

Chapter Four

Experiences Associated with the Psychic

The Psychic Touch or Influence

The psychic influence in the ordinary life of man tries to bring the truth of the soul into human action, human thought and feelings. When it is spiritualised, it tries to turn the human towards the Divine.

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These are movements of the vital under the psychic touch. If there is the firm psychic foundation underneath, it will be felt as an underlying quietude and confidence or a fixed spirit of surrender.

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The demands were there already — when the psychic touches there is an intensification of love but the lower vital mixes up the love with all sorts of demands.

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The soft feeling [*in the head and below*] must be that of the psychic being spreading itself through the higher centres. Faithfulness is one of the first characteristics of the psychic being.

The Psychic Condition

What you describe shows that things are going on very well within, it is the psychic condition that is being gradually prepared as a basis for the sadhana. The special experiences of the burning of the psychic fire, descent of peace etc. are always

intermittent until this basis is ready, but they help it to grow.

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It is this freedom from all ties and entire and sole turning to the Mother that is the deepest psychic condition. It is coming to you as touches of that condition from the psychic, therefore there is not yet the permanent state; but these touches prepare the future permanence.

The fire which you feel in the chest must surely be the psychic fire, for it is there that is the seat of the psychic and the fact that it burns strongly when you sit alone points to the same thing.

The Psychic Fire

The psychic fire is the fire of aspiration, purification and tapasya which comes from the psychic being. It is not the psychic being, but a power of the psychic being.

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The psychic being is a Purusha, not a flame — the psychic fire is not the being, it is something proper to it.

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It [*a flame in the heart as big as a man's thumb*] is the psychic fire kindled in the heart. The psychic being in the heart is described by the Upanishads as of the size of a thumb, *aṅguṣṭha-mātraḥ puruṣo'ntarātmā* — it may manifest first as this psychic flame.

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The fire [*one feels within*] is always the fire of sacrifice and self-offering, the fire of aspiration or the fire of tapasya.

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That the constant fire of aspiration has to be lit is true; but this fire is the psychic fire and it is lit or burns up and increases as the psychic grows within and for the psychic to grow quietude is needful. That is why we have been working for the psychic to

grow in you and for the quietude also to grow and that is why we want you to wait on the Mother's working in full patience and confidence. To be always remembering the Mother and always with the equal unwavering fire within means itself a considerable progress in sadhana and it must be prepared by various means such as the experiences you have been having. Keep steadfast in confidence therefore and all that has to be done will be done.

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The experience of the Fire is quite correct, — it is the great fire of purification and concentration (i.e. gathering up of the consciousness and turning it fixedly towards the Divine), the psychic fire which all must pass through so as to reach the Mother permanently and completely.

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It is egoistic if the ego thinks that it is the psychic fire. If the consciousness feels identified with the psychic fire and becomes conscious that the fire can burn out all impurities, then it is a true experience.

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The central fire is in the psychic being, but it can be lit in all the parts of the being.

The Psychic Fire and Some Inner Visions

The fire you saw was the fire of the psychic being, the fire of aspiration and tapasya, burning under the earth, that is to say, in the subconscious. It opens the earth, the physical consciousness to the Divine Light. Moonlight may symbolise the spiritual consciousness and the room your own personal being or individual physical consciousness. With these clues it will be easy for you to understand the significance of your experience.

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The fire you saw was again the psychic fire of purification and

tapasya and the garland was the offering it was preparing for the Mother, the psychic and divine consciousness (pearl and diamond) in the sadhak. The beautiful place was also probably a symbol of the psychic and the lotus indicated the opening of the psychic consciousness.

The twelve-petalled lotus and the twelve-rayed sun indicate the same thing, the complete Truth-consciousness of the Divine Mother. It was rising but only half risen. The red colour was the sign of Power.

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All these things are signs, now often repeated, of the process that is going on. The heat is the result of the psychic fire burning away obstacles — the coolness and complete quietude come as a result. The tendency to sleep is really a tendency to go inside into the depths of the inner consciousness due to the pressure for the change.

The wideness of light you saw was the wideness of the true consciousness liberated from the narrow limits of the human mind, human vital, human body consciousness. It is true that the mind is narrow, not only yours, but all human minds even the most developed, — compared with the wideness of the true consciousness which has no limits. It is precisely this wideness which will come by the sadhana and which these processes are preparing. The rain of flowers means a plenty of the psychic qualities and movements and the white flower of mental victory indicates the step towards it which is now being led up to — the victory in the mind of the inner light over the outer ignorance.

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The difficulty in giving up habits is common to the physical mind in all people; nothing is more difficult to it. The fire you feel must be what we call Agni, the fire of purification acting on this physical mind to change it.

The bridge you saw was the symbol of transition from the ordinary to the spiritual consciousness; the wide plain was a symbol of the large peace and silence which comes with the

spiritual consciousness when one rests in the Divine.

The perfumes you felt were true perfumes but not of the physical world. This body of flesh and blood is not the whole of ourselves; there is unseen by the eyes a subtle body also and one becomes aware of it when the inner consciousness opens. It was from deep within there that the perfumes came, perfumes of purity, of love and surrender (rose) etc. It is there deep within that the psychic being dwells and it is there that you are trying to go when the inward-going impulse or pressure comes; it is why you felt more and more peaceful, because you were going deeper and deeper into the psychic from which these fragrances came.

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The heat in the body is due simply to the working that is going on within; it is what is called the heat of tapas — there is nothing unhealthy in it as in the heat of fever. The beautiful scent that you get is a subtle or psychic fragrance, just as the vision of the lotus is a subtle or psychic sight.

The psychic being is often seen or felt within in the form of a child, — it is perhaps that that you are feeling within you; it is calling for a complete sincerity, but sincerity is used here in the sense of opening to nothing but the divine influences and impulses. It does not mean that you have committed any fault, but only that the psychic in you wants you to be completely under its sole government, so that all in you may be for the Divine only. The feeling of sorrow is probably a response of the vital in you to this demand — thinking that it must have erred; but such a feeling of sorrow is not necessary. The vital can quietly wait for the psychic working to do all that is needed in due time.

Agni

It is the Agni fire that you feel. Agni is at once a fire of aspiration, a fire of purification, a fire of tapasya, a fire of transformation.

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Agni in the form of an aspiration full of concentrated calm and surrender is certainly the first thing to be lighted in the heart.

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It [*a feeling of warmth in the heart*] comes sometimes from the approach of Agni fire, sometimes from that of love or Ananda, sometimes simply from a touch of the Force.

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The fear of the fire you saw is misplaced, for it is the fire of the purifying Agni that you see burning and that does no harm; it only clears away what should not be there. That is why it is followed by a lightness or an emptiness. You have only to be quiet and let the fire do its work. The heat one feels at that time is not the heat of fever or any other morbid heat. Afterwards, as you felt, all becomes cool and light.

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The burning is sometimes the heat of a difficulty and resistance, but then it disturbs. When it does not disturb, it is usually the purifying fire of Agni.

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It may be pressure of the Agni fire that you feel [*around the head and shoulders*] as the heat — especially if there is something that has to be purified or a difficulty burned away. The cool spray on the other hand comes as an accompaniment of the sense of purification.

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The Fire [*felt in the forehead and eyes*] is the power of the Yoga — Yogashakti.

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That kind of pull [*towards the Divine*] is not the same thing as the lighting of Agni. Agni meets men who are not leading the religious life at all but who have Agni burning in them and are

intent to keep the fire ablaze — scientists, artists etc. who have the intense will of perfecting what they do and all their central energies are thrown into this flame. The same intense fire should burn in the Yoga.

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It is the Mother's Force that works in the Agni.

Agni and the Psychic Fire

If it is in the heart it may be psychic fire — it is possibly not the joy that created the fire, but the decision you had come to to believe in the Mother's action whether the mind understood or not. Such an attitude encourages the opening of the psychic and would therefore bring at once the psychic joy and the kindling of Agni in the psychic centre.

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It is some association in the mind probably coupling Agni with the psychic. Of course the individual Agni fire has its starting-point in the psychic, but the mere burning of the fire does not show that the psychic is coming forward.

When it burns in the heart, it is the fire *in* the psychic. The psychic fire is individual and takes usually the form of a fire of aspiration or personal tapasya. This Fire is universal and it came from above.

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The psychic fire may burn in the vital. It all depends on whether it is the fire of the general Force that comes from above or the fire of your soul's aspiration and tapasya.

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All that [*fire in the heart and elsewhere*] is simply the burning of the Agni in various parts of the being. It prepares it for transformation. But the coming forward of the psychic is another matter and its signs are psychological.

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Agni is the psychic fire — it is not the Divine Presence. If the psychic is active and open, the Presence may be felt — it is not necessary for that that it should be in the front. Also it may be in the front, but the Divine Presence in the heart may not be felt as yet, there may be only the aspiration, bhakti, self-giving. There is no fixed law about these things — it develops differently in different natures.

Psychic Joy

It [*a feeling of joy, intense but calm and pure*] is not mere vital excitement or heightened nerve sensation, it is an attempt of the psychic to emerge from behind the veil and what you feel is the psychic joy. (The psychic is seated behind the heart, behind the emotional centre.) But when this psychic joy comes, it communicates itself to the mind, the vital and the body. You have then to be careful that no mixture comes in from the vital and the physical — such as the sex impulse. The mind, the vital, the physical must receive the psychic Ananda and make it their own, but not bring in their own deviations or any degraded mixture into it.

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There is a dynamic joy as well as the self-existent joy in the soul itself.

Psychic Sorrow

There is a psychic sorrow which usually comes when the soul feels how strong is the resistance in the world and how much the Forces in it rage against the Mother.

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It is the soul, the psychic being in you, behind the heart, that is awake and wants to concentrate the mind on the Divine. It is the nature of the mind to go out to other things, but now when it does that, there is the unease in the heart, the psychic sorrow because the heart feels at once that this is wrong and the head

also aches because of the resistance to the Divine Force at work. This is a thing that often happens at an early stage, after the opening of the consciousness to the sadhana.

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The vital took it up perhaps and gave it a more vehement and turbid expression — otherwise there is nothing disturbing in a psychic sorrow.

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The psychic sadness is of a purifying and not a depressing kind.

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There are many things that are spiritual that are not the essence of the higher consciousness. All that tends towards the transformation and helps to prepare it is spiritual. Psychic sorrow is a spiritual movement, but sorrow is not part of the essential character of the higher consciousness. Resignation, the ego's submission to the divine will, is a spiritual movement, but the higher consciousness has no need of resignation and a submitted ego is not a part of its essence, for it has no ego.

Psychic Tears or Weeping

Yes, there is a psychic sorrow of that kind [*tears of longing for the Mother*] — but psychic tears need not be sorrowful, there are also tears of emotion and joy.

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The tears probably come from the inner psychic being (behind the heart) which is touched in this state of quietness and peace. It is the sign of an aspiration and devotion in the soul which is trying to come to the surface. If the psychic being can come to the surface and a harmony be established in the nature, all of it being turned towards the Divine, this kind of expression will cease.

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The weeping that comes to you comes from the psychic being — it is the tears of psychic yearning and aspiration. At a particular stage it so comes to many and is a very good sign. The other feelings and tendencies are also from the same source. They show that the psychic is exercising a strong influence and preparing, as we say, to come in front. Accept the movement and let it fulfil itself.

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A weeping that comes with the feeling you speak of is the sign of a psychic sorrow — for it translates as an aspiration of the psychic being. But depression and hopelessness ought not to come. You should rather cling to the faith that since there is a true aspiration in you — and of that there can be no doubt — it is sure to be fulfilled, whatever the difficulties of the external nature. You must recover in that faith the inner peace and quietude while at the same time keeping the clear insight into what has to be done and the steady aspiration for the inner and outer change.

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It is quite correct that [*ordinary*] weeping brings in the forces that should be kept outside — for the weeping is a giving way of the inner control and an expression of vital reaction and ego. It is only the psychic weeping that does not open the door to these forces — but that weeping is without affliction, tears of bhakti, spiritual emotion or Ananda.

Your experience was a very beautiful one — the inner being realises by such experiences that which must be established in the waking state as the foundation of the spiritual consciousness and spiritual life.

Psychic Yearning

The yearning of the heart may be there but it should not disturb the peace.

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I think it is better to stop it [*the yearning of the heart*] for the present. It is very possible that the vital is taking advantage of it to create dissatisfaction with the progress of the sadhana. The psychic yearning brings no reaction of impatience, dissatisfaction or disturbance.

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Your new attitude towards food and outward things is the true attitude, the psychic attitude and shows that the psychic is already controlling the vital physical as well as the other parts of the vital nature.

As for the heart, the movement of longing for the Divine, weeping, sorrowing, yearning is not essential in this Yoga. A strong aspiration there must be, an intense longing there may very well be, an ardent love and will for union; but there need be no sorrow or disturbance. The quiet and silence you feel in your heart is the result of the pressure of the higher consciousness to come down. That always brings a quietude in mind and heart and as it descends a great peace and silence. In the silent heart and mind, there must be the true attitude and thus you have the feeling that you are the Mother's child, the faith and the will to be united with her. Along with that there may be an aspiration or silent expectation of what is to come. That also you seem to have. All therefore is well.

Psychic Intensity

I have read your letter of explanation of the "strange" ideas. I still maintain that your views on the lack of all intensity in the psychic things or in the spiritual or their inferiority to vital pleasure *are* strange, because they contradict all psychic and spiritual experience except that of the mere vairagis and make the choice of the spiritual life itself (Nirvana seekers excepted) quite inexplicable. Your arguments are not convincing. What have Ramakrishna's excesses or the fluctuations of Vivekananda's vital receptivity between exaltation and depression or Chaitanya's *viraha* to do with the question in issue? These are difficulties

of the body and the vital. The question was of the intensity of *psychic* and *pure spiritual* experience — psychic devotion and love, peace, Ananda. You cannot base a general denial on your own particular experience, because you have only the initial experiences of calm etc. and have *not* got to the intensities as I have done and others before me have done. It is only when one lives centrally in the psychic with the mental, vital and physical as provinces held under its rule that one knows what psychic intensity is. It is only when the higher consciousness comes down in its floods that one can know what can be the intensities or ecstasies of spiritual peace, light, love, bliss. You can say, “I have not yet had these intensities”, but you cannot say in a sweeping way, “They do not exist and I shall never have them”, or “They are only tepid quiet little things, soothing and more capable of lasting, but not intense and glorious like the vital joys and pleasures.” Do not cling to these notions born of the past limitations, but keep yourself open and plastic to greater possibilities in the future.

My own experience is *not* limited to a radiant peace; I know very well what ecstasy and Ananda are from the Brahmananda down to the *śārīra ānanda*, and can experience them at any time. But of these things I prefer to speak only when my work is done — for it is in a transformed consciousness here and not only above where the Ananda always exists that I seek their base of permanence.

The Psychic and Uneasiness

The psychic is not uneasy, it makes you uneasy when you do the wrong thing.

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The uneasiness created by the psychic is not depression — it is in the nature of a rejection of the wrong movement.

If the uneasiness causes depression or vital dissatisfaction, it is not psychic.

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The uneasiness is simply a reminder to you to be more vigilant in future.

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The unhappiness is not necessary or inevitable in the sadhana, but it comes because your inner nature feels the touch of the Divine Presence indispensable to it and uneasy when it does not feel it. To feel it always a certain constant detachment within allowing you to remain within and do everything from within is necessary. This can more easily be done in quiet occupations and quiet contacts. For it is quietness and inwardness that enable one to feel the Presence.