till the last breath of their life. And they do not stop even after death, when they have left their body under the plea that the body cannot last any longer: they continue to progress.

It is the incapacity of the body to transform itself, to continue progressing that causes it to regress and in the end become more and more open to the inner disequilibrium until one day that becomes strong enough to bring about a total imbalance and it can no longer regain its balance and health. We shall see that next week. It is only in the pure spiritual life — that which is outside all physical and terrestrial existence, including the mental — that there is no progress. You reach a static state and are outside all movements of progress. But at the same time you are outside the manifestation also. When you reach that state, you no longer belong to the manifestation, you go out of the manifested world. One must go out of the manifested world in order to go out of all progress, because the two are identical: manifestation means progress and progress means manifestation.

Many men think and write through inspiration. From where does it come?

Many! That is indeed a wonderful thing. I did not think there have been so many.... So?
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Poets, when they write poems...

Ah! Inspirations come from very many different places. There are inspirations that may be very material, there are inspirations that may be vital, there are inspirations that come from all kinds of mental planes, and there are very, very rare inspirations that come from the higher mind or from a still higher region. All inspirations do not come from the same place. Hence, to be inspired does not necessarily mean that one is a higher being,... One may be inspired also to do and say many stupid things!

What does “inspired” mean?

It means receiving something which is beyond you, which was not within you; to open yourself to an influence which is outside your individual conscious being.

Indeed, one can have also an inspiration to commit a murder! In countries where they decapitate murderers, cut off their heads, this causes a very brutal death which throws out the vital being, not allowing it the time to decompose for coming out of the body; the vital being is violently thrown out of the body, with all its impulses; and generally it goes and lodges itself in one of those present there, men half horrified, half with a kind of unhealthy curiosity. That makes the opening and it enters within. Statistics have proved that most young murderers admit that the impulse came to them when they were present at the death of another murderer. It was an “inspiration”, but of a detestable kind.

Fundamentally it is a moment of openness to something which was not within your personal consciousness, which comes from outside and rushes into you and makes you do something. This is the widest formula that can be given.

Now, generally, when people say: “Oh! he is an inspired poet”, it means he has received something from high above and
expressed it in a remarkable manner. But one should rather say that his inspiration is of a high quality.

*Does it not come, Mother, whenever one wants it?*

Whenever one wants it? Generally not, for one does not know the mechanism of one’s being and cannot open the doors at will.

It is a thing that can be done. It is one of the earliest things that you are taught to do in Yoga: to open the door whenever one wants. It is the result of meditation or concentration or aspiration: all these processes are followed to open the door somewhere.

And generally you try to open it precisely towards the highest thing, not towards anything whatever. For the other kind of receptivity people unfortunately always have.... It is impossible to be altogether shut up in an ivory tower — besides, I believe it would not be very favourable, it would be impossible to progress if one were completely shut up in oneself. One would be able only to rearrange whatever was in oneself. Just imagine you were like a closed globe, altogether closed, that there was no communication with outside — you put out nothing, you receive nothing, you are shut up — you have a few elements of consciousness, movements, vibrations (call them what you like), all that is contained as within a ball, along with your consciousness also. You have no relation with things outside, you are conscious only of yourself. What can you do?... Change the organisation within; that you can do, you can do many things by changing this organisation. But it is confined to that. It is a kind of inner progress, but there is no true progress in relation to the forces outside oneself. You would find yourself extremely limited after a time, you would be tired of yourself: turning and turning again, turning and turning again the elements inside — not very pleasant.

But all the while you externalise yourself and all the while you bring back something from this externalisation; it is like
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something porous: a force goes out and then a force comes in. There are pulsations like that. And this is why it is so important to choose the environment in which one lives, because there is constantly a kind of interchange between what you give and what you receive. People who throw themselves out a great deal in activity, receive more. But they receive on the same level, the level of their activity. Children, for example, who are younger, who always move about, always shout and romp and jump (very rarely do they keep quiet, except while asleep, and perhaps not even so), well, they spend much and they receive much, and generally it is the physical and vital energy that is spent and it is physical and vital energies that are received. They recuperate a good part of what they spend. So there, it is very important for them to be in surroundings where they can, after they have spent or while they are spending, recover something that is at least equal in quality to theirs, that is not of an inferior quality.

When you no longer have this generosity in your movements, you receive much less and this is one of the reasons — one of the chief reasons — why physical progress stops. It is because you become thrifty, you try not to waste; the mind intervenes: “Take care, don’t tire yourself, don’t do too much, etc.” The mind intervenes and physical receptivity diminishes a great deal. Finally, you do not grow any more — by growing reasonable, you stop growing altogether!

But receptivity opens to other levels. Those who live in a world of desires and passions, increase their vital receptivity so much at times that it reaches proportions very unpleasant to themselves and to their surroundings. And then there are those who live in the mental consciousness; their mental receptivity grows very much. All who create mentally, study and live in mental activity, if the mental activity is constant, can progress indefinitely. Mind in the human being does not stop functioning even when the physical instrument has deteriorated. It may no longer manifest its intelligence materially, if there is a lesion in the brain, for example, but nothing can prevent the mind
itself, independently of the instrument, from progressing, from continuing to grow. It is a being that lasts infinitely longer than the physical. It is still young when physically one is already old. Only when you do not take enough care to keep your brain in a good state, only if accidents occur and there are lesions then you can no longer express yourself. But the mind in itself continues to grow. And those who have a sufficient physical balance, for example, those who have not gone to excesses of any kind, who have never mistreated their body, who have never poisoned themselves like most people — who have never smoked, drunk alcohol and so on — keep their brain in a relatively good condition and they can progress, even in their expression, till the end of their life. It is only if in the last years of their life they make a kind of withdrawal within themselves, that they lose their power of expression. But the mind goes on progressing.

The vital is by nature immortal. But it is not organised, and in its normal state, it is over-excited, full of contradictory passions and impulses. So with all that it destroys itself. But otherwise the elements continue to exist. A desire, a passion is a very living thing and continues to live for a very long time, even independently of the being who... is subjected to them, I might say, rather than creates them, because they are things that one is subjected to, that rush upon you from outside like a storm that seizes you and carries you away, unless you keep very calm like that, very still, very quiet, as though one were clinging to something solid and immobile in oneself, allowing the storm to pass over when it begins to blow — it blows, but one must not stir, one must not let oneself tremble or shiver or shake; one must remain altogether immobile and know that these are passing storms. And when the storm has blown over, it passes and goes away; then one can heave a deep breath and resume one’s normal balance; and there has been only a minimum destruction. In such cases, generally, things turn out well in the end.

But those who are like a piece of cork on the water and rush about in all directions and do not succeed in recovering their
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poise and watching themselves, anything can happen to them. They may be drawn into a whirlpool all of a sudden and lo! engulfed. And there remains nothing.

That’s all?

There are people who do foolish things...

Yes.

And they know they are doing so, but their mind does not justify them, it gives no support, no excuse, no reasoning or explanation. What is this state?¹

What is this state? People who know that they are doing foolish things, who are conscious, but who are not able to refrain from them, because their mind does not have enough strength to check them?...

But the mind never has sufficient strength to check them! For the mind is an instrument made to see all things from all sides. Then how can you expect to have a will strong enough to resist an impulse when the mind looks at it first from this side and then from that side? And then it says: “After all, it is like that and why should it not be like that?” And so, where is your will?...

As I said there,¹ it always finds a way to explain everything, justify everything and give admirable reasons for all things.

It is only the psychic being that has the strength to intervene. If your mind is in contact with your psychic being, if it receives the influence of the psychic being, then it is strong enough to organise the resistance. It knows what the true thing is and

¹ "This physical mind is usually in a kind of alliance with the lower vital consciousness and its movements; when the lower vital manifests certain desires and impulses, the more material mind comes to its aid and justifies and supports them with specious explanations and reasonings and excuses."

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what the false; and knowing what the true thing is, if it has the goodwill, it will organise the resistance, give battle and gain the victory. But that is the only condition: it must be in contact with the psychic being.

For even the most beautiful theories, even if one knows mentally many things and holds admirable principles, that is not sufficiently strong to create a will capable of resisting an impulse. At one time you are quite determined, you have decided that it would be thus — for example, that you would not do such a thing: it is settled, you will not do it — but how is it that suddenly (you do not know how or why nor what has happened), you have not decided anything at all! And then you immediately find in yourself an excellent reason for doing the thing.... Among others, there is a certain kind of excuse which is always given: “Well, if I do it this time, at least I shall be convinced that it is very bad and I shall do it no longer and this will be the last time.” It is the prettiest excuse one always gives to oneself: “This is the last time I am doing it. This time, I am doing it to understand perfectly that it is bad and that it must not be done and I shall not do it any more. This is the last time.” Every time, it is the last time! and you begin again.

Of course there are some who have less clear ideas and who say to themselves: “After all, why don’t I want to do it? These are theories, they are principles that might not be true. If I have this impulse, what is it that tells me that this impulse is not better than a theory?...” It is not for them the last time. It is something they accept as quite natural.

Between these two extremes there are all the possibilities. But the most dangerous of all is to say: “Well, I am doing it once more this time, that will purify me of this. Afterwards I shall no longer do it.” Now the purification is never enough!

It happens only when you have decided: “Well, this time, I am going to try not to do it, and I shall not do it, I shall apply all my strength and I shall not do it.” Even if you have just a little success, it is much. Not a big success, but just a small success,
a very partial success: you do not carry out what you yearn to do; but the yearning, the desire, the passion is still there and that produces whirls within, but outside you resist, “I shall not do it, I shall not move; even if I have to bind myself hand and foot, I shall not do it.” It is a partial success — but it is a great victory because, due to this, next time you will be able to do a little more. That is to say, instead of holding all the violent passions within yourself, you can begin calming them a little; and you will calm them slowly at first, with difficulty. They will remain long, they will come back, they will trouble you, vex you, produce in you a great disgust, all that, but if you resist well and say: “No, I shall carry out nothing; whatever the cost, I shall not carry out anything; I will stay like a rock”, then little by little, little by little, that thins out, thins out and you begin to learn the second attitude: “Now I want my consciousness to be above those things. There will still be many battles but if my consciousness stands above that, little by little there will come a time when this will return no longer.” And then there is a time when you feel that you are absolutely free: you do not even perceive it, and then that is all. It may take a long time, it may come soon: that depends on the strength of character, on the sincerity of the aspiration. But even for people who have just a little sincerity, if they subject themselves to this process, they succeed. It takes time. They succeed in the first item: in not expressing. All forces upon earth tend towards self-expression. These forces come with the object of manifesting themselves and if you place a barrier and refuse to express them, they may try to beat against the barrier for a time, but in the end, they will tire themselves out and not being manifested, they will withdraw and leave you quiet.

So you must never say: “I shall first purify my thought, purify my body, purify my vital and then later I shall purify my action.” That is the normal order, but it never succeeds. The effective order is to begin from the outside: “The very first thing is that I do not do it, and afterwards, I desire it no longer and
next I close my doors completely to all impulses: they no longer exist for me, I am now outside all that.” This is the true order, the order that is effective. First, not to do it. And then you will no longer have desire for anything and after that it will go out of your consciousness completely.

When the psychic is about to enter into the world, does it choose in advance the form it is going to take?

It is an interesting question. That depends. As I have just told you, there are psychic beings who are in the making, progressing; these generally, right at the outset, cannot choose much, but when they have arrived at a certain degree of growth and of consciousness (generally while they are still in a physical body and have had a certain amount of experience), they decide at that time what their next field of experience will be like.

I can give you some rather external examples. For instance, a psychic being needed to have the experience of mastery, of power in order to know the reactions and how it is possible to turn all these movements towards the Divine: to learn what a life of power may teach you. It took birth in a king or a queen. These enjoyed some power and during that time they had their experiences; they reached the end of the field of experience. Now, they know what they wanted to know, they are about to go, they are going to leave their body that’s now become useless, and they are going to prepare for the next experience. Well, at that time, when the psychic being is still in the body and has noted what it has learnt, it decides for the next occasion. And sometimes it is a movement of action and reaction: because it has studied one entire field, it needs to study the opposite field. And very often it chooses a very different life from the one it had. So before leaving, it says: “Next time, it is in this domain that I shall take birth....” Suppose, for example, the psychic has reached a stage of growth when it would like to have the chance of working on the physical body to make it capable of coming consciously into
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contact with the Divine and of transforming it. Now, it is about to leave the body in which it had authority, power, activity, the body it has used for its growth; it says: “Next time I shall take birth in a neutral environment, neither low nor high, where it will not be necessary (how to put it?) to have a highly external life, where one will have neither great power nor great misery — altogether neutral, as you know, the life in between.” It chooses that. It returns to its own psychic world for the necessary rest, for assimilation of the experience gained, for preparation of the future experience. It naturally remembers its choice and, before coming down once more, when it has finished its assimilation, when it is time to return, to come down upon earth, it cannot, from that domain, see material things as we see them, you know: they appear to it in another form. But still the differences can be foreseen: the differences of environment, differences of activity in the environment are clearly seen, quite perceptible. It can have a vision that is total or global. It can choose. At times it chooses the country; when it wants a certain kind of education, civilisation, influence, it can choose its country beforehand. Sometimes it can’t, sometimes it chooses only its environment and the kind of life it will lead. And then from up there, before it comes down, it looks for the kind of vibrations it wants; it sees them very clearly. It is as though it was aiming at the place where it is going to drop. But it is an approximation because of the fact that another condition is necessary: not only its choice but also a receptivity from below and an aspiration. There must be someone in the environment it has chosen, generally the mother (sometimes both the parents, but the most indispensable is the mother), she must have an aspiration or a receptivity, something sufficiently passive and open or a conscious aspiration towards something higher. And that kindles for the psychic being a little light. In the mass representing for it the environment in which it wants to be born, if under the influence of its own projected will a small light is kindled, then it knows that it is there it must go.

It is necessary, it is this that makes the difference in months
or days, perhaps, not so much perhaps in years; however, this creates an uncertainty, and that is why it cannot foretell the exact date: “On that date, that day, at that hour I shall take birth.” It needs to find someone receptive. When it sees that, it rushes down. But what happens is something like an image: it is not exactly that, but something very similar. It throws itself down into an unconsciousness, because the physical world, even human consciousness whatever it may be, is very unconscious in comparison with the psychic consciousness. So it rushes into an unconsciousness. It is as though it fell on its head. That stuns it. And so generally, apart from some very very rare exceptions, for a long time it does not know. It does not know any longer where it is nor what it is doing nor why it is there, nothing at all. It finds a great difficulty in expressing itself, especially through a baby that has no brain, naturally; it is only the embryo of a brain which is hardly formed and it does not have the elements for manifesting itself. So it is very rare for a child to manifest immediately the exceptional being it contains.... That happens. We have heard about such things. It happens, but generally some time is needed. Only slowly it awakens from its stupor and becomes aware that it is there for some reason and by choice. And usually this coincides with the intensive mental education which shuts you completely from the psychic consciousness. So a mass of circumstances, happenings of all kinds, emotions, all sorts of things are necessary to open the inner doors so that one might begin to remember that after all one has come from another world and one has come for a particular reason.

Otherwise, if all went normally, it could very quickly have a connection, very quickly. If it had the luck to find someone possessing a little knowledge, and instead of falling into a world of ignorance, it fell upon a little bit of knowledge, everything would be done quite quickly.

But the psychic will and psychic growth escape completely all common notions of justice, of reward and punishment as men understand them. There are religions, there are philosophies that
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tell you all kinds of stories, which are simply the application of notions of human justice to the invisible world, and so these are stupidities. For it is not at all like that truly; the notion of reward and punishment as man understands it is an absurdity. That does not apply at all, not at all to the inner realities. So once you enter the true spiritual world, all that becomes really stupidities. For things are not at all like that.

A large number of people come and tell me: “What then have I done in my previous life to be now in such difficult conditions, with such misfortunes happening to me?” And most often I am obliged to tell them: “But don’t you see that it is a blessing upon you, a grace! And perhaps in your previous life you have asked for it so that you could make a greater progress....” These ideas are quite current: “Oh! I am ill. Oh! my body is in a bad condition, what have I done? What crime have I committed in the other life so that in this one...” This is all childishness.

So there you are. *Au revoir*, my children.