Part 2

MEETINGS

In 1912 a small group of seekers met regularly with the aim of gaining self-knowledge and self-mastery.

At the end of each session, a general question was set, which each member was to answer individually. These answers were read out at the next meeting. Then, to close the session, a small essay was read out. Here are the essays.
7 May 1912

What is the most useful work to be done at the present moment?

The general aim to be attained is the advent of a progressing universal harmony.

The means for attaining this aim, in regard to the earth, is the realisation of human unity through the awakening in all and the manifestation by all of the inner Divinity which is One.

In other words, — to create unity by founding the Kingdom of God which is within us all.

This, therefore, is the most useful work to be done:

1. For each individually, to be conscious in himself of the Divine Presence and to identify himself with it.
2. To individualise the states of being that were never till now conscious in man and, by that, to put the earth in connection with one or more of the fountains of universal force that are still sealed to it.
3. To speak again to the world the eternal word under a new form adapted to its present mentality.

It will be the synthesis of all human knowledge.

4. Collectively, to establish an ideal society in a propitious spot for the flowering of the new race, the race of the Sons of God.

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The terrestrial transformation and harmonisation can be brought about by two processes which, though opposite in appearance, must combine — must act upon each other and complete each other:

1. Individual transformation, an inner development leading to the union with the Divine Presence.
(2) Social transformation, the establishment of an environment favourable to the flowering and growth of the individual.

Since the environment reacts upon the individual and, on the other hand, the value of the environment depends upon the value of the individual, the two works should proceed side by side. But this can be done only through division of labour, and that necessitates the formation of a group, hierarchised, if possible.

The action of the members of the group should be threefold:

(1) To realise in oneself the ideal to be attained: to become a perfect earthly representative of the first manifestation of the Unthinkable in all its modes, attributes and qualities.

(2) To preach this ideal by word, but, above all, by example, so as to find out all those who are ready to realise it in their turn and to become also announcers of liberation.

(3) To found a typic society or reorganise those that already exist.

For each individual also there is a twofold labour to be done, simultaneously, each side of it helping and completing the other:

(1) An inner development, a progressive union with the Divine Light, sole condition in which man can be always in harmony with the great stream of universal life.

(2) An external action which everyone has to choose according to his capacities and personal preferences. He must find his own place, the place which he alone can occupy in the general concert, and he must give himself entirely to it, not forgetting that he is playing only one note in the terrestrial symphony and yet his note is indispensable to the harmony of the whole, and its value depends upon its justness.
What is my place in the universal work?

We all have a role to fulfil, a work to accomplish, a place which we alone can occupy.

But since this work is the expression, the outer manifestation of the inmost depth of our being, we can become conscious of its definitive form only when we become conscious of this depth within ourselves.

This is what sometimes happens in cases of true conversion. The moment we perceive the transfiguring light and give ourselves to it without reserve, we can suddenly and precisely become aware of what we are made for, of the purpose of our existence on earth.

But this enlightenment is exceptional. It is brought about within us by a whole series of efforts and inner attitudes. And one of the essential conditions if we want to achieve and maintain within ourselves these attitudes, these soul-states, is to devote part of our time each day to some impersonal action; every day, we must do something useful for others.

Until we know the essential thing we are intended to do, we must therefore find a temporary occupation which will be the best possible manifestation of our present capacities and our goodwill.

Then we shall give ourselves to this occupation with conscientiousness and perseverance, knowing that it may well be only a stage and that with the progress of our ideal and our energies, we shall certainly one day be led to see more clearly the work we must accomplish. To the extent that we lose the habit of referring everything to ourselves and learn more and more to give ourselves more completely, with greater love, to earth and
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men, we shall see our horizons widen and our duties become more numerous and clear.

We shall find that our action follows a general line of progress determined by our own particular temperament.

Indeed, the successive occupations we shall hold before we become conscious of the definitive form of our action will always point in the same direction, be of the same type and mode, which is the spontaneous expression of our character, our nature, our own characteristic vibration.

The discovery of this tendency, this particular orientation, should come about quite naturally; it is a matter of taste and free choice, beyond all outer selfish considerations.

People are often blamed for choosing an action for themselves which does not correspond to their abilities. There is a slight confusion here.

Those who freely set out to accomplish their own favourite work cannot, in my opinion, be on the wrong track; this work must surely be the expression of their own particular tendency. But their mistake lies in wanting to accomplish this work all at once in its entirety, in its integrality, in depth and above all on the surface, forgetting that the very conception of the work is imperfect as they are imperfect and that to be wise, they should add to the knowledge of what they wish to do the more immediate and practical knowledge of what they are capable of doing at the present moment.

By taking both these factors into account, they can employ themselves with a minimum waste of time and energy.

But few people act with so much insight and wisdom. And it very often happens that one who is seeking his way falls into one of these two possible errors:

Either he takes his desires for realities, that is, he overestimates his present strength and capacity and imagines that he is capable of immediately assuming a place and a role which he can honourably fulfil only after many years of methodical and persevering effort.
Or he underestimates his latent powers and deliberately confines himself, in spite of his deeper aspirations, to a task which is far beneath his abilities and which will gradually extinguish within him the light that could have shone for others.

It seems difficult at first to steer clear of these pitfalls and find the balanced way, the middle way.

But we have a sure pointer to guide us.

Above all, whatever we undertake should not be done for the purpose of self-assertion. If we are attached to fame and glory, to the esteem of our peers, we are soon led to make concessions to them; and if we seek any opportunity to admire ourselves, it becomes easy to make ourselves out to be what we are not, and nothing more obscures the ideal within us.

We should never tell ourselves, openly or indirectly, “I want to be great, what vocation can I find for myself in order to become great?”

On the contrary, we should tell ourselves, “There must certainly be something I can do better than anyone else, since each one of us is a special mode of manifestation of the divine power which, in its essence, is one in all. However humble and modest it may be, this is precisely the thing to which I should devote myself, and in order to find it, I shall observe and analyse my tastes, tendencies and preferences, and I shall do it without pride or excessive humility, whatever others may think I shall do it just as I breathe, just as the flower smells sweet, quite simply, quite naturally, because I cannot do otherwise.”

As soon as we have abolished within us, even for a moment, all egoistic desires, all personal and selfish aims, we can surrender to this inner spontaneity, this deep inspiration which will enable us to commune with the living and progressive forces of the universe.

The conception of our work will inevitably grow more perfect as we grow more perfect ourselves; and to realise this growing perfection, no effort to exceed ourselves should be
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neglected, but the work we perform must become always more and more joyful and spontaneous, like water welling from a pure spring.
What is the greatest obstacle in ourselves to our consecration to impersonal work?

Regarded from the most general point of view, this obstacle is indistinguishable from the very reason for the work to be accomplished: it is the present state of imperfection of physical Matter.

Since we are made up of an imperfect substance, we cannot but share in this imperfection.

Therefore, whatever degree of perfection, consciousness or knowledge is possible to our inmost being, the very fact that it incarnates in a physical body gives rise to obstacles to the purity of its manifestation; and on the other hand, the aim of its incarnation is victory over these obstacles, the transformation of Matter. We must therefore not be surprised or saddened if we encounter obstacles within ourselves, for every single being on earth has difficulties to overcome.

The cause of this imperfection may become apparent to us from two points of view, one general, the other individual.

From the general point of view, the imperfection of Matter comes from its lack of receptivity to the more subtle forces which are to be manifested through it. But this lack of receptivity itself has many causes, and to explain them would lead us too far away from the heart of our subject. Besides, I think that, in the last analysis, all difficulties lie in the illusion of personality, that is, the illusion that one thing can be distinct from the whole.

To avoid speculating on the necessity of this illusion for the very existence of the universe as we know it, I shall consider the question solely from the terrestrial and human angle.

This illusion of a self separate from the whole brings about two tendencies within ourselves.
The first comes from an unconscious need for identification with the whole. But by the very fact of the illusion of personality, each one conceives this identification only as an absorption into himself and seeks more or less to be the centre of this whole. As a result, in proportion to his intellectual or physical strength, each one attempts to draw to himself everything he is conscious of in order to continually increase his personality.

This is the outcome of a desire which is justified in essence — to become conscious of everything — but ignorant in expression, for if a way to become conscious of everything does exist, it certainly does not lie in trying to draw everything to oneself, which is absurd and unrealisable, but in identifying one’s consciousness with the consciousness of the whole, which demands the very opposite action and attitude.

The second tendency, which is in fact a normal consequence of the first, is an excessively conservative spirit, a fixity of the whole nature — intellectual, moral and physical — which makes it impossible for us to transform ourselves as rapidly as we should in order to be always in harmony with the law of universal progress.

It is as if the individual were afraid of not being different enough from others if he encouraged too free and large an exchange with the whole.

Moreover, this fixity comes from the desire to appropriate and the error of believing that we can own something in the universe. We think that the elements we are made of are our own. Consciously or unconsciously, we want to hold on to them for ourselves while at the same time we are quite ready to add to them by drawing other elements to ourselves; but we forget that since there is no real separation, we can receive nothing if we do not give.

We must be a link in the chain: the link does not grow bigger at the expense of its neighbours. But when it faithfully transmits the current it has received, it will receive another, and the more complete and swift its transmission, the more it will
be brought into contact with a great number of forces or things for it to use or manifest. And so, little by little, by taking and keeping nothing for itself, it can become aware of everything by communing with everything.

Foreseeing the objections which could be raised, I shall add this:

When I speak of the illusion of personality, I am not denying that each one has a special mode of manifestation. Differentiation does not mean division.

Why should there be so many countless links in the chain if each one did not have its own function?

And here another comparison is needed to complete the first, for any comparison is necessarily incomplete.

If we consider ourselves as cells of an immense living organism, we shall immediately understand that a cell, which is dependent for its own life on the life of the whole and can separate itself from it only at the risk of destruction, does in fact have its own special part to play in the whole.

But this role is precisely what is most profoundly spontaneous in our being; no egoistic assertion of our personality is needed to discover it. On the contrary, the more fully we give ourselves to an impersonal action, the more this role will gain in strength and clarity within us. But this role is precisely what constitutes our true individuality, since it is our own special way of manifesting the Divine Essence, which is one in everything and in all.
What is the psychological difficulty which I can best study by experience?

In each one of us there is a difficulty which is more central than all the others; it is the one which, relative to the part we have to play in the world, is like the shadow of that light, a shadow which gradually dissolves, fades more and more as the light becomes more intense, more brilliant, more powerful and extends to the whole being.

This difficulty, which is particular to each one, seems to me to be the one which deserves all our attention and effort, for if we know how to observe ourselves, we shall see that it is the source of all the others which may obstruct our way.

So this evening, I shall make a brief survey of a difficulty of this kind.

Some people have an excessive sensitivity, which becomes most acute when it does not manifest itself outwardly. This sensitivity is of an affective, emotional kind.

It usually comes from a supra-nervous substance which is highly intellectualised but not spiritualised enough for its degree of intellectualisation.

It is a stage of evolution in which the being is ready for self-giving, for he is conscious of himself; but, as a result of the work of individualisation, of intellectualisation he has undergone, he has acquired the habit of considering everything in relation to himself and has carried the illusion of personality to its utmost limit.

Thus it is sometimes very difficult for him not to watch himself acting, feeling and thinking, and this results in a lack of spontaneity which verges on insincerity.

The being takes pleasure in his extreme sensitivity; he is
a delicate instrument which responds marvellously to the least vibration, and so, instead of exteriorising himself and forgetting his own self as he should, he withdraws into himself, observes and analyses and almost contemplates himself.

Thus cultivated, the emotional sensitivity goes on increasing, sharpening and refining itself. And since in life opportunities for suffering are more frequent than opportunities for joy, the need to experience and study these subtle movements of feeling develops an inclination, a taste for suffering, a true mystical aberration which is nothing but self-seeking through suffering, a refined but very pernicious form of egoism.

The practical results of this need to suffer are altogether disastrous if you add to it the intuitive but still inaccurate perception that the work you have to accomplish, your purpose in life, is to draw towards yourself, to take upon yourself, the suffering of others and change it into harmony.

As a matter of fact, on one hand this knowledge is incomplete because you do not know that the only way to relieve others, to eliminate a little suffering in this world, is not to allow any sensitivity, however painful it may seem, to arouse suffering in yourself or to disturb your peace and serenity. On the other hand the idea of the work to be accomplished is itself warped by the illusion of personality. The correct idea is not to draw all suffering to yourself, which is unrealisable, but to identify yourself with all suffering, in all others, to become in it and in them a seed of light and love which will give birth to a deep understanding, to hope, trust and peace.

Until this is well understood, the taste for sacrifice rises in the being; and each time an opportunity for it appears, since you are not disinterested in this matter, since you desire this sacrifice, it becomes something sentimental and irrational and results in absurd errors which sometimes have disastrous consequences. Even if you are in the habit of reflecting before acting, the reflections preceding the act will necessarily be biased, since they are warped by the taste for suffering, by the
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desire to have an opportunity to impose a painful sacrifice on yourself.

Thus, consciously or not, instead of sacrificing yourself for the good of others, you sacrifice yourself for the pleasure of it, which is perfectly absurd and of no benefit to anyone.

No action should be deemed good, no action should be undertaken until we know its immediate and, if possible, its distant consequences, and until it appears that they must in the end add, however little, to earthly happiness. But to be able to give a sound judgment on the matter, this judgment must in no way be disturbed by any personal preference, and this implies self-detachment.

Not the detachment which is equivalent to the annihilation of the capacity to feel, but the detachment which brings about the abolition of the capacity to suffer.

By this you should understand that for the time being I am excluding insensitive people, those who do not suffer because the substance they are made of is still too unrefined, too crude to feel, those who are not even ready for suffering.

But of those who have achieved a high development of sensitivity, it can be said that their capacity to suffer is the exact measure of their imperfection.

Indeed, the expression of a true psychic life in the being is peace, a joyful serenity.

Any suffering is therefore a precious indication to us of our weak point, of the point which demands a greater spiritual effort from us.

Thus, to cure in ourselves this attraction for suffering, we must understand the absurdity, the petty egotism of the various causes of our sufferings.

And to cure our excessive and ridiculous desire for sacrifice — too frequently for its own sake, regardless of any useful results — we must understand that if we are to remain in contact with all human sufferings through our sensitivity, we must also be vigilant and discerning enough to dissolve these
28 May 1912

sufferings as they come; to the clear-sighted, they are purely imaginary.

For, from this point of view, the only way to come to the help of men is to oppose to their suffering an immutable and smiling serenity which will be the highest human expression of Impersonal Love.

Finally, in a case such as the one I have just shown to you, even more than in any other, it is indispensable to keep in mind that true impersonality does not consist only in forgetting ourselves in our acts, but above all in the fact of not being aware that we are forgetting ourselves.

In short, to be truly impersonal, we must stop noticing that we are being impersonal.

And then the work can be accomplished with a large-hearted spontaneity, in all its perfection.
What improvements can we bring to our meetings?

We said one day with regard to the numerous groups that form and disappear almost immediately, that this phenomenon of rapid decay is a result of the conventional and arbitrary factors which enter into the organisation of these groups.

In fact, they are founded upon an ideal prototype originating from one or several minds — a formula which is sometimes very beautiful in theory, but which takes no account of the individuals who with their difficulties and weaknesses must form the living cells of the group.

In my opinion, it is impossible to give an arbitrary form to any being, individual or collective; its form can only be the outer expression which perfectly reflects the quality of its constituent elements.

Because this vital law of formation is not observed, these groups follow one upon another and multiply endlessly; all are fated to the same swift destruction. For instead of being living organisms capable of normal growth, development and expansion, they are nothing but inert conglomerations without any possibility of progress.

We had decided to heed this law and carefully refrain from prematurely deciding upon the conditions of life of our little group. It is not yet born, it has hardly begun its period of gestation. Let us allow it to form and blossom very slowly before making any rules for its existence.

Consequently, it would seem disastrous to me to attempt to organise our meetings according to a preconceived plan or to conform to the ideal of one individual or another or even of all of us. We would then be entering on the way of artificial formations shaped by theory and destined to perish even more
rapidly than those institutions which develop according to their own spontaneity, which is the sum total of the varied tendencies of their members.

Certainly, our meetings should progress, since that is the condition of their continuation. But this can only happen if they become an opportunity for each one of us to progress.

For if we want their progress to be sincere and in depth, it must depend on our own.

If we could all bring with us here an ardent aspiration for greater knowledge and wisdom, we would create a contemplative atmosphere, which I would like to be able to call religious, and this atmosphere would be most favourable to our self-perfection.

An atmosphere of spirituality is sometimes a far greater help than an exchange of words; the most beautiful thoughts cannot make us progress unless we have a persistent will to translate them within ourselves into higher feelings, more exact sensations and nobler actions.

Thus, to improve our meetings, the essential condition is our own self-improvement.

If we unify ourselves and identify our consciousness with the consciousness of our Divine Self, our group will become unified. If we enlighten and illumine our intellectual faculties, our group will manifest the light. If we allow impersonal love to permeate our whole being, our group will radiate love. And finally, if we bring order into ourselves, our group will become organised of itself, without our needing to intervene arbitrarily in its formation.

In short, let us become the living cells of the organism we want to bring forth, and let us not forget that on the value of its cells will depend the value of the collective being and its action, its usefulness in the work of universal harmony.
11 June 1912

How can one become master of one’s thought?

First condition. To understand the full importance of this mastery by becoming aware, through observation, that our actions are the exact expression of our thoughts and that so long as we do not have perfect control over our mental activity, these thoughts are nothing but reflexes coming from every outside influence (sensations and suggestions). Thus we do not possess ourselves and can in no way be responsible for ourselves so long as we are not the masters of our thought.

Second condition. To will persistently an effective direction of our mental activity.

Third condition. To observe our thoughts in order to become familiar with them, to know their habitual course and become aware of the ones which have a special affinity with our sensorial and emotional nature.

Fourth condition. To seek in ourselves the idea which seems to be the highest, the noblest, the purest and most disinterested and, until the day we find a more beautiful idea to replace it, to make it the pivot around which our mental synthesis will be built up, the regulating idea in whose light all other thoughts can be seen and judged, that is, accepted or rejected.

Fifth condition. To undergo a regular daily mental discipline. To discover among all the teachings that have been given on this subject the method that seems to be most effective and to follow it scrupulously, rigorously, with energy and perseverance.

Some important recommendations:
To know how to take enough mental rest.
Not to demand from ourselves more than we can do.
To take time into account and to know how to wait patiently
for the result of our effort.
Lastly, without neglecting anything we can do ourselves, to
know how to rely with childlike trust on the Great Supreme
Force, the Divine Force that is One in all beings and all things.
18 June 1912

The Power of Words

It seems unnecessary to draw your attention to the quantity of useless words that are uttered each day; this evil is well known to all, although very few people think of remedying it.

But there are many other words which are spoken needlessly. That is to say, in the course of the day, we often have the opportunity of expressing a helpful wish by pronouncing one word or another, provided that we know how to put the appropriate thought behind the words.

But too often we lose this opportunity of drawing a beneficial mental atmosphere around the people we know and thus of truly helping them. It would be very useful to remedy this neglect.

To do this, we must refuse to allow our minds to remain in that state of vague and passive imprecision which is almost constant in most people.

To cure ourselves progressively of this somnolence, we can, when pronouncing a word, force ourselves to reflect upon its exact meaning, its true import, in order to make it fully effective.

In this regard, we can say that the active power of words comes from three different causes.

The first two lie in the word itself, which has become a battery of forces. The third lies in the fact of living integrally the deep thought expressed by the word when we pronounce it.

Naturally, if these three causes of effectiveness are combined, the power of the word is considerably enhanced.

1) There are certain words whose resonance in the physical world is the perfect vibratory materialisation of the more subtle vibration produced by the thought in its own domain.

If we examine closely this similarity between the vibrations of thought and sound, we can discover the limited number
of root syllables which express the most general ideas, and which are to be found in most spoken languages with an almost identical meaning. (This origin of language should not be confused with the origin of written languages, which are of an altogether different nature and correspond to different needs.)

2) There are other words which have been repeated in certain circumstances for hundreds of years and which are instinct with the mental forces of all those who have pronounced them. They are true batteries of energy.

3) Finally, there are words which assume an immediate value when they are pronounced, as a result of the living thought of the one who pronounces them.

To illustrate what I have just said with an example, here is a very powerful word, for it can combine the qualities of all three categories: it is the Sanskrit word “AUM”.

It is used in India to express the divine Immanence. There, it is associated with every meditation, every contemplation, every yogic practice.

More than any other sound, this sound “AUM” gives rise to a feeling of peace, of serenity, of eternity.

Moreover, this word is instinct with the mental forces which for centuries all those who have used it have accumulated around the idea that it expresses; and, for Hindus especially, it has the true power of bringing one into contact with the divine Essence it evokes.

And as Orientals have a religious mind and the habit of concentration, few pronounce this word without putting into it the conviction that is needed to make it fully effective.

In China, a similar effect is obtained with a word of identical meaning and somewhat similar sound, the word “TAO”.

Our western languages are less expressive; in their present form, they are too far removed from the root language which gave birth to them. But we can always animate a word by the power of our living and active thought.
Besides, there are formulas which we could profitably add to all those in common use.

These formulas were used in certain ancient schools of initiation. They served as greetings, and in the mouth of one who knew how to think them, they had a very special power of action.

The disciples, the neophytes who were taking their first steps on the path, were greeted: “May the peace of equilibrium be with you.”

All those who by their constant and progressive inner and outer attitude had shown their deep and lasting goodwill, were greeted: “May the highest good be yours.”

And in certain instructors manifesting especially high forces, this word was endowed with the power of transmitting true gifts, for example, the gift of healing.
25 June 1912

What is the most useful idea to spread and what is the best example to set?

The question can be considered in two ways, a very general one applicable to the whole earth, and another specific one which concerns our present social environment.

From the general point of view, it seems to me that the most useful idea to spread is twofold:

1) Man carries within himself perfect power, perfect wisdom and perfect knowledge, and if he wants to possess them, he must discover them in the depth of his being, by introspection and concentration.

2) These divine qualities are identical at the centre, at the heart of all beings; this implies the essential unity of all, and all the consequences of solidarity and fraternity that follow from it.

The best example to give would be the unalloyed serenity and immutably peaceful happiness which belong to one who knows how to live integrally this thought of the One God in all.

From the point of view of our present environment, here is the idea which, it seems to me, it is most useful to spread:

True progressive evolution, an evolution which can lead man to his rightful happiness, does not lie in any external means, material improvement or social change. Only a deep and inner process of individual self-perfection can make for real progress and completely transform the present state of things, and change suffering and misery into a serene and lasting contentment.

Consequently, the best example is one that shows the first stage of individual self-perfection which makes possible all the rest, the first victory to be won over the egoistic personality: disinterestedness.
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At a time when all rush upon money as the means to satisfy their innumerable cravings, one who remains indifferent to wealth and acts, not for the sake of gain, but solely to follow a disinterested ideal, is probably setting the example which is most useful at present.
2 July 1912

Which minds are nearest to me and what is my ideal work among them?

Always, in one way or another, life puts in our path those who for some reason are near to us. Each individual creates his own environment according to what he is himself.

And, if such is our dominant preoccupation, all those whom we thus meet on our way are the very ones to whom we can be most useful.

For one who lives constantly in the spiritual consciousness, everything that happens to him takes on a special value and all is conducive to his progressive evolution. It will always be beneficial for him to observe his encounters, to investigate both the apparent and the deeper reasons for them, and, in accordance with his altruistic aspirations, he will ask himself what good he can do in each different case. And according to his own degree of spirituality, his action will always have a greater or lesser spiritualising effect.

If we observe at all attentively the causes which bring us closer to our kind, we see that these contacts occur at various levels of depth in our being, depending on our own special mode of conscious activity.

We can classify these relationships into four main categories corresponding to our four principal modes of activity: physical, vital, psychic and mental. They may have their play in one or several of these categories, simultaneously or successively, according to the quality and type of the manifestation of our activity.

Physical contact is compulsory, so to say, since it depends on the fact that we have a physical body. It inevitably occurs with those who have provided us with this body and with all
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those who are materially dependent on them. These are the relations of kinship. There are also relationships of proximity: neighbourhood in houses, in the various means of transport, in the street. (I may remark here — and this remark also applies to the other three categories — that this relationship is not necessarily exclusive: this is in fact rare, since we are seldom active on only one plane of our being; what I mean is that the physical relationship is dominant over the other three.)

Vital contact occurs between impulses and desires which are identical or liable to combine in order to complement and heighten one another.

Psychic contact occurs between converging spiritual aspirations.

Mental contact comes from similar or complementary mental capacities and affinities.

Normally, if the predominance of one category is not clearly established — and this can only happen when there is enough order in our being to organise it in all its depth and complexity — we can and should give material help to those who are near to us for physical reasons.

With certain exceptions, material help is the best assistance we can give to the members of our family or to those whom we chance to meet in the street, in trains, in ships, in buses, etc.: pecuniary help, aid in case of illness or danger.

We should assist the sensitivity of those who are attracted to us because they have identical tastes, artistic or otherwise, by rectifying, balancing or canalising their sense-energies.

We can help those who by a common aspiration for progress have been brought into contact with us, through our example, by showing them the path, and through our love, by smoothing the way for them.

Finally, we must allow the light of our intelligence to shine for those who come close to us as a result of mental affinity, so that, if possible, we may widen their field of thought and enlighten their ideal.
These various affinities express themselves outwardly in slight and sometimes subtle variations in the conditions of our encounters, and because our insight is seldom alert enough, these slight variations often elude us.

But to direct our action in the right way and reduce as far as possible the causes of our wrong attitudes towards our fellowmen, we should always investigate with the greatest care the numerous reasons for our contacts and find the category of affinities which binds us to them.

A few rare beings are close to us in all four modes of existence at the same time. These are friends in the deepest sense of the word. It is on them that our actions can have their most integral, their most perfectly helpful and beneficial effect.

We should never forget that the duration of a contact between two human lives depends on the number and depth of the states of being in which the affinities that bind them have their play.

Only those who commune with the eternal essence within themselves and in all things can be eternally united.

Only those are friends forever who have been close or distant friends from all time in this or other worlds.

And whether or not we meet these friends depends on the encounter we must first experience within ourselves, in the unknown depths of our being.

Moreover, when this meeting occurs, our whole attitude is transformed.

When we become one with the inner Godhead, we become one in depth with all, and it is through Her and by Her that we must come into contact with all beings. Then, free from all attraction and repulsion, all likes and dislikes, we are close to what is close to Her and far from what is far from Her.

Thus we learn that in the midst of others we should become always more and more a divine example of integral activity both intellectual and spiritual, an opportunity which is offered to them to understand and enter upon the path of divine life.