This talk is based upon *Bases of Yoga*, Chapter 5, “Physical Consciousness, etc.”.

_Sweet Mother, what is the difference between a symbolic dream and a vision?_

Usually one has a vision when one is not asleep, when one is awake. When one is awake and enters within oneself — whether in meditation or concentration — one has visions. Or at night you can’t sleep... remain stretched out, remain quiet, don’t sleep and you may have visions.

Dreams come when one is asleep, that is, when one has no longer the waking consciousness; whereas in vision one is in the waking consciousness, but one quietens or immobilises it, and it is another more inner consciousness which awakens; yet one is not asleep, the body is not asleep, it is just made quiet.

One can have visions even while remaining active. Some people have visions even amidst activity. Vision is another plane of perception which awakes. It is the senses in the mind or vital or physical which wake up and manage to pass their experiences to the outer consciousness. It is as though one had another pair of eyes behind these, eyes which could see in the vital instead of seeing in the physical. And this is always there. Only, as one is concentrated on the most material life, one doesn’t notice it. But some children have the two conjointly, they see even physically all kinds of things which are not physical. Usually they are told that they are saying stupid things; so they stop speaking about them. But they don’t see just this, only physically, they see other things behind. One can have visions with closed eyes, one can

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1 No class was held on the 20th of April.
Questions and Answers

have visions with open eyes; while when dreaming one is always asleep.
Any other questions?

How can we distinguish between a symbolic dream and other dreams?

For each one it is different; but it is a question of the impression one has. Usually the symbolic dream is much clearer, more precise, more coordinated, and carries with it a kind of consciousness of something which is true... I don’t know... one remembers it better, it is not distorted in the remembrance.
And then, that’s all?

Sweet Mother, there’s a question of Jyotindra’s.

Ah! What does he want to know, that child?

He wanted to know: when one is in much pain or is very irritated, how can one sleep peacefully?

This indeed needs a certain yogic power. The best way — and this one is absolute — is to go out of one’s body.
When the body is in pain, when one has fever or is ill, you see, or the body is very ill, the only thing to do is to come out of it, to bring out one’s vital being. And then, if one is a yogi and knows, one rises just above — so as to see his body; the vital being, if it has come out in a fairly material form, can see the body; one sees his own physical body, and then at that moment, with the consciousness one has and the force one has, one can direct the rays of these forces on the place in the body which is ill. But this of course is the peak, it is the surest way of curing oneself; and if one has the power and the knowledge, it is infallible.
One can cure oneself of anything whatever in a very short time. Only, all this means a great practice, a training of the being. It does not come all at once, you see. But in fact when the pain is intolerable and people faint, they do this instinctively. To faint is to go out of one’s body. So some people, who are not too closely tied to their body, when something goes wrong, becomes too painful or is not all right, they faint.

Too great a pain makes you faint away, that is, you go out of your body, you really go out and leave the body very inert; and provided someone is there who has enough knowledge not to shake you like this (gesture) to wake you up, it is a means of escape from suffering. Of course, if you have beside you someone who is panic-stricken and sprinkles cold water on your head or shakes you, then the result can be disastrous, but otherwise one can... And little by little, naturally, as there is no longer any consciousness there to record the suffering, it becomes calm, and in almost every case the body becomes motionless enough to be able to rest even in spite of the suffering. It doesn’t feel it at all any longer. This is the best way.

There are minor methods and they have smaller results; they are not very easy either, that is, the knowledge of the power to cut the connection between the suffering part and the recording brain. One cuts the connection, then the brain does not register. That’s what one does, what the doctors do with anaesthetics. They cut the connection of the nerves between the spot that’s ill and the brain; so the brain no longer perceives anything or it is reduced to a minimum. And it always comes back to the same thing, one way or another; and all this calls for an occult power or a training. Some people have it spontaneously; there are not many of these — very few. But obviously, without going so far, there is one thing that one can try to do: it is not to concentrate on one’s pain, to turn the attention away as much as possible, not think at all of one’s pain, think as little as possible and above all not be concentrated on it, not to pay attention — “Oh, I’m in pain”, then it becomes a little worse; “Oh, I’m in
still greater pain”, then it becomes still worse, like that, because one is concentrated on it; and this is the mistake one always makes: to think, be there, attentive, awaiting the sign of pain; then naturally it comes, it comes increased by the concentration of the attention given to it. That is why, when one is not well the best thing to do is to read or have something read, you see; it depends on the condition one is in. But if one can turn one’s attention away, one no longer suffers.

And so, that’s all?

_Sweet Mother, do we need to dream?

Do we what?...

... _need to dream?...

Need to dream! But it’s not a question of need, my child, one always dreams.

_But why do we dream?

Why do you walk on your feet, with the head in the air, and why do you eat and sleep? It is like that. There is no why about it. There is no why, it is part of the general functioning.

Dreams are not something imposed upon you like that, artificially. It is not as when you are sent to school to learn something, not like that. They are a part of your normal working, that is, usually it is the head, the brain which goes on working. Sometimes, when one is in slightly higher states, it is an inner being that enters into activity, goes to its own domain and lives there its own life. But all these things are not artificially organised for some reason or other. They are a part of the body’s functioning. Dreams are as natural as the activities of the day; and then in a dream one finds out more or less that one understands nothing about it, but in life it’s exactly the same thing because
— no matter what happens — you are always asking yourself hundreds of questions to know why, how and what it is that's happened. You know nothing about it. Only, you are in the habit of its being like that.

That's all. No questions?

*I have a question still.*

Still one?

*Sweet Mother, when one sleeps the consciousness is different from the waking consciousness...*

Yes, and so “Why?” *(Laughter)*

*How is it different?*

But you have never noticed that it is different? For example, your physical consciousness or your subtle physical consciousness, your vital consciousness or the consciousness of your higher or lower vital, your psychic consciousness, your mental consciousness, each one is completely different! So when you sleep you have one consciousness, and when you are awake you have another. In your waking state you look at things projected outside you, in your sleep state you see them interiorised. So it is as though in one case you were pushed altogether outside yourself, in front, and in the other it is as though you were looking at yourself in an inner mirror.

Don’t understand? Not very well!

Well, it’s something one must learn to distinguish, one’s states of consciousness, because otherwise one lives in a perpetual confusion.

In fact, it is the first step on the path, it is the beginning of the thread, if one doesn’t hold on to the end of the thread, one is lost on the way. This is only to hold the end of the thread.
Questions and Answers

That’s all?

_Sweet Mother, when one sees oneself dead in a dream, what does it signify?_

Ah! I have already been asked this several times. It depends on the context.

It can mean that one has made enough progress to get rid totally of an old way of being which has no longer any reason for existing. This, I think, is the most frequent case. Otherwise it depends absolutely on the context, that is, the circumstances surrounding the dream.

That is... one sees himself dead... How does he see himself dead? Does he simply see the inert body or himself already dead, or does he take for dead what is not dead?

You see, if you leave your body — by going out of the body as I explained a while ago — if you have gone out materially enough, in a very material vital, well, the body which is lying on the bed seems absolutely dead, but it is not dead for all that. But if you look at it or see it while you are outside and you don’t know, it seems absolutely dead, it is in a cataleptic state. Then if you know what is necessary and what you ought to do it is very easy; but if you don’t know and the imagination starts roaming, then you open the door to fear and anything may happen.

But in fact, I don’t think that once in a million times it is a premonitory dream. I think it much more likely that it is a fragment of the being which has stopped being useful and so disappears; so the fragment takes the form of the whole and one sees himself dead because this fragment has stopped existing in him. This is the most frequent and the most logical instance.

Now, one may see not a death but, for example, an accident or an assassination or things like that... Then it is a very real violent dream, you know, and this may mean that one is attacked by bad forces sent by someone with a precise purpose. Then one has only to strike hard and react violently.
Sweet Mother, sometimes when one is asleep, he knows that he is asleep but he can't open his eyes. Why?

This happens when one has gone out of his body, and one must not force things, one must quite simply, slowly, concentrate his consciousness in his body and wait a while for the fusion to be made normally; one must not force things.

Sometimes the eyes are a little open and one can also see things...

And one can't move!

Yes.

It means that only a fragment of the consciousness has come back, not enough to bring back the full movement in the body. You must not shake yourself, because you risk losing a bit of yourself. You must remain quite still and concentrate slowly, slowly, on your body; it can take a minute or two at the most.

What can one lose?

Anything at all, something that has gone out, you see. It's because one part of the being has gone out; so if you shake yourself, it doesn't have the time to get back. Why, there's someone behind you (Nolini) who has had an experience of this kind — someone startled him out of his sleep, and when he came back he had truly the feeling that something was missing. Isn't that so? (Mother turns to Nolini)

(Nolini) Yes.

Then I told him to concentrate quietly; it came back. Only, if one is afraid it can become complicated, you see.
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But one must never startle anyone out of his sleep because he must have time to get back into his body. It is not good, for instance, when getting up to jump out of bed — hop! You must remain quiet for a while, like this (*gesture*), as though you were bringing yourself back into yourself, like that, quietly... quietly. When you are quite calm, when you feel that everything is there, then you get up and it is over. But you must never jump out of bed abruptly, it is not good. Besides, sometimes it happens that those who wake up abruptly and jump out of bed feel giddy and risk falling. You must always make a movement like this (*gesture*), as though you were gathering your consciousness or all kinds of things which may be gathered in one's body; you remain very quiet for a few seconds of assimilation and when it is done properly, you get up quietly, composedly.

What else? Nothing?
So it is finished!