ANATOMY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

(Revised Edition)

Redistributed By



Ishwar Chandra Puri

Published by: **ISHA**

All rights reserved.

This book is published under a CC BY-NC-SA license, which means that you can copy, redistribute, remix, and freely distribute sections of the book, as long as any derivative works or new resulting creations are not used for any commercial purpose and as long as you give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original.

License details: creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

Copyright 1986

Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike (CC BY-NC-SA)

Revised Digital Edition 2018

ISBN: 978-0-937067-09-3

ANATOMY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

(Revised Edition)

Ishwar Chandra Puri

This book is dedicated to my wife.

TO THE READER

TREMENDOUS is the word to describe human experience in its entirety. Even more so is the great Socratic theme—"KNOW THYSELF", the process that leads to self realisation whereby we understand ourselves in the truest sense of the theme. It leads us to higher knowledge. It enables us to better understand other people and the world we live in.

Ishwar Chandra Puri has lectured in most parts of the world on a wide variety of such fascinating subjects as art, human awareness, human relations, morality, science, philosophy, religion, health and human consciousness, covering the entire scope of human experience. These lectures are so thorough and illuminating as to justify the title of this volume ("Anatomy of Consciousness") which is a summarisation of what he has said on the many facets of this deep, engrossing theme.

Going through the book from cover to cover one feels like being on an odyssey through the various stages of human consciousness. It is indeed a discovery—the discovery that the level of knowledge can be much higher than what exists within the reach of human mind. It becomes, therefore, a fascinating, if enigmatic, problem in philosophy, modern psychology and religion.

The vehicle of human consciousness, as it were, which remains beyond all intellectual comprehension, has been variously described as the soul, the mind, even the physical brain in some cases. There are aspects of this subject which can be studied and understood by anyone with an open mind and a sincere desire to get at the truth about one's own conscious experiences. But, there are higher aspects of it, relating to the very structure and mechanism of human consciousness. And only a trained intellect, aided by patience, sustained interest and systematic study, can comprehend the deepest mysteries of life.

The author attempts in these pages at providing an "intuitive glimpse" of the beauty and grandeur of this higher knowledge. And, taking a plunge, what does one find? From the Middle Ages to Renaissance to a new threshold, a kind of new evolution, viz., the evolution of human consciousness.

Man's material prosperity, attained through the ages, is undeniable. But, equally true is the fact that millions of people today are in quest of something beyond that, something higher than that. From science itself, as from the spiritual experiences of yogis and mystics, man is in the process of discovering a capacity in human consciousness for an awakening in a universe of endless mystery.

Love and logic have for long functioned independently of each other, leading to a "divided consciousness". The ANATOMY OF

CONSCIOUSNESS is intended to give a description of what happens when one is able to explore the depths of one's own consciousness: a stage, that is, when a synthesis of intuition and reason, as of love and logic, has become possible.

Contents

TO THE READER i

FOREWORD v

INTRODUCTION ix

I. SELF-REALIZATION 1

II. WHAT IS CONSCIOUSNESS 10

III. THE ASTRAL LEVEL 23

IV. THE MIND—AND THE SOUL 35

V. THE MIND IS NOT ALL 48

VI. THE ROLE OF INTUITION 58

VII. A MATTER OF CONCENTRATION 71

VIII. INTUITION 79

IX. BEYOND PHILOSOPHY 88

X. ENTER THE SAINTS, MYSTICS 100

XI. THE 'THIRD EYE' 111

XII. THE MASTER A MUST 126

XIII. INITIATION 139

FOREWORD

I am glad to have this opportunity to write a foreword to a commendable work on religion and philosophy, which will no doubt go a long way to foster and encourage the study of Human Awareness.

The search for truth, going on from time immemorial, will continue for all times to come. Truth is God. From the beginning the mind felt that truth was many-sided, and different views contained different aspects of truth, which no one could fully express. The Buddha insists that reason based on evidence is our only guide to truth. He asks us not to believe any sacred book merely because of its antiquity or regard for its author. Each one should search for himself, think for himself and realise for himself. Throughout one's life, living with one purpose, one has fought for truth and waged war against untruth, illustrating thus the endless quest of the mind, ever old, ever new.

In the past, world-weary men used to go out on pilgrimages to sacred places, mountains and forests to acquire inward peace, listening to the rush of winds and torrents, the music of birds and leaves, and returned full of heart and fresh in spirit. It was in the forest hermitages that the thinking men meditated on the deeper problems of existence. The search for truth still goes on, not as a kind of escapism but as a conscious endeavour on the

part of a few enlightened men to reach the reality and make the task easier for the common man by showing the way to it.

We live in an age of hectic hurry, of deafening noise where most of us have no time or inclination for anything beyond the passing hour. True life grows within. It is in the inner solitude that a seeker finds his solace and where the quest has to be carried on. Yet, our modern life is unwilling to grant us this privilege. Not all of us, however, are deprived of this right, and if there is to be a creative movement, some of us at least have to reflect on the problem so that we attain the ultimate reality and quench this thirst in those who are yearning to know something of it. Neither Plato nor Aristotle recommended a life of pure contemplation to a realized soul, though for both of them that was the best life. They directed wise men to serve the people.

We must realize that the truth which science or philosophy aims at is not of a provincial character. Its search may be conditioned, even restricted, by the mental attitudes and traditions of different countries, but we must aim at the universal truth. Even Western thinkers, shedding the provincial outlook, are admitting that thinkers outside their cultural traditions have grappled with the central problems of life.

The truth which claims to be universal requires to be continually re-created. It cannot be something already possessed, which needs only to be retransmitted. In every generation, it has to be renewed. Otherwise, it tends to become a dogma which induces

complacency and does not encourage the supreme personal adventure. Tradition should be a principle, not of conservatism but of growth and regeneration. We cannot keep the rays of the sun while we put out the sun itself. Petrified tradition is a disease from which societies seldom recover. By the free use of reason and experience, we appropriate truth and keep tradition in a continuous process of evolution. To have hold on people's minds, it must reckon with the vast reorientation of thought that has taken place. By re-interpreting the past, each generation stamps it with something of its own problems and preoccupations. There are two levels of truth, the practical and the ultimate.

The study of classics, which are guardians of the past and heralds of the future, helps us to comprehend what is truth. It is dead if mechanically and unthinkingly accepted. It is alive if each generation consciously decides to receive it. Any system of thought should satisfy two basic requirements: it should state the truth and interpret it for each new generation. It must move back and forth between these two poles, the eternal and temporal. Truth is expressed in a human language formed by human thinking. The consciousness of this leads to a continual clarifying and fuller understanding of the truth.

The ultimate truths are truths of the spirit, and in the light of these the actual life has to be refined. Religion is hardly a dogma, but a working hypothesis of human conduct adapted to different stages of spiritual development and different

conditions of life. Whenever it tends to crystalize itself in a fine creed, spiritual rituals and philosophic reactions are set up, which throw belief into the crucible of criticism, vindicating the true and combating the false. These are doubtless great moments in the history of thought, times of inward testing and vision when, at the summons of the spirit's breath, blowing where it listeth, and coming whence no one knows, the soul of man makes a fresh start and goes forth on a new venture. It is the intimate relation between the truth and the daily life of people that makes the quest always alive and real.

It is a moment of emotion, a great feeling of sincerity, which impels me to confess that my hands tremble when I hold this book and remember the past. For, the author knows, and knows so much, about my loves and hates for the very mission that has now taken this form.

I wish all success to the author and hope he continues his laudable work with zeal.

"The Voice Within"

INTRODUCTION

It was some 20 years ago, during 1966-67, when, in connection with my research, I conceived the idea of writing. I kept on toying with the idea for long and could not do anything concrete until one evening in June 1982, when a friend transcribed a few tapes, and got a few books printed.

Joyous at this initial success, I took to this work more seriously.

'The incorrigible optimist' that I am, I attended more to action than to words of caution. For, people came to listen to me, and I have been amply rewarded. Luckily for me, there has been a very warm and encouraging response.

Believing in 'the breadth of vision' as the spirit of philosophy, I took care that the volume should not project or promote a single point of view but be a comprehensive conspectus that reflects all shades of opinion and, as such, mirrors the contemporary philosophic scene in its true colours. I wanted to, and happily can, compare it with an art gallery where work of all styles are exhibited, from the traditional to the modern, from the conformist to the nonconformist, from the graphic to the abstract, and so on. For, if we, e.g., begin with the 'soul' wherein it is maintained that the soul, like other natural existents, has evolved, that it is not only born and grows but can

also decay and disintegrate, then we also have a view that the soul is external, unborn, immortal and indestructible.

I am quite sure that anybody who cares to turn the pages of this volume shall find something of interest to him or her.

Naturally, I am happy and proud of the fact that this labour of love has been brought to a successful culmination. Apparently, it is a one-man show, but I must, and do, realize that even a one-man show is not possible without countless number of persons toiling behind the scenes. I am fully aware that my own role has been nothing more than that of a Zero, the value of which is only because of the numbers going along with it. It is to that effect that I thankfully acknowledge the debt of gratitude that I owe to "The voice within" who helped. I do not want to diminish my gratitude by mentioning names.

ISHWAR CHANDRA PURI

New Delhi, 1986

I.

SELF-REALIZATION

WHY did Socrates suggest that we should know our self? No one had ever suggested that one know one's self, because all knowledge is always of something else! A man may know millions and millions of things; he can become acquainted with the whole world, but if he is not aware of the "knower", he is still ignorant! He may become very knowledgeable but he will not become "wise". He may collect a lot of information and much knowledge, but the basic thing which makes one a "knower" is lacking—he is not aware of himself! But what, you may ask, is there to know about the self? It looks a little strange that this question should even be asked. People like Socrates are continually telling you to "know thyself"... but you do not want to know your self—you have already decided that you "KNOW" who you are. But do we really "know" what the "self" is? Even men with great philosophical and scientific insight are perplexed by this question. We are the self; what else is there to know about it? It seems very strange and even unnecessary that this question has continued to be asked for over 2,000 years. But it is a question still posed and still not fully answered! The most important question that mankind has ever encountered is "who am I?" But, it is a question which cannot be answered by

anyone other than yourself. You have to look within your own self for the answer. You have to search; you have to become a seeker. It is a question which is absolutely private, and only you are capable of knowing the answer. It can only be answered through a deep inquiry into the core of your own being.

Today, there are thousands of philosophers, poets, yogis and so on who are still busy working on this problem of "knowing thyself". In Indian lore, there is a story of a man who went to a yogi and knocked at his door. The yogi said: "Who's there?'' But there was no answer. There came a second knock and again the yogi asked: "Who's there?" Still there was no answer. The yogi shouted: "Why don't you say who you are?"—still no answer came! Third knock, the yogi screamed, "I said who are you? ... what do you want?" The man answered, "If I knew that, I would not be knocking at your door! I have come precisely for the answer to this question." This is the case with us all. You are aware that, deep down within you, somehow YOU are missing ... you exist but you don't know why; you don't know how; you don't even know WHO exists within you! You are somehow absent ... you exist absently. You "exist", but you do not know what this "you" is. You do not "know thyself!" Man is unable to explain what he (himself) is, and this absence of "self-knowledge" has caused us to identify our self with the things we possess, instead of the "one" who possesses the thing. What is "mine" cannot be "me"! It is this false identification with what is

"mine" but which could not possibly be "me", that creates all of our problems.

Whatever is mine cannot be me! If I say that this thing is mine, then it cannot be me! If I say that this jacket I am wearing is mine, then I dearly understand that the jacket is not me! When I assert that this jacket is mine, I am consciously aware of the fact that "I" am different from the jacket! That is why I call it "mine", and not "me". I possess it, I own and use it, I wear it. It is something that belongs to me; something I carry around with me, but it cannot be me. This mine/me distinction must be clearly understood in order to fully grasp the extent of the fallacy we are making regarding what we are. We say that this body is mine, yet this body cannot be me! We say that these are my eyes, yet these eyes cannot be "me" either! We say that this is my mind, yet the mind cannot possibly be "me"! "My" soul, "my" emotions, "my" this and "my" that—none of these things could possibly be "me", by the simple understanding of the mine/me distinction. Then what is the "me"? All that we have been identifying as the self belongs to us, but is actually not us. If it were, then we wouldn't call it "mine"—we would say it's "me"! What the "me" is, we have not been able to say yet. You have never encountered your self. You have never come face to face with your self—there has been no meeting. You simply "believe" you are this or that ... that you are the things you have become identified with.

Whenever we have attempted to describe our "self", we have only been able to describe that which belongs to us. Therefore, if we ever want to understand what is the "me", we must first discover who is saying "this is mine". Who is claiming? Who is this claimant who is saying the body is "mine"; the mind is "mine"; the soul is "mine" ... who is claiming all this? If we can discover who this claimant is, we will be able to finally answer the question, "what is the self?" Therefore, let us examine what it is that is making these various claims—this house is mine, this family is mine, these children are mine, this body is mine and so on? It does not take very long to discover that it is "human consciousness" that is making all these claims! If we were not conscious and not human, no such claims could be made! If you were unconscious, you could never make all these claims. Therefore, the identity of the individual, who is continually claiming that, this or that is "mine", is linked directly and exclusively with his own consciousness! Without it, no claims can be made.

Human consciousness seems to provide the answer as to what the self is. Knowing this, you will "know thyself". In the journey towards knowing the self, all we have to do is to discover the nature of our "own" consciousness. How are we conscious? What makes us conscious ... what makes us aware? Most people feel we are experiencing human awareness because we have a brain; that the phenomena of awareness and sensory perceptions are being generated by the human brain which,

while we are alive, creates consciousness. But this is not entirely true.

There are many instances where, while alive, we do not experience awareness, and yet, the brain and the entire physical system remains functional! Examine the state of deep sleep. When we are in a state of deep sleep, our brain is there, the body and all of its support systems are still intact; we are alive and yet we are not CONSCIOUS! We do not experience awareness! If the experience of consciousness was merely based on the physical apparatus in the human body, then consciousness could not be shut off while the physical system is still! Moreover, even if it is the brain in the physical body that generated human consciousness, there are still many species of conscious experiences which cannot be attributed to it. Certain cases of extra-sensory perception, e.g., recall of previous lives (reincarnation), are clear instances of the functioning of consciousness outside of the data field available to the human brain and the physical system.

Leaving out these extra-sensory experiences going on in human consciousness, if we confine our examination to simply "non" wakeful experiences, we discover that we are still able to have conscious perceptions which are not part of the physical system, i.e., dreams! Some dreams are so fantastic and bizarre that they cannot be traced to any experience or data picked up by the physical brain during the wakeful state of consciousness.

The perceptive apparatus of the physical body, which picks up experience via its sensory systems, receives impressions of the world around us, which in turn travel from the organs of perception, through the nervous system. and finally the brain picks up these messages. But it is ONLY WHEN WE ARE CONSCIOUS THAT THE BRAIN WILL PICK UP THESE IMPRESSIONS! Please make a note of this! If consciousness, which must causally precede experience, were not there the brain will not pick up any of the messages coming through the nervous system! If we are not conscious, the brain will not generate any response, even though it is functioning! Therefore, consciousness, per se, is the basis of perception and not the physical brain! However, the question of what makes us conscious still remains unanswered.

The question of what causes us to be conscious is a question that we have all been asking ourselves for thousands of years, and still we have not found the answer. Our scientists have only been able to tell us which part of the brain EXPRESSES this or that aspect of consciousness. They are able, to some extent, to tell us which part of the brain is at work when we have audio or visual perceptions and so on, but what is actually causing conscious perception they cannot say! They have not, in spite of their elaborate equipment and labs, been able to find this out. They can only say that a certain part in the centre of the brain, which descends down into the medulla oblongata, into the spine, when choked off, shuts down most of our perceptive

experiences, but not all. You still retain some control over a few of the motor activities.

Therefore, our scientists cannot say that consciousness is controlled and generated by this part of the human brain; because it is not. In fact, our scientists still have very limited information on what constitutes Consciousness. They still do not know what makes a man conscious. But it has become obvious, especially to scientists working in this field, that what enables us to be conscious is not something that is material. Yet it does seem to be embodied in matter, in the physical brain or in this physical body somewhere. But somehow or the other, we are still capable of having conscious experiences outside of the domain and field of data available to the physical system, i.e., certain types of dreams.

In certain dreams, people have dreamt that they were a little bird and that they flew out of a window and so on. They "personally" experienced being a bird! I am taking this kind of dream simply as an example of a "non" wakeful conscious experience and not for any other reason. Don't give it too much importance. But suppose you were to go to sleep and have this kind of a dream in which you are a bird. You become a bird and fly out of the window. You will then have the conscious experience of BEING a bird ... that you were actually a bird! Upon awakening, naturally you will discover that you are not a bird, but a human being with a human body. You realize that you don't have feathers, that you don't have wings and so on,

and that you cannot fly! There is no resemblance between the bird and yourself. But still you do not say, "In my dream 'I SAW A BIRD THAT FLEW OUT OF A WINDOW'!" You will say, "I WAS a bird and I flew out of the window!" The experience retained the personal self. It retains your own human consciousness, and if you say to a friend that last night you dreamt that you were a bird flying all around, your friend will say that this is simply nonsense! There is no resemblance between you and a bird. Just say that you "saw" a bird flying in your dream last night, otherwise people will think you are either stupid or have gone mad! But you will say, "NO! I didn't 'see' a bird ... I wasn't looking at some bird flying out of a window, I 'WAS' A BIRD! I never 'saw' it! I flew! I was flying!" It is the retention of the identity of being the SAME conscious experiencer when awake, whose body became that of a bird which compels you to make this claim! Here is a conscious experience quite outside of the physical body.

Human consciousness is thus capable of having awareness, in the form of a bird or otherwise, and can generate an experience of the world around it. Even "dream" bodies, which are bodies different from the human body with which we have identified ourselves, are also assumed to be the origin of human consciousness. In a dream, consciousness functions in a different form from this physical body. We walk around all over and come back to this form only when we awaken.

Consciousness, the capacity of the human self to have awareness and generate conscious experiences of the world around it, could not possibly be generated by the physical body or any part of it, i.e., the physical brain. Therefore, no wonder we say that this is "my" body, and that it is not "me"! It is just proper that we say this, because "me" is the consciousness that claims that this body is used by it; that it belongs to me—I just function through it! What, then, is consciousness, without the physical body, without a dream body and so on, like? The practitioners of the art of self-realization, based on their own personal experiences, have constructed a very simple model of the structure and anatomy of human consciousness.

II.

WHAT IS CONSCIOUSNESS

Before we examine the nature and structure of human consciousness, I would like to define a few terms that I will be using in the discussion of this subject. They have been used so loosely and with so many different meanings that one can easily become confused. These terms have been used by so many different minds, different backgrounds and conditioning that they are bound to have different meanings to you. Even in ordinary conversation, when one says something, one says it with one meaning; when it reaches the other person, he gives a different meaning to those same words. When this is the case with ordinary conversation, imagine the problem that arises when we discuss a subject as subtle as this. Understanding the meaning of these terms will enable us to avoid many problems arising from semantics and will enable the reader at once, to clearly understand exactly what I will be explaining. The terms that I would like to define are: consciousness, awareness, attention, subconsciousness, superconsciousness, unconsciousness and "psychic" energy forces. These are all terms which I will be frequently using. Therefore, it will be useful to know what they mean. This will facilitate the transfer

of a great deal of knowledge about the anatomy of human consciousness.

I am using the word consciousness in a much larger sense than it is commonly used. Consciousness is the possibility, the potential to be conscious, the compulsion to be conscious. It is the everlasting experience of being conscious. It needs no fuel; it needs no rest. It is pure energy ... perpetual internal energy! It is the totality of potential awareness ... the capacity to be conscious. Consciousness ... is not merely the capacity to be conscious at a particular moment, but it also includes the potential and possibility to be conscious at any given moment throughout the entire domain of the time-space continuum! Consciousness includes the potential to be conscious of the past as well as of the future! It even includes the capacity to be conscious of those experiences which occur OUTSIDE of the time-space continuum!

Consciousness, they say, is the totality of our capacity to have conscious experiences per se, whether we are immediately aware of it or not! Consciousness includes the conscious awareness of a contemporary experience, as well as the potential capacity to be aware of any experience—whether within the time-space complex or outside of it. On the other hand, awareness represents that region of consciousness of which we are conscious at any given time.

Awareness is the "present" field of consciousness—what we are now (immediately) conscious of. It is our "available" consciousness. Out of the totality of consciousness, something is flowing through time into immediate consciousness ... into awareness. This does not simply include that which is being perceived through the sensory system ... what we are now seeing, hearing, tasting and so on. It also includes the things you are not seeing or hearing, but have the potential to hear, see and so on. Those things which you can become aware of whenever you want to; which are "available" in the same time frame—these belong to the scope and domain of "awareness".

Attention is a probe, a narrowed down beam of awareness, which is focussed onto a particular area in the domain of the immediate conscious experiences available to us. Attention is that part of awareness within which we are moving around inside the domain of our possible experience, in order to become "more" aware of a certain part of it, to give it a greater significance in consciousness; to become "consciously aware" of it. Therefore, attention is simply that part of awareness which we use to focus our consciousness upon something. For example, the whole room you are sitting in is a part of your awareness—now.

But, your "attention" is on this book, this particular page and line ... this particular word! Therefore, your attention is picking up only a part of the "available" awareness in the room in which you are sitting! You can pick up other parts also, by shifting and

manipulating your attention from one thing to another. Whenever the attention is shifted from one object to another, you will be picking up certain parts in your field of immediate awareness, in order to have a closer look at them. Human attention is that faculty in consciousness which enables us to have this deeper experience of any part of the domain of our awareness. Human attention also performs another function in human consciousness. It also enables us to become LESS aware of a certain part of our experience! It's a double-edged sword, which cuts both ways. It can increase your power to be conscious of a thing, and at the same time it enables you to cut off the awareness of whatever you do not wish to experience! Later, you will see how this second feature of attention is even more important than the first.

Subconsciousness is a storage area. It is that part of consciousness in which our memories are stored. It is that area of consciousness which lies outside the field of our immediate awareness. Subconsciousness is that part of consciousness of which we are unaware by virtue of "forgetfulness"; by virtue of the shutting down or inhibiting of the memory process. But it can be regained and brought back into the field of our immediate awareness when we turn on memory process.

Unconsciousness is simply another name for subconsciousness. It is a more modern term and is used more frequently than subconsciousness because subconsciousness is not really a "part" of awareness—we have actually forgotten it. Therefore,

the word "unconsciousness" has been preferred, but there is no real difference between the two of them.

Superconsciousness is the capacity to bring into awareness the level of consciousness lying outside the field of our immediate awareness through a process of "expanding" awareness! Thus, the distinction between subconsciousness (or unconsciousness) and superconsciousness would be that subconsciousness can be brought into the field of awareness by the use of MEMORY—whereas, superconsciousness is brought into the field of awareness by the technique of expanding awareness ... often referred to as meditation.

"Psychic" energy force is the flow of "currents" of consciousness coming through the centres of the physical body, from beyond the scope and domain of awareness. "Psychic" energy flow is that part of consciousness which operates through energy centres in the physical vehicle of the human body. It enables the experience to flow outwards, as well as inwards. It enables an experience to be "objective" or "subjective" ... or both! The physical body has a continuous flow of conscious energy, of consciousness, travelling through all of its parts! This energy flows out, from the body into our experiences lying within the domain of awareness. It flows out through sense perceptions. It then sustains these physical experiences, and makes them a close circuit experience. This energy flows through the human body from fixed centres, which then function as the focal points for the flow of consciousness throughout our physicality!

Having defined these terms, it now becomes clear that when we speak of levels of consciousness, we are not merely speaking of levels of awareness, but, more fundamentally, we are speaking of levels of "possible" awareness—levels of potential awareness.

A higher level of consciousness is qualitatively different from a higher level of awareness, and is not merely "knowing" more about the world around us. I am making this point because very often students of awareness, and even practitioners of the art of meditation, make the mistake of regarding expansion of awareness as raising the level of consciousness. One can know a great deal about this world by increasing awareness, but it would not mean he has attained a higher level of consciousness. For example, suppose you are now aware of the room you are sitting in, but not aware of the rest of the world around you. You then decide to become aware of it by "raising" your level of consciousness through some particular technique or meditational practice. Actually, the level of consciousness you have "attained" remains the same as before. It is the same level of consciousness at which, initially, only the room was in awareness, but afterwards more of the world came into awareness. The rest of the world comes into awareness—this is all that has happened! This kind of "expanding" of one's awareness does not lead to any "higher" level of consciousness. One has simply expanded one's "awareness" at the SAME level of consciousness! Yet, there are hundreds of students and

practitioners of the art of meditation, who go on thinking that since something more has come into their immediate field of awareness, they have, in fact, reached a higher level of consciousness. This, however, is not true. What then are these higher levels of consciousness?

These higher levels of consciousness are related to our concepts, at any given moment, of what the "self" is! When we regard this physical body as our own self, then we are in the "physical" level of consciousness! All of the awareness that comes to us about the physical world, about anything that is happening on earth, in this physical universe, would constitute degrees of awareness within a single level of human consciousness called the "physical" level of consciousness. This physical level of consciousness would represent our "wakeful" state. That is the state of consciousness you are now in, the state in which you are reading this book. This state is called the "wakeful" state of physical consciousness. This is considered one of the lowest levels of human consciousness. If, while in this state of consciousness, you happen to have a number of weird or bizarre experiences, it would not constitute a change in your level of consciousness. They would only be different experiences. They may be different degrees of awareness, but the level of consciousness would be the same, i.e., the physical "wakeful" level of consciousness.

When you go to sleep and have a dream, then this "dream state" would constitute a still lower level of consciousness! Why

lower? Why not different? Because, in the dream state, you do not even use the physical body at all. You use a "dream" body, which is different, more ethereal, and which has been created only for the purpose of that particular dream. It is the dream body alone which senses and experiences the dream world. Therefore, the "dream state" is a lower level of consciousness. It is sustained by a dream body, by an "imaginary" body that you have created yourself through the mental process of dreaming! Another reason why we consider the dream level of consciousness to be a lower level of consciousness is because the dream level is always "sandwiched" between two wakeful states of consciousness! When we are "awake", we can shut off this wakeful state of consciousness by going to sleep; by merely becoming "unconscious" of our physical body! When we relax and shut off the awareness of our physical body, we move into the dream state automatically! But it is an experience of a very short duration, followed by a much longer state of wakefulness.

In a long wakeful state, a lifetime lasting many years between birth and death, we have many experiences of these short dream sequences, which are lower levels of consciousness. While we are asleep, we become unconscious of our body, and then a dream sequence starts. But when we wake up, we not only get back the consciousness of our body, we also realize that we were always in this world, even while asleep! This realization, that we were in this world all the time, makes the dream a lower level of consciousness. The knowledge that the

body in which we have slept; the body which was lying on the bed before and is still lying on the bed when we wake up, is all that is necessary to convince us that we were asleep. We don't have to open our eyes; we don't have to pinch ourselves to see if we are awake. All that is required is that we remember we went to sleep. The fact that we retain the continuity of the physical experience preceding the dream state proves that this "wakeful" state is more real!

The immediate recall of our earlier state of physical wakeful consciousness upon awakening, gives us certain proof that the dream state was only temporary, and not "real", and whenever we have an experience of a higher level of consciousness than this wakeful state, a similar change must also take place. It must be a kind of "awakening" into another kind of body, not this one, which we discover was existing throughout the duration of the "wakeful sequence"—a body of which we had become temporarily unconscious! Then, and then alone, can we say that we have raised our level of consciousness to a higher level!

When one examines the different experiences which have been regarded as superconscious experiences, one will find that many of these experiences are dream-like—one feels that the person must be having some weird or fantastic dream, and is wrongly calling it a "higher" level of consciousness. You may be a very wise and learned dreamer; you can be very knowledgeable in your dream, but a dreamer is a dreamer. You can dream of very beautiful sights and scenes of golden temples and sweet music

... even of heaven, but no dream, however beautiful it may be, however great it may look, could ever be a higher level of consciousness, unless it results in a "higher" state of wakefulness. If it does not provide us with a body, in which we have consciousness over a much longer period of time than in this physical body, it is not a higher level of consciousness! When you attain a real and truly higher level of consciousness, you will wake up into a different body which exists at that level of consciousness; which has been with you all the time! It was there, even while you were having this physical experience. This, then, is a very easy test to apply. Many yogic states, which are misunderstood to be higher levels of consciousness, are merely different levels of awareness contained in the "same" level of consciousness, namely, the wakeful level. Very often, these trances which yogis can attain are trances induced by a type of "sleep" in which the dream episode is regulated. But a dream is a dream, however regulated it may be! It is "maya", an illusion, the "stuff" of which dreams are made. These so-called "inner" experiences may be unusual, and perhaps even beautiful, but they are mistakenly being called superconscious experiences—experiences of a higher level of consciousness.

Most of them will be found not to be experiences of a higher level of consciousness, but a different awareness at the same level of consciousness. When a higher level of consciousness is experienced, you will have the sensation of waking up from a dream! You will recall, in your own memory, the point of time

when you fell "asleep" into this lower wakeful state of consciousness. Unless this recall comes, you cannot be sure of having had an experience of a higher level of consciousness.

When we wake up from a dream, we don't pinch ourselves, we don't ask questions and so on. No proof is required! Every morning you wake up; every night you go to sleep. But you never go about asking people if you are awake or still dreaming! You never do this. You are CERTAIN that you are awake. What makes you so certain? It is the recall, the memory of the fact that you went to sleep! If you did not remember that you had gone to sleep, you would never be sure that the intervening experience was a dream. In other words, to have a dream, you must first be awake! In the same way, in order to have a higher experience than this wakeful level of consciousness, there must be the recall of a higher level of consciousness from which we had earlier descended, (in a dream-like way), into this present wakeful level of consciousness! When we rise back to that higher level of consciousness, the experience should be identical to that of waking up from a dream. We should be able to recall when we went into this lower state of physical wakeful consciousness. It is precisely this kind of proof that comes to those who are able to truly shift their level of consciousness one step above this physical level of consciousness, to what is called—the "astral" level of consciousness.

What happens when you shift the level of consciousness one step up to the astral level? When this is done, the reverse of

what happens when you go into the dream state takes place. When you go into the dream state you merely pick up a few of the perceptions from the wakeful state and rejumble them into a less coherent, less consistent framework of rules and laws and we then have an experience within this framework. In the present state of wakeful consciousness, we experience everything in a regulated time frame. Todays follow yesterdays and tomorrows follow todays. However, in a dream, this need not happen. Todays can be followed by yesterdays and so on, and it will not bother you in a dream. Time gets all jumbled up, flows backwards, discontinuously. Yet never do such dream experiences seem unusual. While in that state of consciousness, it looks odd and even queer, but we still regard those events as REAL! In a dream, we often do some of the most bizarre things. We can defy all the laws of nature pertaining to the wakeful experience; yet they are accepted as natural and real while the dream lasts. In the wakeful state we must follow the laws of gravity. However, in a dream, we may walk on the ceiling and it would not bother us! We carry people from the wakeful state and, in our dream, we jumble up their relationships to us and to each other. Your wife may be your daughter in a dream or your boss becomes your son and so on, and yet these jumbled-up roles seem quite real to us while we are in the dream state.

It is only when we shift our consciousness, to the higher wakeful state of consciousness, do we see the "higher reality" on which the dream had been based. Similarly, this whole world is like a

dream and has a higher reality than we can see at this level of physical, wakeful consciousness. Just look around you. Watch the people you are around; look at their faces. Notice how they are moving about. Watch their gestures, and so on. A few are simply talking to themselves, no one is really listening to anyone. Their lips are just moving; they themselves don't even know what they are saying! Everyone seems to be in a dream, in a world of his own—that is why there is so much conflict and friction.

Each person is living in his or her own dream world, so that whenever two persons come close, friction occurs, sooner or later. It is bound to happen because their "dreams" cannot coincide—and everybody wants to impose his dream upon the other. This is the problem, because you cannot interpose your dream with another person. You cannot share it with others. You cannot force your husband or wife to "see things your way!" He or she is dreaming, and so are you! And dreaming is such a private phenomenon that you become completely unaware of the "real" world which surrounds you. This reality can be "seen" at the next higher level of consciousness ... the "astral" level of consciousness!

III.

THE ASTRAL LEVEL

At the astral level, the same people we know at this wakeful level of consciousness are seen in a much more "real" sense. At this physical level of Consciousness, we are having a distorted experience and, therefore, people appear to be doing stupid and foolish things. But, this is a lower level of consciousness, and if we could see these same people from a higher level of consciousness, they would be seen to be far more consistent, far more beautiful and wise, than now. This foolishness that we are seeing in them at this physical level of awareness is a distortion of their "higher reality" taken from the higher (astral) level of consciousness!

At the astral level of consciousness, everyone is more beautiful, more intelligent and wise; events are much more consistent. Individuals who have experienced this higher astral level of consciousness, who have "awakened" into this higher level, recall that they were here before going into this "dream-like" wakeful state. And they have described the experience as a very beautiful one: an experience in which they were able to see the light and the beauty in all things and in all people. People who look so ugly at the physical level of consciousness are seen to be

really radiant and beautiful from the astral level. They have light glowing around them! Even nature is seen to be much more beautiful than ordinarily conceivable at a lower level of consciousness. The astral experience is "aesthetically" superior to anything that we know of at this level. Even in terms of our non-sensual experiences, everything is very different!

At the astral level of consciousness, it is no longer necessary to use words in order to communicate! The method of communication used by those who have awakened to the astral level of consciousness is telepathic. They simply think out something and the other person knows what is being thought! The normal means of communication at the astral level is telepathy, although at this level of consciousness one can also use speech, if one so desires. Words are used merely to add beauty to communication. Everything connected with this higher astral level of consciousness is superior, especially the amount of knowledge we are able to pick up. There is a storehouse of knowledge there which is based on the work done by the "astral conscious" people for billions of years! Here, at the physical level of consciousness, we go to a university or library and select a particular subject to know more about it. We read various books on physics, chemistry, etc., and we are then able to benefit from the history of the scientific research done in these fields. If we want, we can do experiments to build upon the work already done in certain areas. Similarly, at the astral

level of consciousness, we are able to do the same thing ... with one big difference.

If you are interested in a particular subject, you go to the "AKASHIC" libraries and there, not only will you be able to study what HAS been done, but also what WILL be done on earth for the next 2,000 years! It is a different kind of learning experience. People who have been able to get into this higher level of consciousness are collecting immense knowledge in those libraries. Knowledge, which can be verified again and again, is available there. Not only is the knowledge available at this level much greater, but the whole concept of time and space is also different there!

At the astral level of consciousness, we are able to travel huge distances to any part of space. There, we are not bound by the velocity or the speed of light as we are here! At this physical level of consciousness, our sensory perceptions are confined to this physical body and the various mechanical means of locomotion devised for its use. None of these are able to travel faster than the velocity of light. And because of the relatively low velocity at which we are able to travel, our experience gets restricted to a very, very limited area of space. Scientists have very recently discovered quasars travelling at velocities greater than the velocity of light, at the fringes of space. Beyond the velocity of light, there exists an immense space, completely inaccessible to anything which cannot exceed the velocity of light! At this lower physical level, because we move far below

the velocity of light, we can never cross over to have any experience in this part of space.

We can "transcend" the speed of light. We are actually able to have locomotion—to have mobility at much "higher" velocities than light ... over much greater distances than the distances available to the physical body. Therefore, the space which we have for travel is correspondingly much greater at the astral level. A trip even to the very fringes of space, as we know it, would be nothing compared with the trips one can make at the astral level of consciousness! This is an experience which anyone can have, by shifting to the higher "astral" level of consciousness. This is not simply a theoretical possibility. It is a practical possibility as well. All that is required is the "raising" of consciousness one step above this present wakeful state. When this is done, we discover that we have the capacity to see better, to communicate better, to hear better ... the capacity to do everything with the senses better, at the astral level of consciousness. All of these capacities lie dormant in human consciousness.

The question naturally arises as to what facilities are available to us for such "astral" travel and experience. We use what is called the "astral" body. It is our "vehicle" for experiences at the astral level of consciousness. The "astral" body is nothing more than the "pure" form of the sensory perceptions that are locked up in this physical body! It is the gross material out of which this physical vehicle of human consciousness is constructed that

limits our movement. When we want to go somewhere, what keeps us from going there directly and immediately? It is the physical body! You have to carry it with you. If you did not have to carry it, you could go anywhere you want anytime, and AT ONCE! What prevents you from flying out of your window right now and taking a trip around the city? The world? It is the physical body! It would fall down and be broken to pieces if you tried to fly out of your window right now! If you could somehow be relieved of the grossness of the physical body, you will find that there is nothing in your sensory system of perception preventing you from having the entire experience of this world ... of the universe! The astral body, which enables us to have this "astral" experience, is being carried by, or is locked up within us all the time!

In fact, our sensory experiences—even while functioning with this physical body—are arising from the astral body (which exists inside the physical body)! If this astral body were to cease, even just for a second, this physical body would become simply a lump of dead clay! We would have no feeling left in it! All the feelings, all the senses, all the perceptions experienced through the physical body are arising from the presence of the astral body residing within the physical body. Our sensory system exists per se, and is entirely independent of this physical body. So, when we are able to free the operating of our sensory system from the restriction of the physical body, we regain the capacity in consciousness to function entirely free from the

limitations of time and space! This experience is often referred to as "astral projection", or "astral travel", because it is with the astral body that we are able to have these kinds of beautiful experiences.

The astral body shines and glows and has a shape very much like that of this physical body. It has hands and feet with which it moves from place to place. This astral body does precisely the same thing that is done by the physical body, except that it functions with infinitely greater speed, beauty and efficiency! Only those who have had the astral experience are able to know how beautiful it is. I don't know why I am even trying to describe it in words. I am just trying to convince you that it is a superior state of consciousness, by highlighting some of the features of the astral experience. We were all in this "astral form" before we were born! Birth is merely the process of falling asleep into this physical level of consciousness. What we are considering as a lifetime is nothing more than a dream arising from the astral level of consciousness, and at the time of what we call death the astral body "awakes". We will then recall that we had simply fallen asleep! The entire set of memories from the previous life we led, prior to birth, comes back into our recollection and we can see them! When we are able to have the astral experience now ... to "DIE WHILE LIVING" ... we are then able to explain many things that we otherwise were not able to comprehend. For example, we meet many people whom we dislike at first sight. We don't know why, because they have

never done anything to harm or hurt us. At the astral level of consciousness, we are able to see exactly WHY! We are able to see the nature of our relationship with that person at this higher level of reality and how this "reality" has been reflected, to some extent, at the lower level of physical consciousness.

At the astral level, we see what they did to us and what we have done to them. We come to realize that it was a lesson learned from this previous astral episode, which now causes us to dislike a certain person, for no "apparent" reason, at this lower level of consciousness. Also, we meet people whom we immediately like. Why? The same reason! There are some places we go to and feel we have been there before. What is referred to as "deja vu", the feeling of having "seen" it all before. Yet, physically speaking, we know that we have never been there before! When we "awake" to the higher astral level of consciousness, we are able to recall precisely when we saw that place or thing for the first time. It was seen in an earlier episode from the previous life, before we slept into this physical level of consciousness. These are just a few of the experiences we all have had which convince us of not only a higher level of consciousness, but also give us an insight into many other perplexing experiences which we are unable to explain. The astral level of consciousness is only one step above in the hierarchy of levels of human consciousness. There are possibilities of raising levels of consciousness far above this. What would be the next step?

Above the astral level of consciousness, there is another level of consciousness which we call the "mental" or "causal" level of consciousness. When we awake further from the astral level of consciousness to the causal level, we are then able to see people in their pure mental forms. We no longer are restricted to seeing them in the categories of sense perceptions. At this causal level of consciousness, we no longer communicate with each other by telepathy, but by direct perception! Direct perception is entirely different from telepathy! With telepathy, one says something in one's own mind, and then the other person listens with his mind.

In direct perception, you don't say anything! The other person, who has also attained causal consciousness, already "KNOWS" your thoughts. It is what we call "transference" of understanding. It is a common experience at the causal level of consciousness to communicate through the transference of understanding. The recollection of memories that we regain at the causal level of consciousness goes back to the very beginning of time! To the very first instance of time, whenever that was. And, our knowledge moves onwards to the very edge of time, whatever that means. At this causal level of consciousness, we are able to see that in the astral experience we merely picked up a part of this causal experience, confined it to a certain time frame and went through it like a dream. And then, some part of this astral experience was picked up in the physical level of consciousness, and projected upon the screen

of this physical world where we experienced it! In the causal level of consciousness—the "pure" mental level of consciousness—it is not just this mind sitting in this physical body, but the actual "shifting" of our level of consciousness, and our experiences are far more beautiful. Our knowledge greatly transcends that of the astral level!

When we are able to awake further from the astral level of consciousness, through an actual process of wakefulness ... when this takes place, we gain access to all that has ever happened and all that will ever happen to us! Not only to us personally, but to anybody ... anywhere in the world! We regain a universal memory, a universal mind, a universal repository of experience which is available to us at this causal level of consciousness. It is difficult to describe the beauty and immensity of knowledge flowing at this level of human consciousness! The entire "universal mind", the single mind which operates through millions and billions of individual minds at the lower levels of consciousness, is available to us at the causal level of human consciousness! Through the causal mind we can know the entire content of all the individual minds that exist or that will ever exist! The experience and knowledge accessible to the causal or universal mind is so immense; the beauty of this experience is so tremendous, that there is no parallel to it at the lower levels of astral and physical consciousness! It is a remarkable experience.

The experience of knowing the contents of all minds, at once, is so unique and so unusual, that there is no possibility of any dream-like yogic experience ever being compared to it. Causal consciousness is a much higher experience than these lower "astral" experiences. When we are able to reach the causal level of consciousness, we are able to have experience through "pure" mind, without the restriction of the grosser astral body. The astral body is as restrictive and gross upon the causal self as the physical body is upon the astral self! At the astral level, we discover that we had been unable to do or go where we wish because of this physical body.

Similarly, at the causal level, we discover that the astral body itself prevents us from having immediate and complete experiences! All of our astral experiences are divided into the various categories of sensory perception, i.e., seeing, tasting, smelling and so on. We are limited to the experiencing of the "whole" through its parts. Astral consciousness provides us only with "partial" experiences of reality! Human attention plays an important role in all astral perceptions and the narrow scope of attention restricts and limits our experiences. We are only able to have a "part by part" regulated awareness of an experience ... never the direct, simultaneous experience of the whole! At the causal level, that is the third and next higher level of consciousness above the astral level, you become "one" with the entire "mind" of all mankind ... the universal mind! You are able to "know" directly, and not part by part, the entire

experience undergone by all minds, throughout the whole history of mankind, as well as all the future experiences of mankind! It is a tremendous experience, and there has been no way, for those who have attained this level of consciousness, to describe it!

Even those who have just heard about it, and have tried to describe it could only say, "neti, neti"—not this, not that! They said there is no way to describe it. How can you describe an experience in which the totality of the human mind can be experienced all at one time? The causal experience, the level of the universality of mind, has truly been described by the practitioners of the art of meditation as the attainment of "God-realization". Of having FOUND God! God-consciousness has been equated to the consciousness of universal mind. The consciousness of what is called the "Brahma" in India ... the creator. At this causal level of consciousness, man becomes "one" with God. At this level of consciousness, all the knowledge that exists, or could ever exist, is known! One becomes "OMNISCIENT"! Everything that can ever happen in time and space becomes knowable at the causal level of human consciousness!

All "beginnings" exist at this level of consciousness. The beginning of every event occurring in time and space exists at this level! All "middles" and all "endings" of these events are also included here! Everything that has ever happened, or will ever happen within the time-space-causation framework, lies

here at the causal level in human consciousness! It is one of the most beautiful experiences available in human consciousness! And all of this is attained by awakening from the astral level of consciousness by an actual, wilful and deliberate experience of "wakefulness" ... of waking up from the astral level of consciousness. When this happens, we are able to recall the previous state of consciousness we had before sleeping in the astral level of consciousness. The whole of our memory comes back to us! The total memory of all mankind comes back to us, and we recall how this total experience was split up into various segments, in order to sustain the dream sequences below. The totality of all possible experience is stored at this causal level of consciousness.

So much having been said about this causal level, you are probably presuming that there can be no higher level of consciousness beyond this! At this level everything is included even God. Therefore, many practitioners of religion, yoga, meditation and so on have taken it as the last and the highest state of consciousness. They have said that this is the ultimate level of consciousness. When one has reached the region of universal mind, what else could there be beyond it? What else could there be beyond time, space and causation? And yet, I say, there is still a level of consciousness beyond this causal level of consciousness! This is the level beyond the mind, which is called the level of "pure spiritual consciousness".

IV.

THE MIND—AND THE SOUL

What, then, would this fourth level of consciousness beyond the mind, beyond time, space and causation be like? Whatever I have described up to this point—the totality of human experience—all takes place in time, space and causality. Everything that is there at the level of causal consciousness, universal mind, universal memory, universal experience ... all these experiences, even if universal, are locked within the framework of time, space and causation! This totality of experience is confined to the time-space continuum. The level of pure "spiritual" consciousness lies beyond time-space and causation.

At this level of consciousness one is able to experience the pure soul! It is the experience of pure human consciousness, without any restriction from the mind from the time, space and causation framework. Please note that the mind is not material, not something that exists per se. This must be clearly understood. When human consciousness operates within this time-space-causality framework, it is called the mind. The mind is merely a term which connotes the behaviour of human consciousness as it operates within this continuum. At the pure spiritual level of consciousness, the restriction of time, space

and causation does not come in the way of the freedom of human consciousness.

We have noticed how, at each of the lower levels of consciousness, there was always something which inhibited and restricted the functioning of the next higher level of consciousness. In the dream state, below the physical wakeful state of consciousness, the jumbled rules and laws of nature restricted freedom of experience. In the wakeful state, the physical level of consciousness, the gross physical body restricted our freedom and range of experience. At the astral level of consciousness, the sensory system and its division of perception into senses restricted our freedom. And at the causal level of consciousness, it is time-space and causation which restrict the freedom of our conscious experiences.

But, when we rise to the level of the human soul, to the level of pure spiritual consciousness, we are able to have conscious experiences unfettered and unrestricted by any of these things! We discover that we are pure, intuitive souls! Pure, intuitive, conscious beings, not restricted by any laws, any bodies, any division of perception or any time, space and causality! We don't need bodies, we don't need the mind or any of these apparatus in order to have conscious experiences. At this "intuitive" level of consciousness, we discover that these were simply encumbrances upon consciousness! They were not aids. We discover that, in fact, they were cages in which consciousness had been locked.

At the pure spiritual level of consciousness, we regain an awareness that transcends the collected awareness of all the levels of consciousness below it! In Indian terminology, they could find no other way to describe this experience except by the word ... "par-brahma"—that which is beyond the "brahma", the Creator! Since the universal consciousness available at the causal level of consciousness has been considered as the level of the Creator, this state of pure spiritual consciousness has been called par-brahma ... beyond the Creator.

Therefore, you can imagine from what has been said so far how difficult it would be to describe that state of consciousness in which a person can experience that which is beyond the Creator! When we say that, "In the beginning, there was God and he created the heavens ...," we are referring to the Brahma, the creator of all that came into existence AFTER time! Because the "beginning" was there before the creator. If, in the beginning the creator did this and that, then there was a "time flow" even before the creator! He had to start from the beginning! Who created time? Who created the beginning? Who was beyond beginning ... beyond the creator?

The human mind cannot possibly, with any amount of effort, conceive of a God that is beyond "time", beyond the beginning! The highest God that the human mind and intellect can conceive of is one who was there after the beginning. And I am now speaking of a dimension of consciousness that lies beyond time itself! Even when no time existed, we, as conscious beings existed! The capacity of consciousness, the ability to be aware, was and will remain when all time ends! And those rarest of

practitioners of the art of meditation, those who have reached this fourth level of pure spiritual consciousness, have described it as being so luminous and so bright, that the light coming from our solar sun would be like the light of a match in comparison!

Even if you put ten (10) or twelve (12) suns of this solar system together, it would not equal the brilliance of a single soul! Such is the lustre of the human soul! And yet, at this pure spiritual level of consciousness, this immensity of light coming from the human soul looks natural! It seems to be just natural that each of our own conscious selves should have so much light. All of this light has been cloaked and covered by these gross bodies. The physical body, the astral body, the mental body ... these covers do not let the light shine through. This light is the light of our own consciousness. But it has been covered by so many masks that we cannot see this light at the physical level of consciousness. But, when we are able to raise the level of consciousness to the fourth level, to the level of pure soul, we are able to experience our own light, as well as the light of all other souls! The most interesting thing is, that as we rise higher in the levels of consciousness, not only do we experience higher wakefulness, but we also experience ourselves over a much larger span of creation! We experience a widening of awareness and a much greater intensity of aesthetic beauty. Everything becomes perfect! Once this state of consciousness has been attained, your life becomes a melody of tremendous harmony, a festival ... a celebration! All doubts, all problems, all suffering and misery simply get dissolved! You soar for the first time, and life becomes a great symphony of joy, love and happiness! At

the pure spiritual level of human consciousness, we are able for the first time, to know who and what we are.

At this soul level of consciousness, the Socratic challenge to "know thyself" is accomplished! And, at last, we have been able to free our consciousness from all the covers which were coming in the way of attaining self-knowledge. There were the mind, the senses, the physical body, dreams and so on, blocking our "self-awareness". Having transcended the lower levels of consciousness, we are able, at last, to experience our "real self" ... the "me" that we had been mistakenly identifying with the covers upon our consciousness. For the first time, one can say ... "I KNOW WHO I AM."

Below this level of soul consciousness, one does not know who he is! At the physical level, the body is merely a coat being worn over consciousness. At the astral level, the sensory system of perception through which we experience the world, are merely the "windows" through which our consciousness looks out. The mind is just a house; a framework in which consciousness sits. But at the spiritual level of consciousness, we are able to experience the real self ... to experience "pure" consciousness! It is the highest flight of consciousness that one can imagine! Yet I must say to you that this is still not the highest level of human consciousness!

The pure spiritual level of consciousness looks so beautiful, so high and so complete that there doesn't seem to be anything beyond it, and when we try mentally—even intuitively, or by any known process of acquiring knowledge—to think of

consciousness beyond this level ... we fail. All known methods of knowing, including intellect and intuition, will lead to the conclusion that the spiritual level is the highest level of human consciousness. Yet, there are some practitioners of the art of meditation, who tell us that this is still not the highest level of consciousness! What, then, is restricting consciousness at the level of pure spiritual consciousness?

What is the final cover which is still being worn by human consciousness? The final cover that is restricting consciousness at this fourth level is that of "individuation". Individuation restricts and limits our consciousness to being only one consciousness among many. At the fifth level of consciousness, at what is called "TOTAL" consciousness, we discover that the entire scope of conscious experience is being had by only one experiencer. You discover that there is only one conscious being ... your OWN self! You transcend the experience of individuality ... of EGO! At this fifth level of consciousness, you come to realize your totality. Individuation itself was a cover. It reduced your consciousness to singularity and individuality. Therefore, it was a lower level of consciousness. The fifth level of consciousness is the highest level of human consciousness. Not merely the highest, but the level of total and supreme conscious experience!

At this level of consciousness, the barrier of individuation is removed and totality of your own consciousness is experienced unfettered by anything which inhibits its freedom. At this level of total consciousness, total freedom, total experience, total awareness and the totality of all possible conscious experiences

are included. There is absolutely nothing that is lacking at this region of conscious experience. From here, consciousness has digressed, by successive processes of sleep-like experiences, to this physical level of consciousness in which we are having all our experiences. It is the furthest leap from reality that human consciousness can make. Everything at this physical level of consciousness is dream-like, illusory … it is "maya"—the stuff of which dreams are made. We are born in this maya … we live in it … we think in it … we even dream in it. We are philosophers in it … we are scientists, teachers, doctors and so on. Stretch your ideas as far as you can, take them higher and higher, call them infinite or by any name you please—still, you will remain in maya. It cannot be otherwise! The whole of human knowledge and human experience at this level is an illusion, a dream … maya. Everything that is bound by the laws of time, space and causation is within maya!

I have tried to explain, to the best of my ability, what the levels of human consciousness beyond the physical level would look like. I could not say much beyond the causal level of consciousness, because the time-space causation continuum ends there. Beyond it, there is no time, no space, no causality. It is like a seed, which flowers when placed in the time-space continuum. Just as when you take a tiny seed and sow it, you do not see the big tree contained in it. Yet, the entire tree is contained in that little seed! It seems a little funny! But, when we allow time to release the potentiality locked up in that seed, the tree is revealed!

In the same way, when the seed of total consciousness is placed into the time-space-causation framework, the entire infinite, conscious experience of all of the creation is manifested! Everything that has happened, can happen or will happen, is contained in this level of total consciousness. The entire experience of billions and billions of years, as well as all timeless experiences, are included in this level of consciousness. No wonder, then, that when asked to describe this state of consciousness, the only reply from those who have experienced it has been … wonder, wonder! Nothing more about it can be said! With this basic understanding about the levels of human consciousness fully grasped, we are now in a position to explore some of the "deeper" aspects of consciousness.

This whole world exists because we are conscious. Consciousness is the "creator" of everything that we are experiencing at any of the levels of human consciousness. This "total" consciousness within us is, indeed, the creator of everything that exists. The world of creation, the world which exists around us, exists only to the extent to which we are conscious of it! If consciousness is lost or suspended, the whole experience of this world is lost. There would be nothing left to sustain any experience of it. There is no possibility of the world existing without human consciousness existing along with it. Without human consciousness being present, how will there be any experience of such a world? Who will experience its existence?

The entire creation has come into being from within, not outside. Therefore, it is human consciousness; the capacity to

be aware, which sustains our experiences of this and all other possible worlds. This capacity to be aware (consciousness) does not ever change! Experiences change, but the "experiencer", the human consciousness, never undergoes any change. It never has, and never will! All changes are "illusions" created by the human mind. It is the human mind which converts our capacity to have conscious experiences into the additional capacity to have experiences in time, thereby introducing the sensation of "change". When total conscious experience descends to the level of universal mind, it is divided into time—into beginnings, middles and ends, into todays and tomorrows, into days and nights, and so on. But this is only a DIVISION of conscious experience. Consciousness itself has not been divided!

These changes and motions in conscious experience are caused when consciousness functions through the time-space and causation framework. What are these things, time-space and causation? Are they something real, or just an idea? The German philosopher, Immanuel Kant, offers an explanation which is consistent with what Eastern philosophers have been saying for thousands of years. He states that there is no such thing as time, space and causation. They are simply categories of the mind! THEY ARE THE MIND! Mind is consciousness when it functions through the time-space-causation framework. The framework IS the mind! When consciousness is pumped into experience and picks up a beginning, a middle and an end, this is called mind. It becomes what we call a "mental" experience.

This mind, then, is the cause of all the changes we experience. We are still capable of knowing our own consciousness at this

level, but it will be in terms of changes. From the level of the mind, our conscious experience is then projected into the sensory system, and gets even further divided into sense perceptions. Each sense, in turn, then picks up a piece or a part of our conscious experience. Even then, consciousness per se, has not been broken up into these functional divisions of the senses.

Finally, on top of all this, the gross physical body is added. When conscious experience functions through the organs of perception in the physical body, it limits our experience to grossness, completely cutting us off from the original experience of "pure" total consciousness! But, even at this lowest level of conscious experience, human consciousness itself, the "experiencer" of all conscious experience, remains absolutely the same! Consciousness, which uses a soul, a mind, the senses and the gross physical body, remains unchanged and unaltered, at every level of human consciousness! It persists at all times and beyond all time! Human consciousness is never born and, therefore, never dies, never disappears.

The question naturally arises whether the self, whether total consciousness, which takes many other forms, itself has a form? When self-realization, when total consciousness is achieved, in what form will we experience it? Does total consciousness, from where all conscious experiences flow, have a form? Yes! It has a very subtle form, the form of a resonance, a vibration ... the form of a SOUND! This "sound" is emanating from the self, from the "atman", from the soul of man! When we raise the level of our consciousness to that of total consciousness, we discover

that this sound is actually coming from the total self! This sound originating from the total self, the ultimate creator of our conscious experience, manifests itself as an individuated soul! This sound is the form of our own consciousness. It sounds strange, but it is the truth. If I were to tell you that it is because we can "listen" to the "sound" of our own consciousness that we are able to have any experience, you will be very surprised. But it is the truth! All our perceptions: seeing, tasting, touching, and so on, are possible because we "listen" to this sound of our own consciousness. All these perceptions give us an experience because we can "listen".

When you see a thing with your eyes, how do you "know" what you are seeing? After seeing it, very quickly, almost simultaneously, your mind says to you, that's a flower or that's a house. When it says this, and you LISTEN to your own thoughts about what you are seeing, you then "know" what it is that you are looking at! These eyes cannot pick up any "meaningful" experience, unless the mind "comments" on what is being experienced! You have to listen to the "thoughts" accompanying sense perceptions, in order to have a conscious experience of the objects perceived.

You cannot hear without listening; you cannot see; you cannot taste; you cannot touch or smell without listening to the thoughts—to the "sound" accompanying these experiences in your consciousness. You can have no perception without listening! Therefore, listening or "surat", the power to listen, is the basic and most fundamental faculty in human consciousness. At the highest level of consciousness, it is found

that "nirat", the power to see, is simply an extension of surat, the power to hear! Therefore, the capacity to be heard is the chief characteristic of human consciousness. It is no wonder that God ... the ultimate Creator ... total consciousness, has been described as a "SOUND"! As that which can be heard! As that which can be listened to! No wonder that St. John's Gospel says that, "in the beginning was the "WORD" and the word WAS GOD!" No wonder that the Hindus believe that "OM", the first word of the Vedas, was the creator of the universe! No wonder that "Shabd", the "SOUND", has been described as the creator of this universe! No wonder the Greeks say that the "LOGOS"—the word—is the creator! That the Koran says that "KALMA"—the word or sound—is the creator! It is no small wonder why every major religion in the world, without exception, has used the same term, in its own language, to describe the creator as the word ... the sound ... that which can be heard! Whether it is Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism or any other religion, you will find that it is the sound, the WORD which has created this entire universe! If there was a beginning, the only thing that was there was the "WORD". It's remarkable! And whatever exists is a manifestation of this "current" of sound emanating from our total consciousness! One who becomes conscious of the highest manifestation of the sound, becomes one with the ultimate creator; becomes one with ... the LORD!

Therefore, the whole discovery of what is the "real" self, is the progressive discovery of the nature of our own consciousness, which we call the soul. The soul is known when we can experience our own consciousness, without the covers of the mind, the sensory perceptions and the gross physical body.

Total self is realized when we are able to remove the final cover of individuation. When all these things have been done, you are able to say that you "know thyself". That you are total consciousness, that, indeed, you are ... God!

V.

THE MIND IS NOT ALL

We are all trying to solve the problems that face us intellectually (with the mind). We are somehow convinced that the intellect is the best source—the best instrument in human awareness for the acquisition of knowledge; that it has the capacity to solve all of our problems. This belief, however, is erroneous. The problems of life cannot be solved by the thinking process alone. On the contrary, it is because of too much thinking, too much intellectualizing, that we are not able to find solutions to our problems. It has led only to the creation of more problems!

Whenever you bring the intellect in, it immediately dissects and analyzes the problem. Where there is only one problem the intellect will divide it into bits and pieces—into so many other problems. When you divide the reality of the situation, you falsify it, and, consequently you go struggling your whole life trying to solve these additional problems created by the intellect. You simply become confused; totally confused. Intellect, and the excessive use of it, always leads to more confusion—not clarity and certainty. Awareness and intelligence simply become clouded; clouded with doubts created by the excessive use of intellect. With the intellect, no problem can be made clear. Your awareness will become more unclear! But if you could somehow leave the intellect aside, if you could

suddenly transcend the mind and its mental processes, clarity and certainty will immediately flow into your awareness—things will automatically become clear! You will simply "know" the answers to all your problems ... intuitively! But the moment you allow your mind to enter into the problem, the uncertainty, confusion and frustration are experienced. There is no such thing as a "clear" mind; never has been and never will be. It is not the nature of the mind to be so. Mind means division of experience. When you understand the structure of the human mind and intellect, this will then become clear to you.

What is intellect? It is the power in human awareness to break experience apart, into pieces; the power to analyze; the power to see parts of the whole. This characteristic of the intellect to analyze through reasoning, by breaking things into parts and pieces, is what is responsible for the creation of all our feelings of doubt, uncertainty and the experience of all our fears. This may seem to be a strange and startling statement to many. We have always thought that the intellectual process contributes to the clarity and certainty of our conclusions about a thing, especially in Western countries. But, in fact, it leads only to the growth of anxiety, doubt and frustration. It does not contribute to the solving of any of the problems we are faced with in life. Yet, we do not give any attention to other faculties in human consciousness with which we could solve all the problems we are confronted with, i.e., the faculty of human intuition.

The capacity in human consciousness to pick up knowledge through the intuitive process has been dismissed as something which is simply an ephemeral hunch! Something which occurs

only once in a while, and then too by accident. There is no educational institution, to the best of my knowledge anywhere in the world, which scientifically and systematically trains and develops the individual's ability to pick up knowledge through the use of the intuitive process. It is my opinion that if a person is trained in the use of his intuitive faculty, just as he has been trained in the use of logic and the intellect, he could better understand and meet the problems that he will encounter throughout the course of his life. In order to fully appreciate the value of intuition, and the contribution it alone is capable of making to the scope of human knowledge, I must define what is meant, in terms of the processes in consciousness, by the words reason and intuition. They have been used so loosely and with so many different definitions that you can easily become very confused. For an exact understanding of this subject, an exact grasp of such terminology will be necessary. Understanding the meaning of these words, as I will be using them, will enable you at once to understand exactly what is being explained! It will facilitate the transfer of a great deal of knowledge concerning the proper roles of reason and intuition in the quest for knowledge.

Reasoning is the capacity of the human mind, through the use of words organized in various combinations, to draw a logical inference about the experience with which they are associated. In the process of reasoning, there must always be some premise, some kind of empirical data which is already known, which reason can then use to reach a particular conclusion. The steps that are undergone in connecting the data given to the conclusion reached, are called the steps of logic. Logic, inductive

and deductive, is continuously being used by each of us in order to draw inferences and reach certain conclusions about our individual experiences and problems. This process is what is called reasoning. This particular mode or function performed by the human mind has been commonly considered to be the most accurate process available in human awareness for the acquisition of knowledge. In fact, we imagine that the mind can do nothing else except reason. However, this is not the case. There are three parts and functions being performed by the human mind. I must add, in passing, that this classification is being made only for the purpose of understanding the mental process being performed by the mind. Please, do not take them too seriously. Mind is not something material, and, therefore, can have no parts. I am just using this kind of model for the sake of simplifying the analysis of the mental processes generated by the mind in human consciousness. What, then, are these three parts and functions of the human mind?

The lowest part and function of the mind is called sensing. The sensing part of the mind picks up the elements of sense perceptions coming through the physical body and gives them meaning. It does nothing else but absorb whatever is being picked up through the physical sensory system, i.e., through our eyes, ears, nose and so on. Please remember that the frames of experience which are coming through the physical senses, in themselves, have no meaning to us unless the mind interprets them! It is a very strange thing to notice, but if you are merely shown images of what the eyes see, or the few sounds that the ears hear, and so on, it would make no sense to you at all! It is the lowest part, and function of the mind, which receives these

elements of perception, puts them together and adds meaning to them. The cognition of sense perceptions constitutes the function of the lowest part of the human mind called sensing. Above this sensing part of the mind is the intellect.

Intellect is that part of the human mind, which does reasoning and thinking, which makes inferences through the use of logic. This area of the mind is functioning 24 hours a day ... from birth until death! This part of the mind is functioning every minute that we are alive, whether awake or asleep. We have already made a detailed examination of the excessive use of the intellect, and almost all of our activities in life are being guided by the knowledge generated by this part of the human mind. Above this part of the mind is the third and highest part. This upper part is called the "creative" part of the mind.

The creative part of the human mind rearranges the elements of sense perceptions, including the processes of reasoning that accompany them, and creates a new pattern of experience. This experience is then considered to be new and different. However, nothing new has really been created, except the pattern. What this part of the mind creates is simply a new pattern and design, and not the contents of the pattern. The design is new, but the elements in it always remain the same. It is this higher part of the human mind which performs the function of "creative thinking" that manifests itself in the form of art, music, poetry, etc. These, then, are the three broad functions of the human mind—sensing, reasoning and creativity. However, there is one serious flaw in each of these functions of the human mind, which makes it inadequate as a sole means of

acquiring knowledge. All three of these mental processes are confined to a framework of time and space and must obey the laws of causation ... the laws of cause and effect.

You cannot have sensing; you cannot have any experience of an event unless it is placed in time and space! You cannot reason, use logic or creativity without causality. The causal direction of the event must be known. Every event which occurs in the mental processes of the human mind is confined to the limitation of this framework of time-space-causation! This particular feature of the operation of the human mind has prompted many philosophers, both in the East and West, to suggest that there is, in fact, no such thing as the mind per se; that when consciousness operates within this time-space-causality framework, it is called mind! Mind, they claim, is merely a term which connotes the behaviour of human consciousness as it operates in the time-space-causality continuum. In order fully to appreciate the significance of what is indicated by this revelation, I will briefly recapitulate the structure of human awareness.

Human awareness, the capacity to be aware, consists of five broad levels. The lowest level is what we might call the physical level of awareness. This level of awareness arises from the identification we make with the physical body. We are continually identifying ourselves with this physical body ... with that which cannot be me! What is mine, cannot be me! By virtue of understanding this simple statement alone, when I say this is my body—then my body cannot be me! This is my body, I wear it, I possess and use it, but it cannot be me. It is the same

as when I say these are my eyes, my ears, my arms, my feet and so on. It does not mean that I am these things. This mistaken identification of the self, as being this physical body we are wearing, constitutes the lowest level of human awareness.

Our relationship with the entire world is based on the identification with the physical body at this lowest level of human awareness, i.e., father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, boss, friend, etc. All these relationships with the world we are experiencing are based on this identification with the physical body. When the mystics and philosophers speak about the lowest level of human awareness, they are referring to the awareness arising when consciousness is restricted to the physical body. Therefore, this body-awareness, which we consider so important, is in fact the lowest level of human awareness. Next, above this, would be the awareness which arises when consciousness operates via the sensory system alone, unidentified with the physical body.

But even when consciousness functions purely through the use of the sensory system, this awareness has also been mistakenly attributed to the physical body and its senses. For example, we feel that we are able to see only because we have these physical eyes, when in fact, even when these physical eyes are closed, we are still able to "see". We are able to visualize our friends, our homes, children and so on! Of course, you can say these things are not really there—that they are just being imagined—but I am not talking about whether they are really there or not. I am talking about the capacity to "see". Vision—the capacity to see; to have sight. This capacity is not restricted to the physical

eyes! It is not based on or does not arise from the physical eyes, yet we are always saying that we are able to see only when we use these physical eyes! The physical eyes can only see physical things, but we have the capacity to see things that are not physical. Can the physical eyes see our dreams or an abstract idea? The "seeing" is the same. Only, that which is seen is different. The same is the case with hearing. We feel we can only hear through the use of the physical ears, when, in fact, we are hearing without the physical ears all the time—twenty-four hours a day! We are listening to our own thoughts. How else can we know what we are thinking? These physical ears do not hear these thoughts. Yet, is the experience and quality of this hearing any different? No!

Therefore, the capacity to listen or to hear is independent of the physical ears. The case is exactly the same with each of the other sense perceptions. They all exist and function, per se, on their own and independent of the physical body. The assumption that sensory perceptions are confined to the use of their respective organs in the physical body is an entirely mistaken notion—a myth! In fact, if we could somehow retain consciousness, while eliminating our awareness of the physical body, we would still have experiences consisting of all of the sensory perceptions! When we are able to develop the capacity to experience awareness through the sensory system, without the use of, or dependence on, the organs of the senses located in the physical body, this would constitute the second level of human awareness which is sometimes referred to as the "astral" level of awareness. Above this is the mental level or "causal" level of human awareness.

At the causal level of awareness, it is discovered that it is not necessary to divide experience into the different sensory perceptions! At the two lower levels of awareness, there was the illusion that unless experience is picked up through the physical senses or is perceived independently with the astral awareness, there could be no experience of the world. But, at this third level of awareness, we discover that the mind has the capacity to pick up experience without having to divide it into multiple sensory perceptions! For instance, consider the experience of abstract ideas. When we speak about various abstract concepts, we understand and know them without use of the sensory system of perceptions—the experience is direct. It is not seen, heard, touched, and so on. It is an experience that does not require the use of the senses. It is experienced directly through the mind. If you examine this phenomenon a little closer, you will find that all of our experience can be directly grasped by the human mind. They need not be divided into sense perceptions.

We have become accustomed to using only the sensory system in order to experience the world. Therefore, we make the erroneous assumption that it is the sensory system which enables us to have the experience of the world around us. A much more complete experience of the world becomes available to human consciousness when we are able to function at this third level of awareness. The fourth stage in the level of human awareness is when even the mind is not needed in order to have experience! It is the level of intuition and we will explore it, in detail, in the next chapter.

Finally, there is the fifth and the highest level of awareness. It is discovered at this level of awareness that all the restrictions on human consciousness have been removed except one—the limitation of individuation. Even when you are able to experience the world independent of the physical body, the sensory system and the mind itself, this intuitive experience is still an individual experience. This individuation itself becomes a restriction and limitation on human consciousness. At this fifth and the highest level of awareness, the discovery is made that the entire scope of human experience is being experienced by only one experiencer! That there is only one conscious being ... the self! You transcend the experience of multiplicity, of individuality, of the illusion of the many! At this level of awareness, you discover the totality of consciousness. Then there is no such thing as individuality.

I have given this very brief description of each of these levels of human awareness to remind you of man's capacity to have awareness at much higher levels containing much higher knowledge and to show you that the intellect, over which we take so much pride and so many pains, is not the only instrument and source for the acquisition of knowledge. Intellect belongs to the second part of the third level of human awareness (the level of the mind); the level at which human consciousness operates within the time-space-causality framework.

VI.

THE ROLE OF INTUITION

Having understood the structure and anatomy of the levels of human awareness, we will now return to our examination of the mind, intuition and the details of the fourth level of consciousness—the level of awareness from where the intuitive process in human awareness arises. From this fourth level of human awareness, intuition flows and we are able to transcend the limitations of time, space and causation. We are able to pick up knowledge in experience, without any use of the mental processes, without sensing, reasoning or creative thinking! All "knowing" at this level of awareness takes place through the faculty in human consciousness which is called the "human soul".

The entire quantity of awareness possessed by man is contained and distributed by the soul to the lower dimensions of consciousness; it is the original source in you of all life ... of all your movements and activities. The human soul is the force which impels you to be alive; the force which sustains your being! It is the source of all human awareness, and yet there are millions of people who do not believe in the existence of the human soul! Many people consider themselves very intellectual and rational; for them everything requires proof! They say that there is no scientific proof of the existence of the soul—that it is

not something substantial or that if it exists at all, it is simply a by-product of the processes going on in the physical brain. It does not exist independent of the body and the brain; it merely comes into being ... it does not PRECEDE being! There is no soul. Where, they insist, is the proof of its existence? To these people, I say, how can you doubt the existence of this "doubter" (the one who is doing the doubting)? Eyes and ears do not doubt. What is doing this?

You cannot doubt the existence of your own consciousness! No proof is required. Its existence does not depend on logic and science ... it is existential. You cannot say, "I don't know whether I exist or don't exist". This is absurd! How can you say, "I don't believe that I exist?" There is no way to deny that you, the soul, pure consciousness without body, without senses and the mind ... exist! Everything else can be doubted.

One of the greatest Western philosophers, Descartes, used doubt as a method to reach this same conclusion. He started his search for truth with doubt ... very penetrating doubt. He was the consummate philosopher! He understood that unless there is a known basic fact, which cannot be doubted, he could not construct a philosophical system; there would be no foundation to build upon. If everything could be doubted or had to be proved with tricks—with words—then the whole thing would be just logic. It would have no practical or actual significance. Something deep down must be indubitable, which does not need any proof. Descartes, starting from this point, goes on examining one thing after another until, ultimately, he comes to the soul ... to his own indubitable existence! The self, the soul, is

indubitable because it is SELF-EVIDENT! No proof is needed; no argument and no logic is required ... it is self-evident. Descartes realized "cogito, ergo sum"—I think, therefore I exist; I am conscious, therefore I exist!

I have said so much because in the West we find very few people who will acknowledge the existence of the human soul. Even when they do acknowledge its existence, there are even fewer who make a distinction between the soul and the mind. The mind is abstract; thinking is abstract. The mind, without the aid of the soul, cannot experience reality. It cannot touch, it cannot see, it cannot hear or have any experience independent of the consciousness it derives from the human soul; it cannot experience reality. It can only think and, through thinking, contemplate upon the experiences being picked up by the human soul. It is an epiphenomenon.

The point which must be understood, in order to enjoy the distinction between the mind and the soul, is that the mind does not possess its own consciousness! It is not as if there are two beings within us, one mental and the other non-mental. There is only one conscious being; consciousness is being derived only from the human soul. The mind has no consciousness of its own! It is simply a device used by the soul in order to have a certain species of conscious experience. The mind and the mental processes it performs is being sustained by consciousness arising from the human soul; but because consciousness is constantly flowing through the mind, we get identified with it. We feel that we, as conscious beings, are the mind! This false identification with the mind is called ego. It is

this ego which gives rise to our assumption that the mind is the source of human consciousness, and, therefore, is the same thing as the soul. When, in fact, the difference between them is so immense, in terms of the quality of experience arising from each, that there is not even an overlap between the two!

The human mind, as stated earlier, functions only in time, space and causation, whereas the soul functions only OUTSTDE of time, space and causation! There is nothing common between the two! The soul of every human being has the capacity to have conscious experiences which do not suffer from the limitations of time, space and causality. This must be clearly understood. Soul is the capacity in human consciousness to use intuition. Suddenly, a flash of knowledge comes to us, we just "know" something! When did we seek it; when did this "knowing" happen? Where? How? These questions have no answers because there is no time, space or causality accompanying the function of the intuitive process in human consciousness. Very often, this sudden flash of knowledge is rejected by us because it is sometimes quite inconsistent with what the mind has been thinking. The reasoning process says that we should do this or that and suddenly an intuitive flash comes, which is very often inconsistent with logic and inconsistent with the conclusion reached through the mind. Yet, this non-mental "knowing" is always right! Intuition has never been wrong. The human soul, the capacity in consciousness to experience knowledge which lies beyond time, space and causation, also gives man the capacity to have another type of intuitive experience—the experience of LOVE; the capacity of complete identification with another human being.

Whenever you experience love for somebody it is a sudden, timeless, causeless, and spaceless experience! This great experience of love, which makes us lose our own identity and transfers all our attention to the beloved, does not occur in time, or space; nor does it follow the laws of causality! It does not result from any of the mental processes of the mind. One minute it is not there, and the next—it has totally consumed us. Afterwards, the mind can think about it, but this thinking and contemplation becomes a part of the mental process. Therefore, this "thinking" about love will take place in time, space and causality. It very often happens that the mind, by thinking so much about what is happening during this experience of love, destroys the experience altogether!

When you fall in love, the mind says, "Why have you fallen in love with this person?" You try to find some reason for it. Perhaps because she is beautiful, maybe it's her personality which attracts you, and so on. However, this is not the case. These things are beautiful because you HAVE fallen in love! This is what you do not understand! That is why you are also perplexed about other people's "love". You think the person is crazy; that he has gone mad! How could he or she love this kind of a person! It does not make sense! Love never makes sense because love does not come from the mind and its mental process; it is not a logical phenomenon! That is why we call it "falling"—you fall from the pinnacle of reasoning. You "FALL" in love! You lose your sense of reason; you go mad! Love is a sort of madness because it is not logical at all. The experience of love is of such a nature that it cannot be explained.

But without love, man is simply a corpse. Minus love, life is nothing but misery. Plus love, life is bliss. Minus love, you are an empty void—a black hole. Minus love, you are only pretending to be alive, but you cannot really live! How can there be life minus love? LOVE IS LIFE! With the experience of love, your life starts soaring for the first time—you have wings. Minus love, you are just crawling on tiny speck of mud, floating aimlessly amidst the appalling immensity of the physical universe! The significance of human existence is justifiable only if love is being experienced! The human soul, the capacity in human consciousness to experience love, as well as higher knowledge, also enables man to have another type of intuitive experience—BEAUTY. The experience of aesthetics.

Whenever we experience the beauty of a thing, the experience is identical with the experience of love and intuition. It does not subject itself to any of the laws of causality, time and space. When you look at a beautiful landscape or a beautiful painting, you experience the beauty of these things intuitively! If you analyze the whole landscape, part by part, you will not be able to find any beauty! The beauty is coming from the totality of the experience. It is a synthesis of all the parts of its composition, and this experience of the oneness is called beauty, and is being experienced by the soul of man! When you have the experience of beauty, it comes in a sudden flash of intuition. It is experienced when the mind has become completely silent. When you are not aware of the stream of thoughts flowing in it ... when verbalization ceases ... when the intellect has shut down ... when you are in a state of "no-mindness" ... this is when beauty is experienced! When the mind returns, when intellect

again takes possession of you, when you contemplate on what you are experiencing, the experience of beauty is lost.

These experiences of beauty, love and intuitive knowledge do not arise from any of the mental processes of the human mind, whatsoever! They are arising from the fourth level of higher awareness ... from the soul of man. It is an awareness which arises from a much deeper part of human consciousness which is beyond the scope of the intellect and the mind; and yet we do not regard intuition as a different function in human consciousness from that of the mind. We go on thinking that whenever the mind, working very fast, is able to execute the steps of logic rapidly, it is intuition. However, this is not the case. Intuition is something that arises in consciousness separately from the mind. The mind is incapable of the "pure" intuitive process.

There are certain "psychic phenomena" that are called intuitive, but are actually this other kind of "mental" intuition. This is not the kind of intuition of which I have been speaking. Some people can "think" very quickly, can go through the successive stages of logic very fast, but they are still functioning in time. Suddenly, a thought comes to them and they spend a few seconds thinking about it; then they are able to come up with an answer. Most so called "psychic" people, who are able to do these things, are merely capable of thinking very fast, and so are capable of "mental" intuition. They are capable of reaching certain conclusions very quickly, which would otherwise take a much longer time to be reached via the process of reasoning. Now this particular capacity of fast paced thinking, of coming up

with a quick answer, is not "pure" intuition. Their answer could be wrong or right because they are still using the mind. On the other hand, the pure intuitive flash of knowledge requires no time—not even a few seconds, and its answers are NEVER WRONG! The distinction between the two would be in terms of accuracy and time. In the pure intuitive process, no errors are ever made and no time is taken to know the answer.

Therefore, there is a very basic difference between the intuition which is based on the use of the mind, and that which arises from the soul of man. The intuition of which I am speaking is the capacity of human consciousness to function without the use of the mind. Now, the only question which remains is whether we can use this capacity of consciousness wilfully? Is it possible that we can use the mind up to a point, and then switch over to the use of intuition? Is there any particular technique or training available which can enable us to learn how to use the intuitive process? If there is, then we could avoid the numerous problems which result from the exclusive use of the mind. The reply that has been given by these Eastern philosophers and mystics is ... YES! All this can be done. They have said that there can be systematically arranged programmes to educate man in the use of intuition, just as there are schools which are designed to develop man's skills of reasoning and use of logic!

All of our schools and educational programmes are arranged to build up the individual's power of analysis; the power and capacity to break and divide things into parts. Reasoning and logic then proceed upon these parts in order to reach a conclusion about the whole. Our entire educational system, and

all the processes and techniques of teaching, rely upon the use of the analytical faculty ... the intellect.

The result is that whenever anyone comes out of a university, he has simply become a machine—a computer! It is as if he has no soul ... only intellect! And then he creates problems wherever he goes. He will create them because the university has given him only intellect and ego and nothing else. He has neither learned a single bit of humanity; nor one bit of humility. He has not touched a single bit of his soul! He has been stuffed with intellect, and this intellect gives him the feeling that he is very significant and important because he has a lot of so-called "knowledge"! He becomes identified with the intellect, with the mind ... the ego is strengthened, and now he creates every kind of problem that is humanly possible.

He will separate and divide life into politics, economics, and so on, which in turn breed jealousy, ambition, violence, cut-throat competition and constant struggle! We have intellectualized life! We have cut it up into bits and pieces, broken it into parts and are now wondering where the beauty of life has gone. The method of the intellect is to separate and divide. There is no other way in which the intellect can function except by breaking things apart, euphemistically referred to as analysis, whereas the soul of man functions not by breaking experience apart, but by joining things together by synthesis ... by LOVE! By synthesis we experience the beauty of the whole. When we experience life in its totality, the beauty of life reappears! The intuition, this much greater capacity for experience, which lies hidden in every human being is being destroyed by an excessive use of the

intellect. We have not done anything to develop this higher faculty available in human consciousness.

We must use this faculty of intuition, of synthesis, which enables man to experience things as a whole, to experience things totally! We have been trained to see only bits and pieces of a thing, and yet what our inner consciousness really wants to have is the total view—the total knowledge of things. Only the intuitive faculty in human consciousness can provide this. The intuitive process draws upon the totality of experience, which has taken place in consciousness throughout its entire history, and throws up, into our awareness, the answer! Reasoning, on the other hand, picks up only a tiny part of our experience, applies logic, and then reaches its conclusion. It is sometimes right and sometimes wrong. All logic, whether inductive or deductive, proceeds upon a given premise. A premise is merely a part of the experience which becomes the subject of our thoughts and the reasoning process. When we apply deductive logic to a premise, we gain no new knowledge. When we apply inductive logic, we can never be certain about the conclusion. In either case, the situation remains the same—unchanged.

Very often, the data that we proceed upon is itself inadequate. Sometimes we reason out exactly what we would do in a particular situation, and then later we find that what we had decided on was wrong. Not because the logic itself was wrong, but because we didn't know, at the time of our decision, the other additional data which was relevant to the situation! The absence of adequate data leads to wrong results, and this happens whenever we use the process of reasoning to make our

decisions. This is one of the biggest flaws and weaknesses of reasoning. It must rely, in most cases, on inadequate data, thereby making it incapable of supplying accurate and total knowledge. The process of reasoning proceeds from a given premise—a part of experience which is always limited. On the other hand, this limitation of data does not occur in the use of intuition.

With the intuitive process, there is no deliberate choosing of a particular set of data or premise. Intuition draws upon the total conscious experience of the human being! (The unconscious experience of the past as well as that which lies within the immediate awareness of the individual.) The intuitive process is based upon the entire scope of the individual's experience and knowledge! Not only of one's self (of one's personal past), but that of the whole history of mankind as well! This may seem hard to believe for those who are hearing it for the first time, but this total knowledge of experience is in fact being transferred from person to person, through the genetic principle. This huge storehouse of knowledge, containing the unconscious memories of the entire experience of human evolution, is accessible through the use of the intuitive process. INTUITION is based on this knowledge of the totality of the human experience. By having access to the entire history of human experience, it is easy for intuition (the soul of man) to arrive at the smallest details of a given situation and determine, with absolute precision, everything connected with it! When man uses the intuitive process in human consciousness, it is not confined only to the knowledge picked up from selected data. Therefore, when intuition has been developed and is properly

functioning, it can never go wrong! This is the experience of all those who have trained their intuition. They have found that a properly trained intuition never goes wrong. Whereas, even the best and most highly trained intellect very often reaches wrong conclusions—not because of any flaw in logic or in the reasoning process, but simply because of the inadequacy of the data being used. However, this does not suggest that there can be no deficiency in the reasoning process itself.

A well-known professor of philosophy at Harvard University, Professor Charles Sanders Pierce, has written several very interesting books in which he examines the deficiency inherent in the logic used in the reasoning process. In one of his books, he has dismissed the use of certain types of logic because they are entirely useless when applied to the non-mathematical world. He points out that certain syllogisms, like A equals B and B equals C, therefore A equals C, and so on—are never practical in the real world. In this world, it is never the case that any A equals B.

Therefore, to talk in terms of a theoretical model which has no practical application clearly means that this kind of logic is of no use in this world. The real world of people consists of an entirely different kind of relationship. If A "LOVES" B and B "LOVES" C ... in the real world we find that it does not logically and necessarily follow that A "LOVES" C! "A" may or may not love "C"! When we use logic of this kind to solve problems in the world of mathematics and physics, there is no possibility of going wrong because these relationships will follow the rules of logic, but when this same logic is applied to man, to a conscious

living being, there is every possibility of going wrong! Life does not follow the rules of logic, life has its own hidden laws, and you cannot reduce them to any kind of formula or equation. Therefore, ordinary logic, when applied to people and to real situations in life, FAILS! Syllogisms have no practical value when we consider real situations and circumstances of life; a new set of rules must be introduced. Ordinary logic which insists that if A equals B and B equals C, then A equals C, is unrealistic and cannot be applied to the relationships which exist between human beings. It is completely useless in all matters pertaining to practical life, especially in our personal relationships. Interestingly enough, this Harvard philosopher goes on to formulate an alternative set of equations designed to meet our human needs.

However, the point I simply want to make is that we have been over-emphasizing the use of logic and reasoning to the extent that we have shut out our capacity to use our intuition ... the other faculty of knowing which exists in human consciousness. This faculty of ours has been completely ignored, and we must look at the methods of developing the intuition and the use of the intuitive process reliably; not accidentally—and at will!

VII.

A MATTER OF CONCENTRATION

The methods and means of developing the intuition are as simple as, if not simpler than, the methods which we are using for the development of the intellect and reasoning process. How do we learn how to use the reasoning process? By the manipulation of "attention" and concentrating it upon the subject or object we wish to understand! When we want a student to understand something, to understand what is written in his book, we tell him to concentrate on what he is reading—to "pay attention" to the book! It is the attention of the student that we want to be concentrated upon the book, and when this is done sufficiently, the student "learns" what is within the book. The same principle applies to the learning of anything. Whatever you wish to know or learn will involve the use of the human attention.

What is attention? Attention is that part of awareness which we use in order to focus our consciousness upon a part of our experience, to have a closer and deeper awareness of that particular thing. When attention is concentrated upon the object or subject we wish to know or understand, the growth of knowledge automatically takes place! Therefore, this same process of concentrating the attention has been used by those who have developed their intuition. Exactly how does the

student go about concentrating his attention on the book? What is he actually doing? What he is doing is "shutting" off his experience of all the other things going on in his field of awareness, EXCEPT for the object or subject of the learning process! It is only when the student is singularly aware of the book, when he has "suspended" his awareness of the other things around him, do we say that he is concentrating!

When this state of awareness has been achieved, what is written in the book becomes a part of the child's knowledge and learning. In the same way, we should also be able to concentrate our attention on the intuitive processes going on within human consciousness, by withdrawing it from the mental processes going on in the mind! How do we proceed in doing this? Reflect for a moment on what these mental processes of the mind were that we discussed earlier. They were sensing, reasoning and creativity. So, if we take our attention off these mental processes of the human mind, and focus it on the remaining part of our consciousness, we would, in fact, be training ourselves in the use of intuition. It is through the use of human attention, the capacity to attend or not to attend to a particular thing, that we are enabled to learn the art of using the intuitive process of knowing. It is one of the greatest gifts that God could have given to man! But first, our attention has to be trained because we have no attention span at all!

Our attention has become flickering; it has become scattered, moving from this to that and from here to there. Not for a single moment are we fully attentive. Even as you are reading this, you are not paying attention! You read one or two lines, and then

your attention goes somewhere else; then it comes back. You read a few more lines and then, again, your attention has gone somewhere else. Only a few lines written here and there have really been read. The rest is your own mental creation! Attention represents a state of awareness with no distracting thoughts interfering; it represents a silent alertness. First, our attention must be developed, and the only way we can develop it is by using it!

If we are able to withdraw our attention from the distracting processes going on in the mind and are able to retain our individual awareness, free of interference, we would quickly become proficient in the art of using the intuitive process. This intuition is flowing within human consciousness all the time! We are continuously receiving intuitive flashes. They are a much more reliable source of knowledge than any mental process in consciousness, and are available to us, if only we are willing to make use of them. Intuition is a far more reliable instrument than intellect. The means and methods of developing intuition are available.

Any individual who wants such knowledge must himself make the initial effort to find the source of it and to approach it, taking advantage of the help willing to be given to him. This knowledge cannot be given to people who put in no effort on their own part. We understand this perfectly well in connection with the acquisition of ordinary intellectual knowledge, but in the case of this "higher" knowledge we find it possible to expect something different! Yet, at the same time it is essential that one understands that by one's own independent efforts to

attain something in this direction there will be no results. An individual can only attain this knowledge with the help of those who possess it. Fortunately, there are specially designed institutions with a training programme where the knowledge of the use of the intuitive process can be learned—where the art of the use of intuition can be learned from those who have mastered it. The intuitive process cannot be learned by merely thinking about it. It is not a matter of scholarship. Do not make the mistake of thinking that, because I have made it all seem so simple, an individual can teach himself this process by reading a few books.

There are many great books full of information about this subject. Very great masters of this technology have existed. They have written everything that could be expressed in words concerning this subject. You can memorize their teachings, but you will not learn how to use the intuitive process by reading these books! Through study of books alone, you will simply get lost in thinking and in contemplating the subject. All your knowledge will simply be borrowed and impotent. Your conclusions will have no roots in experience and will simply remain the product of logic and reasoning. Many students who fall into this trap just look for answers in books. They get the answers, but they do not know the process by which they are found!

The problems are given and the answers to them are also given. They simply memorize the answers and then think they "know". They know the problems and they know the answers, but they

never know the process. They never "know" how the answer is achieved.

With the study of books alone you will simply go on thinking and thinking about the answers, whereas the objective of learning the art of using the intuitive process is to be able to "know" the answers without using the thinking process at all! The mind is abstract—thinking is abstract, and when this abstract faculty of the human mind tries to reach the plane of intuition, it can only THINK about it! It can never experience awareness when this thinking goes on all the time! Therefore, there must be a special technique used in order to become temporarily unaware of the mental processes. It is here that there is a need for a very highly trained teacher, who is himself skilled in the art of using the intuitive process without the interference of the mind.

First of all, the teacher, as already said, must himself be a practitioner of the intuitive process and not merely a person of scholarship; not someone who has simply read a lot of books on the subject, but someone who has practised and mastered the art of using the intuitive process. The teacher must be someone who has mastered the technique of shifting the attention from experiencing consciousness through the mind to experiencing consciousness free from the distractions of the mental processes. Only someone like this could transfer to us the knowledge of the intuitive process and the techniques for concentrating our attention upon conscious experiences without the use of reasoning. The teaching method employed would not simply be that of the transfer of scholarship! This you

can get from books on the subject. This "special" kind of teacher will be capable of transferring pure understanding!

The transfer of scholarship is not as important as the transfer of understanding. Whenever you meet a really inspired teacher, you feel that what he teaches is very, very clear! You feel that you did not have to use too much reasoning at all! You did not have to bring a certain knowledge of the subject with you! Yet this kind of teacher is capable of transferring understanding and knowledge in a way that is far more effective than by studying mountains of books on the subject. His depth will reach your depth. He will become an invocation; his very being will do something to you. He will touch you deep down. Just as you see the full moon at night, and you suddenly become silent—its depth, its beauty and majesty touch you. Similar is the case with such a teacher, but he touches you deeper than any full moon can touch; deeper than anything in the world can touch you. This feeling flows from the intuitive levels of his awareness; it flows from the innermost core of his being to yours—just by being near such a person, you are changed! You are enlightened! What is the difference? How is a teacher of this calibre able to transfer understanding and knowledge in a much more effective way than ordinary teachers and books do? The reason is because such "special" teachers are intuitively transferring knowledge to us, and we are intuitively understanding it!

This high level and volume of knowledge and understanding can only be transferred to us by a teacher who himself is an expert and master in the art of using the intuitive process. The

technique he will use for developing the intuition will be the same simple process by which we train the intellect. The only problem is that we are afraid to take our attention off the thinking process going on in the mind. We are afraid that it would result in our lack of efficiency in performing our duties and meeting our personal needs. We do not seem to realize that only a very tiny amount of thinking that goes on in our minds is relevant to the situations in our lives. The vast majority of it is simply a mad mechanism of which we have become prisoners! Thinking is just like walking. When you want to walk, you use your legs. But if you go on moving them even while sitting down, people will call you mad! And if someone says to you, "stop this nonsense!", you will say, "If I stop, then when I want to walk, what will I do? If I rest my legs, they will become less efficient. If I stop, then I will lose the capacity to walk, so I have to use them constantly!" This is madness! But this is what we are doing all the time. We have been trained by our teachers to go on thinking about "things" as long and as deeply as we can—so that this will improve our capacity to function. The more we think, the better our lives will be. The less we think, the worse-off we will be. Look at the madness of it all!

This fallacy of unnecessarily using a process, even when not required, is consciously avoided in the training of the intuitive process. The student is not asked to engage the intuitive faculty 24 hours a day. We do not ask him to shut off his awareness of everything going on in the thinking process for all time. We only want him to be able to focus, at will, his attention on the intuitive process in order to pick up knowledge when needed. After having acquired the knowledge, he can expand his

awareness to other things. The knowledge picked up during the use of the intuitive process will simply have become a part of his consciousness and will enhance the other experiences going on around him. The intuitive process, therefore, would require only the temporary blocking out of the awareness of the physical senses and the thinking process.

After the desired knowledge has been acquired, he can again use the physical senses and the reasoning process to express and apply this knowledge to his situations and circumstances. The intuitive process in human awareness will remain available to him whenever he feels the need to have complete and certain knowledge—KNOWLEDGE that is never wrong! Therefore, I am not suggesting that you do not use the reasoning process at all, nor that you use intuition 24 hours a day; you need not altogether dismiss the use of logic, reasoning and the intellect.

VIII.

INTUITION

In creating a model or structure for the purpose of analysis, there can be no better instrument than the intellect. I have drawn this picture of the structure of the human mind and the levels of human awareness in such a way that it will appeal to your intellect! The fact that I have divided the mind into functions and awareness into different levels and so on, immediately won the approval of your intellect! If I had not broken the subjects into sections and categories, you would have rejected the whole theory of intuition. All that has been said so far could never have been said without the use of the human intellect. I would have had no capacity to communicate with you! Therefore, up to a certain point, and I stress only to a certain point, intellect is a very useful instrument. But if we feel that we can attain the highest knowledge available through the exclusive use of the intellectual process, we will be making a great mistake! Therefore, what I am suggesting is that, in addition to using intellect and reason, we should also use our capacity to know things intuitively! We should not let intellect get in the way of our use of this higher faculty available in human consciousness. Therefore, the best contribution that intellect can make to the process of acquiring knowledge is to know and observe its limitations! This would be a great

contribution and will relieve the individual of a great deal of frustration and anxiety.

There is no other faculty in the entire scope of human consciousness that can perform this service, except the intellect! To understand this is to have a great insight! To realize that any event or experience taking place beyond the limits of the time-space-causality complex is inaccessible to the human intellect! Try to think about what occurs before it begins; that takes place nowhere, which has not been caused by anything, and the intellect will collapse! The moment any experience in consciousness is taken out of the time-space-causality sequence, the intellect cannot comprehend it—no matter how much effort is made! The only problem is that the intellect itself has not been trained to automatically shut itself down. The intellect will not automatically perform this function unless it has been properly trained and sharpened! Therefore, even for the intellect to perform this service, it will need to be developed to a very great extent! So, I am not condemning the use of the intellect, because it must be developed to a point where we can discover its limitations, thereby enabling us to go beyond logic and reasoning into the realms of knowledge that have been "denied the logicians".

This limitation of the intellect keeps us at a level of awareness where we cannot see truth. No truth can ever come out of logic because no experience is derived from thinking. With intellect you can only think about the truth, you cannot experience the truth. But logic and intellect can be a good servant. When you have attained a certain experience, intellect can help to explain

it, logic can help to make it clear ... But that is all. The greatest contribution that intellect can make to the growth of human knowledge is to discover this limitation; to discover that it can never "know" the truth and that it cannot transcend and grasp any experience which lies beyond time, space and causation! Once this is fully understood, the intellect can then be persuaded to step aside and let the higher faculty of consciousness, intuition, function. It is not necessary to destroy the intellect. The human mind, consisting principally of this intellectual process, need not be destroyed. Unfortunately, you will find many people who are interested in developing higher levels of human awareness, who try to destroy their minds, and some of them have SUCCEEDED! There are madhouses full of this kind of people! But look at the blunder that these people are committing. Who is saying that "the mind is terrible"? What, in consciousness, is making this statement? That the mind is our enemy; that the mind is the only obstacle standing in the way of our enlightenment and so on ... What is making these claims? "Destroy this mind and you will attain the highest levels of awareness ... What is saying all this?" It is the MIND itself which says all these things! They are trying to use the mind to destroy itself! Look at the absurdity of it all! No wonder, then, that they go mad. This IS madness!

It is not necessary to destroy the mind, but it is necessary to understand the nature of the mind ... to understand that it has its own limitations. Therefore, you must take the level of the intellect to a point of development where it realizes that it can go this far and no further. Then alone will the intellect step aside and allow us to use the higher faculty of intuition arising

from the soul of man. In fact, it has been said that the human mind is the greatest enemy of man, only as long as it has not been fully understood. When the intellect has been properly trained to perform its functions in human awareness, this same mind becomes man's best friend. Therefore, in the spiritual development of man towards the attainment of higher levels of awareness, the human mind has been the greatest obstruction when not understood and trained. When we fully understand its legitimate function, it becomes man's greatest aid in the journey to higher levels of human awareness. The only problem is in training it.

If we deliberately trained the mind, along with training ourselves in the use of the intuitive process, we would greatly add to the scope and accuracy of human knowledge. Today, one of the greatest drawbacks in our society and in our human relationships is that we are beset with doubts. Nothing is certain; no one knows anything for sure—everyone is simply groping in the darkness, and because of this uncertainty and doubt, great fear and scepticism is created in the minds of men. This fear and suspicion breeds hatred and anger. We are constantly victimized by jealousy, frustration, lack of trust and so many other emotional and psychological diseases of the mind. People have become schizophrenic, split, divided. Our entire society is becoming mentally ill! This is due, largely, to the element of doubt which permeates our minds. We are never really sure about the other person, about our wives or our husbands, about our boss or our neighbour, and so on ... we are never sure of what they will do; of what they are thinking, and so on. All our fears, our lack of trust and confidence, and conflict

in personalities occur because of this element of doubt which is present in the human mind. This 'doubt' and lack of knowledge is arising from one thing, and one thing only ... the excessive use of the intellect.

The more we reason, the more doubts we create in the mind. The more we think about a problem, the more confused we become. The mind becomes crowded with so much information and so many alternatives that lack of certainty and confusion is bound to occur! It is a very strange thing to notice. The intellectual process upon which we rely so much, upon which we bestow such acclaim—this process of reasoning and use of logic leads only to more confusion and uncertainty! It generates so many possibilities that we become totally confused. We are, then, not able to decide what to do and, therefore, can do nothing but suffer! The excessive use of the intellect, especially with regard to our human relations, has led to a lack of faith and trust in each other, lack of love, greater conflict in society and violence in general. It is, therefore, the excessive use of the intellect which is causing all our problems in society as well as in our personal lives.

I am suggesting that, in addition to the use of logic and the intellectual processes, we also use our faculty of intuition. The intuitive process will, in turn, generate total and certain knowledge which will enable us to banish these problems of jealousy, hatred, fear, violence, and so on—first from our personal relationships, and then from society as a whole. The knowledge of the goodness of man will be brought to us through this use of intuition. It will enable us to function from a

much higher consciousness ... LOVE! Love is the greatest mystery; the greatest mystery that there can be. It can be lived, but it cannot be intellectually "known". It can be tasted, experienced, but cannot be understood! It is something which goes far beyond logic and reason ... something which surpasses all understanding! Love is the highest possible experience available to human consciousness!

This experience of love is being blocked out because of the excessive use of logic and reasoning. Therefore, worldwide training and development of the intuitive faculty in human consciousness is extremely important and necessary. We should not banish reason and the use of the intellect altogether, but we should learn to use them properly and only when and where they are required. We should not supplant them into areas of human existence where their efficiency is minimized or altogether inadequate. Intellect and reasoning should not be used in the areas of love, human understanding and togetherness, that is in the realms ... beyond logic and reason. All exercises in the development of awareness lead to the experience of "oneness" and love. This total awareness, which is the experience of oneness, is the highest experience which we can visualize or know, in terms of the growth of human awareness. We have had problems in the development of human awareness, because we have had problems in understanding our own self. When we are able to understand our own self, we are automatically (with no further effort; without any other mechanics) able to develop higher awareness and the experience of love.

The more we use the mind, the more we see the difference between ourselves. Different clothes, different bodies, different races, different languages, different religions ... and so on. The intellect always divides people into different categories—the educated and the uneducated, the religious and the sinner, the moral and the immoral; the pattern is always the same. The intellect goes on dividing people into "differences". Then we claim to belong to one of these "so-called" higher categories; that way, we can pretend to be better than others! All these differences between us are being created by the intellect, by the mind. Intuition, the soul faculty in human consciousness, notices only one thing ... the ONENESS of consciousness. It notices the same consciousness—the same light of consciousness that is shining in all of us! The awareness of this "common" consciousness comes through the deliberate use of our intuition. Therefore, when we talk about the development of awareness to the level of the soul, the spiritual level, we are not merely speaking of some abstract level of consciousness. We are talking of the development of one's intuition in order to see the oneness existing among all human beings. This realization is called love, and it can be experienced—at will—by transcending the intellectual processes going on in the mind.

What happens when we transcend the intellectual process? When we do so, instead of approaching anyone or any situation full of doubts, we approach through love, based on the understanding that he or she IS THE SAME THING THAT I AM. That, in them is operating the same consciousness as in me. My trust will beget his trust; my love will beget his love! We are all

basically loving creatures because we are made of love. THIS MUST BE REMEMBERED AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.

You can try this experiment today. No one needs to change his name, lifestyle and so on. We need love. All that we are inwardly concerned with is ... LOVE! But, when we function through the process of reasoning, logic and an excessive use of the intellect, we trigger the "mind" response in other people. When we speak with (through) the intellect, with only the mind, we create doubt in the mind of the other person. Then he or she becomes unsure of our motives; doubts whether we are sincere and whether we really mean what we say, and so on. Our intellect will trigger doubt and fear in the other person's mind! When we act out of the ignorance of the "sameness" of human consciousness, the other person picks up our uncertainty and himself responds with doubt. Then come fear, tension and lack of knowledge of each other, which only lead to further misunderstanding! Just replace this whole phenomenon with the language and act of love and trust. Act and speak from the realization that the "other" person is the same as you are, the same soul, the same consciousness made by the same creator ... we are a part of the same thing!

We are able to solve all of the problems we are having in our human relationships by remembering that consciousness, God and love are in EVERYONE. When this oneness can be remembered all the time, we will have no more problems. Our life will become a melody of tremendous harmony; a festival ... a celebration! All our tensions and anxieties will dissolve; and

friction amongst ourselves will disappear. Our life then becomes like music … a great symphony of joy, love and happiness!

IX.

BEYOND PHILOSOPHY

It is said that philosophy is like a blind man searching on a dark night, in a dark room, for a black cat which is not there! Therefore, if you can find any answers through philosophy, remember that this simply means that your question was silly; that your question really did not have any significance; that it was not a question about "reality", i.e., about that which "IS"! For answers to "real" questions, for solutions to "real" problems, you will have to go beyond philosophy! In fact, the more one confines oneself to the study of only "academic philosophy" for arriving at "answers", the more confused one becomes by contradictions. Philosophy is unable directly and satisfactorily to answer the vital questions concerning human existence.

The realization of the necessity for a higher level of knowledge—knowledge which surpasses the levels of knowledge attainable by doing tricks with words, with intellect and clever reasoning—has become more and more apparent to modern man. We have come to realize that, in providing us with solutions relating to the fundamental problems of existence, modern philosophy has become almost as helpless as a little child. Philosophy is drifting farther and farther away from its real purpose and is getting bogged down in futile discussions of

artificial questions which do not throw any light on the fundamental problems of life.

Academic philosophers are very good at categorizing things. Their whole effort is to put everything in a particular category—this is this, that is that. If you ask them a question, for which they already have an answer, well enough. But if a question is asked for which they do not have an answer, you are in trouble! Their whole approach to knowledge is mechanical! Academic philosophy is mechanical, and how can anything mechanical help you to become wise? They are no longer in search of the organic unity of life; they are no longer in search of the ultimate principle of life that sustains the existence of the trees, of mountains, of a rose and of each and every one of us! They are no longer in search of that unifying factor, the "Philosophia Perennis!"—the highest knowledge ... the truth! As there is only ONE reality as the basis of the universe, there can be only ONE ultimate truth which should be the object of pursuit by anything that goes by the name "philosophy"! It is the knowledge of this truth, which is the goal of all "TRUE" philosophy.

As I understand it, philosophy is the art of knowing. Knowing life, knowing one's self, knowing everything, knowing what "KNOWLEDGE" is and knowing the skills and techniques of the process of knowing! In this sense, philosophy and knowledge become synonymous, but the word "knowledge" has been used in so many different senses that it becomes necessary to clarify what is meant here by "knowledge" and "knowing". There are many other words which are mistakenly considered to have the same meaning as the word knowledge. Some of the other words

which we confuse with knowledge are information, memory, understanding, wisdom and awareness. In fact, each of these words actually represents different functions in human consciousness. We very often consider a "wise" man as simply being a man of knowledge. Or we consider a man who has "good" understanding, as a man of "knowledge". Sometimes, people who are able to pick up and store information in their memory are called knowledgeable simply because they can reproduce this data like a parrot ... like a computer! But, only when you are able to "know" something, in a manner which a computer cannot, will you have earned the right to be called knowledgeable! After all, the basic power for having all types of non-mechanical knowledge, including all nomenclatures of knowledge, is derived from human consciousness.

Unfortunately, the word "consciousness" is used very loosely in modern psychology, and even in ordinary parlance. It is used to refer to the principle of human awareness in a very general way. We use the words "consciousness" and "mind" almost synonymously. This is understandable because the two are so closely intertwined in their expression that we can hardly distinguish between them. Nevertheless, it must be fully understood that there can be no "mind" without consciousness, because mind arises out of consciousness! Therefore, if one is not "conscious", there is no question of one being knowledgeable or having any kind of understanding, wisdom and awareness! It then follows, necessarily, that human consciousness is the prime source of power that sustains all the functions and modifications of the human mind, namely, memory.

Another lower form of knowledge—perhaps the lowest—is "information", which is data gathered through the physical sensory system of perception. Our eyes see and our ears hear; our hands feel, our tongue tastes, our nose smells and so on, thereby enabling us to know what we are perceiving. This knowledge of our perceptive experience is just "information" about the experience. This knowledge is then stored in our memory, from where we can recall it and communicate it to others. In spite of the ability to recall and communicate this knowledge through words, it simply remains information!

Next come the sensory perceptions themselves ... per se. Even without the use of the physical organs of perception, we are able to see, hear, taste, and so on. In short, we are able to create experiences through "imagery". Although the operation of the faculty of imagination is very often based upon use of the information obtained through the physical sensory apparatus, at times it can be original and unrelated to the information gathered in this manner. Knowledge, arising from the sensory system of perception per se, is knowledge of a higher kind than mere information. It is this kind of knowledge which inspires great works of art; or scientific invention; of spiritual revelations; of literary breakthroughs and religious miracles! But, knowledge higher than this is the knowledge arising from that part of the mind which is described as reason and understanding. Please note that the human mind has the capacity to perform three different functions. The first, and the lowest, is "sensing"; when it picks up information via the sensory system of perception. Reasoning, and the use of logic, is the second and a higher function of the mind. It is that part

which does what we call "thinking". All "thinking" involves the use of words. These words are nothing more than phonetic symbols having a certain connotation based on our association of ideas with them. Thus, the words that each individual utilizes in his thinking process will have a unique and private meaning. No two individuals can have the same association of ideas with the same set of words. Through the process of recalling to memory and through the process of association of ideas, words are used to create a logical cause and effect relationship in the thinking process. This mental process is continuous and goes on in ordinary consciousness all the time.

This, then, is a brief description of the second function of the human mind, namely, logic and reasoning. Knowledge acquired through this process is commonly considered to be a higher form of knowledge than the knowledge which arises from information gathered through the sensory system of perceptions. Philosophy, as it is currently understood, is entirely based on logic and reason. Logic is the foundation of science, but not the foundation of life! Logic and reasoning are only applicable to dead things, because the basic method of logic is dissection, and the moment you dissect something, you kill it! Academic philosophy simply goes on killing people because it goes on dissecting man and dissecting the human experience into categories and parts! Therefore, if you want to find the meaning of life through the study of academic philosophy, through logic—you will never find it! The very process and method being used will prohibit it! Life is like a flower—a rose. You can dissect it, you can "analyze" its ingredients and chemical composition, but you will then miss the most

important thing ... its beauty! You will not be able to find any beauty, any life, any fragrance ... they will all be gone. There will be a few chemicals, but these chemicals are not the "rose"; these chemicals were simply the "situation", the "circumstances" in which the rose "appeared"! The "rose" has escaped and disappeared into an invisible world. Philosophizing life is like dissecting a dancer—do you really expect to find "dance" inside him? You will find bones, flesh, blood and so many other things, but you will not find dance! You can cut open the throat of a singer, but you will not find the song! The throat is simply a vehicle, a medium. The song comes from a world beyond science or academic philosophy ... beyond logic and reason!

The third and the highest function of the mind is "creative" thinking. It is called creative although nothing is actually "created" except "new" patterns and designs! The mind simply picks up the various elements of sensory perception, churns them and then rearranges this information into different patterns and designs. This whole process is then called "creativity". However, the mind creates nothing new. The contents gathered through the sensing apparatus remain the same and only a "new" pattern, a different "combination" of the elements of perception, is evolved.

There are however, certain times when the creative mind does overlap with "higher" awareness, which we will examine a little later. But for the present I will return to examination of "knowledge", and its variant ... wisdom. Wisdom is the growth of your own consciousness! It is intrinsic; it does not come from

outside. It explodes within you and then spreads to your outer life! When knowledge dovetails, practically, or near practically, with the exigencies of human experience, it is called "wisdom". It is something which must be obtained by each individual by his own effort from the deepest recesses of his own consciousness! Wisdom, unlike information cannot be "borrowed" from books, lectures, and so on! The difference, then, between a "wise" man's knowledge and understanding, and the understanding of someone who is not wise, consists in the former's ability to "correctly" apply his knowledge and understanding to the situations and problems of real life! A wise man is one whose understanding is "practical"; applicable to the problems of life, and that enhances the experience of joy, love and happiness! Wisdom results from a very highly developed capacity to "understand", combined with a very deep experience of life. The experience may not be long in years, but it would be significant in terms of its impact upon human consciousness.

Therefore, wisdom is a superior form of knowledge, as it couples understanding with practical living. But higher than wisdom is the fully developed human awareness available through the use of the faculty of intuition! It is direct knowledge of the entire human situation. It solves all the riddles of the mind and, therefore, has often been described as the attainment of "total knowledge" or "total awareness".

When human awareness gets developed to this level, it provides us with total knowledge; knowledge which "surpasses all understanding"! Sometimes this level of knowledge has been called ''transcendental knowledge" because it transcends the

mental processes of ordinary knowledge. Sometimes this knowledge is also referred to as "mystic" knowledge because it can be acquired by various mystic practices. However, no matter what label we give to this higher knowledge, one thing is clear. It encompasses all other forms of knowledge and gives a meaning and interpretation to them. Therefore, philosophy, in the truest sense of the word, must consist of the art and techniques of securing this total knowledge. And, side by side with the quest for this highest level of knowledge, there has always been the simultaneous quest for higher levels of consciousness.

Any intelligent person, who is capable of serious reflection, who is capable of understanding even the most elementary realities of human existence, cannot help but conclude that there is a great mystery hidden behind the universe as well as behind his own life. And until this mystery is unravelled, life can have no real meaning and man cannot be at peace with himself. However, there are people who do not concern themselves with this mystery and instead get involved in their careers, families, and so on. But the "unconscious" presence of life's unresolved mystery will continue to haunt them and poison whatever little happiness they are able to derive from this life.

We have become so engrossed in our ordinary pursuits and passions that we are hardly aware of the hard facts of life which stare us right in the face! If only we would honestly look at these facts, we would tremble. We would be shaken to the very core of our being by their impact. It requires only a little common sense on our part and a little detachment from our

engrossing preoccupations to see how utterly meaningless and dream-like the whole drama, being played on the stage of this world, would be if there was nothing more to life. Should we not try to go deeper into the question of human existence and its problems instead of living our lives thoughtlessly?

The deeper problems of life do not cease to exist simply because they are ignored! They will simply appear in the form of some other problem, more serious and far more dangerous to our peace of mind. When society ignores the needs of man's spiritual nature—the need to know the truth—we are temporarily able to do what we like without any inhibition. But, sooner or later, the problem will reappear, perhaps in the form of a nuclear war with the dreadful possibility of destroying this whole planet!

Thirty-five centuries ago, a great continent, Atlantis, disappeared into the ocean. Atlantis was the most advanced society on earth; civilization had reached its highest peak, and whenever civilization reaches a great scientific peak, there is a great danger involved ... the danger of it falling apart. Humanity is again facing the same danger. Scientific breakthroughs have made man very, very powerful. And when there is too much power, and too little understanding, power has always proved fatal. Atlantis committed suicide! Without higher knowledge, scientific growth is dangerous. The whole world is again in a state of chaos. Society is uprooted and life seems meaningless. Moral values are disappearing and a great darkness of evil surrounds us. Our sense of direction is lost. We simply feel that life is accidental. There seems to be no purpose, no significance;

life appears to be just a by-product of chance. It seems as if existence does not care about us. It seems that whatever we are doing is futile, routine and mechanical. Life seems to be pointless. You don't know who you are, where you are ... why you are. You feel like a piece of driftwood with no direction. Where are you going? Why were you even born? For what? These answers you do not know. The question mark is there all over your face, why? The reason is because you have not looked into the deepest core of your being! You have not unravelled the mystery which surrounds your being and very existence, and there can be no real peace in life until and unless the answers to these questions are known!

The answers to all questions lie within ourselves, within our own consciousness. I have taken a long time to make such a simple statement as this: THAT ALL ANSWERS LIE WITHIN US. And yet, I am not satisfied that I have said enough! I am not sure if you will really look within your self to find the answers. Even if sometimes the desire to search within arises, you again start searching outside. You may still like to read books or listen to lectures to get the answers. Lectures and books, however good they might be, are still outside! They are not within you! Sometimes you go to this place or that place, but why are you going to these places! Somebody goes to India, somebody to Tibet, and so on, but still the search remains somewhere outside! So, even when the right desire arises, you move in the wrong direction!

If you really want to know who you are, you need not ask anybody else. Nobody can answer this question except you! And

even if someone answers, the answer will not be "your" answer! At the most, it will be information, and information is futile because it is not "KNOWING"! Not only will this "information" be of no help to you, it will simply create more confusion in you! Therefore, the correct process is first to "GO WITHIN" and then go to these lectures, holy lands, and so on! These things will then serve as a "witness" to your experience. They will authenticate what you already "know", and you will be able to verify their authenticity. Otherwise, all reading, studying or attending lectures, are going to simply create more and more confusion! How will you be able to interpret their validity? You cannot understand more than you have experienced; you can "understand" only that much which you have known on your own, which you—yourself—have experienced.

Consciousness, which is the creator of all experiences, is inside us ... within our own self, and all answers must come from there. The teacher, the "Guru", the master, is within ourselves, and we have to discover him "within". But we have become so accustomed to searching outside that the master residing within us must come outside! He comes outside to talk to us—not because the "truth" is outside—but because we look nowhere else! He says, "I waited for you for a long time within, but you never turned your attention within! What could I do? I became impatient, that is why I have come outside to talk to you! But I am only the 'image' of the teacher. The 'real' teacher still remains inside you. My role is to 'push' you back to your own self!" Hence, the outer master does not impart mere "information" ... he imparts "being"! He does not make you more knowledgeable, he makes you more "aware" ... more

meditative. He will not just give you theories, hypotheses and "academic philosophy"; he will throw you back to your own self ... again and again! Sometimes he has to do this in spite of you! Because you want to cling to some "philosophy"; you want clear-cut, ready-made answers; some kind of dogma or doctrine to believe in! Yet, the master will refuse to give you any dogma or theology. In fact, he will take all these ideas from you and slowly he will leave you totally naked! Then you will see yourself as you are and not as according to some doctrine. All this happens within you and you need not go anywhere else. What, however, is this business of "going" within? Can there be a "methodology" for going within and, if so, what?

X.

ENTER THE SAINTS, MYSTICS

The saints and mystics have presented a concept of man that is not easily accepted by most people in the world. The concept is that man, in essence, consists of "pure" consciousness, which is simply functioning through various "coverings" picked up in its descent down into this physical world. Self-realization can be attained simply by removing, one by one, these various covers. Therefore, let us briefly see what these various covers upon the self are, how we got them and how these saints and mystics say they can be removed. According to the analysis of the mystics, what we call the "self" is the totality of our own consciousness. When this "total consciousness" individualizes (splits into many pieces), we call each of these pieces a "spirit" or a "soul". The Eastern philosophers and mystics have called it the "atman" ... individuated consciousness. Next comes the functioning of this individuated conscious soul through the first cover, the causal body. The causal body is so called because it "causes" all things to happen! Frequently, it is more simply referred to as the mind. There is no distinction between the two. No experience takes place in time, space and causation, except through the agency of the causal body ... the human mind. Just as there is only one

single, total consciousness that we call the self or "soul", similarly, there is but one human mind that has been called the "universal mind".

Just as the single, total consciousness individuates itself into individual souls, in the same way the universal mind also individuates itself and becomes an individual mind and has the experience of interacting with other minds! In the Eastern schools of philosophy, the universal mind has been called the level of "Brahmanda" ... the creator. All things are created from this level. So, in its descent, the soul picks up the universal mind and, together with it, continues its descent into "creation". So, from this point on, below the level of Brahmanda or the "causal level", the soul travels with a cover of the individuated mind over it. Thereafter, all the functions of human consciousness take place through the agency of the human mind. Next, this consciousness, contained in the mind, is further split into what is called the "sensory system". When we experience an event through this sensory cover, it causes us to regard the singular and direct experience of the mind as a split-up experience consisting of hearing, tasting, seeing, touching, and so on. In fact, the sensory systems of perception are merely devices in awareness to "expand" an experience by dividing it into parts.

Therefore, this division of the mind into sensory functions constitutes yet another cover upon the soul which is very often called the "astral body". This whole complex is then called the "astral self". This astral self, in turn, picks up yet another cover

upon itself—the physical body. Once it has taken on the physical body, the sensory functions, which were supposed to be performed by the astral body, are locked up in the physical body. We then begin to feel that if we want to see something, we must use these eyes, to hear we must use these ears, and so on. Therefore, this final covering upon the soul, the physical body, ultimately creates in us the feeling that we are the physical body! That this world—this physical plane of consciousness—is our home! And that the journey back to our original state of consciousness, the one in which we existed without any of these various covers, is simply the journey from the physical self back to the total self! This, then, is real self-realization! If we accept this analysis of our spiritual plight by the saints as being accurate, the question of how these various covers are to be removed naturally arises. We would like to know if there is any methodology or technique we can use, in order to move from the physical self back to the total self within. The mystics and practitioners of the art of yoga and meditation say, yes! They say that there is a very simple and natural methodology by which we can increase our awareness from that of this physical self to that of total consciousness.

One can conceive of a methodology or technology for achieving something outside, for reaching somewhere outside one's self. But for becoming oneself, we need not go anywhere; we need not reach some place outside; we do not have to "achieve" anything. We have simply to be what we already are! Therefore,

why should there be any necessity for a methodology? Why should we need any technology or method to become what we are? All methodologies and technologies should be required for becoming something else ... not for becoming what we are!

The consciousness "within" us is the creator of all that we are experiencing around us, it IS what we are! Everything that we are perceiving in this world around us is being "experienced" by this "consciousness" within. The entire creation has come into being from "within", not outside. Therefore, if one desires to know one's self, one must know the consciousness which resides within the physical body. So, the problem becomes how to go "within" this physical body?

This body, in which we find ourselves, is the most beautiful product that the Lord has ever made. There are no heavens and paradises; no higher regions or any other forms as marvellous as this human body, through which we are experiencing creation. In this human body, the LORD HIMSELF resides! The "CREATOR" Himself is sitting inside! ... "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you". This human body itself is the "temple of God"! All other temples in which you are spending so much time and energy, in which you go on searching for the self and God-realization, are but monuments and a tribute to this living temple ... the human body!

We have to enter this temple of God, the only real church, the only mosque, the only true place of worship ... through the

"gate" which opens into the temple. This body, or temple, has many gates but there is only one that opens "within", only one which leads us to the "inside" of this body; all others are exits. There are nine "exits" in this body from which our consciousness flows out into the world and generates the human experience. They are: the two eyes, the two ears, the two nostrils, the mouth, the reproductive organ and the rectum. These are the nine portals or nine "doors" through which our consciousness—via attention—goes out of this human body. Please note that "attention" does not come into the body via these doors, it can only go out! Nobody can put "vision" into his eyes, it can only flow OUT of his eyes! Similarly, all the nine doors to this beautiful temple of the human body are capable of only the outward flow ... the "exit" of human consciousness.

We have been roaming outside our abode too long. From the very first time we went out of this body through the flow of attention we have remained outside! You have only to watch the behaviour of your own thoughts. When this is done, you will see how you have become entangled and trapped outside. Through the senses, you have spread your consciousness very thinly throughout experience; you have made many attachments. We have gone outside ourselves and have made all kinds of strong attachments that we are now unable to break, and we cannot, therefore, come back "within" ourselves. We are spending all our time outside! These nine doors that open outwards into the world are being constantly used by us

just to make contact with the objects of our attachments! Therefore, being attached, we remain outside our "own self". When our consciousness remains outside, we become identified with the objects of our attachments and forget who we are ... we lose contact with our "self"; the result is loneliness. Fulfilment of this "inner loneliness" is sought from the company of people outside, but this outside company fails to satisfy this "inner" need of the human being, and, therefore, we continue to be lonely. Even when we are surrounded by hundreds of people, we still remain lonely. Something in us is not being satisfied. There is something absent, something "missing" in our life ... the self is not there.

The world is full of lonely people, and because of their loneliness they do many foolish and stupid things in an attempt to fill this void ... this emptiness inside. Sometimes, a person starts eating too much, just to feel full! Someone else turns to drugs or alcohol to escape his loneliness. This loneliness hurts. It's like a wound and is so painful that one wants to soothe it at any cost. The world is a very lonely place, hence people turn to drugs, sex or any and every kind of conceivable entertainment that will keep them anaesthetized! However, this pain of loneliness persists despite our best efforts to escape its clutches. We try to appease it in many different ways—with cars, with big houses, with money, with all kinds of gadgets and toys, but still the pain of loneliness persists!

Fig. 1

Name	Location	Presiding Deity	Function
6. Ajna Chakra	Center of the eyes  Two Petals	Soul and Mind	Enlivens the body
5. Vishudhi or Kanth Chakra	Throat  16 Petals Dark Blue	Shakti	Minor creative current
4. Anahat or Hirday Chakra	Heart  12 Petals Blue	Shiva	Protection and destruction of physical body
3. Manipurak or Nabhi	Navel  8 Petals Dark Red	Vishnu	To nourish the physical body
2. Svadasthan	Genital  6 Petals Whitish Black	Brahma	To prepare the physical body
1. Muladhar	Rectum  4 Petals Reddish Colour	Ganesh	Elimination of physical matter

This six chakras, called Darjat Sifli by the Mohammedan Saints, are the reflection of the six Chakras of Brahmand. These lower Chakras are presided over by the deities, or powers, whose function is only to look after the physical body.

You can have the biggest house in the world, and still you will remain as lonely in it as you were in your basement apartment! These things are not going to make a bit of difference—ownership of this world itself cannot satisfy your inner loneliness! To satisfy loneliness, you will have to go within! You will have to go through the "tenth" door, which opens into our head ... into the "upper room" of this temple where consciousness resides. How do we enter into this human body through the tenth door, in the head which is above the nine doors below? There are many ways of doing this, two of which I will now briefly describe.

One of the ways of doing this is to reverse the direction of the energy flowing outside, and bring our consciousness back through this energy to the tenth door. Since we cannot use these nine doors to come into the body, we can, however, use "energy centres" sustaining this physical body to gain entrance into the tenth door; the door behind the eyes ... the "eye centre". The physical body has two parts. The first is below the eyes and is called "Pinda". The second is above the eyes corresponding to the frontal part of the brain. This is called "Brahmanda", the seat of Brahm ... the Creator.

There are six energy centres or CHAKRAS which sustain and hold this physical body—Pinda—together. (See Fig. 1). If these centres were not operating, this physical body would instantly disintegrate! The lowest energy centre, the Muladhar, is at the rectum. The energy flowing at this centre holds us to the earth

and provides us with the experience of gravity. Through this centre, we are able to determine directions. It is also the centre of evacuation; all the waste material left over in the body processes is eliminated through this centre. In Hindu mythology LORD GANESH, the "guardian" of the temple, resides at this centre. All of these powers are then referred to as the power of LORD GANESH. Once we are able, through the concentration of our attention, to enter into this centre, we rise up to the second energy centre of the Genitals, the Svadhisthan Chakra ... the centre of pleasure. This is also the centre of reproduction where all human life is created. It is the centre where the physical body is prepared and created. Therefore, all "beginning", in terms of the physical life, occurs here. The beginning of all physical experience with the body starts and is created at this centre. Huge whirlpools of "creative energy" flow near this centre. The "Kundalini", a vast coiled "serpent" of energy, lies just behind this chakra. The entire energy of the Kundalini can be released by entering this chakra through the concentration of attention. Rising still further from this centre, by the concentration of attention, we are able to gain access to the next centre—the NABHI CHAKRA—the navel centre. This is the chakra or centre in the middle of the stomach. This is the centre of sustenance, of nourishment and maintenance. LORD VISHNU, the God of sustenance, the "sustainer", resides at this centre. In the trinity of the beginning, the middle and the end, he represents the middle.

That energy, the power at the navel centre, provides us with ability to rise higher, through meditation, to the next higher chakra in the body—the "Heart" centre or Hriday Chakra. It is the primary centre and the one that generates permanent experiences. Out of all the chakras so far described, it is only this chakra that provides us with a permanent experience. It is the abode of Lord Shiva ... the Lord of Death! In the trinity he represents the end. Hence, he is often referred to as the "destroyer". Since all things which have a beginning must also have a middle and an end, Lord Shiva—the power at the Heart centre—is considered to be the all-inclusive deity, containing Lord Brahma and Lord Vishnu within himself. Therefore, the experience of death, which arises from the heart centre, is considered to provide the only permanent experience of which we can be certain. The one thing of which we all can be sure ... is death! We cannot be sure of anything else in this life except this. Yet, we can still rise higher in this ascent through the energy centre via meditation to the next higher chakra, the Kanth Chakra ... the centre at the throat.

At this centre of the throat resides the goddess Shakti, the power to create ... the subsidiary power to create. Just as the "creator" of all the experience we are having in the world is created by the creator sitting within this temple behind the eyes ... in the "Brahmanda region", similarly Shakti is sitting at the throat centre and can also create. All dreams are created from here; all fantasies and imaginations are created here. All ideas

and inspirations that we project into experience flow from here. We are able, by concentration of our attention—by meditation—to enter into this centre and have an experience of this higher power which exists in human awareness. However, we can rise still further in this "ascent" of consciousness, to the centre behind the eyes—the Ajna Chakra. It is the centre where our own self and the mind resides. It is the "tenth" door ... the door that opens into this temple of the human body! By entering through this door, we will at last have come home to ourselves and for the first time, we will be fulfilled. All loneliness will disappear at last.

The other approach would be to destroy the chakras to release their energy while alive; the suggestion is to "die while living".

XI.

THE 'THIRD EYE'

Before making a further analysis of this other methodology given by the mystics, let us briefly familiarize ourselves with some of the problems inherent in the process of going within the body via the use of "attention". Immediately, we are confronted with the problem of how to "lose" awareness of this physical body, which is necessary in order, to have the experience of what we are without it. Do we have to die? Does this physical body have to be destroyed to enable us to reach our inner self? If we must kill ourselves to get the knowledge of the self, we cannot be sure that we will, in fact, attain such knowledge.

Therefore, we will need a methodology which will enable us to have the same experience of destroying this physical body and yet not actually killing it! Hence the suggestion that we learn how to "die while living". We have been told by mystics that if we die while living, we would automatically destroy all the chakras, and our attention will come immediately to the point behind our eyes ... inside! When you withdraw your attention from the physical body and concentrate it behind the eyes, the process is the same as dying. You will become completely

unaware of this physical body! Therefore, the mystics say don't destroy this physical body, simply "lose" awareness of it, by concentrating your attention at the point behind the eyes. If we are able to become completely unaware of this physical body, and hence the world outside, and still remain aware of the inner self, then we can—in effect—experience "dying while living"; and experience "life after death"! Therefore, let us see what it is which causes us to be aware of this physical body in the first place. We discover, upon examination, that what makes us aware of this physical body seems to be the very fact that we can "feel" the body itself. Indeed, all our actions which establish a relationship with the world around us, which make us aware of this world, must take place through the agency of the physical body. Therefore, we are "constantly" aware of this physical body and, as a result, come to identify ourselves with it. If we did not consciously "attend" to all the various things happening to the body, we would not be aware of it at all. If we did not put our attention into the sensory apparatus located in this body, not only would we lose awareness of this world, but we would also "lose" awareness of this physical body! We would become—literally speaking—dead!

It is, in fact, the blocking of the sensory systems located in the physical body, the actual withdrawal of our attention from the events happening through this body, that constitutes an effective method of meditation. But those of us who practice meditation know that the total withdrawal of attention is not so

easy in practice, as it is in theory. Even if you are able to successfully withdraw your attention from the world by closing your eyes and ears, you will still remain conscious of the physical body. It is not as easy to sit still for two or three hours as it seems. There are all kinds of aches and pains. Sitting in meditation, you will eventually reach a point where it feels as if your legs are going to explode and that your bones are on fire! So please understand that it is not so easy to sit still for long periods of time necessary for effective withdrawal of attention.

How, then, do we withdraw our attention from the physical body itself, after we close our eyes and ears? The mystics answer to this problem is that you must develop the capacity of staying at that place, in the physical body, where the conscious self resides. This place, the point from where all consciousness in the form of attention flows, is in the head—behind and between the two physical eyes! This point has often been called the "third eye" by many mystics, to distinguish it from the other two eyes. It is also sometimes called the "eye-focus" or "eye-centre". It is from this point in the physical body that our attention travels outside—via the sensory system—and we become aware of the physical world and this physical body. Therefore, if we can successfully withdraw our scattered attention back to this point we will, in effect, "lose" awareness of the world as well as of the physical body itself! We will become aware of the "inner" self and the "inner" world. We are moving up to this focal point of consciousness every night when

we sleep! It happens every night, and then we become unaware of the body and this world. The only problem is that we fail to hold our attention here and allow it to drop down to the throat centre where it then gets engulfed in a dream. Higher consciousness cannot be attained if the attention drops below the focal point at the eye-centre. To hold on to the focal point of consciousness behind the eyes, and not go to sleep, is the key to attaining higher consciousness.

The key to higher consciousness is the ability to concentrate your attention upon your ownself at this point, the eye-centre—behind the two physical eyes. If we slip into a sleep trance, we simply go into one of the lower chakras and will not experience a higher awareness or a higher consciousness. If we can maintain our wakefulness and still concentrate our attention upon ourselves, we will achieve a new experience—higher awareness! Once we are able to become unaware of the physical body without taking any anaesthesia, without being knocked on the head, but by our own "Sadhana" (our own meditation), we discover that we possess immense energy and power of which we were unaware. This ability to concentrate attention on the self "within", behind the eyes at the "eye-centre", is not unique. It does not belong to only a few gifted people, but is available to each and everyone of us. Of course, there are many distractions which come in the way.

The most immediate problem that confronts us is that there is a process going on inside our heads called "thinking" that never

seems to stop! Even when we close our eyes and ears, this thinking process—this thinking about the affairs of the world, our family and problems—continues to go on. In fact, scientists now believe that the thinking process never ceases! From birth to death, day or night, asleep or awake, conscious or unconscious ... this thinking process never stops. This, then, is the most difficult problem in the initial stage. What is "thinking"? Thinking is essentially a stream of thoughts made up of words that defines, describes and relates to some external experience of the physical self. Hence, whenever we think, we are in fact moving away from the eye-centre into phenomena! Therefore, thinking becomes "self-defeating". But alas, thinking cannot be stopped!

Now, how does the technology or methodology given by the mystics solve what seems to be an impossible dilemma? The mystics have devised a technique, a method called "bland word repetition" to overcome this obstacle. By the repetition of a set of words collectively referred to as a "mantra", they show their initiates how to pump these words into the thinking machine which, in turn, pumps out the thoughts of the affairs of the world! Since the connotation of the words contained in the thoughts running through the mind always refers to some external experience of the physical self, the mystics show us how—by substituting into the thinking process words which have NO outside connotation or reference—the outward flow of attention is stopped!

The next obstacle blocking our way in the journey back to the eye-centre is the problem of "visualization". You can go on repeating the mantra as fast and as loud as you like, but how can you stop the mind from seeing something? These mystics tell us that this problem also can be solved by adopting a method which they call "contemplation". Just as we are able, by substitution, to choke out the externalizing effects of the thinking process, we can, in turn, overcome the obstacles that arise from the distractions of external visualization by selecting a form or symbol that "pushes" our attention in, not out! The mystics say that the best object to select for our contemplation is something, in our external experience, which itself is continuously and singularly involved in the process of self-realization—that object is called the "Guru" or "Master". Even in this external experience, if you go to this object he will throw you back to yourself! His teachings will tell you to go back to the eye-centre. So even if, in the course of meditation, your attention travels away from the eye-centre to the visualization of this external form, you will again be pushed back inwardly.

To block out this second category of obstructions to the withdrawal of attention—the visualizations of the mind—we put before our mind's eye the form of the Guru. This aspect of the mystic methodology is also sometimes called, "DHYAN". But even if you are able to block out the thoughts of the thinking process in the mind, by the repetition of a mantra, and are able to also block out its visual distractions, by contemplating on the

form of the Guru, what about the sounds that we are hearing all the time? Scientists have now discovered that there is some sound going on in the external universe all the time! Therefore, we can never experience a moment of external silence! At any moment, anywhere and any place we go, even if you sit in a cave with your ears plugged, you will STILL hear some kind of external sound! If nothing else, you will hear your own breathing or your heart beating! How, then, do we overcome this final obstruction to concentration which arises from the distractions of these external sounds? The principles of the method are once again the same. That is, we have to simply listen to a sound which is "within", not outside! Just as there are sounds of other things, there is also a "sound" of the self! This sound is audible and can be heard when our attention is properly focused.

There are five forms of this sound in every human being. The mystics have referred to it by various names in their writings. It is the "WORD" of the Bible; the "Kalma" of the Holy Quran, the "NAD" of the Vedas, the "Shabd" or "Sound current" in the terminology of contemporary mysticism. So, by focusing our attention on this sound, we are able to overcome the last obstacle to withdrawal of our attention back to the focal point of consciousness behind the eyes.

What happens when we are able to do all these things?

When you withdraw your attention, through meditation, to the third-eye centre, behind the two physical eyes, you will gradually become unaware of the extremities of the body! If you are able to sit for a sufficiently long period of time, in the right posture for meditation, and concentrate your attention at the point behind the eyes, after a while you will lose awareness of your feet! You won't feel them! Sometimes in the beginning of this practice, you have to open your eyes to look and see that they have not disappeared! You become completely unaware of them! A while later, the hands are gone! And if you are persistent and have the patience, you will then notice that your legs, arms and so on also disappear from your field of awareness! When you lose awareness of them, then you will experience a very strange thing. The body awareness completely disappears, and you feel that you are just awareness alone without any vehicle! When the attention is withdrawn from the bottom of the body, you have the strange sensation of floating in the air! You realize that it was only because you could "feel", through attention, the ground on which you sit, that you have the experience of "gravity" ... of being on the ground! The moment attention is withdrawn from the bottom of the torso, you discover that "YOU" are not sitting on the ground at all! You will have the feeling of being in mid-air; you will experience ... "levitation". You feel that, somehow or other, you have "risen", but you are still in the body which is still sitting there in the same place!

If you continue withdrawing your attention further upwards, it eventually reaches the throat centre. You will then become completely unconscious and unaware of the body, and the light coming from the third-eye centre floods you! Eventually, when you are able to fully complete the process of withdrawal of attention to the third-eye centre, you are able to see the gate ... the tenth door! The door that leads into this temple of the Lord! Many yogis have preferred to travel along these chakras, as they have spent too many years and too much effort involved with the principles of energy. Therefore, they would rather awaken the energy centres one after the other. As a result, they are able to develop yogic and supernatural powers.

But the highest mystics, those who are interested in journeys that go far beyond the entrance to the temple, have recommended that we need not waste our time going through each of the chakras. They say that we should practise the art of withdrawing the attention "directly" to the eye centre. When the attention is withdrawn to the third-eye centre, it opens up into a region which is full of light and sound. The light and sound within us is so beautiful that it is impossible to describe it in words! The sound is like that of a big bell. Its peels are so loud and the music is so beautiful that anyone who has had this experience can never forget it! It is not just a sound, it is a power that pulls you. It is like a conscious being! It is like a friend. It "IS" the source of consciousness; it is the sound which makes you conscious! And this entire episode takes place when

you are able to withdraw your attention back to the eye centre. It is what would happen if you died. Therefore, it is referred to by the mystics as the art of "dying while living".

When you die the same thing happens but then you are not able to come back and share this knowledge with anybody. But if you could die, while still living in this body, then you would be able to describe the journey within. Therefore, we have to simulate this dying while still being alive through the use of the mystic methodology. What happens when you die? When a person is dying, you will notice that he becomes unconscious of the parts of his body. When a person is dying, the first experience is that of losing consciousness of the feet, hands and so on. He is still able to talk but does not know what has happened to his feet and hands. Then gradually, the person becomes unconscious of the whole body and no longer knows "where" he or she is! But he is still able to talk! The "head" is still there and it is the last part of the physical body to drop out of awareness. When this happens, the person is said to have died! Then there is no life left. In the same way, if we can simulate death, that is, withdraw our attention from the body in the same manner—from the extremities up to the head—we can have the same experience of "going within" ... the experience of life after death! All this can be accomplished by the use of attention.

Human attention is the most wonderful gift that has been given to us. Whatever we place our attention on, that becomes real for us! In fact, the only things we are ever able to experience are

those things on which we put our attention! If you put all of your attention on this book, the rest of the room in which you are now sitting will simply disappear. When the attention is again unconcentrated, that is "scattered", you will again become aware of the rest of the room around you. Great marksmen, who are able to hit the bull's-eye all the time, have practised the art of "focusing" attention to such an extent that they do not "see" anything else except the target they want to hit. If they allowed themselves to become aware of anything else, they would not hit the target. So they are trained to practise the art of concentration of attention in such a way that they do not see any thing else! And whenever you concentrate your attention on something, you will automatically lose awareness of the other things going on around you. It is the use of attention in this manner which enables us to do this wonderful thing called "dying while living". We are conscious of our hands and feet and this entire world, simply because of the use of attention. Our attention is scattered throughout the body and from there—via the organs of perceptions—the whole world come into being.

If we can imagine this head of ours as a room, and we are sitting in the centre of it, and if we then put all of our attention here, we will become completely unaware of our hands and feet and gradually the rest of the physical body. The experience will be identical to the process of death! And when the attention is withdrawn up to the waist, you will have the sensation of flying!

You will not know where "you" are, even whether you have a body or not! When the attention reaches the centre behind the eyes, you will discover that "you" are separate from the body ... you will "see" your own body separate from you! It is a tremendous experience. You will be able to see your physical body from the outside just like everybody else sees it. You can see your own physical body just sitting there!

With your astral body, you are able to walk through walls, you can fly, you can have the same feelings of touching, tasting, smelling, seeing and so on while the physical body is still just sitting there! Then one wonders, "Why have I been calling it 'me'?" "Who am I?" "I thought that was me!" It is a strange and very frightening experience to see your body separate from you! The first sense that you will use will be that of sight. You will be able to "see" independently of the physical eyes which are closed! Then you will discover that you are able to walk away and "leave" the body sitting there! It is as if you are stepping into a different world! This ability to use the sense perception, without using the physical body, is called "astral travel". When this complete complex of sense perception moves away from the physical body and yet continues to function, you discover that you are able to touch, taste, smell and so on with much greater clarity and scope! In this astral state, you move just as if you were walking with feet. But when you look, you will see that you really don't have any feet! And when you start to run you discover that you can run very, very fast; that you can move at a

velocity greater than the velocity of light itself! What's more, you can run right through walls and everything else! It is a very strange but wonderful experience. If you want to see what is happening in the other room, you can just look "intently" and you can see what is going on. In the astral body, you will discover you have faculties that you never dreamt of! Anybody can do this! You can do it also, by the simple method of using your attention to focus away from the physical experience and onto the point from where the attention flows. But there is one big problem. The problem is that when the attention rises above the throat, there is the experience of dying ... real dying! One becomes afraid, and out of this fear pumps his attention back into the whole body.

All of us are really afraid of dying. But we really do not realize how much, until death actually comes. Therefore, when we are able to simulate the experience of death by withdrawing the attention to the eye centre, we naturally become very frightened and start to panic! This may be the "real" thing! This fear comes because we really are dying! The soul really does separate from the body! Although actually, the physical body is not dead. We are merely shifting our focus of attention to a point where we can segregate it from the body. There are vital centres within the body that continue to support its life functions while the astral body takes over as the vehicle of our conscious experience. At the eye-centre, we are able to segregate the astral body from the physical body while its life

remains sustained by these energy centres. Life remains in the physical body in the same way as it is maintained when we are in deep sleep or in a trance. But because of the fear that accompanies the experience of coming to the eye-centre, it is advised that you attempt this exercise only under the guidance of a trained teacher; one who is a master in this art and has himself made this journey many, many times. Then it becomes very safe and once you have practised it, you are able to leave the body and travel at will for as long as you like! You will discover that there are many different and new experiences available while in this astral state of being.

One of the experiences available is the ability to read other people's minds and thoughts! As a result, your ability to communicate is greatly enhanced because you "know" what the other person is thinking about! You are then able to respond "precisely" to his need, which often startles and amazes him! You will be able to see his doubts, his true emotions and so on! It is all very, very amazing. In this astral state, you also discover that everything you are seeing around you is being seen without there being any light! Here, in the physical state, you cannot see anything or anybody unless there is light! If the light is turned off in the room in which you are sitting, everything will become "invisible" to you because you need external light in order to see. But in the astral state of being, you can switch off the light and you STILL will be able to see everything! Everybody and everything, viewed from this state of being, seems to have a

light of its own! They can be seen without the need of any external light! That is why in this state, things and people are often said to be "luminous" and "radiant".

There is an internal illumination in everything and everyone! It is an extraordinary experience and for those who have it for the first time, they think that it is the final and ultimate experience! "We have found heaven" they say. We have found paradise ... we have found everything! It is at this point that the teacher, the master, appears in his own "radiant" form and says, "I have brought you here to start the spiritual journey, not to end it."

XII.

THE MASTER A MUST

We now come to a point in our analysis of the journey towards self-realization about which there is not much understanding: the role of the master in the quest for self-realization. The word "master" has been used in many different senses. Indeed, there is a great deal of controversy on whether or not a master is even needed for such a journey. It is only when one reaches the eye centre that the need for a master really becomes necessary. Up to this point, withdrawal of attention is easy. Anybody can do it! It is not something very difficult. But, upon reaching this point, your progress will simply stop. The experience of reaching the eye centre is so beautiful that you will no longer have any "urge" to rise to the higher states of consciousness. You will feel that this is the end. And it is here that you need the master to convince you that, "No, this is just the beginning." He "pushes" you forward. He takes you on a flight throughout this entire universe! You will then discover that there are many more worlds existing which are far more beautiful than this world known to us. You are amazed to find that there are many MORE people who have attained a higher level of awareness than you had ever imagined! We think only a few rare souls have attained this higher state of awareness. In fact, this world in which we

live is simply a replica of these higher worlds. You will discover that the events happening on this physical plane of consciousness are nothing more than a replay! You find out that the "film" of this physical life is made there, and is then projected through time, space and causation, onto this physical experience! The space-time continuum outside is simply a screen on which consciousness is projecting a film already made at the astral level of consciousness! On this plane, we are able to actually see these films being loaded into consciousness at this physical level.

You can see how, in the future, we will be able to plug ourselves into each other and transfer our thoughts and feelings in a few seconds! Since the mode of communication at the astral level is that of telepathy, it will eventually be reflected at the physical plane of consciousness over here! We will then call it a scientific discovery. At this level of consciousness, you will be able to see everything that is going to happen on this physical plane for the next 2,000 years! You will see all of these events there. It is a fantastic experience! And it is the spiritual master who makes it possible for you to see all of this. He is able to give you instructions on how, by the use of one's own personal consciousness, this region of awareness can be attained. In fact, he will accompany you throughout your whole journey inside consciousness. You will also begin to notice how the lords of these regions respect him; how they show a certain type of reverence and honour to him which they do not show to anyone

else. And you begin to wonder what is so special about him. He is just a co-traveller with me. He is simply a guide who has brought me to this level. Why is he being shown so much respect? But the people at this higher level of awareness "know" who he is. They know that he belongs to a "higher" region. The master is now "teaching" you in a different way than he did on this physical plane.

At the physical level, the master teaches you how to "go within"; how to trigger the experience of reaching the astral state of being. Once you have been able to achieve this, he must then take you out of this state because you will like it so much that you will not want to leave it! He has to somehow or other persuade you that there is still something better than this. He has a very hard time doing this because, in spite of everything he says, you do not want to go on.

The astral region is so beautiful and satisfying that you do not ever want to leave it! It is everything you have hoped for and you do not want anything more! But the master goes on insisting that this is not the end and you must go on. He then takes you to still higher realms of consciousness by showing you how to withdraw your attention, through the process of listening to the "Sound Current", the sound of the self that I mentioned in the previous chapter. This process then enables you to withdraw your attention from the astral body itself and takes you into the region of pure mind! There, the senses are no longer necessary! In this state of consciousness, it is no longer

necessary to have the "power to see" in order to see! It is no longer necessary to have the "power to hear" in order to hear, and so on. At this level of consciousness, you acquire the capacity to have "direct perception", —the ability to have experiences directly with the mind! You are able to enter the region of the "universal mind", the "causal region", where all things and events have their origin! This causal region is simply the region of "pure" mind, where neither the physical nor the astral body are required!

There are hardly any words that can describe the experience of this state of being! It is really impossible to give a description of it! Yet, something must be said. But first, let me clarify one very important point. These regions are not one above the other. You don't have to go from here to there! All these different regions are in the same place! They are "within" your own consciousness! Even this physical world, which we see around us, is within CONSCIOUSNESS from where we project it outside! Even the dream world which we experience when we slip below this wakeful level of consciousness is contained within this same consciousness! Therefore, we do not actually "go" anywhere to have these experiences of higher regions. They automatically come into being when we shift our focus of attention! This must be clearly understood throughout this description of the journey to higher regions.

When we enter into the causal region, we are able to have the experience of "total time"! In the astral region, we were

surprised to discover that time could be suspended! In this physical region, time cannot be held. You are having some nice experience and you want to "hold" on to it, but this cannot be done at this physical level. However, it can be done at the astral level. At the causal level, you can not only suspend time, but you are able to travel backward and forward as well! If you want, you can move backwards into the past to re-experience your happiest moments. Not through memory, but through the "actual" re-experience of the event! If there is some experience happening to you that you do not particularly care for, you can "leap" over it and continue travelling until you reach an experience of your liking! It is an incredible experience. At the causal level of consciousness, time becomes mobile. You can move through time in any direction that you like. You have the ability to go through past, present and future experiences at will! Along with the nature of time, the whole concept of reality, changes!

We discover that what we thought was the beginning of an event is not so, because this experience can be had at "any time" throughout the flow of time! When you can travel in any direction in the time continuum, where is the beginning? You can make any part of time the beginning, the middle or the end! This new and unique ability completely overwhelms and fills us with elation. Then, we become anxious to know more about the nature of this new reality we are experiencing.

At the causal level, we also discover that the reason we were able to communicate through telepathy at the astral level was because there is only ONE mind! We discover that ALL thoughts of ALL people were there inside one single "universal" mind! Entering into the causal state of being, we acquire access to ALL thoughts being had by all minds ... throughout the entire spectrum of time! I cannot really describe the impact of the realization that what you thought was "your" mind and "his" mind, were simply fragments of a single mind! As a result of this experience, all misunderstandings, all problems in human relationships immediately disappear!

At the causal level of consciousness, another very interesting thing also takes place. We discover that all past actions, all future actions and all current actions are being manufactured here! We are able to see how the "Law of Karma" operates! At this physical level of consciousness, we do not know if a certain event which occurred happened because of something we had done a few moments before or because of something we did ten lives ago! In fact, we are not even sure that there is such a thing as a "past" lifetime! At this physical level, we have absolutely no knowledge about matters such as these. But when we are able to go into the causal region of consciousness, we are capable of seeing our entire lifetime as well as that of any other person we want! The experiences which we get, upon entering the causal region, are so immense, so expansive and

total, that no one can believe that there could be any experience higher than this!

Even the most knowledgeable person, someone who has made a very deep study of the levels of human consciousness before making the journey, upon reaching this level, finds it impossible to conceive of anything higher than it! The experience is too grand and too immense for anyone to intellectually comprehend it. And when it happens to you, you are really convinced that, "This is it"! And again, the master, whom you now see in his causal form, must somehow take you still higher.

"You are still in the realm of the mind", he tells you. "This is not the end of the journey ... we have still a very long way to go! Consciousness transcends mind and you must go beyond this region." But the experience of this region is so tremendous that we refuse to believe even the master! The master has a very, very difficult time in persuading us to go beyond the causal level. Therefore, a very long period of time is spent in this region. Incidentally, when I say a lot of time, I am not referring to a few years. I am referring to much longer spans of time! Hundreds of thousands of years are sometimes spent in this region! We cannot believe that there is anything beyond this region, and the enjoyment of it is so fulfilling that we flatly refuse to make any attempt to continue our journey. It is only through spiritual force that the master is able to take us up to the next region of consciousness where even the universal mind gets left behind—the "pure spiritual region".

Once we reach the pure spiritual region, we discover that it was the mind itself which was creating time! All events, whether they were total or not, were being sustained in a time frame created by the mind. Even if you could move in either direction on this continuum, it was still "within" time! At the causal level, we are not able to cross time itself. This capacity comes only after we are able to rise into the pure spiritual state of being! It is really impossible to give any description of this region. Those souls who are able to experience this level of consciousness have not been able to describe it with words. At best, they are only able to describe it in a negative sense—"NETI, NETI", not this ... not that! Therefore, strictly speaking, I should end here because nothing more can be said! One of India's greatest mystics, Sant Kabir, has written a very beautiful book which is an account of a conversation with his principal disciple, Dharmadas. The book is called "Anuraag Sagar"—the Ocean of Love! In it, Dharmadas asks Kabir to say something about the higher regions beyond the mind.

> "You have been lecturing to me for a long time about the higher level of consciousness; about a higher way of seeing things. Why don't you tell me what this is really about? What is this higher consciousness?" ... Kabir replies, "Dharmadas, how can I say anything about it to you? I can't describe it with the words of this world. How can I explain to you that there is a state of consciousness where there is no time? How

would you comprehend it? How can you comprehend a state of being where there is no time and no space? But these are only words! They are not the experience! We can go on and on repeating that the experience is one of timelessness and spacelessness but it will not be a description of this region!"

And then Kabir goes on to tell Dharmadas, in a storybook fashion, the whole tale of creation relating it to the worldly life here. It is one of the greatest books ever written.

When the causal region is traversed, and you are able to enter into a higher level of conscious experience, then alone are you able to realize that TIME is not an indispensable coordinate of experience, that one can have experience WITHOUT time! You are able to have the experience of "timeless" time! This timeless time is where all time is total! All time is existing in ONE SINGLE MOMENT and you need not move backwards or forward! The entire scope of all experiences available within time is "capsuled" into a single, timeless moment! This experience is impossible to describe! I don't know why I am even trying to say anything about it! I am just trying to give some idea, however inadequate, about the incredible nature of the pure spiritual experience. It is an experience where time need not be extended in order to have personal experience.

All experiences are condensed at this level of consciousness. At this level, one has an intense longing to be "ONE" with

everyone, to "LOVE" everyone! Everything is known instantly ... "INTUITIVELY "! No time is required! This timeless, spaceless experience occurs when we are able to enter into this spiritual region existing one step above the causal region. At this level, we transcend everything relevant to all known reality. Our experience becomes permanent! It never suffers death, it never changes, it remains exactly the same as it always was, has been and always will be! At this level, we discover that our nature is the same as that of God Himself! That MAN IS GOD! He is made of the same stuff of which God is made but has been completely ignorant of this fact. Man is a seed—the seed of God.

And when man reaches the pure spiritual level of consciousness, he blossoms ... the "God" in him becomes manifest. The fragrance of divineness is released because "Godliness" has bloomed in you, and you become so fulfilled and joyous that you have no desire or need to go anywhere else! We then thank our spiritual master for bringing us to this "highest" level of consciousness. But he says, "No, this is still not the end of our journey! You have only discovered your own self, you have yet to discover 'GOD HIMSELF!' "

When we transcend the pure spiritual region we are able to cross the last barrier ... the barrier of "Individuation"! Even this feeling that there can be more than one soul, that you are simply one of many billions of other souls, is an illusion! We discover that at the level of "total consciousness", we are able to transcend the experience of individuation ... the experience

of "ego"! At this level of consciousness, no time, not even timeless time, exists! This state of totality of consciousness contains all experiences from the lowest dream, up to the very highest and is being experienced by ONE SINGLE CONSCIOUSNESS ... your own! It is difficult to explain how the "whole" of experience is fused together into one total experience. It is unconfined, unlimited and has no time or space! I am not sure you can even understand this concept of unlimited consciousness without time and without space! But this is the experience one gets when one reaches the level of total consciousness. At this level of consciousness, you discover that you have unlimited possibilities, that you are "ONE" with the creator ... one with God Himself! Hence, upon attaining this level of consciousness, every person—with no exception—has proclaimed the same thing ... "AHAM BRAHMASMI" ... "I am God"! It simply means they have "realized" that their seed is no more a seed, it has disappeared into the soil of existence, and they have come to the ultimate blossoming ... to the "peak" of creation.

At the level of total consciousness, you are able to have "total experience"! Total experience means ALL experiences, not just the "highest" experience. This must be clearly understood. The highest experience is LOWER than the experience of totality, and when anyone attains this level of total consciousness, he CONTINUES to be aware of all of the levels of consciousness

below, whether he is here or there. At this level, your experience becomes one of "symphonic consciousness"!

People very often wonder whether those who have reached this level of consciousness have to "come down" and "go up" in order to know what is happening at the various planes of reality. They don't! They are totally aware of EVERYTHING at every level of human awareness! This, then, is a brief description of what lies within every human being's own consciousness! I have tried to describe the variety of experiences available in human consciousness as best as I could. The language, any language, is completely inadequate! It is something which cannot be described in words. But I have to try to say something about these things because very few people have ever been told of such human possibilities. The secrets of your own consciousness have been kept hidden from you!

As a result, a deep feeling of worthlessness surrounds your existence. Society has conditioned you to feel very negative towards yourself! You have been conditioned to believe that your worth is not intrinsic. You are asked to "prove" yourself; to achieve success; to make a lot of money! You are asked to "earn" respectability and prestige! You must prove you are worth something! And this idea of success goes on torturing you throughout your whole life. Hence, the deep feeling that "I am worthless as a human being unless I prove otherwise" destroys all the beauty of human experience. But, when you are able to realize that you are one with God—one with the Creator

Himself—this becomes proof enough of your worth. No other proof is needed. You discover the infinite immensity of your own consciousness. For the first time, you are able to really love "yourself" which is the only way you can ever love "God". Therefore, the greatest fortune that can ever befall a human being in this world is to be initiated by a perfect master, who will then give him the "key to the kingdom of God" ... the key to higher consciousness.

XIII.

INITIATION

The word "initiation" is used all over the world to indicate the entry or introduction of someone into a new discipline or subject. However, "spiritual initiation" of the perfect masters that will be examined in this chapter introduces us into "higher awareness" and takes us into higher levels of consciousness! It is not simply an introduction into a new discipline or subject—it means much more than this. From the very beginning, I want to make it absolutely clear that a very large number of initiations going on, especially in this country, are not the kind of initiations that I consider authentic and real. Today, you can "purchase" initiation into many cults and various kinds of yogic practices by simply paying a fee! This is not the "spiritual" initiation of which I am speaking, when I refer to initiation by a perfect living master. A long time ago, initiation was not so easy. It could not be purchased for a few dollars! It was very difficult to obtain. A seeker would have to sometimes wait for years to be initiated! Some were made to wait for almost the whole of their lives, because unless they were "ready" they would not be accepted by the masters. This waiting itself became a way of testing the "maturity" of a soul! The more impatient the mind,

the less mature was the soul. In other cases, a seeker was not even allowed to ask any questions—none!

Sometimes, you would be made to wait for five or ten days before you could even ask a single question! But today, we can hardly wait even an hour before we attack the masters with our questions! An hour seems to be the longest we can stay with a trend of thought! Whereas, in the old days, you would be made to "hold" the thought; to stay with it until it matured, and then, like a ripe fruit, it would fall away of its own accord! No "real" questions can be answered by words. Questions can only be answered by an "experience"; by something existential ... but never through the intellect! This simple waiting, unquestioned waiting, the reliance upon the Master to pick the right moment, would prepare the seekers of that time to make tremendous progress when they were finally initiated! But today, the whole thing has become a different matter because no one is willing to wait. We have become such victims of time, that to wait for even a single moment is impossible! As a result of this "time" consciousness, we cannot afford to "waste" our time when we come across a perfect master. He will make us wait! And, the mind will ask, "What are you doing? Why are you wasting your time with this man? Is that which he is offering you really worth the wait? Will it really lead you to anything?" But this waiting is the price you will have to pay—and one has to pay a price for everything!

However, we are only willing to pay with money, not with faith, and trust!

Because of this "hurry-up" attitude, which is characteristic of these modern times, initiation from the perfect masters has become almost impossible! Full of impatience, ignorance and lack of faith, we rush to such a master, and ask him, "Will you initiate me?" But, even during this brief asking, we are still on the run! Traditional initiation has become almost impossible, but there is still no alternative to some kind of initiation! Initiation is still needed! To meet this need, there are thousands of phony gurus and Swami "this" or Swami "that" who are willing to sell you a "QUICK-FIX" initiation for a fee! Today, in the name of mysticism, something pseudo—something false—is being sold. America is full of gurus who are selling you something which has nothing to do with spirituality. Now this is not the kind of initiation I am referring to as initiation by a perfect living master. However, even if one does have the patience to wait and trust ... to "surrender"—there still remains another problem in being initiated by a perfect master ... their initiation is NOT done at the physical level at all!

There is no such thing as initiation at this physical level so far as a perfect master is concerned! The perfect master operates from the higher levels of consciousness and initiates us at a level of consciousness higher than this wakeful state. When a perfect master initiates you, he creates a connection between you and his higher form at the next higher level of consciousness. No

perfect master ever initiates his disciples at this physical plane! The "real" initiation takes place at the astral level within, from where he operates; from where he connects his "spiritual form" to ours. He does not believe in teaching any new system of rituals and ceremonies. He does not propagate any new practices or methods of worship. We have already been confused enough by all these things. We have been praying and worshipping the Lord for thousands of years in thousands of different ways.

Therefore, the perfect master simply says, "Worship Him in whatever manner you like." There is no harm in praying to the Lord in any manner you desire, because your relationship with Him is direct! In fact, prayer with words and so on is not even necessary! But if you like, you may pray and worship in whatever fashion you think is correct and effective; it hardly makes any difference. To whom are you praying anyway? You and the Lord are ONE! You are simply "talking" to your own self! Prayer is really one of the most misunderstood notions found in religion. It is as if you are praying before a mirror, seeing your own face, kneeling down before your own image, begging for favours! There is nothing in the mirror except your own reflection! Similarly, there is no distinction between that which we call God and our own self, and all prayers—however beautiful they may be—are, therefore, regressive. Your own consciousness is the "creator" of this entire experience of the world which you are having!

When the perfect master initiates you, he will take you to a level much higher than prayers, rituals and worship! He enables you to "personally" reach a level of consciousness much higher than this wakeful physical level at which your search for God-realization was confined to rituals and ceremonies! Therefore, his initiation will have nothing to do with religion. Initiation by a perfect master does not require you to change or drop your religion; to change your form of worship or concept of God. Nor does it require you to make any changes in your cultural background or nationality.

It requires only a change in your attitude! A change from the attitude that "I know everything" to that of "I don't know anything." Your so-called "knowledge" is an illusion of the mind that you must leave! It is fictitious; just a creation of words; a fantasy, made of the same "stuff" that dreams are made of! You will then come to realize that "you don't understand anything; you cannot understand anything. Your consciousness is confined to this dream-like physical level of consciousness. You are part and parcel of this physical world which is simply a creation of your own mental projections! You are dreaming all the time, even while fully awake!" This change, from that of deep metaphysical sleep to that of seeking and searching for "reality", is the only change required for initiation from a perfect master. But if there is no "outward" change required for initiation by a perfect master, then what "is" initiation? What happens when you are initiated by a perfect master?

When you are initiated by the perfect master, all your "karma" is destroyed! There is no new karma added, and you are liberated from the clutches of actions and their consequences! To fully appreciate the significance of this event, you must clearly understand what this "Law of Karma" and its relationship to an individual's spiritual plight are. The very first thing that must be understood is that karma is a state of consciousness, and is a function of the human mind. We call this part of the human mind, which is exposed to the impression coming into its field of awareness, the "Antahkarana". The Antahkarana is the sensitive part of the mind which picks up the impressions of our conscious experiences. These impressions are called "Samskaras". These samskaras are simply the previous impressions left by what we have experienced in consciousness. Once these impressions are picked up by the human mind, they are retained and our future course of experience is then guided by them. It is this process by which the mind picks up these impressions and then releases them back into our experiences to be worked out, that is called the "Law of Karma"!

Therefore, Karma is entirely mental! We create Karma with our mind and we also work it out through the mind! A mental decision may or may not be followed by a physical act, but Karma is still there! Karma need not always be worked out through our physical actions. In fact, if the mind is unaware of a certain activity, then there is no Karma. But if it IS aware of something mentally, but NO physical act follows, Karma is still

created! Karma, then, is merely the "retention" of previous memories, experiences and their impressions within the human mind. It is the working out of these impressions in our present and future decision-making processes based upon our previous experiences.

Therefore, we are bound to act in a certain way because of these previous experiences and impressions. We are "destined" to do certain things, therefore some of these impressions are called "Fate Karma"—"Pralabdha Karma"—Karma over which we have no control. When we have cleared up these impressions and start to create new ones, then these new impressions are called "New Karma"; Karma that will form the basis of "Fate Karma" for the future. This new Karma is also sometimes called "Kriyaman Karma". But how, you may ask, can we "jam" up all of the activity, all of the follow-up actions of our Karma within the scope of a single life-time? The answer is that it is held in "storage" for a future life! The concept of Karma is, therefore, tied up with the concept of reincarnation.

The concept of reincarnation is that this "overflow" of Karma is being held in reserve in the same Antahkarana ... the same mind! Since the mind cannot work out each impression that comes into it within a single lifetime, it stores these unused impressions in its sensitive part, to be worked out in a future lifetime! This third type of Karma which is held in reserve for distribution in a future life, is called "reserved Karma". It is also sometimes referred to as "Sanchit Karma". All three kinds of

Karma, briefly described as Pralabdha, Kriyaman and Sanchit, become a heavy load on our consciousness and make it impossible to rise above this physical level of consciousness! Therefore, you can now understand and appreciate the great significance of getting initiation from a perfect master! The master, by using the force of his own consciousness, frees us from the mind and from our load of Karma! Initiation by the perfect master is the only process by which a human being can escape from the law of Karma. What goes on thereafter is just "mock" Karma created to preserve the pattern of experience in this life. There is no new Karma! You are liberated from the realms of Karma! Initiation by a perfect master is not just an external ceremony!

If a person who claims to be a guru simply gives you a few words to repeat, saying, "This is the mantra, now I have given you initiation", you can be sure you have been given nothing! If he has not linked you with his own spiritual force within; not severed your connection with the negative power of time, which sustains your load of Karma; if he does not do all this, then he has not been of any help to you! Therefore, initiation by a perfect living master is the greatest event that can happen to you in this world! It is something which angels, rulers of higher realms, souls who are governing this entire creation ... those who themselves are creators of regions of consciousness, are waiting and hoping for! They are all waiting for a connection with this "spiritual force" which is a direct link ... to the "totality"

of consciousness! Therefore, when a seeker is "ready", he is then picked up and initiated ... he is "CHOSEN", and once you are initiated by a perfect master, he will simply laugh at all the efforts you are still making to reach the higher levels of consciousness! All the yoga and meditation you are doing is just being done out of past habits! The truth is: even if you make numerous efforts, they are not going to take you anywhere!

God-realization does not fall within the laws of causation! God-realization is not causal; it is "acausal" ... without any cause! This has to be clearly understood! The tendency of the "logical" person or a "rational" man is to either decide that God-realization is causal (and that by his effort he can achieve it), or that it is acausal, (it happens only when it happens ... of its own accord, and there is no need to make efforts)! This is how intellect will divide the reality of our spiritual plight. But, in both ways, you will miss the point ... the "whole" point.

If you think it is causal and you make efforts to do "great sadhana", you will fail because it is not causal. Yet, if you conclude that it is acausal, and hence, there is no need to make efforts, or why bother, again you will miss! You will have to make all the effort possible, because you are "prepared" through your efforts to be "receptive" when it happens! The reality is: God-realization is acausal. It will "happen" to you; it is not going to happen through your efforts. Your efforts will simply make you "ready"; make you open and vulnerable to the master. The master, seeing the validity and sincerity of your

efforts—out of compassion and love—draws you within and takes you on a flight from the known to the unknown … from the self to the total self—to God-realization!

"Come to the edge," he said. They said: "We are afraid." "COME TO THE EDGE!", he said. They came. He PUSHED them … and they flew.

(APOLLINAIRE)

For a list of further publications, recorded lectures, or for more information, contact:

Institute for the Study of Human Awareness
PO Box 991
Palatine, IL 60078

Email: Isha.info1@gmail.com
Website: www.ishanews.org



Ishwar Puri has lectured throughout the entire world on a very wide variety of subjects including: art, human awareness and human relations, morality, science, philosophy and religion, health and wellbeing, human consciousness, plus a long list of other subjects which cover the entire scope of human experience. The delivery of each presentation is eloquent, motivating and enlightening. By them, we are encouraged to know and understand ourselves in the truest sense of the Socratic theme "KNOW THYSELF." And the higher knowledge, which results from self-realization, permits us to better understand other people and the world in which we live.

As founder and principle speaker for the Institute for the Study of Human Awareness, Ishwar Puri continues to donate his time and resources to others through this nonprofit organization.

https://ishwarpurisantmat.com/