Chapter Eight
Descent and the Lower Nature

The Resistance of the Lower Nature

If the habit of the ordinary nature is not any obstacle to the descent, then what is the need of sadhana? What prevents the whole higher consciousness from coming down and changing you into a superman in one second? It is because the things of the lower nature offer an obstinate resistance that long sadhana is necessary.

*An uneasiness of that kind is always due to a resistance somewhere — something that remains closed and does not open when it is touched by the Force. It is due probably not so much to yourself as to other conflicting influences that are acting upon you.*

*If one brings down more force or light than some part of the being is ready for and that part resists — or if there is a struggle between descending and adverse forces in the body, then these things [a burning sensation etc.] can take place.*

*The feeling of resistance [to the descent of the Force] may be the result of the effort at response. When there is the free flow there is neither effort nor resistance.*

*The experience of the action in the three centres is perfectly all right (the opening to the higher consciousness and its characteristic action and results already beginning there) except for the pains which mean a resistance. These experiences are quite sound and according to the divine schedule. But the pain at the
bottom of the neck indicates that in trying to pass from mind to
higher vital towards the heart, the Consciousness encountered
an obstruction. However that too is in the day’s work. It will be
overcome in due time. So nothing to grumble — there at least.

The concentration is all right — since it is proceeding so
well, the concentration in the higher centres should continue,
but as the consciousness comes down or to help its coming
down to the vital centres, more concentration in the heart may
be necessary hereafter.


* What usually comes is a descent of the Divine Power to work
upon the nature and prepare it for the Divine Presence in the
heart. There is much in human nature that has to be changed
before it can hold what descends — incapacity and limitation of
the mind, insufficient purity in the heart and elsewhere, restless-
ness etc. To contain the descent a quiet mind and pure heart
are needed. That is why there is the restlessness and sense of
incapacity in her. That is a quite common experience. If she
wants to go farther, she must aspire for calm, peace, purity, etc.
in the mental and emotional being and allow what is descending
to establish it in her.


* It must be the vital-physical that is in action. It is under the
pressure of the Force that the resistance recedes lower and lower
down and manifests so as to have the pressure brought there also
specifically for its expulsion.


* The Power that is above your head has not only to be in connec-
tion with you, but to occupy the consciousness with its influence.
The restlessness is due to a resistance of the lower consciousness
which is not accustomed to the process by which this is done and
probably feels uneasy — as you say you feel everything unsure.
The body becoming unreal and all of one seeming to disappear
are very usual results of the higher consciousness taking hold of
the mind and they are very good signs — so too the sensation
spreading from the head to the body is probably only the Power coming in. There should be no apprehension, for these things are quite normal in the transforming process. Probably the sense of unsureness is due to the part of the nature which founds itself on the body consciousness and feels nothing sure or solid except the body. In the new consciousness on the contrary what will be felt as sure and solid is the wide spiritual consciousness not limited by the body, in which the body is only a small circumstance hardly felt, an instrument only. The losing all consciousness must also be due to the consciousness going entirely inside as soon as the restlessness is forgotten or is no longer active.

That is good progress. As for the resisting part, there is for a long time a resistance from some layer of the physical — one layer opens, another beneath remains obscure. But if the pressure from above is continuous, the resistance gets exhausted at last. The stillness of which you speak in the meditation is a very good sign. It comes usually in that pervading way when there has been sufficient purification to make it possible. On the other side, it is itself the beginning of the laying of the foundations of the higher spiritual consciousness.

You speak of a struggle (yuddha) beginning when the Force comes down, but such a result is not inevitable — it is not necessary that the progress should be through a struggle. That rather takes place before the Force is there in the being, while one is still making efforts to open oneself to it or when it is still pressing from above or has taken up something of the nature but not the whole. When the Force is there at work, the imperfections and weaknesses of the nature will necessarily arise for change, but one need not fight with them; one can look on them quietly as a surface instrumentation that has to be changed. It is not with “indifference” that one has to look at them, for that might mean inertia, a want of will or push or necessity to change; it is rather with detachment. Detachment means that one stands
back from them, does not identify oneself with them or get upset or troubled because they are there, but rather looks on them as something foreign to one’s true consciousness and true self, rejects them and calls in the Mother’s Force into these movements to eliminate them and bring the true consciousness and its movements there. The firm will of rejection must be there, the pressure to get rid of them, but not any wrestling or struggle.

When you felt the Force, the concentration, the peace, it meant evidently the true consciousness coming; that could not produce the restlessness at night. If the restlessness were the result of the Force coming, it would follow that the more the Force comes down, the more the restlessness must increase. But that would be absurd and is not the case. What happened was simply that with the Force came a beginning of the inner or spiritual peace; in the nerves the old restlessness which was lying dormant rose up as a resistance, trying as all these habitual things of the nature do to prolong itself. As the peace enters the vital and the nervous being, these things naturally diminish and are eliminated. One has only to remain quiet and detached and let the Force in its working bring in the peace there also. If the difficulty persists, you will let us know so that we may see to it.

Descent into the Mind and Vital

The danger of the mental forces is that when the higher consciousness descends they tend (unless there is a deep silence) to become active in the consciousness for forming ideas of a mental type which can always be misapplied. First, there should be a basis of entire calm, peace and silence — if there is activity, it should be that of a knowledge coming down and the mind silent receiving it accurately. This you can easily have, provided the mind is quiet.

The danger of the vital is that of taking hold of love, Ananda, the sense of Beauty and using it for its own purposes, for vital human relations or interchange or else some kind of mere enjoyment of its own.

*
The wideness is that of the higher consciousness, golden being the colour of the light of Truth, and the Cow is the symbol of the Light of the higher consciousness descending, turning all into the Truth light.

The state of wideness and of quietude unaffected by anything that happens is the natural result of the descent which you saw in this figure. The impartial condition towards work or not work is also a result of this descent. Usually it is the vital that pushes to work and without this vital push one can do very little. When the higher consciousness descends into the mind and vital, this push becomes silent, but the faculty of work remains, — afterwards when the new consciousness is settled it takes up the work and carries it on with another force which replaces the push of the vital and is much greater.

* 

In the first condition you are receiving through the mind and it is drawn back upon itself to receive the Presence and grow in the Light and Power from above. The body or external consciousness is probably not sharing in its outward-going parts, there is no effectuating energy for any work other than what the external consciousness is habituated to do.

In the second the vital is receiving directly and transforming immediately into kinetic energy; for it is the direct reception by the vital or else the active participation of the vital in the Light, Power or Ananda that makes externalisation, effectuation, all kinds of work and action possible and easy.

* 

The opening of the vital mind (or any part) does not mean that the vital mind is absolutely open or wholly converted so that there shall never again be any darkness or ignorance or error or resistance or anything else but the higher consciousness there. It only means that the higher consciousness is able to come down there and work and establish something of itself there — as has been done in the thinking mind. Each plane, one after the other, has to open initially in that way down to the physical. So long
as this initial opening is not made in all the parts, there can be no complete and final descent of the higher consciousness anywhere. If the nervous being and other physical parts are not open, even the thinking mind cannot be finally open, for it can be affected by resistance, darkness etc. from below. If the vital mind is open, that does not mean that it is open so wholly that it is already divine and is not feeling pride or other wrong movements.

As for the nervous being, it is part of the physical consciousness, below the physical mind and not above it — the nerves are part of the body.

* 

The attitude which he describes, if he keeps it correctly, is the right one. It brought him at first the beginning of a true experience, the Light (white and golden) and the Force pouring down from the Sahasradala and filling the system; but when it touched the vital parts it must have awakened the prana energies in the vital centres (navel and below) and as these were not pure, all the impurities arose (anger, sex, fear, doubt etc.) and the mind became clouded by the uprush of impure vital forces. He says that all this is now subsiding, the mind is becoming calm and in the vital the impulses come but do not remain. Not only the mind but the vital must become calm; these impulses must lose their force of recurrence by rejection and purification. Entire purity and peace must be established in the whole ādhāra; it is only then that he will have a safe and sure basis for further progress.

The reason why the force flows out of him must be because he allows himself to become too inertly passive and open to everything. One must be passive only to the Divine Force, but vigilant not to put oneself at the mercy of all forces. If he becomes passive when he tries to see God in another person, he is likely to put himself at the disposal of any force that is working through that person and his own forces may be drained away towards the other. It is better for him not to try in this way; let him aspire for the Peace and Strength that come from above and for entire
purity and open himself to that Force only. Such experiences as the feeling of the Divine everywhere (not in this or that person only) will then come of themselves.

* 

It is when the true contact and the Light and Force can be steadily brought down into the whole being (including the lower vital and body) that the basis and organisation [of the being] can be founded and settled.

**Descent into the Physical Consciousness and Body**

This is a very great progress — to be able to receive the higher consciousness while doing external things with the physical mind and body — it shows that the physical consciousness is fast opening. What you feel is indeed the Grace coming down and bringing the higher divine or spiritual consciousness with it with all that is there. All that (peace, power, Ananda) will develop afterwards more clearly.

* 

It [the descent of the higher consciousness into the most physical] brings light, consciousness, force, Ananda into the cells and all the physical movements. The body becomes conscious and vigilant and performs the right movements, obeying the higher will or else automatically by force of the consciousness that has come into it. It becomes more possible to control the functionings of the body and set right anything that is wrong, to deal with illness and pain etc. A greater control comes over the actions of the body and even over happenings to it from outside, e.g. minimising of accidents and small mishaps. The body becomes a more effective instrument for work. It becomes possible to minimise fatigue. Peace, happiness, strength, lightness in the whole physical system. These are the more obvious and normal results which grow as the consciousness grows, but there are many others that are possible. There is also the unity with the earth-consciousness, the constant sense of the Divine in the physical, etc.
It is, of course, not easy to make the physical entirely conscious in this way—for it is the seat of unconsciousness and obscurity and inertia—but a partial and sufficiently effective introduction of the higher consciousness can be established as a basis and the rest of the ground conquered as its force increases in the body.

*  

Your recent experiences are of considerable importance: the triple condition of the being, the sense of the Divine everywhere, that of the Divine Child in the universe. The last two are self-evident in their significance. As to the triple condition it indicates the proper direction of the realisation of the sadhana in three parts of the being. The mind has to merge in the one infinite consciousness of the silent self which will then envelop the whole being; the heart has by adoration and love and surrender to live in the dynamic Divine and be its dwelling place; the vital and physical (below the navel) have to be the instruments of the Divine Will, instruments pure, surrendered, expressing nothing but that Will.

The Blue Light coming below the level of the Muladhara means that it has entered into the physical (physical mental, physical vital, material) consciousness. The two main obstacles here are the mechanical mind with its memories and desires of the past and the most outward sex movements; these have to be overcome (especially the mechanical mind, for the other may be easily overcome if not supported by the vital proper) for the Light to possess all the physical consciousness. It is probably why it rose so strongly when the Light came to these parts.

*  

That is to say, [when there is sometimes stillness and sometimes mechanical thoughts] the Power is still working on the physical consciousness (the mechanical mind and the subconscious) to bring stillness there. Sometimes the stillness comes but not complete, sometimes the mechanical mind reasserts itself. This oscillation usually takes place in a movement of the kind. Even if there is a sudden or rapid transforming shock or downrush,
Descent and the Lower Nature

there has to be some working out of this kind afterwards — that at least has always been my experience. For most, however, there comes, first, this slow preparatory process.

* 

It is not a question only of the force working — but of the force descending into the body. The force descends in order to establish quietude, peace, light or whatever else comes from the higher consciousness. When the force comes only to do some work it comes and goes after doing its work. But this is a question of establishing something in the mind, vital and body.

* 

It [how the body receives the higher dynamism] depends on the condition of the body or rather of the physical and the most material consciousness. In one condition it is tamasic, inert, unopen and cannot bear or cannot receive or cannot contain the force; in another rajas predominates and tries to seize on the dynamism, but wastes and spills and loses it; in another there is receptivity, harmony, balance and the result is a harmonious action without strain or effort.

* 

Probably the accumulated Force became more than the physical being could receive. When that happens, the right thing to do is to widen oneself (one can learn to do it by a little practice). If the consciousness is in a state of wideness, then it can receive any amount of Force without inconvenience.

* 

It was the descent of the higher consciousness not only into the mind but the whole body and the whole being. That is what you must get fixed in you, having it not only as a descent but as your normal consciousness. Of course that does not happen in a day (except in rare cases). The descent repeats itself until it is strong enough to hold the whole body.
What will happen when the supramental consciousness takes hold of the body fully, can be decided only by the descent itself — there must be no premature attempt to do it or decide it with the Mind, before the Descent is an accomplished reality — for that would only retard the Descent and perhaps spoil the body.

**Experiences in the Subtle Body and the Physical Body**

It [*the higher consciousness*] can come into the physical consciousness direct in the sense that the rest can remain passive, but it must pass through the subtle to reach the material.

*All experiences that penetrate the centres are recorded in the body and seem to be the body’s experiences,¹ but one has to distinguish between the reflection of the experiences there and the experiences that belong to the physical body consciousness itself. It is a matter of consciousness and fine discernment. There is no absolute law about the time.*

*It can be a rushing of Force into the subtle body which the physical records and feels the effect. When Force descends into the head it means that it has come down into the mind, when it is felt in the heart it means it has entered into the emotional vital, when it is in the Muladhara and below it means it is acting on the physical consciousness. The centres are all in the subtle body although there are corresponding parts in the gross physical.*

*I spoke [*in the preceding letter*] only of the fact that what one feels recorded in the physical body may be actually taking place only in the subtle body. Whether in a particular case it is that or a direct experience in the physical body also, is a matter to be*

¹ *The correspondent wrote that he sometimes felt peace or silence or force as “tangibly present” in his body. — Ed.*
seen in each case. One must distinguish for oneself which it is.

* 

Any reflection or outflowing [of the Force] from the subtle body into the physical would also be felt as tangible.

* 

Why “mere” record? If you think the experiences in the subtle body are feeble vague things, you are mistaken — they can be quite as intense, swift, palpable, massive as those of the body.

**Descent into the Subconscient and Inconscient**

It [the correspondent’s experience] is the approach of the higher consciousness to the subconscient through the psychic and vital which are the connecting links. Without the vital the action would not be complete, without the psychic it would not be possible.

* 

I do not see what is your difficulty. That there is a divine force asleep or veiled by Inconscience in Matter and that the Higher Force has to descend and awaken it with the Light and Truth is a thing that is well known; it is at the very base of this Yoga.