8 December 1954

This talk is based upon Sri Aurobindo’s *Bases of Yoga*, Chapter 2, “Faith – Aspiration – Surrender”.

*Sweet Mother, what is the meaning of “the psychic surrender in the physical”?*

Why, we spoke about it last time, didn’t we? I think so. It is the psychic surrender expressing itself in the physical consciousness; that is, the physical consciousness takes an attitude of psychic surrender. The physical consciousness receives the influence of the psychic and takes the attitude which psychic surrender gives. We said that; I am sure I said something very much the same.

*(To a child)* And you, you said you had something?

*Here it is said: “Develop the cosmic consciousness.” How can we do it?*

Cosmic? Why, I have been asked this before. Someone asked me, “How can we teach the children to develop the cosmic consciousness?” And so I replied, “Develop it first in yourself.”

How can you do it? You know what the cosmic consciousness is? You must first begin by knowing that. The cosmic consciousness means that, instead of feeling that one is an altogether separate, isolated being, different from all others, one feels that he is only a part of an immense whole and in relation with the whole totality, receiving the movements and vibrations of all others and transmitting to all others its own vibrations, that the movements of consciousness, the psychological vibrations do not stop inside a small individual enclosed in himself, who is as in a shell, without any contact with the rest; the forces pass across, going from one to another, touching one here, another
Questions and Answers

there, and these forces are so complex and multiple that we can no longer tell where one begins and another ends. One has exactly the impression of an immense whole moving within itself. It is something like that — the cosmic consciousness.

So, first of all, you must think of this; you must first become aware that you are a point in the universal immensity, and not isolated but altogether joined with it. And then you must study yourself, observe yourself. You will immediately have the opportunity of seeing the vibrations which come from outside and pass through you but are not generated in you, which you receive and express. So gradually, by studying, looking, observing, you become aware of that which is not limited. This is how you begin to acquire the universal or cosmic consciousness. Cosmic and universal mean the same thing.

*Here it is written: “No snatching or clutching at realisation.” What does that mean — “snatching and clutching at realisation”, Sweet Mother?*

No snatching, no...?

*Clutching.*

You know what “clutching” means? (The child expresses the meaning by a gesture. Mother laughs.)

All right, it means... Does he say one should not or one cannot?

*One should not, Sweet Mother.*

That means one must not try to do it, because it does not obey this kind of movement. These people try to progress through violence. They have no patience, they have no persistence; and when a desire arises in them they must realise it immediately. Now, they want to have something—let us say a change in
their character or a change in the circumstances or a set of things—and then, they want it at once; and as this usually does not happen all at once, they pull it down from above. This is what he calls “clutching”. They seize it, pull it towards themselves. But in this way one has neither the real thing nor the true movement; one mixes violence with one’s aspiration and this always produces some confusion somewhere, and moreover one cannot have the true thing, one can only have an imitation of the true thing; because this is not how it comes, not by pulling it as though one were pulling it by the tail; it will not come. Clutching! One clutches the rope when one wants to climb up. That’s how it is when one pulls! That’s exactly the movement one should not have once one holds the rope. That’s all.

Mother, on what does the central will of the being depend?


It itself.

The central will? It depends on the divine Will.

It is the individualised expression of the divine Will; and the divine Will is the expression of the divine Consciousness seeking to manifest itself, to realise itself.

How can one become aware of the central will?

Ah, this of course is another side of the problem. First of all one must become aware of what is highest, most true, most universal and eternal in one’s consciousness.

This is learnt gradually. One learns to discern among one’s ordinary, external movements and the different gradations of the
Questions and Answers

movements of one’s inner consciousness. And if one continues to
do this with a certain persistence, one realises what it is that puts
this highest part of one’s being into motion, which represents the
ideal of the being. There is no other way. Sometimes this awakens
through reading something, sometimes through a conversation,
sometimes through a more or less dramatic, that is, unexpected
event, which gives you a shock, shakes you up, brings you out
of your usual little rut. Sometimes when you are in very great
danger, suddenly you feel as though you are above yourself
and beyond your small habitual weakness, having within you
something higher which can hold out against circumstances.

Such occasions make you enter, first, into contact with that.
Afterwards by a methodical discipline you can make the contact
continuous; but usually this takes time. But first you get it like
that, suddenly, for one reason or another.

(Long silence)

This may come with a very strong emotion, with a very great
sorrow, a very great enthusiasm. When one is called to perform
a fairly exceptional action, in circumstances which are a little
exceptional, all of a sudden, one feels something as though
breaking or opening within one, and one feels as though one
were dominating oneself, as though one had climbed up a higher
rung and from there was looking at one’s own existence with the
normal perception. Once one has experienced this, one does not
forget; even if only once it has happened, one does not forget it.
And one can by concentration reproduce the state at will, later.
This is the first step to cultivate it.

Afterwards one can very easily call up this state each time
a decision is to be taken, and then one takes it in full awareness
of the implications and foreseeing everything that’s going to
happen. I don’t think there’s one individual in the world who
hasn’t experienced it—in any case one cultured individual—
at least once in his life, something that breaks and opens... and
one understands. This seems to astonish you very much!... *(To a child)* You have never felt this, you? Yes?

*I don’t know.*

You are not sure! *(Long silence)*

When one has had it one feels that one has begun to live, that before this one did not know what life was. Suddenly one has entered fully into life. This is not forgotten.

*(To a child)* So?

*Sweet Mother, to what plane does intuition belong?*

It is one of those planes, one of those regions we were speaking about last time, which are intermediary between the higher mind and the Overmind.

*How does it manifest, Sweet Mother? — intuition.*

Um! How does it manifest? It is something which takes place without any reasoning, any analysis, any deduction. Suddenly one knows a thing, without having reasoned, without having analysed, without deducing, without having reflected, without having made use of one’s brain, without having put together the elements of the problem and tried to resolve them — it is not like that. All of a sudden it comes like a light in the consciousness; it can be in the head, it can be lower down, elsewhere; it is a light in the consciousness which brings a precise knowledge on a particular point and it is not at all a result of analyses and deductions. In fact, it is the first manifestation of the knowledge by identity. Knowledge by identity — you understand clearly what that means?

If one succeeds in identifying oneself with something, well, one becomes this thing for a time, and becoming this thing one
knows all that is in it, without needing either to guess or to construct. (Long silence) That’s all.

Of course, there is also a form of foresight, but this does not have altogether the same nature. Foresight usually comes from the faculty of knowing by identity. If one can project one’s consciousness into something—a circumstance or an event or a person—if one can project one’s consciousness, well, one receives, afterwards, the precise indication of the thing with which the consciousness was mingled. And this leads gradually to a total and absolute knowledge. In fact it is the only way of knowing, and if one pushes this far enough and succeeds in identifying oneself with the Divine, one has the divine knowledge, and this is not impossible. It is something possible because the universe is made like that, for that. Only, it has gone off the right track; for what reasons, one doesn’t know. Ah, what strange things we see!... To be sure that one knows, and then, at the same time to wonder how it happens.

You have never tried to enter another person’s consciousness to know exactly what is going on there? Not projecting your consciousness into someone else, because then you find yourself inside him and this is not interesting—but entering into relation with his consciousness which is within him, for example when, for one reason or another, you don’t see things eye to eye; one sees them in one way, the other in another. If people are reasonable they do not quarrel. But if they are not reasonable, they begin quarrelling. Then, instead of quarrelling, the best thing to do is to enter into the other’s consciousness and ask yourself why he says things like that, what is it that pushes him to do this or say that? What is the inner reason, what is his vision of things which makes him take this attitude? It is extremely interesting. If you do this, immediately you stop being angry. First thing: you can no longer be angry. So this is already a great gain. But also, if the other continues being angry, it has no effect on you.

And then, later, one can try to identify oneself more perfectly
and prevent the movements of division and deformation and stop quarrels. Very useful.

(To a child) I have already recommended this procedure to you several times, I think. I remember. Did you try? You, there, I am talking to you! You have tried? No? Ah, you are obstinate. No? (The child does not say anything.) It won’t come out.... Good, let’s not talk about it any more.

So, that’s all, my children? Anything else? No more questions? Nothing over there, no?

Mother, is the central being the psychic being?

For the immense majority of people the psychic being is the central being. But the central being can be identified with another consciousness and another state which is more central and is not purely human. And this is — I can’t say that it is extremely rare, but still it is not frequent.

That’s all?
It is nine o’clock. That’s all?
Good. Finished.