13 April 1955

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

Now, has anyone any questions?

_Sweet Mother, here it is written: “I find it difficult to take these psycho-analysts at all seriously...”_

It means that he is laughing at them, simply that.

(The child continues reading) “... _when they try to scrutinise spiritual experience by the flicker of..._”

“... of their torch-lights”. It is a joke; it’s to say that it is a very tiny light of nothing at all and that they think they can judge spiritual experiences with this light which is no better than a small torch-light; it means something that has no strength. It is a joke.

But what did you want to ask?

_Here, “spiritual experience by the flicker of their torch-lights”..._

Yes, that’s it, it means that they want to judge spiritual experiences with a very tiny light which is worthless, which has no strength, a torch-light, a torch-lamp, it is nothing at all. These people want to explain everything by the most material and most ordinary phenomena of human life; and they want to explain everything, including the creation and all the higher phenomena by the help of all the small physical habits of the most ordinary consciousness. It is absolutely ridiculous.
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_Sweet Mother, what is a “super-ego”?_

A super-ego means an ego that's enlarged, swollen, made more important, even, than it can be... This whole letter is full of mockery. Super-ego means an ego that's still more of an ego than an ordinary ego, something swollen, something which tries to be very big while being nothing at all.

_But why an “underground super-ego”?_

Underground, yes, it means something hidden, that’s very low down in the consciousness, far below, very low down. “Underground” gives the impression of something that’s in a great darkness, lower down, hidden in the shadow: the most material movements — an ego that tries to become an important person.

_Sweet Mother, sometimes we dream of ordinary things, but sometimes we have dreams which are not..._

Yes, that’s what Sri Aurobindo says, doesn’t he? He says that all dreams are not ordinary dreams, associations of memories, that there are dreams which are revelations. He describes all kinds and types of dreams here.

_Mother, does this depend on the day? If one is more conscious in the day, one will have dreams of a good kind?_

It is very difficult to say on what it depends.

It happens that when you need to dream of something, so that it may enlighten you on a point of your nature, give you an indication about the effort you must make, it comes.

It depends perhaps on a consciousness that watches over everyone; and provided one is just a little open, it can guide him and give sure indications.
I think there is an entire category of dreams which are absolutely commonplace, useless and simply tiring, which one can avoid if, before going to sleep, one makes a little effort of concentration, tries to put himself in contact with what is best in him, by either an aspiration or a prayer, and to sleep only after this is done... even, if one likes, try to meditate and pass quite naturally from meditation into sleep without even realising it... Usually there is a whole category of dreams which are useless, tiring, which prevent you from resting well — all this might be avoided. And then, if one has truly succeeded well in his concentration, it is quite possible that one may have, at night, not exactly dreams but experiences of which one becomes conscious and which are very useful, indications, as I just told you, indications about questions you asked yourself and of which you did not have the answers; or else a set of circumstances where you ought to take a decision and don’t know what decision to take; or else some way of being of your own character which does not show itself to you clearly in the waking consciousness — because you are so accustomed to it that you are not aware of it — but something that harms your development and obscures your consciousness, and which appears to you in a symbolic revelatory dream, and you become clearly aware of the thing, then you can act upon it.

It depends not on what one was during the day, because this doesn’t always have much effect upon the night, but on the way one has gone to sleep. It is enough just to have at the moment of sleeping a sincere aspiration that the night, instead of being a darkening of the consciousness, may be a help to understand something, to have an experience; and then, though it doesn’t come always, it has a chance of coming.

There is also, you know, a whole lot of activities of the night which one doesn’t remember at all. Sometimes when one has awakened quite slowly and quietly, when one hasn’t jumped up while awakening, when one wakes up quite gently, quite slowly, without stirring, one has a vague impression of something that
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has happened which has left an imprint on one’s consciousness — you have your own way of waking up — particular, sometimes even strange. And so if you remain very quiet and observe attentively, without moving, you notice a kind of half-memory of an activity that took place at night, and if you remain concentrated on it, still motionless for some time, suddenly it may come back like that, like something that appears from behind a veil, and you can get hold of the tail of a dream. When you hold the tail — just a little event — when you hold the tail, you pull it, like this, very gently, and it comes. But you must be very quiet and must not move. And usually these dreams are very interesting; these activities are very instructive.

One does lots and lots of things at night which one doesn’t know, and if one learns, you see, when one becomes conscious, one can begin to have control. Before being conscious you have no control at all. But when you begin to be conscious, you can also begin to have a control. And then if you have control of your activities of the night, you can sleep much better; for the fact that when you wake up you are often at least as tired as when going to bed and have a feeling of lassitude shows that you do any number of useless things during the night; you tire yourself running around in the vital worlds or moving in the mind in a frantic activity. So when you get up you feel tired.

Well, once you have the control you can stop that completely... stop it before going to sleep... make yourself like a vast sea, that is, it is completely calm and still and vast... well, you can make your mind like that, vast, calm, like a flat, motionless surface; then your sleep is excellent.

Of course, here too it is a question of people going in their sleep to places of the vital worlds which are very bad, and then, when they return, sometimes they are more than tired, at times they are ill, or they are absolutely exhausted. This is because they were in bad places and had a fight. But this surely has something to do with the state of the consciousness during the
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waking hours. If, for example, you have been angry during the day, you see, there are many chances that at night you will be in a vital fight for some time. This happens.

That’s all? Nothing?

_What is “the heavenly archetype of the lotus”?_

It means the primal idea of the lotus.

Each thing that is expressed physically was conceived somewhere before being realised materially.

There is an entire world which is the world of the fashioners, where all conceptions are made. And this world is very high, much higher than all the worlds of the mind; and from there these formations, these creations, these types which have been conceived by the fashioners come down and are expressed in physical realisations. And there is always a great distance between the perfection of the idea and what is materialised. Very often the materialised things are like caricatures in comparison with the primal idea. This is what he calls the archetype. This takes place in worlds... not always the same ones, it depends on the things; but for many things in the physical, the primal ideas, these archetypes, were in what Sri Aurobindo calls the Overmind.

But there is a still higher domain than this where the origins are still purer, and if one reaches this, attains this, one finds the absolutely pure types of what is manifested upon earth. And then it is very interesting to compare, to see to what an extent earthly creation is a frightful distortion. And moreover, it is only when one can reach these regions and see the reality of things in their essence that one can work with knowledge to transform them here; otherwise on what can we take our stand to conceive a better world, more perfect, more beautiful than the existing one? It can’t be on our imagination which is itself something very poor and very material. But if one can enter that consciousness, rise right up to these higher worlds of creation, then with this
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in one's consciousness one can work at making material things take their real form.

Mother, at night if one sees someone dying, and a few months later one sees again the same person dying, what does it mean? Is this person in danger?

In a dream, one sees a person... and a few months later one sees him again?...

Yes, dying.

One sees a person dying and then some months later one sees him dying a second time, the same person! He is dead or alive?

Alive.

This is becoming disquieting, my child! I don’t know; it depends absolutely upon the case.

It can be a spiritual death, it can be a vital death, it can be the death of something in the being which ought to disappear (and then it means a progress), it can be a premonition, it can be lots of things. Unless you have the context of your dream one can’t explain it. But you should have what we could call a jurisprudence of your dreams. You have never compared the dream with the events which occur?... for example, hasn’t it happened to you — I know it has — that you see someone dying and this person really dies? But you don’t see him dying again a second time. If you see the same dream twice, it means one of two things: either that he has lost once more another state of being, you see, that he has entered a vital consciousness or later from this vital consciousness he has gone out to enter a psychic consciousness. It can be that. But then there are sure signs. The dream cannot deceive you, and it cannot be similar. Or it may be simply that there was
something which was profoundly impressed in the thought, in the brain, and that in certain circumstances which can have many causes... yet in certain circumstances... this impression begins to be active again and gives you the same dream once more. If it is an identical dream, it can be this, just a cerebral phenomenon.

Many dreams are just phenomena of the brain, that is, of things which go into activity again under some stimulus or other and bring back the same pictures, sometimes exactly the same, sometimes with slightly different associations and connections; so there are differences.

At times some dreams are repeated, you know, often dreams which are lessons or indications, dreams which announce something to you or want to draw your attention to something or put you on your guard against something. Very often it happens that they recur either at brief intervals or at a certain distance. And usually it means that the first time the impression was very faint, one doesn’t remember it well. The third time or even after the second, one has a vague impression already: “Why! This isn’t the first time”, when one sees it. Then the third time it is clear, precise, absolute, and one remembers: “Ah, I have already seen this thrice!”

Usually these dreams are extremely interesting and give you precise indications: either about something to be done or something not to be done, or about precautions to be taken or perhaps about your relations with someone, what you should expect to receive from a person, how you should act towards him or in certain circumstances.

You see it is quite a small detail, a very small detail which recurs in this way; sometimes it comes immediately: one night, the second night, the third night; sometimes it takes weeks to recur.

_Sweet Mother, to profit by one’s nights, to have good dreams, is it necessary that one should have done nothing_
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very intellectual late at night, or that one should not eat too late at night or do anything external?

This depends on each one; but certainly if you want to sleep quietly at night, you must not study till just before sleeping. If you read something which requires concentration, your head will continue to work and so you won’t sleep well. When the mind continues working one doesn’t rest.

The ideal, you see, is to enter an integral repose, that is, immobility in the body, perfect peace in the vital, absolute silence in the mind — and the consciousness goes out of all activity to enter into Sachchidananda. If you can do this, then when you wake up you get up with the feeling of an extraordinary power, a perfect joy. But it is not very, very easy to do this. It can be done; this is the ideal condition.

Usually it is not at all like this, and most of the time almost all the hours of sleep are wasted in some kind of disordered activities; your body begins to toss about in your bed, you give kicks, you turn, you start, you turn this way and that, and then you do this (gesture) and then this... So you don’t rest at all.

During the day we have no time, so we are compelled to prepare the lessons at night.

Oh, there are always fifty thousand reasons for doing things! You must not at all introduce a moral question there. You can do your duty, and in an absolutely... unselfish way, and still it can prevent you from sleeping all the same.

Moral issues have nothing to do with the inner development. I am sorry to tell you this, but one goes one way, the other another. You can make yourself completely ill by doing something absolutely... how to put it?... unselfish, you see, which has nothing selfish about it, and you can be very healthy while being absolutely selfish. That does not come in the way. It is not this kind of morality which is effective.
There is a great difference between having a moral conscience and a consciousness which is the expression of truth. But I must say that it is infinitely more difficult to have a consciousness which expresses the truth than to have a moral conscience, because any fool who knows the social rules and follows them has a moral conscience, while to have a consciousness of truth one must not be an idiot — in any case, it's the first condition!

This is how I have been wasting my nights for more than a year!

Yes. But don’t you think that all these things are the result of a lack of organisation in your life? One lives from moment to moment, as things come, anyhow. Or else one makes some effort of mental organisation which does not at all correspond to the truth and therefore is thwarted every minute.

But if one organised his life in accordance with a higher principle of consciousness and without the groping one usually tries, that is, with a precise indication at every minute of what is to be done and how it is to be done, I think that one could so manage that things don’t become awkwardly difficult. It is very good to be a good teacher, but perhaps it is not absolutely necessary to correct all the homework just at the time one is going to bed. I don’t know, you see, because I was never a good teacher, so I never prepared the exercises for my students, never corrected the homework of my students. But still, it seems to me this ought to be quite possible.

Usually, instead of choosing one’s work very carefully and taking exactly what one can do and doing it as well as one can, very often one takes too much. And in this too much there are many things which are at least partially useless, which could be considerably reduced, without harming the result (note that I am not making a general rule of it, it is only an experience I have); and when one is very attentive to the inner indication and refuses to be tossed by the waves that come from outside —
these waves are of all kinds of movements arising from the wills of others or from a kind of routine of circumstances or from oppositions coming from forces which are not very favourable — so, instead of being pushed like that and moved by these things, if one receives a very clear, very precise inner indication and follows it without equivocating, you see, without any hesitation, a little strictly — indeed, if it doesn’t please others, so much the worse for them — well, it happens that one becomes in a way the master of circumstances, that they are organised favourably, and that one does much more work in much less time.

There’s a way of reducing the time necessary for doing things by increasing the concentration considerably. Some people can’t do this for long, it tires them; but it’s like weightlifting, isn’t it, one can get accustomed to it. And then, if you can succeed in mastering this power of concentration and in making your mind absolutely still — for this indeed is the first condition — and if in this quietude you concentrate it, concentrate, concentrate on the point you want to make, on the work you have to do or the action you have to perform, well, you can... it comes like a kind of extremely quiet but all-powerful force of propulsion, and you go forward with one movement... without hesitation you can literally do in a quarter of an hour what would otherwise take one hour. And so this has the great advantage that it gives you time and that after this, instead of going from one activity to another, from one agitation to another, you can relax completely for some minutes and have a total rest. This gives you time to rest; and in this repose, naturally, as you are relaxed, all that could have been a little too tense is relaxed and put in order, and this puts you back in a condition in which you are once again able to make another concentration. Try!

There. That’s all? No questions?
Then *au revoir*, my children.