Nexus Between

Psychic Being
&
Higher Consciouness

Second Edition



A Compilation from the Works of
Sri Aurobindo and The Mother

Compiled by Jamshed M Mavalwalla

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Sri Aurobindo Society
AUROPUBLICATIONS
POWERFUL THOUGHTS, INSPIRING VISION

Nexus Between Psychic Being and Higher Consciousness

Second Edition

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Vijaybhai's Note on Comprehensive Compilation

All over the world, there is a growing interest in spirituality and Yoga. There is a search for the true meaning and purpose of life, for deeper solutions to the problems that confront us all, and for ways in which we can contribute to evolutionary change and progress.

In this search, more and more people are turning to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother for guidance and enlightenment. But in their voluminous writings, they do not know where to find the answers they are looking for.

In this regard the Mother has said,

> "*It is not by books that Sri Aurobindo ought to be studied but by subjects—what he has said on the Divine, on Unity, on religion, on evolution, on education, on self-perfection, on supermind, etc., etc.*"
>
> (CWM 12: 206)

On another occasion She said:

> "*If you want to know what Sri Aurobindo has said on a given subject, you must at least read all he has written on that subject. You will then see that he seems to have said the most contradictory things. But when one has read everything and understood a little, one sees that all the contradictions complement*

one another and are organised and unified in an integral synthesis."

(CWM 16: 309–310)

While several compilations are now available, many sincere spiritual seekers have felt the need for Comprehensive Compilations from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on specific subjects, in which the contents are further organised into sub-topics, so that one can find everything one is looking for in one place.

This compilation is an effort to fulfil this need and thus help spiritual seekers in their journey and sadhana. We hope that this compilation will help us gain greater mental clarity about a subject so that we can channel our efforts in the right direction. For Sri Aurobindo has written:

"*It is always better to make an effort in the right direction; even if one fails the effort bears some result and is never lost.*"

(CWSA 29: 87)

We will be glad to receive suggestions and feedback from the readers.

Vijay

Preface

As part of our series of comprehensive compilations on the topic "Descent of Higher Consciousness in Sadhana," we now bring out the fourth volume, entitled *Nexus Between Psychic Being and Higher Consciousness*.

In this fourth book, we show that the link between the two is that the psychic being can open the lower consciousness to the higher spiritual consciousness above for its descent, and that the descent of the higher consciousness through the mind can bring out the psychic being.

In all the comprehensive compilations, that I have published up till now, there has been no introduction to the concept of the psychic being, so the first few chapters introduce what the psychic being is and the role it plays in sadhana, as per the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

The quotations in this compilation are taken from the volumes of *The Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo* (CWSA) and the *Collected Works of the Mother* (CWM), Second Edition. Each quotation is followed by the title of the book, the volume number, and the page number from which it has been taken.

While the passages from Sri Aurobindo are in the original English, most of the passages from the Mother (selections from her talks and writings) are translations from the original French. We must also bear in mind that

the excerpts have been taken out of their original context and that a compilation, by its very nature, is likely to have a personal and subjective approach. A sincere attempt, however, has been made to remain faithful to the vision of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Those who would like to read the fuller text are advised to consult *The Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo* (CWSA) and the *Collected Works of the Mother* (CWM), Second Edition.

Jamshed M. Mavalwalla

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I—What Is Psychic Being?

1.

"*Sweet Mother,*

What exactly is the soul or psychic being? And what is meant by the evolution of the psychic being? What is its relation to the Supreme?

The soul and the psychic being are not exactly the same thing, although their essence is the same.

The soul is the divine spark that dwells at the centre of each being; it is identical with its Divine Origin; it is the divine in man.

The psychic being is formed progressively around this divine centre, the soul, in the course of its innumerable lives in the terrestrial evolution, until the time comes when the psychic being, fully formed and wholly awakened, becomes the conscious sheath of the soul around which it is formed.

And thus identified with the Divine, it becomes His perfect instrument in the world." (CWM 16: 245–246)

2.

"There is this divine element in all living beings, but it stands hidden behind the ordinary consciousness, is not at first developed and, even when developed, is not always or often in the front; … It grows in the consciousness by

Godward experience, gaining strength every time there is a higher movement in us, and, finally, by the accumulation of these deeper and higher movements there is developed a psychic individuality,—that which we call usually the psychic being. It is always this psychic being that is the real, though often the secret cause of man's turning to the spiritual life and his greatest help in it. It is therefore that which we have to bring from behind to the front in the Yoga.

… The psychic being is quite different from the mind or vital; it stands behind them where they meet in the heart. Its central place is there, but behind the heart rather than in the heart; for what men call usually the heart is the seat of emotion, and human emotions are mental vital impulses, not ordinarily psychic in their nature. This mostly secret power behind, other than the mind and the life-force, is the true soul, the psychic being in us. The power of the psychic, however, can act upon the mind and vital and body, purifying thought and perception and emotion (which then becomes psychic feeling) and sensation and action and everything else in us and preparing them to be divine movements.

The psychic being may be described in Indian language as the Purusha in the heart or the *caitya purus.a*; but the inner or secret heart must be understood, *hr.daye guh.ay.am*, not the outer vital-emotional centre." (CWSA 28: 103)

3.

"The soul is the same always, the psychic being is what it develops in the evolution." (CWSA 28: 119)

4.

"It would be more correct to say that the soul puts on a progressive individual form which becomes the psychic being. … The psychic being is progressive and immortal." (CWM 16: 246)

5.

"The psychic being at its origin is only a spark of the divine consciousness and it is through successive lives that it builds up a conscious individuality. It is a progress similar to that of a growing child. It is a thing in the making. For a long time, in most human beings the psychic is a being in the making. It is not a fully individualised, fully conscious being and master of itself and it needs all its rebirths, one after another, in order to build itself and become fully conscious." (CWM 5: 203)

6.

"What is meant in the terminology of the Yoga by the psychic is the soul element in the nature, the pure psyche or divine nucleus which stands behind mind, life and body (it is not the ego) but of which we are only dimly aware. It is a portion of the Divine and permanent from life to life,

taking the experience of life through its outer instruments. As this experience grows it manifests a developing psychic personality which insisting always on the good, true and beautiful, finally becomes ready and strong enough to turn the nature towards the Divine. It can then come entirely forward, breaking through the mental, vital and physical screen, govern the instincts and transform the nature. Nature no longer imposes itself on the soul, but the soul, the Purusha, imposes its dictates on the nature." (CWSA 30: 337)

II—Nature of the Psychic Being and Its Role in Ordinary Human Life

1.

"In ordinary life also there is no doubt an action of the psychic—without it man would be only a thinking and planning animal. But its action there is very much veiled, needing always the mental or vital to express it, usually mixed and not dominant, not unerring therefore; it does often the right thing in the wrong way, is moved by the right feeling but errs as to the application, person, place, circumstance. The psychic, except in a few extraordinary natures, does not get its full chance in the outer consciousness; it needs some kind of Yoga or sadhana to come by its own and it is as it emerges more and more 'in front' that it gets clear of the mixture. That is to say, its presence becomes directly felt, not only behind and supporting, but filling the frontal consciousness and no longer dependent on or dominated by its instruments—mind, vital and body, but dominating them and moulding them into luminosity and teaching them their own true action." (CWSA 27: 86)

2.

"This psychic being always has an influence on the outer being, but that influence is almost always occult, neither

seen nor perceived nor felt, save on truly exceptional occasions." (CWM 16: 221–222)

3.

"It is the very nature of the soul or the psychic being to turn towards the divine Truth as the sunflower to the sun; it accepts and clings to all that is divine or progressing towards divinity, and draws back from all that is a perversion or a denial of it, from all that is false and undivine. Yet the soul is at first but a spark and then a little flame of godhead burning in the midst of a great darkness; for the most part it is veiled in its inner sanctum and to reveal itself it has to call on the mind, the life-force and the physical consciousness and persuade them, as best they can, to express it; ordinarily, it succeeds at most in suffusing their outwardness with its inner light and modifying with its purifying fineness their dark obscurities or their coarser mixture. Even when there is a formed psychic being able to express itself with some directness in life, it is still in all but a few a smaller portion of the being—'no bigger in the mass of the body than the thumb of a man' was the image used by the ancient seers—and it is not always able to prevail against the obscurity or ignorant smallness of the physical consciousness, the mistaken surenesses of the mind or the arrogance and vehemence of the vital nature. This soul is obliged to accept the human mental, emotive, sensational life as it is, its relations, its

activities, its cherished forms and figures; it has to labour to disengage and increase the divine element in all this relative truth mixed with a continual falsifying error, this love turned to the uses of the animal body or the satisfaction of the vital ego, this life of an average manhood shot with rare and pale glimpses of godhead and the darker luridities of the demon and the brute. Unerring in the essence of its will, it is obliged often under the pressure of its instruments to submit to mistakes of action, wrong placement of feeling, wrong choice of person, errors in the exact form of its will, in the circumstances of its expression of the infallible inner ideal. Yet is there a divination within it which makes it a surer guide than the reason or than even the highest desire, and through apparent errors and stumblings its voice can still lead better than the precise intellect and the considering mental judgment. This voice of the soul is not what we call conscience—for that is only a mental and often conventional erring substitute; it is a deeper and more seldom heard call; yet to follow it when heard is wisest: even, it is better to wander at the call of one's soul than to go apparently straight with the reason and the outward moral mentor. But it is only when the life turns towards the Divine that the soul can truly come forward and impose its power on the outer members; for, itself a spark of the Divine, to grow in flame towards the Divine is its true life and its very reason of existence." (CWSA 23: 153–154)

4.

"At a certain stage in the Yoga when the mind is sufficiently quieted and no longer supports itself at every step on the sufficiency of its mental certitudes, when the vital has been steadied and subdued and is no longer constantly insistent on its own rash will, demand and desire, when the physical has been sufficiently altered not to bury altogether the inner flame under the mass of its outwardness, obscurity or inertia, an inmost being, long hidden within and felt only in its rare influences, is able to come forward and illumine the rest and take up the lead of the Sadhana. Its character is a one-pointed orientation towards the Divine or the Highest, one-pointed and yet plastic in action and movement; it does not create a rigidity of direction like the one-pointed intellect or a bigotry of the regnant idea or impulse like the one-pointed vital force; it is at every moment and with a supple sureness that it points the way to the Truth, automatically distinguishes the right step from the false, extricates the divine or Godward movement from the clinging mixture of the undivine. Its action is like a searchlight showing up all that has to be changed in the nature; it has in it a flame of will insistent on perfection, on an alchemic transmutation of all the inner and outer existence. It sees the divine essence everywhere but rejects the mere mask and the disguising figure. It insists on Truth, on will and strength and mastery, on Joy and Love and Beauty, but on a Truth of abiding Knowledge that

surpasses the mere practical momentary truth of the Ignorance, on an inward joy and not on mere vital pleasure,—for it prefers rather a purifying suffering and sorrow to degrading satisfactions,—on love winged upward and not tied to the stake of egoistic craving or with its feet sunk in the mire, on beauty restored to its priesthood of interpretation of the Eternal, on strength and will and mastery as instruments not of the ego but of the Spirit. Its will is for the divinisation of life, the expression through it of a higher Truth, its dedication to the Divine and the Eternal." (CWSA 23: 154–155)

5.

"But the most intimate character of the psychic is its pressure towards the Divine through a sacred love, joy and oneness. It is a divine Love that it seeks most, it is the love of the Divine that is its spur, its goal, its star of Truth shining over the luminous cave of the nascent or the still obscure cradle of the new-born godhead within us. In the first long stage of its growth and immature existence it has leaned on earthly love, affection, tenderness, goodwill, compassion, benevolence, on all beauty and gentleness and fineness and light and strength and courage, on all that can help to refine and purify the grossness and commonness of human nature; but it knows how mixed are these human movements at their best and at their worst how fallen and stamped with the mark of ego and

self-deceptive sentimental falsehood and the lower self profiting by the imitation of a soul movement. At once, emerging, it is ready and eager to break all the old ties and imperfect emotional activities and replace them by a greater spiritual Truth of love and oneness. It may still admit the human forms and movements, but on condition that they are turned towards the One alone. It accepts only the ties that are helpful, the heart's and mind's reverence for the Guru, the union of the God-seekers, a spiritual compassion for this ignorant human and animal world and its peoples, the joy and happiness and satisfaction of beauty that comes from the perception of the Divine everywhere. It plunges the nature inward towards its meeting with the immanent Divine in the heart's secret centre and, while that call is there, no reproach of egoism, no mere outward summons of altruism or duty or philanthropy or service will deceive or divert it from its sacred longing and its obedience to the attraction of the Divinity within it. It lifts the being towards a transcendent Ecstasy and is ready to shed all the downward pull of the world from its wings in its uprising to reach the One Highest; but it calls down also this transcendent Love and Beatitude to deliver and transform this world of hatred and strife and division and darkness and jarring Ignorance. It opens to a universal Divine Love, a vast compassion, an intense and immense will for the good of all, for the embrace of the World-Mother enveloping or gathering to

her her children, the divine Passion that has plunged into the night for the redemption of the world from the universal Inconscience. It is not attracted or misled by mental imitations or any vital misuse of these great deep-seated Truths of existence; it exposes them with its detecting search-ray and calls down the entire truth of divine Love to heal these malformations, to deliver mental, vital, physical love from their insufficiencies or their perversions and reveal to them their true abounding share of the intimacy and the oneness, the ascending ecstasy and the descending rapture." (CWSA 23: 155–157)

6.

Q: "*Sweet Mother,*

How does the soul influence a being who is normally unconscious?

A: The soul's influence is a kind of radiance that penetrates through the most opaque substances and acts even in the unconsciousness.

But then its action is slow and takes a very long time to obtain a perceptible result." (CWM 16: 247)

III—The Psychic Being Can Progress Only in Physical Life and on Earth

1.

"Let us take a divine spark which, through attraction, through affinity and selection, gathers around it a beginning of psychic consciousness (this work is already very perceptible in animals—don't think you are exceptional beings, that you alone have a psychic being and the rest of creation hasn't. It begins in the mineral, it is a little more developed in the plant, and in the animal there is a first glimmer of the psychic presence). Then there comes a moment when this psychic being is sufficiently developed to have an independent consciousness and a personal will. And then after innumerable lives more or less individualised, it becomes conscious of itself, of its movements and of the environment it has chosen for its growth. Arriving at a certain state of perception, it decides—generally at the last minute of the life it has just finished upon earth—the conditions in which its next life will be passed. Here I must tell you a very important thing: the psychic being can progress and form itself only in the physical life and upon earth. As soon as it leaves a body, it enters into a rest which lasts for a more or less long time according to its own choice and its degree of development—a rest for assimilation, for a passive progress so to say, a rest for

passive growth which will allow this same psychic being to pass on to new experiences and make a more active progress. But after having finished one life (which usually ends only when it has done what it wanted to do), it will have chosen the environment where it will be born, the approximate place where it will be born, the conditions and the kind of life in which it will be born, and a very precise programme of the experiences through which it will have to pass to be able to make the progress it wants to make." (CWM 4: 143–144)

2.

"Each time that the soul takes birth in a new body it comes with the intention of having a new experience which will help it to develop and to perfect its personality. This is how the psychic being is formed from life to life and becomes a completely conscious and independent personality which, once it has arrived at the summit of its development, is free to choose not only the time of its incarnation, but the place, the purpose and the work to be accomplished.

Its descent into the physical body is necessarily a descent into darkness, ignorance, unconsciousness; and for a very long time it must labour simply to bring a little consciousness into the material substance of the body, before it can make use of it for the experience it has come for. So, if we cultivate the body by a clear-sighted and rational method, at the same time we are helping the

growth of the soul, its progress and enlightenment." (CWM 10: 29–30)

3.

"It is the soul in us which turns always towards Truth, Good and Beauty, because it is by these things that it itself grows in stature; the rest, their opposites, are a necessary part of experience, but have to be outgrown in the spiritual increase of the being. The fundamental psychic entity in us has the delight of life and all experience as part of the progressive manifestation of the spirit, but the very principle of its delight of life is to gather out of all contacts and happenings their secret divine sense and essence, a divine use and purpose so that by experience our mind and life may grow out of the Inconscience towards a supreme consciousness, out of the divisions of the Ignorance towards an integralising consciousness and knowledge. It is there for that and it pursues from life to life its ever-increasing upward tendency and insistence; the growth of the soul is a growth out of darkness into light, out of falsehood into truth, out of suffering into its own supreme and universal Ananda." (CWSA 21: 632–633)

IV—The Psychic Being Helps Us on Our Spiritual Path

1.

"If you have within you a psychic being sufficiently awake to watch over you, to prepare your path, it can draw towards you things which help you, draw people, books, circumstances, all sorts of little coincidences which come to you as though brought by some benevolent will and give you an indication, a help, a support to take decisions and turn you in the right direction. But once you have taken this decision, once you have decided to find the truth of your being, once you start sincerely on the road, then everything seems to conspire to help you to advance, …" (CWM 4: 261)

2.

"When someone is destined for the Path all circumstances, through all the deviations of mind and life, help in one way or another to lead him to it. It is his own psychic being within him and the Divine Power above that use to that end the vicissitudes both of mind and outward circumstance." (CWSA 29: 30–31)

V—With Psychic Education We Come to the True Motive of Existence

1.

"The three lines of education—physical, vital and mental—deal with that and could be defined as the means of building up the personality, raising the individual out of the amorphous subconscious mass and making him a well-defined self-conscious entity. With psychic education we come to the problem of the true motive of existence, the purpose of life on earth, the discovery to which this life must lead and the result of that discovery: the consecration of the individual to his eternal principle. Normally this discovery is associated with a mystic feeling, a religious life, because it is mainly the religions that have concerned themselves with this aspect of life. But it need not necessarily be so: the mystic notion of God may be replaced by the more philosophical notion of truth and still the discovery will remain essentially the same, but the road leading to it may be taken even by the most intransigent [stubborn] positivist. For mental notions and ideas have only a very secondary importance in preparing one for the psychic life. The important thing is to live the experience; that carries with it its own reality and force apart from any theory that may precede or accompany or follow it, for most often theories are no more than explanations that

one gives to oneself in order to have, more or less, the illusion of knowledge." (CWM 12: 30–31)

2.

"It is through this psychic presence that the truth of an individual being comes into contact with him and the circumstances of his life." (CWM 12: 32)

3.

"The starting-point is to seek in yourself that which is independent of the body and the circumstances of life, which is not born of the mental formation that you have been given, the language you speak, the habits and customs of the environment in which you live, the country where you are born or the age to which you belong. You must find, in the depths of your being, that which carries in it a sense of universality, limitless expansion, unbroken continuity. Then you decentralise, extend and widen yourself; you begin to live in all things and in all beings; the barriers separating individuals from each other break down. You think in their thoughts, vibrate in their sensations, feel in their feelings, live in the life of all. What seemed inert suddenly becomes full of life, stones quicken, plants feel and will and suffer, animals speak in a language more or less inarticulate, but clear and expressive; everything is animated by a marvellous consciousness without time or limit. And this is only one aspect of the

psychic realisation; there are others, many others. All help you to go beyond the barriers of your egoism, the walls of your external personality, the impotence of your reactions and the incapacity of your will.

But, as I have already said, the path to that realisation is long and difficult, strewn with snares and problems to be solved, which demand an unfailing determination. It is like the explorer's trek through virgin forest in quest of an unknown land, of some great discovery. The psychic being is also a great discovery which requires at least as much fortitude and endurance as the discovery of new continents." (CWM 12: 32–33)

4.

"A few simple words of advice may be useful to one who has resolved to undertake it.

The first and perhaps the most important point is that the mind is incapable of judging spiritual things. All those who have written on this subject have said so; but very few are those who have put it into practice. And yet, in order to proceed on the path, it is absolutely indispensable to abstain from all mental opinion and reaction.

Give up all personal seeking for comfort, satisfaction, enjoyment or happiness. Be only a burning fire for progress, take whatever comes to you as an aid to your progress and immediately make whatever progress is required.

Try to take pleasure in all you do, but never do anything for the sake of pleasure.

Never get excited, nervous or agitated. Remain perfectly calm in the face of all circumstances. And yet be always alert to discover what progress you still have to make and lose no time in making it.

Never take physical happenings at their face value. They are always a clumsy attempt to express something else, the true thing which escapes our superficial understanding.

Never complain of the behaviour of anyone, unless you have the power to change in his nature what makes him act in this way; and if you have the power, change him instead of complaining.

Whatever you do, never forget the goal which you have set before you. There is nothing great or small once you have set out on this great discovery; all things are equally important and can either hasten or delay its success. Thus before you eat, concentrate a few seconds in the aspiration that the food you are about to eat may bring your body the substance it needs to serve as a solid basis for your effort towards the great discovery, and give it the energy for persistence and perseverance in the effort.

Before you go to sleep, concentrate a few seconds in the aspiration that the sleep may restore your fatigued nerves, bring calm and quietness to your brain so that on

waking you may, with renewed vigour, begin again your journey on the path of the great discovery.

Before you act, concentrate in the will that your action may help or at least in no way hinder your march forward towards the great discovery.

When you speak, before the words come out of your mouth, concentrate just long enough to check your words and allow only those that are absolutely necessary to pass, only those that are not in any way harmful to your progress on the path of the great discovery.

To sum up, never forget the purpose and goal of your life. The will for the great discovery should be always there above you, above what you do and what you are, like a huge bird of light dominating all the movements of your being.

Before the untiring persistence of your effort, an inner door will suddenly open and you will emerge into a dazzling splendour that will bring you the certitude of immortality, the concrete experience that you have always lived and always shall live, that external forms alone perish and that these forms are, in relation to what you are in reality, like clothes that are thrown away when worn out. Then you will stand erect, freed from all chains, and instead of advancing laboriously under the weight of circumstances imposed upon you by Nature, which you had to endure and bear if you did not want to be crushed by them, you will be able to walk on, straight and firm,

conscious of your destiny, master of your life." (CWM 12: 33–35)

5.

"… for one it [psychic education] is a higher realisation upon earth, …

So one can say that the psychic life is immortal life, endless time, limitless space, ever-progressive change, unbroken continuity in the universe of forms. … To become conscious of your psychic being and to live a psychic life you must abolish all egoism; …" (CWM 12: 35–36)

6.

"The latter [identification with the psychic being] can be made more and more lasting and, in certain cases, it becomes permanent and never leaves the person who has realised it, whatever his outer activities may be. In other words, the identification is no longer realised only in meditation and concentration, but its effects are felt at every moment of one's life, in sleep as well as in waking." (CWM 12: 36–37)

VI—The Psychic Will Wants the Being to Be Identified with the Divine

1.

"*Is it the psychic will which wants the being to be identified with the Divine?*

Yes, surely. It is the will of the psychic. It is also the very reason of its existence. It is for that it is there. For example, in the mind certain activities (and even at times in the physical and vital) certain activities awaken to the influence of the psychic without even knowing it. That is why those parts adhere to it and begin to aspire also for the divine knowledge, the divine union, the relation with the Divine." (CWM 5: 394)

2.

"*What is the work of the psychic being?*

What is the work of the psychic being? You want it to have some work? What do you want to say exactly? What is its function? Ah! Very well. One could put it this way, that it is like an electric wire that connects the generator with the lamp. Now, if someone has understood, let him explain what I said!

What is the generator and what the lamp? (Laughter)

Ah, there we are! So, what is the generator and what the lamp? That is exactly it. What is the generator and what the lamp? Or rather, who is the generator and who is the lamp?

The generator is the Divine and the lamp is the body.

It is the body, it is the visible being.

So, that is its function. This means that if there were no psychic in Matter, it would not be able to have any direct contact with the Divine. And it is happily due to this psychic presence in Matter that the contact between Matter and the Divine can be direct and all human beings can be told, 'You carry the Divine within you, and you have only to enter within yourself and you will find Him.' It is something very particular to the human being or rather to the inhabitants of the earth." (CWM 6: 160)

3.

"*Sweet Mother,*

What is the role of the soul?

But without the soul we wouldn't exist!

The soul is that which comes from the Divine without ever leaving Him, and returns to the Divine without ceasing to be manifest.

The soul is the Divine made individual without ceasing to be divine.

In the soul the individual and the Divine are eternally one; therefore, to find one's soul is to find God; to identify with one's soul is to unite with the Divine.

Thus it may be said that the role of the soul is to make a true being of man." (CWM 16: 227)

VII—The Contribution of the Psychic Being to Sadhana

1.

"The contribution of the psychic being to the sadhana is: (1) love and bhakti, a love not vital, demanding and egoistic but without conditions or claims, self-existent; (2) the contact or the presence of the Mother within; (3) an unerring guidance from within; (4) a quieting and purification of the mind, vital and physical consciousness by their subjection to the psychic influence and guidance; (5) the opening up of all this lower consciousness to the higher spiritual consciousness above for its descent into a nature prepared to receive it with a complete receptivity and right attitude—for the psychic brings in everything right thought, right perception, right feeling, right attitude." (CWSA 31: 339)

2.

"Merely to have experiences of the higher consciousness will not change the nature. Either the higher consciousness has to make a dynamic descent into the whole being and change it—or it must establish itself in the inner being down to the inner physical so that the latter feels itself separate from the outer and is able to act freely upon it—or the psychic must come forward and change the nature—or the inner will must awake and force the nature to

change. These are the four ways in which change can be brought about." (CWSA 30: 23)

VIII—You Should Be Able to Get in Touch With Your Own Psychic Being

1.

"Each one of you should be able to get into touch with your own psychic being, it is not an inaccessible thing. Your psychic being is there precisely to put you in contact with the divine forces." (CWM 4: 245)

2.

"The psychic being always has an influence on the thoughts and actions, but one is rarely conscious of it. To become conscious of the psychic being, one must want to do so, make one's mind as silent as possible, and enter deep into the heart of one's being, beyond sensations and thoughts. One must form the habit of silent concentration and descent into the depths of one's being.

The discovery of the psychic being is a definite and very concrete fact, as all who have had the experience know." (CWM 16: 399)

IX—Aspire to Come in Contact With Your Psychic Being

1.

"Aspiration constant and sincere and the will to turn to the Divine alone are the best means of bringing forward the psychic being." (CWSA 30: 360)

2.

"I have known people who were extremely stupid, truly stupid; well, these people succeeded through aspiration—an aspiration which was not formulated, had not even the power to express itself in words—succeeded in coming into contact with their psychic being. It was not a constant contact, it was momentary, at times very fugitive. But while they were in contact with their psychic being, they became remarkably intelligent, they said wonderful things. I knew a girl who had no education, nothing, truly stupid; people said, 'There is nothing to be done about it, it is not possible.' Well, when she was in contact with her psychic being, she understood the profoundest things and made astounding remarks. But when the contact stopped she became stupid once again. It was not something permanent, it was only the contact that took away her stupidity. So, it is a difficult cure, that is, one must establish the contact with one's psychic being and keep it always." (CWM 4: 368–369)

X—Inner Communion with the Psychic Being When One Willingly Gives Up a Desire

1.

"There is a kind of inner communion with the psychic being which takes place when one willingly gives up a desire, and because of this one feels a much greater joy than if he had satisfied his desire." (CWM 7: 40)

2.

"If desire is rejected and no longer governs the thought, feeling or action and there is the steady aspiration of an entirely sincere self-giving, the psychic usually after a time opens of itself." (CWSA 30: 349)

XI—To Acquire the Experience of the Psychic Being

1.

"You feel trapped in a kind of fatalism that weighs you down, you know neither whence nor how; you are born like this, in such and such a place, into such and such an environment, with such and such a character, and you get through life as best you can, adapting to things without having much influence on them, and trying to mitigate the drawbacks of your own character without having the power to transform it. … You are the plaything of circumstances, of unknown forces, of a will you do not submit to, but which constrains you. … the only thing that liberates you is precisely the act of passing behind the veil and discovering what lies beyond it [the psychic being]. Once you have seen, you know who you are and once you have established your true identity, you have the key to the true transformation.

We read, we try to understand, we explain, we try to know. But a single minute of true experience teaches us more than millions of words and hundreds of explanations.

So the first question is: 'How to have the experience [of psychic being]?'

To go within yourself, that is the first step.

And then, once you have succeeded in going within yourself deeply enough to feel the reality of that which is within, to widen yourself progressively, systematically, to

become as vast as the universe and lose the sense of limitation.

These are the first two preparatory movements.

And these two things must be done in the greatest possible calm, peace and tranquillity. This peace, this tranquillity brings about silence in the mind and stillness in the vital.

This effort, this attempt must be renewed very regularly, persistently. And after a certain lapse of time, which may be longer or shorter, you begin to perceive a reality that is different from the reality perceived in the ordinary, external consciousness.

Naturally, by the action of Grace, the veil may suddenly be rent from within, and at once you can enter the true truth; but even when that happens, in order to obtain the full value and full effect of the experience, you must maintain yourself in a state of inner receptivity, and to do that, it is indispensable for you to go within each day." (CWM 10: 18–20)

2.

"But those who have the power of concentrating with images, well, they have one more facility.

To sit in meditation before a closed door, as though it were a heavy door of bronze—and one sits in front of it with the will that it may open—and to pass to the other side; and so the whole concentration, the whole aspiration

is gathered into a beam and pushes, pushes, pushes against this door, and pushes more and more with an increasing energy until all of a sudden it bursts open and one enters. It makes a very powerful impression. And so one is as though plunged into the light and then one has the full enjoyment of a sudden and radical change of consciousness, with an illumination that captures one entirely, and the feeling that one is becoming another person. And this is a very concrete and very powerful way of entering into contact with one's psychic being." (CWM 7: 268)

3.

"In the meanwhile our only safety is to find a guiding law of spiritual experience—or else to liberate a light within that can lead us on the way until that greater direct Truth-consciousness is reached above us or born within us. … The guiding law of spiritual experience can only come by an opening of human consciousness to the Divine Consciousness; there must be the power to receive in us the working and command and dynamic presence of the Divine Shakti and surrender ourselves to her control; it is that surrender and that control which bring the guidance. But the surrender is not sure, there is no absolute certitude of the guidance so long as we are besieged by mind formations and life impulses and instigations of ego which may easily betray us into the hands of a false experience.

This danger can only be countered by the opening of a now nine-tenths concealed inmost soul or psychic being that is already there but not commonly active within us. That is the inner light we must liberate; for the light of this inmost soul is our one sure illumination so long as we walk still amidst the siege of the Ignorance and the Truth-consciousness has not taken up the entire control of our Godward endeavour." (CWSA 23: 137–138)

[The question was asked to the Mother based on the above passage from *The synthesis of Yoga.*

"*Sweet Mother, Sri Aurobindo has said that one must find a light within, then surrender to the divine Shakti. Now that the Supermind has come down, will this be easier?*

Well, *that* is the light within, [light in our inner being] now.

What is the difficulty? Where do you see any objection or contradiction? What is your difficulty?

How can we understand that it has become easier? What is the effect of this descent [supramental descent]?

Well, wait until it occurs in you and you will know it!

All right. Imagine that in a dark room you have put an oil lamp, one which burns oil, as we used to have fifty years ago—we had oil lamps in the rooms, … So you were

lighting your room with that, and then suddenly somebody invented the means of lighting it by electricity. So your oil lamp is replaced by a beautiful electric lamp which gives ten times more light.

…

You have always had a light to illumine your room—your inner room—but instead of an oil lamp it has become an electric lamp. That's all.

…

How to enter the room [inner being]?

You take a key and open the door!

You must find the key.

Or you sit down in front of the door until you have found the word, the idea or the force which opens it—as in the *Arabian Nights* tales.

It is not a joke, it is very serious. You must sit down in front of the door and then concentrate until you have found the key or the word or the power to open it.

If one doesn't try, it doesn't open by itself. Perhaps after thousands of years, but you want to do it immediately—so? To do it immediately, you must sit down *obstinately* before the door until you have found the means. It may be a key, it may be a word, it may be a

force, it may be anything at all, and you remain there before the door until it opens.

And you do not think of anything else.

Only of the door." (CWM 8: 143–144)

4.

"*What does the liberation of the psychic being mean?*

Because one has the feeling—this is a feeling one very often has in the beginning of the sadhana—that the psychic being is as though shut up in a kind of hard shell, a prison, and that this is what prevents it from manifesting outwardly and entering into a conscious and constant relation with the outer consciousness, the outer being. One has altogether the feeling that it is as though enclosed in a box or in a prison with walls which must be broken or a door which must be forced in order to be able to enter. So naturally if one can break the walls, open the door, it liberates the psychic being which was shut in and which can now manifest externally. All these are images. But each person, naturally, has his own personal image, his personal method, with small modifications.

Some of these images are very common to all those who have had the experience. For example, when one goes down into the depths of one's being to find the psychic right at the bottom of one's consciousness, there is this image of descending into a deep well, going down deeper

and deeper, descending, and it is as though one were truly sinking into a well.

Naturally all these are analogies; but they are associations with the experience of impressions which give a great deal of force and concrete reality to the experience.

As when one goes on the discovery of one's inner being, of all the different parts of one's being, one very often has the feeling that one is entering deep into a hall or room, and according to the colour, the atmosphere, the things it contains, one has a very clear perception of the part of the being one is visiting. And then, one can go from one room to another, open doors and go into deeper and deeper rooms each of which has its own character. And often, these inner visits can be made during the night. Then it takes a still more concrete form, like a dream, and one feels that he is entering a house, and that this house is very familiar to him. And according to the time, the periods, it is internally different, and sometimes it may be in a state of very great disorder, very great confusion, where everything is mixed up; sometimes there are even broken things; it is quite a chaos. At other times these things are organised, put in their place; it is as though one had arranged the household, one cleans up, puts it in order, and it is always the same house. This house is the image, a kind of objective image, of your inner being. And in accordance with what you see there or do there, you

have a symbolic representation of your psychological work. It is very useful for concretising. It depends on people.

Some people are just intellectuals; for them everything is expressed by ideas and not by images. But if they were to go down into a more material domain, well, they risk not touching things in their concrete reality and remaining only in the domain of ideas, remaining in the mind and remaining there indefinitely. Then one thinks one is making progress, and mentally one has done so, though it is something altogether indefinite.

The mind's progress may take thousands of years, for it is a very vast and very indefinite field, which is constantly renewed. But if one wants to progress in the vital and physical, well, this imaged representation becomes very useful for fixing the action, making it more concrete. Naturally it doesn't happen completely at will; it depends on each one's nature." (CWM 7: 266–268)

5.

"It can take centuries to put the external consciousness in contact with the psychic. But for some reason or other the vital takes a hand in it. A passion seizes it. It wants this contact (for some reason or other, which is not always a spiritual reason), but it wants this contact. It wants it with all its energy, all its strength, all its passion, all its fervour: in three months the thing is done.

So then, take great care of it. Treat it with great consideration but never submit to it. For it will drag you into all kinds of troublesome and untoward experiments; and if you succeed in convincing it in some way or other, then you will advance with giant strides on the path." (CWM 5: 257–258)

XII—Two Powerful Levers to Enter into Contact with One's Psychic Being

1.

"There are two principal things. This, the capacity for enthusiasm which makes one come out of his greater or lesser inertia in order to throw himself more or less totally into the thing which rouses him. As for instance, the artist for his art, the scientist for his science. And in general, every person who creates or builds has an opening, the opening of a special faculty, a special possibility, creating an enthusiasm in him. When this is active, something in the being awakens, and there is a participation of almost the whole being in the thing done.

There is this. And then there are those who have an innate faculty of gratitude, those who have an ardent need to respond, respond with warmth, devotion, joy, to something which they feel like a marvel hidden behind the whole of life, behind the tiniest little element, the least little event of life, who feel this sovereign beauty or infinite Grace which is behind all things.

I knew people who had no knowledge, so to say, of anything, who were hardly educated, whose minds were altogether of the ordinary kind, and who had in them this capacity of gratitude, of warmth, which gives itself, understands and is thankful. Well, for them, the contact with the psychic was very frequent, almost constant and,

to the extent that they were capable of it, conscious—not very conscious but a little—in the sense that they felt that they were carried, helped, uplifted above themselves.

These two things prepare people the most. They are born with one or the other; and if they take the trouble, it develops gradually, it increases.

We say: the capacity for enthusiasm, something which throws you out of your miserable and mean little ego; and the generous gratitude, the generosity of the gratitude which also flings itself in thanksgiving out of the little ego. These are the two most powerful levers to enter into contact with the Divine in one's psychic being. This serves as a link with the psychic being—the surest link." (CWM 7: 418–419)

XIII—The Psychic Being Is Not in the Third Dimension but in Another Dimension

1.

"You must remember that the inner beings are not in the third dimension. If you open up your body you will find only the viscera of the body which are in the third dimension. The inner beings are in another dimension, … the psychic being which extends beyond it in every way; it is so much higher and deeper than the other outer consciousness that there is no relation either of quality or of nature between them. Religions say that you have a divine spark in you—it is well they call it a 'spark', for it is so small indeed that it can be placed anywhere in the body without difficulty. But this does not mean that it is in the body: it is within the consciousness in another dimension, and there are beings who have a contact with it, others who haven't. But if you come to the divine Presence in the atom, the image is easier to understand, for there you touch so infinitesimal a domain that you are on the border-line where you can no longer distinguish between two, three, four or five dimensions. If you study modern physics you will understand what I mean. The movements constituting an atom are, in the matter of size, so imperceptible that they cannot be understood with our three dimensional understanding, the more so as they follow laws which elude completely this three-dimensional idea. So if you

take refuge there, you may say that the divine spark is at the centre of each atom and you won't be far from the truth; but I was not speaking of the divine spark, I was speaking of the being, the psychic consciousness, which is another thing. The psychic being is an entity which has a form; it is organised around a central consciousness and, having a form it has a dimension, but a dimension of another kind than the third dimension of the outer consciousness." (CWM 4: 139–140)

XIV—It Is Easier to Enter into the Psychic Consciousness Than to Change the Habits of Vital-Physical Consciousness

1.

"These things, hard forms of speech, anger etc., are habits formed by the vital-physical consciousness and, as they are supported by the subconscient, very difficult to change. If one can conquer or change them by force of will or mental or spiritual control, so much the better. But if one cannot do this at once, one must not be upset or think oneself unfit. It is easier for most to realise the Divine or enter into the psychic consciousness than to change this part of the nature; but once the psychic consciousness governs or the higher consciousness descends then it is much easier for these to go. You must not therefore be discouraged by these recurrences or persistences, but try always to stand back in an inner quietude and if they come let them pass away like a cloud across the light. In time these things will be finally dealt with by the Force." (CWSA 31: 267)

XV—With Sustained and Persistent Effort, One Has Conscious Contact with the Psychic Being

1.

"In the ordinary life there's not one person in a million who has a conscious contact with his psychic being, even momentarily. The psychic being may work from within, but so invisibly and unconsciously for the outer being that it is as though it did not exist. And in most cases, the immense majority, almost the totality of cases, it's as though it were asleep, not at all active, in a kind of torpor.

It is only with the sadhana and a very persistent effort that one succeeds in having a conscious contact with his psychic being. …

In almost, almost all cases, a very, very sustained effort is needed to become aware of one's psychic being. Usually it is considered that if one can do it in thirty years one is very lucky—thirty years of sustained effort, I say. It may happen that it's quicker. But this is so rare that immediately one says, 'This is not an ordinary human being.' That's the case of people who have been considered more or less divine beings and who were great yogis, great initiates." (CWM 7: 273)

XVI—With Perseverance, the Veiled Inner Preparation of Many Years Can Lead to Realisation

1.

"It is a pity that this movement of depression has come back with its painful and irrational circle. It must be thrown away for good: these movements go round in a circular repetitionary way characteristic of these things. It is lent force by the reasonings of the physical mind which are specious [erroneous] but of no value. It is not true of spiritual things that experience must come within a certain number of years or not at all. There are some who begin to succeed after a few years, some who take longer, succeeding only in work but not in meditation or activity of the inner consciousness, but finally the veiled inner preparation of so many years has prevailed and they begin to get the psychic change, the inner opening of head and heart, the descents, the growth through frequent though not uninterrupted experience. This has happened even to those who are troubled by these circular movements and have been again and again on the point of rushing away in despair. There is nothing more futile than to despair in the spiritual path and throw up the game: it is to break a working which would have led one to the realisation asked for if one had persevered." (CWSA 31: 201)

XVII—Signs of the Psychic Coming Forward

1.

"A central love, bhakti, surrender, giving everything, a sight within that sees always clearly what is spiritually right or wrong and automatically rejects the latter—a movement of entire consecration and dedication of all in one to the Mother [*are the signs of the psychic's coming forward*]." (CWSA 30: 356)

2.

"*By what signs can one tell that the psychic being has come to the surface?*

One feels peaceful and happy, full of trust, full of a deep and true benevolence, and very close to the divine presence." (CWM 17: 73)

3.

"It is the psychic being in you that has come forward—and when the psychic being comes forward all is happiness, the right attitude, the right vision of things. Of course in one sense it is the same I that puts forward different parts of itself. But when these different parts are all under the control of the psychic and turned by it towards the reception of the higher consciousness, then there begins the harmonisation of all the parts and their progressive

recasting into moulds of the higher consciousness growing in peace, light, force, love, knowledge, Ananda which is what we call the transformation.” (CWSA 30: 355)

XVIII—Contact Is Easily Obtained a Second Time, Once the Psychic Withdraws

1.

"*Once the psychic has come to the front, can it withdraw again?*

Yes. Generally one has a series of experiences of identification, very intense at first, which later gradually diminish, and then one day you find that they have disappeared. Still you must not be disturbed, for it is quite a common phenomenon. But next time—the second time—the contact is more easily obtained. And then comes a moment, which is not very far off, when as soon as one concentrates and aspires, one gets a contact. One may not have the power of keeping it all the time, but can get it at will. Then, from that moment things become very easy. When one feels a difficulty or there is a problem to be solved, when one wants to make progress or there is just a depression to conquer or an obstacle to be overcome or else simply for the joy of identification (for it is an experience that gives a very concrete joy; at the moment of identification one truly feels a very, very great joy), then, at any moment whatever, one may pause, concentrate for a while and aspire, and quite naturally the contact is established and all problems which were to be solved are solved. Simply to concentrate—to sit down and

concentrate—to aspire in this way, and the contact is made, so to say, instantaneously.

There comes a time, as I said, when this does not leave you, that is, it is in the depths of the consciousness and supports all that you do, and you never lose the contact. Then many things disappear. For instance, depression is one of these things, discontentment, revolt, fatigue, depression, all these difficulties. And if one makes it a habit to step back, as we say, in one's consciousness and see on the screen of one's psychic consciousness—see all the circumstances, all the events, all the ideas, all the knowledge, everything—at that moment one sees *that* and has an altogether sure guide for everything that one may do. But this is bound to take a very long time to come." (CWM 6: 33–34)

2.

"*Once the being has entered into contact with the psychic, why does the psychic again hide itself?*

It is not the psychic that hides itself, it is the being which returns to its ordinary consciousness!... It is difficult for it to remain at its highest. One slides down, falls back. Only, the second time the discovery is easier. And each time the road is easier until one no longer falls back." (CWM 6: 24)

XIX—The Nexus Between the Psychic Being and Higher Consciousness Is the Principal Means of Attaining Siddhi

1.

"It will be evident that the two most important things here are the opening of the heart centre and the opening of the mind centres to all that is behind and above them. For the heart opens to the psychic being and the mind centres open to the higher consciousness and the nexus between the psychic being and the higher consciousness is the principal means of the Siddhi. The first opening is effected by a concentration in the heart, a call to the Divine to manifest within us and through the psychic to take up and lead the whole nature. Aspiration, prayer, bhakti, love, surrender are the main supports of this part of the Sadhana—accompanied by a rejection of all that stands in the way of what we aspire for. The second opening is effected by a concentration of the consciousness in the head (afterwards, above it) and an aspiration and call and a sustained will for the descent of the divine Peace, Power, Light, Knowledge, Ananda into the being—the Peace first or the Peace and Force together. Some indeed receive Light first or Ananda first or some sudden pouring down of Knowledge. With some there is first an opening which reveals to them a vast infinite Silence, Force, Light or Bliss above them and afterwards either they ascend to that or

these things begin to descend into the lower nature. With others there is either the descent, first into the head, then down to the heart level, then to the navel and below and through the whole body, or else an inexplicable opening—without any sense of descent—of peace, light, wideness or power or else a horizontal opening into the cosmic consciousness or, in a suddenly widened mind, an outburst of knowledge. Whatever comes has to be welcomed—for there is no absolute rule for all,—but if the peace has not come first, care must be taken not to swell oneself in exultation or lose the balance. The capital movement however is when the Divine Force or Shakti, the Power of the Mother comes down and takes hold, for then the organisation of the consciousness begins and the larger foundation of the Yoga." (CWSA 32: 205-206)

2.

"*Sweet Mother, here Sri Aurobindo says: 'The nexus between the psychic being and the higher consciousness is the principal means of the siddhi.' Ordinarily is there not a nexus between the psychic being and the higher consciousness?*

Ordinarily means in the ordinary life? A relation between the psychic being...

Yes.

It is almost, almost totally unconscious.

In the ordinary life there's not one person in a million who has a conscious contact with his psychic being, even momentarily. The psychic being may work from within, but so invisibly and unconsciously for the outer being that it is as though it did not exist. And in most cases, the immense majority, almost the totality of cases, it's as though it were asleep, not at all active, in a kind of torpor.

It is only with the sadhana and a very persistent effort that one succeeds in having a conscious contact with his psychic being. Naturally, it is possible that there are exceptional cases—but this is truly exceptional, and they are so few that they could be counted—where the psychic being is an entirely formed, liberated being, master of itself, which has chosen to return to earth in a human body in order to do its work. And in this case, even if the person doesn't do the sadhana consciously, it is possible that the psychic being is powerful enough to establish a more or less conscious relation. But these cases are, so to say, unique and are exceptions which confirm the rule.

In almost, almost all cases, a very, very sustained effort is needed to become aware of one's psychic being. Usually it is considered that if one can do it in thirty years one is very lucky—thirty years of sustained effort, I say. It may happen that it's quicker. But this is so rare that immediately one says, 'This is not an ordinary human being.' That's the case of people who have been

considered more or less divine beings and who were great yogis, great initiates." (CWM 7: 268–269)

3.

"Between psychisation and spiritualisation there is a difference. The spiritual is the change that descends from above, the psychic is the change that comes from within by the psychic dominating mind, vital and physical." (CWSA 30: 380)

4.

"The psychic is the first of two transformations necessary—if you have the psychic transformation it facilitates immensely the other, i.e., the transformation of the ordinary human into the higher spiritual consciousness—otherwise one is likely to have either a slow and dull or exciting but perilous journey." (CWSA 30: 380)

5.

The unification of the psychic and the higher consciousness forces and activities is indispensable for the sadhana at one time or another." (CWSA 30: 382)

6.

"Complete psychisation brings entire openness of the being to the Divine and to the Higher Consciousness and an

entire inability to accept anything untrue and undivine." (CWSA 30: 382)

7.

"When there is an opening in the spiritual mind but not a sufficient psychic change, there is or can be this kind of vehement force-action and resistance; when the psychic opens, then it acts on the whole nature, mind, vital, physical, governing them from within, to transform themselves and become ready for the complete spiritual opening and spiritual consciousness." (CWSA 30: 384)

8.

"What you see above is of course the true or higher consciousness—the Mother's … it is that that we speak of as the higher or divine consciousness. Even if it comes and goes, yet its effect on the heart shows that a connection has been established through the psychic—for the psychic is behind the heart. It is there above the head that the consciousness has to ascend and remain, while it also descends into the head and heart and lower vital and physical and brings there its wideness, light, peace and freedom." (CWSA 30: 381–382)

9.

"As I have written often, there are two transformations in this Yoga. The first is when the psychic being comes

forward and controls and changes the nature. This is what has happened in you with great rapidity; it must complete itself, but that it will do naturally. The second is the descent of the Mother's consciousness from above the head and its transformation of the whole being and nature. This also is now preparing in you. It is the reason of the pressure, the silence in the heart etc. What you experienced this time when you went above was the wideness of the higher being in that higher consciousness above with the Light coming down through it. That wideness and that light will afterwards come down into you and your consciousness will be changed into the light and wideness and all that is in them." (CWSA 30: 385)

10.

"One can receive [*forces from above*] always through the psychic part of the being, even before the veil is broken." (CWSA 30: 387)

11.

"An increasing advance on the road to the entire psychic change is what is most important in the sadhana, for that is the straight road to the spiritual transformation. Devotion, harmony and scrupulousness in work, a growing inner perception and consciousness, more and more fading of the more vehement movements of the vital ego are

among the more prominent landmarks on the road." (CWSA 35: 842–843)

12.

"But the result of psychisation of the whole nature is not small; it can bring about or embrace most of what have been celebrated as the great spiritual realisations. Only these are got by a sort of reflection in the human consciousness (mind, life, body), not by a permanent ascension of the consciousness to the highest planes or a permanent descent from above. There are upgoings and downflowings from there only. If that much is gained one may think of the rest afterwards. On the other hand there are others in whom there is the clear possibility of rising above after a sufficient psychisation (when completed) of the being and then these two things go on together—psychisation and spiritualisation of the being, the latter process opening up the highest planes entirely." (CWSA 35: 285)

XX—Neither the Psychic nor the Spiritual Movement Is Complete Without the Other

1.

"The two feelings are both of them right—they indicate the two necessities of the sadhana. One is to go inward and open fully the connection between the psychic being and the outer nature. The other is to open upward to the Divine Peace, Force, Light, Ananda above, to rise up into it and bring it down into the nature and the body. Neither of these two movements, the psychic and the spiritual, is complete without the other. If the spiritual ascent and descent are not made, the spiritual transformation of the nature cannot happen; if the full psychic opening and connection is not made, the transformation cannot be complete.

There is no incompatibility between the two movements; some begin the psychic first, others the spiritual first, some carry on both together. The best way is to aspire for both and let the Mother's Force work it out according to the need and turn of the nature." (CWSA 30: 383)

2.

"The concentration in the heart which is intended to bring out the psychic being and the calling down of the descent from above are two sides of the same thing and are

complementary and can go naturally together." (CWSA 30: 386)

3.

"Certainly the concentration in the heart is very necessary for the full transformation. When peace is established in the heart, it is possible for the psychic being to come forward and rule the mind, life and body. The descent from above prepares the being, but unless the psychic acts fully it cannot change by itself the outer being, though one can have a settled inner peace, freedom, light, not disturbed by the outer movements, but the outer movements will remain. It is only the combined action of the psychic and the spiritual power that can change it." (CWSA 30: 386–387)

4.

"It is by meditation, by concentration, by the constant turning or call [*that aspiration and openness may be cultivated*]—secondly, by the keeping of the mind and vital still for the descent of the Presence, peace, light, Ananda and for the psychic being to emerge. When the psychic being is in front, the descent constant, then the constant feeling of the Divine in you and of yourself in the Divine becomes more easy to have." (CWSA 30: 387)

5.

"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." (CWSA 30: 367–368)

6.

"In man alone there is the possibility of the psychic being growing to its full stature even so far as to be able in the end to join and unite with a descending being, a godhead from above." (CWM 3: 151)

7.

"If the inmost being, the psychic, takes charge, then indeed a deeper mutation, not mental, can make the descent of spiritual force more effective; for the totality of the conscious being will have undergone a preliminary soul change which emancipates [liberates] mind, life, body from the snare of their own imperfections and impurities. At this point, a greater spiritual dynamisation, the working of the higher powers of the spiritual mind and overmind, can fully intervene: they may indeed have started their work before, though only as influences; but under the new conditions they can uplift the central being towards their own level

and commence the last new integration of the nature." (CWSA 22: 971)

XXI—A Call of the Veiled Psychic Element May Break the Lid That Shuts Off the Higher from the Lower Nature and Open the Floodgates

1.

"A call of the veiled psychic element oppressed by the mass of the outer ignorance and crying for deliverance, a stress of eager meditation and seeking for knowledge, a longing of the heart, a passionate will ignorant yet but sincere may break the lid that shuts off that Higher from this Lower Nature and open the floodgates. A little of the Divine Person may reveal itself or some Light, Power, Bliss, Love out of the Infinite. This may be a momentary revelation, a flash or a brief-lived gleam that soon withdraws and waits for the preparation of the nature; but also it may repeat itself, grow, endure. A long and large and comprehensive working will then have begun, sometimes luminous or intense, sometimes slow and obscure. A Divine Power comes in front at times and leads and compels or instructs and enlightens; at others it withdraws into the background and seems to leave the being to its own resources. All that is ignorant, obscure, perverted or simply imperfect and inferior in the being is raised up, perhaps brought to its acme, dealt with, corrected, exhausted, shown its own disastrous results, compelled to call for its own cessation or transformation or expelled as worthless or incorrigible from the nature. This cannot be a smooth and even

process; alternations there are of day and night, illumination and darkness, calm and construction or battle and upheaval, the presence of the growing Divine Consciousness and its absence, heights of hope and abysses of despair, the clasp of the Beloved and the anguish of its absence, the overwhelming invasion, the compelling deceit, the fierce opposition, the disabling mockery of hostile Powers or the help and comfort and communion of the Gods and the Divine Messengers. A great and long revolution and churning of the ocean of Life with strong emergences of its nectar and its poison is enforced till all is ready and the increasing Descent finds a being, a nature prepared and conditioned for its complete rule and its all-encompassing presence." (CWSA 23: 179–180)

XXII—The Psychic Being Can Open the Lower Consciousness to the Higher Consciousness Above for It to Descend

1.

"The contribution of the psychic being to the sadhana is … the opening up of all this lower consciousness to the higher spiritual consciousness above for its descent into a nature prepared to receive it with a complete receptivity and right attitude—for the psychic brings in everything right thought, right perception, right feeling, right attitude." (CWSA 30: 339)

2.

"You have asked what is the discipline to be followed in order to convert the mental seeking into a living spiritual experience. The first necessity is the practice of concentration of your consciousness within yourself. The ordinary human mind has an activity on the surface which veils the real self. But there is another, a hidden consciousness within behind the surface one in which we can become aware of the real self and of a larger, deeper truth of nature, can realise the self and liberate and transform the nature. To quiet the surface mind and begin to live within is the object of this concentration. Of this true consciousness other than the superficial there are two main centres, one in the heart (not the physical heart, but

the cardiac centre in the middle of the chest), one in the head. The concentration in the heart opens within and by following this inward opening and going deep one becomes aware of the soul or psychic being, the divine element in the individual. This being unveiled begins to come forward, to govern the nature, to turn it and all its movements towards the Truth, towards the Divine, and to call down into it all that is above. It brings the consciousness of the Presence, the dedication of the being to the Highest and invites the descent into our nature of a greater Force and Consciousness which is waiting above us. To concentrate in the heart centre with the offering of oneself to the Divine and the aspiration for this inward opening and for the Presence in the heart is the first way and, if it can be done, the natural beginning; for its result once obtained makes the spiritual path far more easy and safe than if one begins the other way." (CWSA 29: 6)

3.

"The aspiration of the psychic being is for the opening of the whole lower nature, mind, vital, body to the Divine, for the love and union with the Divine, for its presence and power within the heart, for the transformation of the mind, life and body by the descent of the higher consciousness into this instrumental being and nature." (CWSA 28: 65) (CWSA 35: 149)

4.

"For your sadhana it is necessary first to establish the entire openness of the physical being and stabilise in it the descent of calm, strength, purity and joy with the feeling of the presence and working of the Mother's Force in you. It is only on that assured basis that one can become an entirely effective instrument for the work. Once that is done, there is still the dynamic transformation of the instrumental being to achieve and that depends on a descent of a higher and higher power of consciousness into the mind, vital and body — by 'higher' being meant nearer and nearer to the supramental Light and Force. But that can only be done on the basis of which I have spoken and with the psychic being constantly in front and acting as an intermediary between the instrumental mind, vital and body and these higher planes of Being. So this basic stabilisation must first be completed." (CWSA 31: 362)

5.

"This also the psychic change makes possible; for as it opens us to the cosmic consciousness now hidden from us by many walls of limiting individuality, so also it opens us to what is now superconscient to our normality because it is hidden from us by the strong, hard and bright lid of mind,—mind constricting, dividing and separative. The lid thins, is slit, breaks asunder or opens and disappears under the pressure of the psycho-spiritual change and the natural

urge of the new spiritualised consciousness towards that of which it is an expression here." (CWSA 22: 943–944)

6.

"All true Truth of love and of the works of love the psychic being accepts in their place: but its flame mounts always upward and it is eager to push the ascent from lesser to higher degrees of Truth, since it knows that only by the ascent to a highest Truth and the descent of that highest Truth can Love be delivered from the cross and placed upon the throne; for the cross is the sign of the Divine Descent barred and marred by the transversal line of a cosmic deformation which turns it into a stake of suffering and misfortune. Only by the ascent to the original Truth can the deformation be healed and all the works of love, as too all the works of knowledge and of life, be restored to a divine significance and become part of an integral spiritual existence." (CWSA 23: 157)

7.

"Yes, there has been some progress in that respect [*psychicisation*] and all progress in the psychic or spiritual consciousness of the sadhaks makes the descent more easy." (CWSA 28: 275)

8.

"As for the experience at the Pranam it was the other thing, the descent of the higher consciousness (the Mother's consciousness) from above, with its light, peace and wideness. When the individual consciousness is enveloped in that, rests in it, then you feel that you are lying in the Mother's lap. As the psychic consciousness grows from within, it becomes more and more possible for this [the higher consciousness] to descend from above." (CWSA 30: 386)

9.

"The moment you are in front of what you feel to be such, you should be moved to tears of joy. … Why should you bother about your ego when the main concern is that the Divine should reveal itself wherever it wants and in whatever manner it chooses? You should feel fulfilled when it is thus expressed, you should be able to burst the narrow bonds of your miserable personality, and soar up in unselfish joy. This joy is the true sign that your soul has awakened and has sensed the truth. It is only then that you can open to the influence of the descending truth and be shaped by it. I remember occasions when I used to be moved to tears on seeing even children, even babies do something that was most divinely beautiful and simple. Feel that joy and you will be able to profit by the Divine's presence in your midst." (CWM 3: 158–159)

XXIII—A Spiritual Opening Can Occur Before the Psychic Is Advanced or Complete

1.

"It is possible for the spiritual opening to take place and its action to proceed before the psychic is far advanced or complete; for the spiritual influence from above can awaken, assist and complete the psychic transmutation: all that is necessary is that there should be a sufficient stress of the psychic entity for the spiritual higher overture to take place." (CWSA 22: 965–966)

2.

"… if there is any awakening to the existence of these higher supernormal levels, then an aspiration towards them may break the lid or operate a rift in it. This may happen long before the psycho-spiritual change is complete or even before it has well begun or proceeded far, because the psychic personality has become aware and has an eager concentration towards the superconscience. An early illumination from above or a rending of the upper velamen can come as an outcome of aspiration or some inner readiness, or it may even come uncalled-for or not called for by any conscious part of the mind,—perhaps by a secret subliminal necessity or by an action or pressure from the higher levels, by something which is felt as the

touch of the Divine Being, the touch of the Spirit,—and its results can be exceedingly powerful." (CWSA 22: 944)

3.

"Very usually the first preparation is to work on the mind and vital and physical nature in such a way that the soul, the psychic being can have a chance of manifesting itself and influencing the rest of the nature; for that purpose all the main darknesses in the mind and vital have to be combated and thrown out and the physical also prepared in an initial way so that the descent may be possible. This is what has been done so long in you. It has to be made stronger and more complete; but sufficient has been done for it to be possible to prepare the descent of the higher consciousness." (CWSA 30: 458)

XXIV—Psychic Change Makes the Descent of Higher Consciousness Safe

1.

"I have read your account of your sadhana. There is nothing to say, I think,—for it is all right—except that the most important thing for you is to develop the psychic fire in the heart and the aspiration for the psychic being to come forward as the leader of the sadhana. When the psychic does so, it will show you the 'undetected ego-knots' of which you speak and loosen them or burn them in the psychic fire. This psychic development and the psychic change of mind, vital and physical consciousness is of the utmost importance because it makes safe and easy the descent of the higher consciousness and the spiritual transformation without which the supramental must always remain far distant. Powers etc. have their place, but a very minor one so long as this is not done." (CWSA 30: 381)

2.

"But if it [breaking the lid above] is brought about by a premature pressure from below, it can be attended with difficulties and dangers which are absent when the full psychic emergence precedes this first admission to the superior ranges of our spiritual evolution. The choice, however, does not always rest with our will, for the

operations of the spiritual evolution in us are very various, and according to the line it has followed will be the turn taken at any critical phase by the action of the Consciousness-Force in its urge towards a higher self-manifestation and formation of our existence." (CWSA 22: 944)

3.

"If the psychic mutation has not taken place, if there has been a premature pulling down of the higher Forces, their contact may be too strong for the flawed and impure material of Nature and its immediate fate may be that of the unbaked jar of the Veda which could not hold the divine Soma Wine; or the descending influence may withdraw or be spilt because the nature cannot contain or keep it. Again, if it is Power that descends, the egoistic mind or vital may try to seize on it for its own use and a magnified ego or a hunting after powers and self-aggrandising masteries may be the untoward result." (CWSA 22: 948)

4.

"For when the Peace is established, this higher or Divine Force from above can descend and work in us. It descends usually first into the head and liberates the inner mind centres, then into the heart centre and liberates fully the psychic and emotional being, then into the navel and other vital centres and liberates the inner vital, then into the

Muladhara and below and liberates the inner physical being. It works at the same time for perfection as well as liberation; it takes up the whole nature part by part and deals with it, rejecting what has to be rejected, sublimating what has to be sublimated, creating what has to be created. It integrates, harmonises, establishes a new rhythm in the nature. It can bring down too a higher and yet higher force and range of the higher Nature until, if that be the aim of the sadhana, it becomes possible to bring down the supramental force and existence. All this is prepared, assisted, farthered by the work of the psychic being in the heart centre; the more it is open, in front, active, the quicker, safer, easier the working of the Force can be. The more love and bhakti and surrender grow in the heart, the more rapid and perfect becomes the evolution of the sadhana. For the descent and transformation imply at the same time an increasing contact and union with the Divine." (CWSA 30: 327) (CWSA 32: 204–205)

XXV—The Descent of Higher Consciousness Can Bring Out the Psychic Being

1.

"If one begins with this movement [descent of the higher Consciousness into mind, life and body], then the Power from above has in its descent to open all the centres (including the lowest centre) and to bring out the psychic being; for until that is done there is likely to be much difficulty and struggle of the lower consciousness obstructing, mixing with or even refusing the Divine Action from above." (CWSA 29: 307)

2.

"*You suggested another way—to keep the psychic in front. But I don't know how to bring the psychic forward.*

It comes forward of itself either through constant love and aspiration or when the mind and vital have been made ready by the descent from above and the working of the Force." (CWSA 35: 748)

3.

"In using the expression 'opening of the psychic' I was thinking not of an ordinary psychic opening producing some amount of psychic (as opposed to vital) love and bhakti, but of what is called the coming in front of the

psychic. When that happens one is aware of the psychic being with its simple spontaneous self-giving and feels its increasing direct control (not merely a veiled or half-veiled influence) over mind, vital and physical. Especially there is the psychic discernment which at once lights up the thoughts, emotional movements, vital pushes, physical habits and leaves nothing there obscure, substituting the right movements for the wrong ones. It is this that is difficult and rare, more often the discernment is mental and it is the mind that tries to put all in order. In that case, it is the descent of the higher consciousness through the mind that opens the psychic, instead of the psychic opening directly." (CWSA 30: 352)

4.

"It [*the dynamic descent from above into the heart*] can help the psychic to come forward, but it does not always do so automatically—it at least creates better conditions for the psychic." (CWSA 30: 361)

5.

"Nobody said it [*the opening of the psychic*] must be done necessarily from above. Naturally it is done direct and is most effective then. But when it is found difficult to do direct, as it is in certain natures, then the change begins from above, and the consciousness descending from there has to liberate the heart centre. As it acts on the heart

centre, the psychic action becomes more possible.” (CWSA 30: 352)

XXVI—Do Not Give Up Discrimination Against What Is Trying to Descend; Open the Psychic Being Further

1.

"It is dangerous to think of giving up 'all barrier of discrimination and defence against what is trying to descend' upon you. Have you thought what this would mean if what is descending is something not in consonance with the divine Truth, perhaps even adverse? An Adverse Power could ask no better condition for getting control over the seeker. It is only the Mother's Force and the divine Truth that one should admit without barriers. And even there one must keep the power of discernment in order to detect anything false that comes masquerading as the Mother's Force and the divine Truth, and keep too the power of rejection that will throw away all mixture.

Keep faith in your spiritual destiny, draw back from error and open more the psychic being to the direct guidance of the Mother's light and power. If the central will is sincere, each recognition of a mistake can become a stepping-stone to a truer movement and a higher progress." (CWSA 32: 228)

XXVII—When the Psychic and Spiritual Join Together, the Transformation Can Be Complete

1.

"What you have been having up to now is the psychic change; when the psychic and spiritual join together, then the transformation can be complete. For this the Descent is necessary and that is the second thing you are feeling,—the descent of the higher, spiritual or divine consciousness and energy into the whole system down to the bottom of the spine where is the Muladhara or centre of the physical consciousness. The Energy descends through all the levels and centres, mind centres, vital centres, physical centre and fills the whole body with the higher existence and consciousness. … In the Descent the body is felt but not as a confining form so much as an instrument and receptacle for this larger consciousness. Your description of the experience is unmistakable. All the elements are there. What has to happen is to get fixed in the wideness, freedom, stillness, peace of the consciousness above and for the Descent to continue till it has fixed the higher power of being everywhere below—in the body and in the subconscience below it and also all round the body so that one lives enveloped in this new consciousness and being." (CWSA 30: 426–427)

XXVIII—Ultimate Achievement Needs Supramentalisation

1.

"Finally, the transformation effected by the sadhana cannot be complete unless it is a supramentalisation of the being. Psychisation is not enough, it is only a beginning; spiritualisation and the descent of the higher consciousness is not enough, it is only a middle term; the ultimate achievement needs the action of the supramental Consciousness and Force. Something less than that may very well be considered enough by the individual, but it is not enough for the earth-consciousness to take the definitive stride forward it must take at one time or another." (CWSA 29: 398–399) (CWSA 35: 154)

2.

"It follows that the psychic and the spiritual transformation must be far advanced, even as complete as may be, before there can be any beginning of the third and consummating supramental change; for it is only by this double transmutation that the self-will of the Ignorance can be totally altered into a spiritual obedience to the remoulding truth and will of the greater Consciousness of the Infinite." (CWSA 22: 963)

3.

"One can aspire for the Divine to bring about the supramental transformation, but that also should not be done till the being has become psychic and spiritualised by the descent of the Mother's peace, force, light and purity." (CWSA 29: 58)

4.

"In this Yoga, one can realise the Psychic Being as a portion of the Divine seated in the heart with the Divine supporting it there—this psychic being takes charge of the sadhana and turns the whole being to the Truth and the Divine, with results in the mind, the vital, the physical consciousness which I need not go into here,—that is a first transformation. We realise it next as the one Self, Brahman, Divine, first *above* the body, life, mind and not only within the heart supporting them—above and free and unattached as the static Self but also extended in wideness through the world as the silent Self in all and dynamic too as the active cosmic Divine Being and Power, Ishwara-Shakti, containing the world and pervading it as well as transcending it, manifesting all cosmic aspects. But, what is most important for us, is that it manifests as a transcending Light, Knowledge, Power, Purity, Peace, Ananda of which we become aware above and which descends into the being and progressively replaces the ordinary consciousness by its own movements—that is the

second transformation. We realise also the consciousness itself as moving upward, ascending through many planes physical, vital, mental, overmental to the supramental and Ananda planes. This is nothing new; it is stated in the Taittiriya Upanishad that there are five Purushas, the physical, the vital, the mental, the Truth Purusha (supramental) and the Bliss Purusha; it says that one has to draw the physical self up into the vital, the vital into the mental, the mental into the Truth Self, the Truth Self into the Bliss Self and so attain perfection. But in this Yoga we become aware not only of this taking up but of a pouring down of the powers of the higher Self, so that there comes in the possibility of a descent of the Supramental Self and nature to dominate and change our present nature and turn it from nature of Ignorance into nature of Truth-Knowledge (and through the supramental into nature of Ananda)—this is the third or supramental transformation. It does not always go in this order, for with many the spiritual descent begins first in an imperfect way before the psychic is in front and in charge, but the psychic development has to be attained before a perfect and unhampered spiritual descent can take place, and the last or supramental change is impossible so long as the two first have not become full and complete. That's the whole matter, put as briefly as possible." (CWSA 29: 497–498) (CWSA 35: 176–177)

5.

"There are two systems, one concentric with the psychic at the centre; another vertical, an ascension and descent, like a flight of steps, a series of superimposed planes with the Supermind + Overmind as the crucial nodus of the transition beyond the human into the Divine. … For us there is one way, one path; first, a conversion inwards, a going within to find the inmost psychic being and bring it out to the front, disclosing at the same time the inner mind, inner vital, inner physical parts of the nature; next, an ascension, a series of conversions upwards and a turning down [descend down] to convert the lower parts. When one has made the inward conversion, one psychicises the whole lower nature so as to make it ready for the divine change. Going upwards, one passes beyond the human mind and at each stage of the ascent there is a conversion into a new consciousness and an infusion of this new consciousness into the whole of the nature. Thus rising beyond intellect through illuminated higher mind to the intuitive consciousness, we begin to look at everything not from the intellect range or through intellect as an instrument, but from a greater intuitive height and through an intuitivised will, feeling, emotion, sensation and physical contact. So, proceeding from intuition to a greater overmind height, there is a new conversion and we look at and experience everything from the overmind consciousness and through a mind, heart, vital and body

surcharged with the overmind thought, sight, will, feeling, sensation, play of force and contact. And the last conversion is the supramental, for once there, once the nature is supramentalised, we are beyond the Ignorance and conversion of consciousness is no longer needed, though a farther divine progression is still possible." (CWSA 28: 84–85) (CWSA 35: 300–301)

6.

Stages of Sadhana, Psychic Change, Descent of Higher Consciousness and Supramentalisation

"There are three stages of the sadhana, psychic change, transition to the higher levels of consciousness—with a descent of their powers, conscious forces—the supramental. In the last even the control over death is a later, not an initial stage. Each of these stages demands a great length of time and a high and long endeavour. The legend related to you comes partly from a false idea that Mother and Sri Aurobindo will bring down everything and the sadhaks have only to wait and receive, a misconception responsible for much inner indolence and inertia, and the fact that for a long time a certain protection was over the Asram so that there was no death of any sadhak and little illness—the legend survives, though the circumstances are not now the same." (CWSA 32: 93)

7.

"A highest spiritual transformation must intervene on the psychic or psycho-spiritual change; the psychic movement inward to the inner being, the Self or Divinity within us, must be completed by an opening upward to a supreme spiritual status or a higher existence. This can be done by our opening into what is above us, by an ascent of consciousness into the ranges of overmind and supramental nature in which the sense of self and spirit is ever unveiled and permanent and in which the self-luminous instrumentation of the self and spirit is not restricted or divided as in our mind-nature, life-nature, body-nature." (CWSA 22: 943)

8.

"*You wrote to me yesterday, 'Now there is a sufficient descent of Light and Power.' Does this show that the psychisation of the sadhaks is advancing?*

Yes, there has been some progress in that respect and all progress in the psychic or spiritual consciousness of the sadhaks makes the descent more easy. But the main cause is that the Overmind principle which is the immediate secret support of the present earth-nature with all its limitations is more and more undergoing the pressure of the Supramental and letting through a greater Light and Power. For so long as the Overmind intervenes (the

principle of the Overmind being a play of forces, each trying to realise itself as the Truth) the law of struggle remains and with it the opportunity for the adverse Forces.” (CWSA 35: 326)

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