

Danijel Turina

A Yogi Approach



ouroboros

Danijel Turina / A Yogi Approach

Danijel Turina

A Yogi Approach



ouroboros
Zagreb, 2004

First published in Croatia by Hermes Cro 2000
First English edition published by Ceres Editions 2000. Second edition 2001.

Ouroboros Publishing
VII Ravnice 21
10000 Zagreb
<http://www.ouroboros.hr>
E-mail: info@ouroboros.hr

Author:
<http://www.danijel.org>
E-mail: info@danijel.org

Editor: *Domagoj Klepac*
Copyediting: *BookConductors™, LLC*
Typesetting and layout: *Domagoj Klepac*
Cover: *Danijel Turina*

This book was written in both
Croatian and English by Danijel Turina.

ISBN 953-7150-00-3
PDF e-book version

This book is available in print under ISBN 953-98824-9-4

Copyright © Ouroboros Publishing 2004

All rights reserved.

No part of this PDF e-book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, taping, or by any information storage or retrieval system, without the permission in writing from the publisher. Printing and copying are permitted for personal use only.

Bible quotations taken from the New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. (www.Lockman.org)

Contents

Introduction	1
The Philosopher's Stone	5
The Techniques	11
Basic Meditation	13
Resonance	15
Upstream Kriya	17
The Inner Space Technique	21
The Noble Truths	23
The Quest	29
Life	49
The Levels of Consciousness	63
Matter	65
Prana	68
The Astral Level	89
The Mental Level	113
Vajra (The Causal Level, Lower)	131
Indigo (The Causal Level, Higher)	133
Violet (The Buddhic Level)	134
Shiva. Shakti. (The Atmic/Nirvanic Level)	135
Golden (The Paranirvanic Level)	137
Purusha	138
Practical Spirituality	139
Love and Sex	149

The Meaning	160
Ecology	164
Pollution of the Soil	165
Pollution of Waters	168
Atmospheric Pollution	170
Damage to the Ozone Layer	171
The Greenhouse Effect	173
Damage to the Food Chain and to the Ecosystem ...	176
Electromagnetic Pollution	178
Acoustic Pollution	179
Mental and Spiritual Pollution	180
Moral Pollution	187
Religion	194
Education	198
Vegetarianism	202
Choices	205
The Master and the Disciple	208
Theoretical Spirituality	213
God	214
Soul and Reincarnation	223
Karma	227
Dharma	231
Yoga and Kundalini	234
Conclusion	239

Introduction

Writing a book on spirituality is an unrewarding task, doomed from the very start. For if I can write of something, it can in the best case serve as a signpost, as a finger pointing at the moon, leaving the moon itself untouched... always leaving not a probability, but a certainty that the vast majority of the readers will look at the finger. The greatest of dangers is in the possible beauty of the finger, for the more beautiful, more visible the finger, and clearer its task as a signpost, the greater is the chance that its existence is futile. If we, however, remove the finger, if we make it smaller and less conspicuous, attempting to put the stress on the moon... We come to the conclusion that the only book on spirituality, that would contain spirituality that is impossible to confuse with something else, is the one that is never written. If we remove the wrappings from a package, so that only its contents would be visible, we have at that point destroyed the package.

In spite of that, writing books makes sense. The only constant thing in the history of the holy scriptures of all civilizations, of all religions, is their almost immediate misinterpretation. The authors of the scriptures speak of the necessity of breaking the jar, of the need to get out of the well so that we can see the sky. The readers of the scriptures read of the need to fill the jar with a new, sweet-smelling liquid, and of the fresh water in the well. The authors of the scriptures speak of dogma as death of the spirit, as a

cage for the soul; the readers read it as dogma. Repeating the dogma of the worthlessness of dogmas, with glassy eyes they wage war, in the name of that dogma, against those who misinterpreted some other scripture.

No religious conflict has ever existed between those who know, but between those who believe. Those who believe are the greatest of dangers to the world, because they have not realized the truth. They are content with little. What great abundance they miss! Let us not be content with little. Great dangers prey on us in the forests of false humility, the dangers of being content with something that is not so great, that leaves no possibility of there being something greater. Let us not fight desires; on the contrary, let us fight lowly goals. Never, ever should we be content with licking a jar of honey and watching a picture of bread, for that way we would remain hungry. We should go to the store, buy bread, open the jar of honey and eat. Knowledge of bread is in the eating.

God has to be realized immediately, because there is no time left to wait. The highest goal has to be approached immediately. By licking the jar of honey we will not reach the contents. By reading the scriptures and practicing dogmas we will not attain enlightenment. What we need is living experience, living touch with the highest of realities. For the holy scriptures say: “the enlightened ones do not kill, nor desire another’s wealth, nor another’s mate, and they love God more than anything in the world, and with all of their being.” All of that will come by itself, if we make God the foundation of our lives. If we do not recognize God at all, it is clear that we will love everything more than God; it is clear that we will love a real automobile or a house more than an imagined God. What we need is real enlightenment; we have more than enough religious systems. The rules and regulations will then take care of themselves. We need to strive for the highest of realities and not be content with anything less, and all the other things will come naturally.

The problem with religions is that they often confuse the cause and the effect, the goal and the means, to a degree where they start looking like cargo cults. I’ll provide an example, based on a real event.

One fine day, a small airplane landed near a village in Papua New Guinea and “white gods” came out, acted really nice, and

gave some chocolates and candies to the tribe. Then the gods ascended back to heaven with a “brrrm!” noise. In a short while the stock of chocolates and candies got a bit thin, and the counsel of elders decided that more should be obtained, and that the white gods should be summoned again. And so they made a model plane of wood and straw and ran up and down the meadow making a “brrrm!” noise, in hope that this would attract the gods.

It appears that religious wars are waged between the members of the tribe who make a plane of wood alone, and those who use wood and straw; between those who think that it is necessary to run loudly up and down the meadow saying “brrrm!”, and those who think that a silent prayer in the silence of the cabin will suffice.

It is all so absurd, that it would be funny if it weren’t so close to the truth. The signs of enlightenment are claimed to be the means of attaining enlightenment; a description of the goal is seen as a description of the path.

Let us make up one more example.

One fine day, people from a village passed through a forest and saw a man sitting with his legs crossed, mumbling a certain sound, his eyes shining in ecstasy. They asked him what he was doing, and he told them that he was repeating God’s holy name, and loving God with all of his being. The people were so impressed that they wanted to be just like him. They began to sit like him and mumble the sound they have heard him mumble; the only thing they didn’t manage to imitate was the look in his eyes, and the image of God that they imagined didn’t fulfill them. So they went back to the forest and asked the saint how he managed to attain the vision of God that fills him with such bliss, that he could stay in meditation, sitting in one place for days in a row; they, unfortunately, couldn’t do it, because other things attracted them.

“But that is normal; it came all by itself,” the saint answered. “I walked through the woods one day and stumbled upon a rock. I stumbled upon rocks many times before, but this time I paid attention, and realized that I had never before in my life seen or felt a rock. I walked and lived within a cloud of my thoughts, desires, conceptions... while reality went its course, passing me by. I never saw the reality, never noticed... till the moment I felt this rock. At that moment I was filled with realization. I saw the unity of the essence of that rock and the essence of everything; I realized that I am the only reality in the rock, and in all the stars in heaven, and

all the beings. I felt life, in its pure stainless essence I felt, undivided, the joy that I used to feel in small fragments while I made love, while I asked questions about the world, in small moments of knowledge. I felt God so close, that nothing could possibly be closer to me, nothing could be more intimate, nobody could know me better, and no love outside him could love me. Thus rooted in the highest, I lost all desire to do anything but stay in that undivided consciousness of ecstasy.”

Hearing that, one group of the peasants took hoes and stones and killed him for blasphemy, while the other group mourned him and started worshipping the rocks on the road.

This is an imagined story, but it happens all the time. The way to God is so simple that it appears incredible, and its fruits are so diverse, that they can endlessly be described and praised. The way to God begins with noticing the reality—seeing and appreciating the reality, awakening in the reality. I wrote this book in hope that some readers will truly realize this truth, and feel the book, the paper, the covers in their hands, the scent of the ink on paper, the chair on which they sit, and that in this moment they will realize that reality is what is.

And then it begins.

The Philosopher's Stone

Recognizing the reality and its nature, awakening in the reality, is the first step, with which all spirituality begins. Spiritual is real, unspiritual is unreal; therefore, the spiritual begins with the awakening to the reality.

Many approaches and their defenders are mistaken in the belief that one must start with some technique, which will lead to the awakening to the reality. The exact opposite is the truth. It is necessary to awaken and be alive, to feel one's own life—which is the actual meaning of the term “kundalini¹ awakening” from various yogic² schools—and then to make that life divine, fill it with God, make oneself an organ and means through which God works in the world. Unawakened human will and consciousness, which in a dormant state perceives itself as separate from everything, is now awakened and learns how to act as a part of everything, one with the essence of everything, and as everything, in all.

A dormant man resembles an automobile without a driver, which moves guided by inertia and the laws of nature, until it hits some obstacle. Such a man possesses a mind that doesn't surpass a computer's mind by much, a mind guided by instincts and passions, by standard patterns that lower nature is subject to, before

¹ See the chapter on kundalini.

² See the chapter on yoga. The term “yogic” denotes the things related to yoga; the Sanskrit term that denotes the practitioner of yoga is “yogi.”

the higher nature becomes its part. Kundalini awakening means uniting the higher and the lower nature; the hand has entered the glove and controls it. The divine has descended, and has taken over the control of the animal. The order descends into chaos, acting as a purifying, organizing force. The difference between a plane and a glider: the glider is guided by the winds and flows of air, just like the plane, but the difference is that the plane possesses the engine that empowers it to fly against the winds. The forces of instinct and entropy are still present to an extent, but they no longer prevail. The higher spirit of a man is no longer a helpless force that can only lament in observation of a man's life, with no actual power to direct it to a right course.

The kundalini awakening changes all that: the spirit is empowered to act in the body. It can manifest in the body, as much as the body feels and perceives the spirit. Human nature, life and consciousness (Shiva and Shakti³) are no longer separated, but made whole. The polarities are unified, and the insurmountable gap between life and consciousness is no more.

Spirituality is often thought to be some sort of a “departure from oneself.” Quite the opposite: it is entering oneself, feeling oneself. Instead of attempting to surpass the physical body, let us use it—feel the reality of our bodily nature, our own feelings, our own thoughts. Everything that we possess as ourselves is pure and beautiful. The body is beautiful, the feelings are beautiful, the thoughts are beautiful. All those things that we have, we should dedicate to God.

The greatest part of human creativity is unbreakably bound with sexuality. That is the natural order of things, for sex is literally a force of unity and life. Therefore our essence is clearest and most present in the sexual thoughts and imaginations; sexual fantasies are the most powerfully focused thought processes, the greatest part of our life force is invested in them. One of the major turning points in my thinking happened when I read, in a booklet on tantra, that sexuality should be dedicated to God and used as a means of adoration. That flashed with truth as lightning in the night to me—before that, I, trusting the “spiritual authorities,”

³ The terms Shiva and Shakti in this meaning should not be confused with the description of the higher consciousness in the context of which they are also mentioned; here, they are the symbols for consciousness (Shiva) and energy (Shakti).

thought that sex was something low and filthy, material, that should be thrown away and rejected so that the Divine could be reached. This approach, however, was something completely different and completely natural—ten scales of magnitude more true and natural than all those repressions and frustrations.

An idea of sexually driven worship was immediately conceived in my mind—but since I perceived God as a male principle—why, I don't know, but that's how it was then—I saw myself as a woman in that relationship, a “passive side.” You can imagine my enormous surprise when in my vision God appeared as a woman, who accepts my love and sexuality of a man. It was only later that I recognized this acceptance, adoration, recognition, integration of self, and healing of my own rejected parts as my kundalini awakening. At that time I was still too contaminated with various Indian concepts of serpents on the bottom of the spine⁴ and similar nonsense to be able to recognize kundalini as something so close and dear, intimate and inner; so intimate that I could not identify it as something external, as some image or concept, even if I tried hard with the best of intentions. So wonderful was the Goddess, so powerful, beautiful, magnificent and conscious, that I remained in her vision for days and weeks, a vision which makes an orgasm seem literally like a tiresome waste of time; I remained cuddled up at her feet in adoration, holding her with all of my being, giving her myself as a gift, with no holding back. The inner recognition, understanding, feeling and unity.

Before kundalini awakening I was able to meditate, and I even managed to attain some states of consciousness—after the awakening, I would fall asleep on the mere attempt to meditate. Some protective circuit would jump in and off I'd go, end of attempt. After several such unsuccessful “meditations,” I completely gave up trying. It was only later that I found out that there are things that are not to be done after kundalini awakening; an entirely different approach is needed, and the rules of the game are completely different. Meditation can at this point become counterproductive, as much as plowing a field after the plants have sprouted can be counterproductive and harmful, instead of being beneficial.

⁴ In the standard symbolism kundalini is represented with a three and a half times coiled serpent, dwelling under the root chakra (muladhara). It is, basically, the symbol for the potential energy of life.

After kundalini awakening, only natural behavior works. If a natural response means doing something stupid, it should not be repressed and replaced with a learnt, “spiritual” response. One has to stop and find the cause of the inadequate response, that cause has to be identified, looked at carefully, felt. It should be looked at from all sides, and eventually a misconception, or rejection of a part of oneself, that behaved as a naughty child, has to be found and healed with love and acceptance into one’s essence. Only then can a response, a natural, spontaneous response, become adequate.

The true being of a man, his real condition, his true responses, are those that take place when the mind has no opportunity to act. If your mind was erased at this moment, if you were born as a child with no memories whatsoever, with no learnt “spiritual commandments,” how would you act? That is the only thing that counts, the only thing to which God gives value, and all learnt behavior, all artificially modified response is utterly worthless and no being of higher planes will pay any attention to any of it. With those deceptions a man can only deceive himself, he may attempt to deceive others, but what really counts is what we are, not what we appear to be.

And from what we are, whatever it may be, we should move on, in honesty. We must notice that something is dirty, that there are problems. And we need to act naturally, even if it means acting badly, and learn whatever we need to learn in order for that natural action to be purified, for it to become finer and nicer, more transparent, pure and gentle. There, and only there, can we speak of the techniques of kundalini-yoga. The techniques are about observation—of emotions, energy movements, thought patterns, and the techniques of learning, acquiring, healing. No techniques other than love and devotion are needed for the kundalini to awaken, and no techniques other than love and devotion are needed after the awakening. So where are the techniques, then?

The techniques aren’t about forcing things, not here. The techniques are about pointing a finger in the right direction, not about forming molds. The techniques are about recognizing the natural ways, which are an inseparable part of a man’s very nature, and their optimal and adequate use.

A frequent concept of yogic techniques, in the schools of yoga, claims that a man is created imperfect, with no means of enlightenment, and dependent on some guru from India or Tibet, who

invented a technique that will bring the salvation. When we look at things a bit closer, we see that human inventions are always inferior to God's inventions, the inventions of nature. Whenever a man created something, he usually discovered that something better already existed. Likewise, whenever I practiced some yogic technique, I discovered that something better was already a part of my body's natural functioning. With a deep sigh or a yawn, my body performs a form of pranayama⁵ far superior to anything that anyone could possibly devise. With a resonant sigh or a sob, my body selects a mantra⁶ that will release my tension in a way far superior to anyone's creation—I called that the resonance technique. After the kundalini awakening, I discovered that my body has an energy balancing technique far superior to any human invention—I called it the upstream kriya⁷ technique, the upward movement.

And then, I finally began to understand things. I saw the true nature of the techniques, and I started to practice them with directed effort, not occasionally or by accident as I did before. My attention was drawn to the right direction, and everything took a different shape, it was accelerated, increased... it was all there, waiting for me, but I had to make the choices and surrender to that, make the moves on my side of the board, take the gift and make use of it.

⁵ The technique of breath control.

⁶ A sound of power.

⁷ "Upstream kriya" is the term that came to my consciousness as a description of the phenomenon, and which I decided to use in the form in which it appeared.

The Techniques

The kundalini awakening is the turning point, the essence of the real spirituality; spirituality without kundalini adds up to a mere imagination of moods and harboring attitudes and dogmas. For that reason, I will here give the technique for awakening the kundalini for those who are still unawakened, and for those with the awakened kundalini, I will give a description of kundalini-awakened living, as the essence of things, something that has to be done right away, right now, instead of the eternal delays and postponing. But...

BEWARE!

Kundalini is the life itself, the creative Divine Force in manifestation. To awaken it means to unite life and consciousness, to an extent. The process of purification, guided by Kundalini Shakti,⁸ will eventually produce the unity of consciousness and life/energy on all levels of manifestation of the Divine, where the individual ego will cease to exist and give way to the manifesting God—an individual is transformed into a Divine incarnation. Before you proceed, think carefully, examine your heart—are you willing to give your entire life, your entire being, to God?

⁸ In this context, Shakti is most accurately translated as “force” or “energy.”

If the answer is “yes,” or your kundalini is already awakened and you seek advice on the possible direction of your life, then please, keep on reading. If not, skip this chapter. The following technique will cause kundalini awakening only in those persons who are truly ready, and to whom the awakening represents a natural process, and it will happen in the mildest and gentlest way possible. The difficulties that will arise during the process of purification of the system can all be solved with devotion to God, and with faith.

May God’s blessings stay with you on the path.

Basic Meditation

Relax completely. Sit⁹ in a comfortable position, spine erect... if you don't feel comfortable sitting, it's all right to lie down. Use the resonance to get rid of your tension. Do it until you are completely free of all expectations, stress and that sort of things... observe your shoulders. If they are in spasm, if they are not relaxed, you are too tense. At one point your shoulders will relax, the muscles will become soft. Keep up the good work... observe your jaw. At one point it will relax, and you will most certainly feel it... that is the sign of the deep relaxation—the jaw muscles are most sensitive to stress. They go into spasm first, and they relax last.

You are relaxed completely now. Your mind is peaceful and blank. You are ready.¹⁰

God is omnipresent. Everywhere, (s)he can take any form... he will take any form you can love, surrender to. Make it easy on yourself—love God in the form closest to your heart... the one you react most strongly to, most lovingly... the one you can see and admire, glow on the mere memory. If you don't have such a form, it doesn't matter... take any form that creates a loving response in you—see your ideal person of the opposite sex¹¹ in your spirit's eye. Love freely! You will get sexually aroused, and that is good. It is good because sex is most intimately connected with everything that is creative in you; it is most intimately connected with your ability to love. Instead of trying to repress it as something dirty, use your sexuality as an engine, accept its help. It has most obviously been offered. Worship with your sexuality; give it as a gift to your Divine Beloved. It is accepted, unconditionally.

⁹ The sitting posture is recommended because of the orientation of the body and the according orientation of the consciousness, but it is not obligatory; what matters is that the position of the body is comfortable enough not to distract your attention.

¹⁰ This is the preparation, the purpose of which is the relaxation of the body and bringing the consciousness into a state that is appropriate for focusing on God—it can be replaced by autogenous training or some similar relaxing practice.

¹¹ Or the same sex, if it is an image of a higher being that invokes a powerful image of the Divine, such as for example Jesus, Krishna, or some other great holy person.

Love, adore, just feel it, unmotivated, give yourself to God, to do with you as he pleases. There is no time limit, you don't ever have to stop, keep the feeling with you.

If your kundalini isn't awakened so far, ask God to awaken in you... to make love to you gently, go through you and take all the blocks, take you and dissolve you in herself... surrender to the Divine Will... worship God with your entire being, as your heart's essence, heart of your heart, soul of your soul, core of your being... purpose of your existence.

If you feel the top of your head tingling, open up to God, ask that he comes through you into the earth... feel your feet... feel the ground below your feet... feel your entire being consumed as you surrender...

You might spontaneously go into upstream kriya as you do this... I always do. If you do, that is a 100% positive sign that your kundalini is awakened.

Ask God for guidance. Open up and accept. You are safe. Everything is all right. I love you.

Resonance

I already spoke of sound, of releasing the emotional charge through resonant exhalation. This is a “yogic technique” that every child starts to apply immediately after birth. Birth is a stressful act, and the child discharges this enormous stress from its system by crying and screaming... exhaling, making sound, emotions transformed into sound. This is the most powerful technique for discharging emotional states.¹²

Remember the times when you felt under pressure, and you sighed deeply, producing an emotional, resonant sound while exhaling? This is it—and it is the active compound in all the mantric systems. This is what works in mantras—in chanting “om” and other mantras... but this is natural, this is perfect, safe, and works many times better than a “fixed” mantra. Why? Because here, the mantra is determined dynamically by your system, and not by some book. Your condition changes, and your body will always “know” the right sound. There are conventional mantras that resonate with certain parts of your system, producing desired results. Since the condition of the system changes, such mantras are hazardous, they can produce unpleasant side effects, or they can be simply useless.

This system, however, is your natural safety valve. It is yours by birthright. You just have to know that you have the right to use it.

Inhale deeply...

...exhale, let it out, surrender and release the sound...

...let it out... it is OK, you are safe, loved and accepted...

...you can release it... exhale the full breath, resonate it out...

...breathe in deeply...

...and let it all out, make the sound, give your emotions the sound, cry out...

Repeat that, many times... observe how the sound gets deeper and deeper... how your mind gets calmer... new emotions will come up when you finish the first ones... the sound will get higher again, doesn't matter, go with it, scream it out, sigh deeply, whatever...

¹² The resonance is essentially a nasal sound (“nnnn...” or “mmmm...”) or a vowel (“aaaa...,” “eeee...,” “iiii...,” “oooo...,” “uuuu...”).

Until you are completely serene... your consciousness runs deeply... as you go inside, make the sound again, and again... It will open your nadis and chakras, make your consciousness go deeper in peace... When you encounter a block, the sound will dissolve it—become higher again, and you can feel and hear it dissolve... forever.

Upstream Kriya

This is a kundalini technique... unlike resonance, which can be done by anybody, regardless of the kundalini awakening, you can do kriya correctly only if two conditions are fulfilled: that kundalini is awakened, and that the vertical path, from the root of your spine to the top of your head, is clear, ready to let it through.¹³ Such kundalini flow has the spiritual meaning of unconditional surrender to God.

Regardless of that, it is interesting that most people have experienced it to some degree.¹⁴ How can that be? It is quite simple, actually... Kundalini is never completely dormant, and its awakening is a matter of degree, where the phenomenon known as kundalini awakening is some form of a critical mass, a state where things start going all by themselves. Every full orgasm is kundalini activity, of a sort, the clarity of consciousness before the orgasm is kundalini in the active state. And knowing that some of the things that you experienced are the symptoms of kundalini movement, I'll show you how to take advantage of them, and use them for your growth and purification.

One such experience of kundalini happens when you do that little genital contraction to stop urinating. If you do it intensely, and hold the contraction, you will feel a pleasant shiver going through your body, your eyes will roll upwards and your head will jerk a bit, in a left-right direction.¹⁵ That is, basically, the upstream kriya. If you managed to recognize it, do it voluntarily, and the more you do it, easier will it be, and more powerful. If you didn't manage to figure it out, don't worry... it will come. It's definitely worth the trouble—it's the most efficient purification tool you can imagine. And the most natural one—your body's built-in kundalini management technique.

¹³ Here, we are dealing with the basic prerequisites of openness and devotion, that are necessary, for instance, for surrender to one's partner during sexual intercourse, or for elementary compassion for another being.

¹⁴ Trembling and shivers that take place when you go out from a warm place to a cold one; the shiver that happens when you stop urinating, the shivers on the top of the head that happen when one listens to powerful music, etc.

¹⁵ In the beginning it is possible that it isn't the head that jerks, but legs, arms, torso or some other body part, for the energetic channel in the spine isn't open all the way to the head; this is corrected with devotion and surrender.

Don't do it in the morning—early afternoon, or evening will be ideal—don't ask why, you will understand it later; your energy configuration in the morning makes it more difficult.

Sit comfortably, with your spine erect—lotus posture (padmasana) would be great—and if you can't do it, sit in any way that makes you comfortable. If you have problems with your spine, it might be wise to get a chiropractic treatment to get everything in place, and increase your spinal flexibility. As you sit, relax your muscles—use the resonance to free yourself of strain and expectations. Pull your consciousness into yourself—detach from all the objects of your attention. Surrender to God. Go inside yourself and repeat the name of your Divine Beloved.¹⁶ Let your head drop to your chest, relax the tension and let it drop.

As you draw your consciousness inward, do the physical movement that you use when you want to stop urinating—that's the physical/energetic equivalent of drawing inward. For men, it means contracting the muscles of the perineum area inward, accompanied with inner feeling of in-drawing and surrender—contract anus and perineum, and hold, while you surrender to God. For women, it is very similar to the Kegel exercises—contracting the vaginal muscles; contract anus, perineum, vagina, everything, and draw inward. You will feel sweet shivers throughout your body as you do it—surrender yourself to God within, let yourself go, as you let yourself go when you orgasm. That is the form of surrender that you need—let yourself go while the orgasm takes you. This is very similar, in that aspect. You will feel the parts of your body twitch—legs, arms, torso—as kundalini moves vertically in you, and when it reaches your head, you will “depart,” as you do when you orgasm, you surrender inside as your head jerks/rotates left and right. In the beginning it may be just a little twitch, later it will grow into rapid, forceful rotation of high frequency—you could never do that at will, you would break your neck, but kriya won't break anything.

If you didn't manage to figure it out by now, try to reproduce the shivering feeling when you get out of the warm bed, and into the cold. Reproduce that shivering with your perineum muscles.

¹⁶ This is the true purpose of repeating God's name, the invocation of devotion and surrender. It is wise to use this name as a mantra that invokes the kriya.

At first, you may have to use the perineum contraction and all sorts of stuff to get it going. Once you do it, and your energy grows, it will be enough to go inward and kriya will automatically start rinsing your system from the impurities. That is what it does—as you surrender, kundalini moves through your system and takes all the junk from you—everything you want to surrender to her. She knows what to do, the most efficient ways to rinse your system; you just have to let her do it. It is the natural, most powerful technique. All sorts of kundalini-related trouble, like the lack of grounding (which can cause power appliances to go crazy, as your energy bursts through them), and all sorts of weird symptoms—are gone, because your system can no longer overload; kriya will automatically start when you feel an excess of energy (which means a blocked flow of energy), and it will be released (the energy release is just a visualization, nothing is actually lost, it just re-establishes the interrupted/blocked flows of energy)—all the junk you surrender that way is dissolved into purity, on its way to God... your system becomes transparent for the Divine Will, since kriya takes care of everything, if you let it.

There is one more technique, which also requires a certain degree of kundalini awakening... it is mentioned in the basic scriptures of the Catholic Church. It is sincere remorse.¹⁷ All sins are cleansed through sincere remorse. It's that simple. Upstream kriya, the upward movement, is the accelerated energetic equivalent of sincere remorse.

Let us analyze the feeling of remorse—not regret over something, but remorse, admission of one's sinfulness, sincere regret over one's *own* mistake, not blaming the other. The necessary condition that makes remorse possible is the renunciation of ego, which wants to be right, to rule and to dominate. In remorse the ego is rejected, and the energy is released, not accumulated.

“God, I am guilty, do with me as you will, and any punishment that you have for me will be just.”

By such remorse we are freed from our own importance, from focusing on our own will; we renounce our will and we are cleansed. Such cleansing is infinitely powerful. There is nothing

¹⁷ Remorse in the sense of admitting one's sinfulness and addressing God, and acknowledging one's failures. It is not about deliberate self-humiliation.

that can't be cleansed by remorse, because the very remorse is the very process of cleansing, of releasing the sin. Remorse as a yogic technique—that, too, is written in the Church's texts, that we must repent for even the slightest fault immediately, and hardly anyone takes it seriously, and hardly anyone sees its importance. Remorse and the upstream kriya go hand in hand, one cannot exist without the other, except for the fact that the forcefulness of release and cleansing is increased at least tenfold if the force of remorse turns into kriya, which speeds up the process greatly with its enormous strength, making it easier.

For kriya, as well as for the remorse, it is necessary to “die to the world,” to kill one's ego, to renounce it. When we read it like that, it sounds beyond our reach, and yet we all managed it sometime in our lives. So it is not about achieving something new, but on the contrary, it is about recognizing something familiar, about pointing the finger at the right spot.

We can go from one place to another, a few kilometers apart, in just one day if we walk in the right direction. If we, however, walk in the wrong direction, if we run in circles or stand in one place, it is quite possible that we will *never* reach the goal. We can look at the goal for the whole time, not knowing it as the goal.

Pointing at the goal is what the yogic techniques are all about. They are the finger, pointing at something that is already present.

The Inner Space Technique

The following technique is used for “targeting” the blocks in your system, for kriya to dissolve them more efficiently—it implies the mastery of the techniques of basic meditation, resonance and upstream kriya. It is based on the principle that where consciousness leads, energy follows. When you are aware of yourself in a certain part of your body, kundalini moves in it. If her movement isn’t free, your system will automatically start dissolving the blocks—and since you are adept in the practice of upstream kriya, it is enough for you to be aware of a part of your body, for the cleansing to take place—with intense kriyas. Kriya is, basically, a response of the physical tissue to the movement of energy.

Feel your body. Move inside your feet, for a start... if you encounter blocks, kriya will start all by itself. When kriya ends, start at the feet, again. Soon, you will feel a difference between the clean and the unclean parts of your system. Move your consciousness within your inner space, and cleanse it. Place a block before your consciousness, and as you observe it, it will break and dissolve... kriya, and up your head it goes... Where does it go? Actually it isn’t energy to go anywhere, it’s the state of the energy that is blocked, so you’re not losing energy, the energy just gets to the places it couldn’t before, and upstream kriya is actually dissolving the block into its basic components—bigger into smaller, until it all turns into purity. When you break up a bigger block, it is essential to go from the bottom up again, because the big chunk will break up into its basic components—and, according to their vibe level, they will place themselves within your system. Look for them all, and give them the same treatment.

On the other hand, the prerequisite of kriya as such is the connection with global energy, so that every movement of energy forms a circle—everything that is released is replenished—actually more comes than is released, because cleansing opens up new space, new resources are being unlocked.

The more you break up, the more will come to you, to be broken; it is like an avalanche. When you are tired and you want to rest, ask God to stop the breaking, and then clean up the dust from your system, so that it doesn’t implant itself again, and go on with your business.

Soon after you start cleansing, after you finish all the stuff that's easy to remove, you'll reach the ceiling—an area of solid junk that is almost impossible to break up. That is the part of your personality that has not yet evolved—the space in which your consciousness can move is the vibe level that you have reached. The higher you go, the more energy you must have, and the subtler your consciousness must be. You will grow by self-exploration, by deeper surrender... following God into greater subtlety, gentleness, power. As you identify with God, your energy grows—and breaks the solid ceiling of the unexplored parts of yourself. To break a block, you must rise above it, at least a little bit—a practice in transcendence. You must be detached from it, in order to rise above it. You can never rise above egoistic motivations if you exercise them in your life... your energy must withdraw from that, go inside, and cleanse it. When there is no more your will, bound by attachments and desires, that limits you, the Divine Will will act through the parts of you that you transcended and purified. Flaws are replaced with perfection—with spontaneous actions, which are always right.

When you cleanse the part of your system that is inside your body, don't forget what is outside! Go with your consciousness into the perimeter of your aura, move your consciousness outside of your body, and feel the junk and the dirt there—cleanse it in the same way as you did inside. They are united, you know, no inside/outside difference, but in the beginning it is easier to recognize it in your body.

The Noble Truths

To live in harmony with God means to live and manifest harmony on all levels of existence; it means to be the truth, to observe the truth, to think the truth, to feel the truth, to speak the truth and to do the truth. Therefore, what spirit is, and what consciousness perceives, words and deeds must follow. The consciousness that is not testified for and manifested in one's own life is impure; like Jesus wisely noted, the man is not soiled by what comes into him, but by what comes out. It also applies that the man is purified not by what comes into him, but by what comes out.¹⁸

A nice example is a tap, through which water flows. If there is any dirt in the pipes, flowing water will take it all away, wash it away, and in a while it will flow out pure and clear. Likewise, if a man feels the reality, and acts sincerely and openly from that reality, even if his deeds are impure and imperfect in the beginning, they will soon become pure,¹⁹ and the more water flows, the wider will the channels become, making way for the greater amounts. For that reason it is said that love purifies. By feeling love, the closed channels in body and spirit open up, and energy begins to flow through them. In those channels, being closed and clogged, impurities were accumulated. When the love starts to flow through,

¹⁸ Paraphrased Mark 7:14–23; Matthew 15:10–20.

¹⁹ See Bhagavad-gita 9:30–34.

the impurities rise to the surface in the form of all sorts of wicked thoughts, impressions and states of consciousness—such impurities have to be cleansed using the yogic techniques, when they come up.

By no means should one close and protect oneself from those impurities and inner dark places, but on the contrary, one should open up even more so that they can get out sooner. The dirtier the water, the greater should be the satisfaction, and the tap should be opened widely, for more impurities come out, and sooner will water flow out pure and clean. The more impurities surface into the consciousness, the sooner the end will come to them, and the consciousness will be pure.

A man is not merely a physical being. A man is a focal point in which all the levels of consciousness and existence merge. A man is a sort of a multidimensional portal, his will being the mechanism of control with which the dimensional depth is chosen that will manifest in the world. That will may represent brakes that disable the manifestation of the higher consciousness in the world, and it can also open up the gates widely for the Divinity to manifest, so that the inner heaven could be manifested as outer.

By shifting our consciousness we select our level of perception, and decide what we want to live, how we want to form our lives. For the whole time we are making decisions, at every single moment. In each and every situation that gives us the option to act in different ways, in every situation that enables us to think in different ways, we make our choices, we choose, we decide what we want and what we don't want to realize. It is most often and regrettable that, fearing the responsibility of our position, fearing our own strength, we decide to suppress them, by making decisions that will guide us through the path of least resistance, down the stream—decisions that direct our lives in a way that is common, that doesn't defy conventions, that doesn't demand that we face the responsibility for our life and its form. We choose to displace that responsibility; we find conditions, beings, circumstances, all the parties to blame for our condition. We say that changes are impossible, that things are the way they are, the way they have always been, and nothing can be done about it.

And still we are incessant in our efforts to change others. When we are advised to change, we respond that it is impossible, and

still we give that very same advice to others. The world would change instantly if people just started to apply to themselves all the advice that they give to others. For human insight and ability to perceive are excellent, the depth of that vision is great. The only problem is the object of its application.

The faults of others are so clearly visible, so obvious, that we have absolutely no problem noticing them. At that very same time we are utterly blind to our own faults. The fact that we best notice the very faults of others that are so specific to ourselves is also very interesting. It is a great achievement to turn our vision inward and direct it toward our own spirit, in the only direction that it is reluctant to choose. We should then, without any mercy and sympathy, without any attachment, observe the condition.

Then, when the condition is brought to our awareness, 90% of all our problems are solved, for the greatest amount of impurities in our spirit is pointed exactly against the perception of our own corruption. The greatest force of fears and inner horrors produces that very protective blindness. The ability to move the sight from others and toward oneself means overcoming those forces, their breakdown, and that is when things start to happen, then we stop walking in circles, and we begin to walk the path toward the goal. The path begins with the realization that:

- We have nobody to blame for anything
- We are the ones who choose our own reality
- We are the creators of our own cages
- All the impurities that we have ever seen dwell within our spirit
- All the perfections that we have ever seen dwell within our spirit
- Nobody but ourselves is responsible for our condition
- We are not responsible for the condition of others, for in the same manner in which we choose our own reality, they do as well

Being the creators of our own cages, we can leave only by our own choice. Others may show the way, they can take our hand and lead us, they can remind us of what we have forgotten, but we are the only ones who can make the decision and we are the only ones who can walk the path. Others cannot breathe for us, they cannot eat for us nor can they live for us. Our life is our own

responsibility, our right and our duty. The form of that life is what we ourselves create, in each and every single moment.

People often defend themselves from that truth, calling upon what they call “objective circumstances.” There are people who chose the life of utter darkness, and who see it as a necessity that follows from the unfavorable circumstances in which they developed.

Someone, for instance, had an unhappy childhood in which he was abused by his parents, in which he received punches instead of love, scorn instead of laughter, punishments instead of joy, and he evolved into a bitter and cruel person who abuses others in the same manner in which he himself was abused. It seems to make some superficial sense. It is nonsense—there are people who, in those very same circumstances, reacted to the same environmental stimuli by turning themselves into the exact opposite of the environment that surrounded them. Persons abused by their parents, who give their children all the love in the world, all the love that they themselves were deprived of. Persons to whom the evil with which they were surrounded served as a reminder of what they must not become, in whom evil reinforced the inner core of goodness.

Eventually, it turns out that the circumstances of life are the fire that tempts us, in which it will show what we are made of: are we made of gold, that will shine more brightly, or are we made of paper, that will turn black and burn to ashes?

The greater the temptations that we survive, the greater will be our glory. The more the difficult trials we pass, the greater will be our renown among the angels. Those who shone in the darkness will be praised, and not those who shone in the light, for it is not a trial to shine in the light; it is the darkness that shows the parts of us that lack brightness. And for that reason we should not observe difficulties, disease and other unfavorable circumstances as something negative to be avoided; on the contrary, we should greet them as dear friends, as a source of our renown, for in facing and overcoming difficulties will our inner nature be tempered, as the steel that is tempered with fire and ice. An ordinary rock will be turned into dust under the forceful blows of a hammer, but diamond will shine with all of its brightness, for under those blows all the impurities will be cast aside, and the brightness of its inner nature will be revealed. Likewise shall our inner Divine nature shine under the blows of

destiny, under difficulties and in the fire of suffering; crowned with thorns, we shall shine with the light that shines upon all the worlds, and under the burden of a cross we shall grow mighty and magnificent, so magnificent and beautiful that the angels will shine from the very chance of being in our service.

Renown and might never come to the small; they never come to those who break under the burden of life. They come to those who shine under the burden, to those who die with a smile of power and knowledge, to those who fear not amidst terrors, who do not beg for mercy amidst their sufferings, but who from that suffering pray for others.

Surrounded by hatred and unhappiness, it is easiest to hate and be unhappy. It is difficult to love and be happy. He who succeeds is the one who recognizes the universal and immortal springs of joy within his own being, the springs that depend not upon the external. He who succeeds has taken control of his life and responsibility for its contents and its flow. The surroundings might be dark, but what is that to us? At least we shall not fall prey to the illusion that the joy that we manage to feel came from the outside, and we shall find its immortal inner well with greater ease, and from that well we shall drink the water of life, we shall shine in the darkness, if not for the sake of others, then for our own sake, and for the sake of joy that comes from the beauty and power that is unbreakable and beyond temptation. Once we manage that, we shall have no need to persuade others of anything, we shall feel no need to speak or preach of things that we ourselves understood the least, as teachers who teach what they themselves most need to learn.

On the contrary, we shall teach with our very existence, and others will touch our lips with theirs and drink the breath of our lives, with no need for us to do anything. We shall become the true teachers once we lose the need to teach. At the moment when what is needed flows from us, in every single moment, without personal bias and considerations. When the needs of others start to form our existence, for our needs will no longer be. Our needs will be fulfilled for all eternity with the sparkling brilliance of the water of the eternal life, which flows throughout our being, unbound and cruelly beautiful, so inconceivably beautiful that the vessel through which it flows, as well as its needs, will no longer claim our attention.

Our needs are fulfilled in the eternity, our cup is filled with sparkling light and overflowing, and there remains no thought in us of self and the other, there remains nothing but the purity and shine of our blissful, sparkingly powerful nature.

The Quest

There is a thought, that seems to be present in some religions, about how God resents our wrongdoings, which are called sin, and that we have to repay him for such actions.

If I, as an imperfect being, can forgive someone who did something wrong to me or owes me some debt, with the greatest of ease, then it is unclear to me what kind of God he would be if he could be worse than myself in that, or any other respect, so that I could forgive with ease, and he could not.²⁰

From that example it is obvious that it isn't God who blames us, but the sin itself, and that sin, for as long as we cling to it, directs our actions and thoughts,²¹ and if we renounce it, we become free, and nobody resents us anymore. It would be utterly perverted to think that God could blame someone for something that is no longer specific to him, even if God could blame to begin with. Nobody judges us but our deeds. Our deeds and their consequences set the course of our destiny; if we choose the deeds of love, we shall move in the surroundings of love, and if we choose the deeds of hatred, we shall be surrounded by hatred—that is a mere example of the principle of the attraction of similarities, “birds of feather...”

²⁰ Matthew 7:9–11.

²¹ John 8:34.

The world is, therefore, at the same time heaven and hell, and we alone, in every single moment, choose what is it that we want of these two, the heaven of love or the hell of hatred. We are the ones in control of the radio receiver, choosing the station that we want to listen to. In every contact with others, in every situation, with our reactions we choose the direction that we want to follow—the deeds of habit and fear lead us to hell, while the deeds of creativity, sincerity and love lead us to heaven.

By the nature of things we perceive ourselves as separate from others. Such separation can easily be prolonged and continued, and that is the course of inertia. Nothing new is to be done to keep us in separation from others; we simply need to keep ourselves entangled in a bunch of worthless thoughts and observations of our own importance. Unity with others is not so easily attained—we need to break old habits, and make a leap of faith—to love, to give oneself, open oneself to the other, without knowing whether we will be accepted or rejected. That is the risk that causes fear, but that fear needs to be overcome, it is the risk that needs to be taken, and in this way the initiations are attained, by daring, by doing, for the first time, something that we desired, something that we longed for within, and we didn't dare to do until that moment. We will overcome hatred when we dare to love. We will overcome blame when we dare to forgive. We will overcome fear when we dare to open up to what we fear.

And the techniques of yoga will help us on that path—they will ease the burden of such decisions, they will ease the emotional load that those decisions bring up. It is difficult to dare, and the very attempt will face us with reasons and fears—with yoga we should release those fears and reasons from ourselves, overcome them. Once we change, the world changes. From the dirty and low place filled with hatred and fears, the world immediately turns into a blissful heaven in which the angels make love by thoughts. All we need is to dare and choose that, nothing more.

Love is our bond with reality. Love is the very force that binds us with the Divine, the bond that turns us from illusion to reality. Love, of course, exists in many degrees, many aggregate states, but that is not that important at this point, what we need is to feel whatever love we are able to feel, and once we feel it, it will purify us and grow, if we do not limit it and bind it with the chains of prejudice, ideas, attitudes and other things.

Love starts as limited, but it does not end as such, and after a while it by far surpasses everything that a human being on this ladder of evolution can conceive as love. As the light of a certain frequency, in the spectrum above violet, can no longer be called light, because we no longer perceive it as light, love, too, after some point, with its forcefulness and energy, with its frequency of vibration, greatly exceeds anything that a human experience can call love.

Such higher forms of love can be called states of pure endless consciousness, states of blissful omnipotence, power of intelligence, but it is always about such depths of realization that are completely unknown to human beings in the majority of their experience.

And we can reach those depths by purity and love; we can reach those depths only if our lower levels, meaning the levels of body, energy, feelings and thoughts, are perfectly pure, if the lower elements are purified and united. Only after we have climbed the lower ladders shall we be able to see the higher ones—yes, see, because it is not possible for us to even see them, let alone step on them, until we have mastered the lower ones.

The love of the heart is outgrown only after it becomes too narrow and tight, only after our heart becomes too small to take the vast flows of love that we feel and give, when our heart bursts with the force of love, then is that force elevated to the throat, and only then does the vast power of the love of the heart become a laughable child's play, compared to the depths of consciousness and love of the throat center. And the throat center is just the first in a row of the superhuman centers of higher consciousness.

Consciousness, love and power go hand in hand, and it is difficult to even conceive an abuse of power in the path of spiritual growth. Why is that so? It is obvious that the power of the throat center, and the omnipotence of the brow center are acquired only after the love of the heart has completely purified and united all the lower elements of the personality.

When a being in its growth outgrew the power of the heart, outgrew not by thinking that it is outgrown, but indeed outgrew, when nothing but love remained, and when that love has to grow by a scale of magnitude in quality, how can any form of selfish abuse even be imagined? That cannot be. Every selfishness and selfish desire has long ago died in the fire of devotion that burns within the heart. If it didn't die, there can be no higher power. If

it died, there can be no abuse. So it is obvious that the highest forms of power can not be abused; that means that we leave all evil far behind us at the moment in which we outgrow the lower states of consciousness, that are subordinate to the heart.

And if we think further, if the love/power/insight/consciousness of the throat is so much superior to the love and consciousness of the heart, in power, then it means that the love of the heart is superior, to a similar degree, in power and forcefulness, to the lower states of selfishness, fear, hatred and others. It is therefore perfectly apparent that love protects us from those things with an impenetrable shield, for the lower cannot overcome the higher, merely because those levels are separate.

Where there is love, there is no fear and hatred. Where there are fear and hatred, there is no love. Therefore by founding our consciousness in the pure love of the heart we have protected ourselves from all lower forces, and they can no longer overcome us, unless we allow them by a choice of our own will.

Many would be surprised if they knew how frequent such cases actually are, in which a higher and more developed being allows itself to be directed and exploited by lower ones! That is a fact of our daily lives. It is enough to look at all the things that they have persuaded us of: they have persuaded us that life is a struggle in which the more powerful and more merciless reigns. They have convinced us that we need to struggle throughout life with great difficulty, because we will otherwise perish. They have convinced us that we have to work hard in order to stay alive. They have convinced us that we have to fear for our own existence, because it is finite, frail, and after it there is nothing.

By accepting these ideas we have opened ourselves to fear, uncertainty, anxiety—all the lower energetic forms, and the beings to which these forms are specific, the beings of those lower levels, use them to control us. It is logical that they can control us in that way, because they are fighting us at their own game. If it is specific to some being to control others, then it is logical that on its terrain we will lose, or become equally bad by accepting these rules ourselves.

For that reason we need to renounce those rules completely, along with the entire worldview that feeds them, without turning back. It is sufficient to feel sympathy, pity, responsibility, and we are doomed.

Entire systems are made to convince us that those qualities are desirable, that they are even qualities of spiritual strength. We are being told that sympathy is good, that pity is a sign of spiritual greatness. What a terrible bunch of nonsense that is! Sympathy means feeding the weakness of the other. Sympathy breaks our own dignity, as well as the dignity of the other. We do not need sympathy and others need it even less. What we both need is love, powerful, dignified love, which shines when it gives, tall and erect, not crooked and gloomy.

Things should never be done out of pity, but out of dignity, out of a magnificent shining strength. Only the one who is tall and bright can rectify and enlighten. Those are the universal rules without exception. Never can weakness or nourishing the weakness give birth to strength. It will, quite the opposite, produce more weakness.

Self-sacrifice will never result in greatness; it can be achieved only through cheerful giving of an open and pure heart. If pure love is not accepted, then give nothing! Do not give less. Do not be content with less, and do not give less to others.

We have been convinced that life is a struggle, that we must work hard, do things that don't fulfill us, in order to attain happiness. But what kind of a fulfillment is it, if it is indefinitely postponed, and it never actually happens? What kind of happiness is that, always placed somewhere in the future, beyond reach? Nil and void, imagined, false, nonexistent, it is not happiness, but a bait that we swallowed along with the hook, that now pulls us away from the waters of life and into a desert in which we will perish. They feed themselves on our very life, promising us the carrot on a stick, as they do to donkeys.

Let us, on the contrary, do nothing that is difficult for us! Let us not do anything that is against our will, justified with a greater cause. For the goal never justifies the means, and the quality of the means is equal to the quality of the goal. If the means don't fulfill us, if the means go against our inner feeling, the goal will be no different. It is not possible to wage war for peace, as much as it isn't possible to kill for non-violence. If the means make us unhappy, the result may be only further unhappiness in the future, never happiness.

We make choices, we introduce conditions into our reality, and we maintain those states. Let us, opposed to our conventional

practice, introduce happiness into our reality, hold on to that happiness and grow in that happiness, and reach the highest happiness. Let us do things that fill us with happiness, that make us feel complete. Let us find our own path, let us not imitate, let us not adjust ourselves in order to fit the merits of others, but on the contrary, let us find ourselves. When we find and fulfill ourselves, we will finally become really useful to others; only then will we have something to give. An unhappy man cannot spread happiness, an unfulfilled man cannot bring fulfillment.

Instead of doing things against our will, just to earn money and survive, let us do things that fill us with joy, let us do them so well and with such grace, that others will feel a desire to give us money for it, and will wish to reward it, give it value. Let us be a sparkling source of light and joy, and it will be appreciated. For if we do not appreciate ourselves, if we feel that the things that are important to us are not worth enough to secure our existence in the world, others will feel little desire to give them value as well, so we will ultimately be forced to engage ourselves in activities that do not fulfill us, but which we still value more—for if we didn't value them more, we would not be engaged in them, but in something else.

We should therefore learn to esteem ourselves; we need to learn to appreciate our own value, to acknowledge our own beauty. If we do not do it ourselves, how can we expect others to do it? So let us leave this self-created vicious circle.

“Work hard, and you will become happy,” they tell us throughout our lives. I tell you: “be happy, and you will be able to work with ease.” The happiness must come first, the joy, satisfaction and inner fulfillment, and then will this inner fulfillment start to spread throughout the world. Unfulfilled people just create more unfulfillment, nothing more, they feel deprived and unhappy and from their unhappiness they deprive others. How can an unhappy and unfulfilled person be useful to others?

Everything we do carries our thoughts, thoughts and feelings that we merged into it during its creation. If we are unhappy and unfulfilled, if we work against our will, that work will be filled with such thoughts, and pass our unfulfillment to those who are unfortunate enough to use it. However, if we weave love and creativity into our work, the joy of creation, the pleasure of expressing inner harmony, such work will then be the source of harmony and peace to those who use it.

One of things used to control us is need. If a vampire wants to hold a man in captivity, he will not do it by violent means, tie him to a chair in his basement and drink his blood every day. Nooo... we have to *willingly accept* such a relationship. At the first glance, it appears that nobody would be crazy enough to do such a thing, and then again, we can see examples of it every day.

Workers go to work that they don't like, doing it against their will; they would much rather dedicate their efforts to something else, something that fulfills them. Why do they do it, then? Because they think they lack something they need to obtain. First there was the idea of inadequacy and incompleteness. Then there came the awareness of need. Someone said he can fulfill that need for us, and we signed the contract with the devil.

Let us just take a look at TV commercials. Let's say that they show us a new car. Let's say that we don't need a car at all, because we prefer to walk, or we already have one that suits us just fine. What does the advertisement look like? "This car is wonderful. It has qualities that will introduce happiness into your life. Without it you are not complete. What you have now is not good enough. Your value is dependent on objects and their possession. If you possess a good object, your value will grow. If you have a bad object, your value is poor. Compared to our object, everything that you have is miserable and inadequate. Your value is small. But we have a solution! Buy what we offer, and you will become worthy, complete, wholesome and happy." Until a new model reaches the market.

So we are being systematically projected upon with pictures that are meant to create an initial breach into our consciousness. The biggest problem is to create that initial breach: to convince a man that he needs what they want to sell. Creating such a breach in a person who looks for happiness inside, who is aware and awake, is difficult, almost impossible. But a person who is insecure, whose sense of value is shaken, is easy prey.

Merchants of all kinds are the exact opposite of healers. The healer will tell a man that he is worthy, wholesome and fortunate, that God loves him and dwells within his being, and that he can never leave him, that happiness is his natural right and his normal inner condition, that happiness doesn't need to be bought or obtained, but instead it has to be recognized and lived.

The merchant will, however, do the exact opposite, he will convince a man that he is unworthy, incomplete and unfortunate, that

God is apart from him in some remote place, he will explain to the man that he is severed from the source of safety and put in a wilderness where no safety is to be found, in which the law of strength applies. That happiness is something to be acquired, that completeness is something to be acquired, and that they are always temporary, expendable, always to be replenished again and again.

The one who “buys into” such a deal will find himself in a dark pit of foul stench, filled with woes and lamentations. Nobody wants to dwell in such a place, and all the instincts scream “let’s get out, quick, right now.” Then the vampire, wanting to keep his victim just to himself, gives explanations for the mind, persuading it that the situation is indeed bad, but *necessary*. There may indeed be something better, but in order to attain it, one needs to work and live in a dark humid pit. It *has to be done*. And the evidence for that is that *everybody* does it. The idea of necessity of *sacrifice* is implanted into the mind—for others, for the higher goal, for the nation, state, company, God... the idea that says that by the very destruction of our own happiness, by denying ourselves the right to be happy, we are doing something noble and good. Do you think that the supervisors of the gas chambers in the concentration camps didn’t know that they were doing something bad? They knew it perfectly well. They knew that they were doing something atrocious, but they persuaded themselves that it needed to be done, that it was for the higher good, for the higher goal, that they were doing it for the higher good and happiness of their own nation. No one but the utter spiritual cripple can convince himself that murdering children is good; nobody enjoys that. But trust me that good and honest men killed children, feeling the horror of that act, feeling it as foul, as something that must not be done, and still the idea of the “higher goal” was implanted into their consciousness with such strength, that it managed to scream louder than their conscience.

All the horrors of the world are done “for the greater good.” There is a horrible tradition of female circumcision in Africa. This is a form of crippling that cuts away a little girl’s clitoris and labia, which are then sewed together. It is an act so immensely painful, that it is probably the most cruel thing that one human being learned to do to another. There is no means to inflict greater pain to a woman than the amputation of her clitoris. A great number of girls die from that procedure. The emotional crippling

is probably even worse than the physical one. Why am I citing such a horrible example?

If people manage to convince themselves that such a senseless, cruel and crazy act is somehow justified, what can there be so horrible that people will not manage to justify with some greater good or a higher cause? A father takes his daughter, the little girl whom he loves, to a “procedure” that will, at best, take away her ability for sexual pleasure, for her entire life, in a most bloody, cruel and painful way possible, and at worst will cause an agonizingly painful death. Do you think he does it out of hatred, because he wants pain and misfortune for his child? Nooo... he is doing it *for her good*. It is thought to be some sort of a religious act, something that *needs* to be done, something *positive*. And such a “procedure” is performed by a woman who was once crippled in the same way, who was convinced that she was thus done a favor, who was convinced that it’s a good thing to do, and that by doing it she is *doing good* to those little girls; they just don’t know it, and ungrateful as they are *they don’t know how to appreciate her efforts*. They scream, they are afraid and they die, but it is for their greater good. It’s all for a greater cause.

The quality of a goal is determined by the quality of the means through which it is attained. Horrible deeds of fear and hatred can never produce good goals. The only higher goal of such methods is unhappiness, deep unhappiness that produces more unhappiness, pain that produces more pain, suffering that produces more suffering. Evil that is done for the greater good is just evil, nothing more. Never ever do anything that even in the slightest way opposes the voice of your conscience. Never. There are no excuses. Excuses have to be cast away as mere garbage, as lies. Satan is a liar and the father of lies, and he stands not firmly in the truth, for in him there is no truth.²² And the truth is that voice of conscience, which we smother with reasons and with “the higher good” and with “it has to be done.” What has to be done is only what is done gladly, out of joy, gladness, fulfillment, that makes us shine, what we can honor ourselves with in public, the thing that the voice of our conscience demands.

Books on philosophy and higher states of consciousness cannot be written if these horrors, that are present in the world for

²² Paraphrased John 8:44.

the whole time, are not immediately handled. Immediately. The mentality of suffering and sacrifice for the greater good needs to be rooted out utterly, and only then we can speak of the awakening, realization, of life, of the higher states of love. Of what good is the achievement of higher consciousness, if we remain enslaved by fools and the horrible customs with which they enslave us and guide us as cattle to the slaughter, from birth to death, instead of living that very higher consciousness on earth?

Let us awaken, let us be free, let us wear dignity, harmony and beauty, let us do what we love, let us do things out of joy and not out of duty, and let us cast away the shackles that bind us. Let us finally accept ourselves as beings loved and wholesome, for that we indeed are. Let us finally believe in what we have been told for the last two thousand years: if I, God, take care of all beings as my children, if I provide food for the birds in the sky, that neither work nor collect nor worry, if I dress the flowers of the field in robes that would put kings in all their glory to shame, how will I then take care of you, and how will I honor you, if you let me and believe me!

God did not create people in order for him to be served. On the contrary, he created people so that he could have the opportunity to serve; let us finally accept his service! Let us surrender to his care and love, believe in its reality, believe that God is love, and that in that love we are safe, that we can never lose it and that we need to do nothing at all to attain it. If from that knowledge we act in the world, and not from the justification of monstrosities, the world will be instantly transformed into paradise.

It is quite easy to find examples of beings of a naturally high consciousness who let themselves be exploited and abused by all sorts of darkneses. That is so because we forget ourselves, because we draw a sharp line between the spiritual and the material. The result is that the spiritual disappears into the unmanifested, while darkness, misfortune and evil remain manifested.

In the example of the connection of money and spirituality we can see the consequences of the mentality that will have the eventual result of disappearance of the spiritual from the world.

What is the problem about?

It is enough to observe the things that are most commonly criticized in spiritual organizations and movements: sex and money. It is so much of a rule, that it is almost impossible to find an attempt

to discredit a spiritually oriented group that is not based on those two elements. There are of course cases in which there are objections to violence, but that form of criticism is mostly justified.

Why are sex and money the things that are used to discredit spiritual organizations? Probably because it is held that these things are incompatible with the spiritual, and their presence, even in traces, forms the final argument, on which some following stands or falls. There are even spiritual organizations that apply those criteria to other spiritual organizations and movements, with a basic statement which says “behold, we take no money and we don’t have sex, therefore we are authentic, while others who do are not.” When I read a statement of that kind, and unfortunately I have plenty of opportunities, I don’t know whether to laugh or cry.

For sex and money are the very foundations of a spiritual teaching’s existence on the physical level. Without sex and money, every teaching will perish within a generation, or sooner. What is it about? Money is energy, an aggregate state of energy. It is a criterion of value, an indicator of value on the material plane. If something is given value on the material plane, if it is given esteem, it needs to be valued with money, or it will perish from the material plane. What we feed, grows, what we don’t, dies. Groups, persons, organizations to which we give money will grow, they will be better organized and founded on the physical plane, while others will be dislodged and rooted out like weeds. It is interesting that nobody seems to object to giving money to an organization that produces soap, even if the owner of the organization leads a wicked life and engages in all sorts of strange activities. It is assumed that what counts is the soap, and if a company produces good quality soap for an affordable price, it is held perfectly reasonable to buy that soap. If many people buy soap from that company, it will get more money, and that money is an indicator of quality work and its appreciation from buyers. The company that produces overpriced soap of lower quality will perish, because its products won’t be bought by anyone.

So, it is clear from the example of the soap that the money is the key element that keeps something in existence. Without money it is not possible to obtain the means necessary to live and act; without money one literally dies. From that it is apparent that every spiritual organization, starting with the one that preaches against taking money, has to obtain money in some way, or it will

perish, and its members will starve. It is thus obvious that this form of criticism is hypocrisy and nourishes faulty concepts.

Let us move on to the issue of sex. The fact being that human beings reproduce in a sexual way, it is obvious that the existence of physical bodies in the world directly depends on sex. Those who advocate abandoning sex are, in fact, directly advocating their own extinction as a species. We should also have in mind that the spiritually advanced people, the enlightened people, are the very group of people that are able to raise children in an ideal way, in the environment of love and higher consciousness.

If enlightened people will not reproduce, who should, then, the unenlightened ones?

That is what is happening, and that is the very reason why unenlightenedness and spiritual primitivism are being established on the physical plane. There is an increasingly larger number of the primitives while the number of the enlightened drops, because the enlightened retreat in solitude, separate themselves from the world, and die without leaving a mark in the world. Enlightenment is, therefore, a plant that dies soon after it sprouts from the seed, because it is unable to root itself; it is not kept in existence but forced out into the sphere of the unmanifested.

As opposed to feeding the spiritual, we are feeding the industry that nourishes the lower passions and the consumer mentality which drains the earth's blood and which brings about severe, maybe fatal injuries to the planet as such.

The earth will be inherited by what we value, what we reward with money. If automobiles are to be valued, it is obvious that more people are going to have to work in the automobile industry and thus earn money. If something spiritual were valued instead of automobiles, then people would earn money with spiritual work.

Unfortunately, by current standards, spirituality is regarded as too valuable to be expressed with money, which is translated as "worthless." Spirituality is given no value whatsoever.

And then someone expresses surprise at the fact that we live in a world in which the consumer mentality prevails; what is there to be surprised at? That is a logical consequence of the attitude that material is worthy and spiritual is worthless. Our most sincere stands are visible from what we reward with money. If someone gives tens of thousands of dollars for a new car, it is considered to be perfectly normal. If someone gives tens of thousands of dollars

for a spiritual teaching, he is considered to be out of his mind. How can a spiritual teaching cost tens of thousands of dollars? The better question would be how can a car cost more than a spiritual teaching.

If we value spiritual teaching less than we value a car, it is apparent where our heart is. Therefore it is obvious that the spiritual is attained only by those, to whom nothing else is worth more, who are able to renounce everything and devote themselves to God.

Such renunciation is not a sign of sacrifice; sacrifice is a sign that we are on the wrong path. It is a mere rejection of the irrelevant, detachment from the lesser value. The one who lives in a castle does not desire a hut of straw. The one who flies a plane does not miss a bicycle.

Likewise, the one who lives in God does not regret the absence of the material things. He will not put any material value before the spirit. But that spirit will live within the material values, as well. He will live in the material, seen as a form of God's manifestation and existence, he will see God in everything, and live God through everything. It will be the same to him whether he lives in a straw hut or in a castle.

Some would, obviously, choose a hut over a castle, and thus show that they see the difference.

Let us go back to the other notorious object of criticism, sex. It is obvious that people need to reproduce, and it is even more obvious that enlightened people should reproduce, so that they would promote the materialization of the spiritual qualities on the genetic level. That is not an issue for most—what is an issue is the idea that sex should be kept only for the sake of reproduction, and that sexual pleasure should be avoided. This is just another “brilliant idea” that makes me wonder whether to laugh or cry.

This idea was so often accepted as “spiritual,” that the fact that I think it is utter nonsense will come as a surprise to many, but that is simply a fact. For how will two enlightened beings express their mutual love? On the higher planes, of course, they will express it by exchanging objects of consciousness, by mutual direct experience and unity. On such a level it is considered to be spiritual and acceptable. But when such a fusion is manifested on the physical plane in the form of sexual unity, in the form of mutual giving of pleasure, mutual enjoyment and blending, then it becomes “material” and “dirty.”

An enlightened man and an enlightened woman will see no level of existence as unspiritual, for they will observe the spirit in the whole of reality of all the levels. They will observe everything as God. If, therefore, conscious God in the form of one human being makes love with conscious God in the form of another human being, it is considered to be holy and blessed by the wise, while the fools consider it to be dirty. Their inner filth soils everything it touches.

If the Divine love of two beings wants to remain present on the physical plane, instead of withdrawing from it, it is perfectly clear that sex is a direct consequence of that decision, sex not for the sake of reproduction, but for the sake of expression and manifestation of love. Sex for the sake of reproduction, that lacks the presence of the Divine elements of love, the very form of sex that is advocated by various “spiritual” movements, is the animal act of copulation. How can a relationship of two people on the physical plane be filled with love, if they see the joy of their bodies as something dirty, while they still engage themselves in sex for the sake of reproduction? It is not possible, love is the first thing to depart and vanish from such relationships. Such relationships are the least spiritual form of human community. Of course, I am by no means expressing a claim that sex is a necessary condition for expression of love on the material plane. What I am saying is that love is the necessary condition for sex on the material plane, if sex is not to become a source of misery. Love can easily be manifested in all sorts of ways, and spiritual force can through those various ways be greatly displayed, often to a greater extent than would be possible through sex, but sex can by no means be practiced as separate from love and adoration, if it is to stay consistent with the materialization of love in the world.

So we are left with a choice: if we are to look for the spiritual outside of this world, and express the spiritual outside of this world, then we need neither sex nor money, but if we want to make this world spiritual, to ground the spirituality into the world, then we definitely need both sex and money.

Of course, in all those considerations we need to state that there are cases of abuse of both sex and money, which are to be avoided. There are groups whose leaders exploit the confidence that their disciples place in them, for the reason of getting hold of their money, and there are also lots of sexual abuses. By the term “sexual abuse”

I mean all activities that leave someone with a feeling of being exploited, manipulated or hurt; activities done by conscious individuals out of mutual acceptance and for mutual pleasure, that cause no harm to anybody, I find perfectly acceptable.

In criticisms of different spiritual organizations, accusations of brainwashing are the most frequent. Unlike the criticisms that are based on the criteria of sex and money, this type of criticism hits the bull's-eye; since essential spirituality is merely an observation of the reality, and living in the reality, all systems that are based on cultivating all sorts of ideological attitudes, or on dogmatic theology in general, instead of natural simplicity, are not likely to have anything to do with spirituality, and such organizations have to be confronted. True spirituality is natural functioning and simplicity, which needs no icons or dogmas. Only those who lack the touch with the reality need all sorts of symbols and other substitutes, and fanatical attachment to such a dogmatic theology, that has the goal of separation from others and setting oneself in a superior and privileged position, can easily be called brainwashing, and it definitely is a negative quality.

To be quite honest, acceptance of some conventional, mind-numbing ways of thinking isn't really that far from that; watching TV for the whole day is no better than washing our brains in some "more religious" manner.

Every form of thinking that does not promote love and harmony among the beings is negative—while the means of manifesting that balance do not necessarily have to be non-violent; for instance, in the second world war the harmony could not be attained by peaceful means, victory had to be won with arms in combat, and thus peace was established.

Harmony and peace do not mean cowardice and retreat from combat, but on the contrary they mean facing the trials of life and the forces of entropy, so that the weeds of hatred, fear, ignorance and prejudice would be rooted out, and the seeds of love, knowledge, wisdom and harmony sown. If defense of loved ones from danger means dying, then we need to die. But in any case, violent means and deeds have to be avoided, until we reach the state where avoiding conflict starts aiding the aggressors, and leads to the implementation of injustice in the world.

Injustice of all kinds has to be strongly opposed; we should engage ourselves to the greatest possible extent in order for it to

end immediately. The Divinity within should manifest itself through harmony in the world. The goal of the evolution is the expression of the Divine qualities in the world—and not in this world, but in all of the Creation. Man should, therefore, be an instrument of manifestation of that inner harmony, and in alignment with that voice of conscience be the factor of the materialization of the harmony of all the elements of everything that is created.

God is the harmony in everything. By recognizing the harmony we know God. And that harmony should not be attributed only to the spiritual levels, but we should dedicate ourselves to establishing it in the material as well—the harmony manifested as willingness to help the other, to feel the other's needs as one's own. That is the harmony in which it makes a difference to you whether your neighbor is hungry or unhappy, and if he is, then you will spontaneously take care of his needs, physical as well as the spiritual. That is a natural consequence of the inner harmony, which is no longer limited to just one being, but spreads and feels others as parts of itself, and tends to manifest harmony in those parts as well. That is the true meaning of compassion.

And compassion is the essence of a teacher. It is for that reason said that the path of bodhisattva is the path of compassion—the realization that outgrows one person, the harmony that spreads. Only the one who walked the path himself, who realized the inner and outer harmony, can become a teacher, for only harmony can result in harmony, only the one who knows can confer knowledge, and point toward the knowledge.

The teacher teaches by accepting the student into his own being, and by purifying such a fused being. For that reason it is said that the student is initiated into the teacher, for after the initiation their essence remains united beyond the possibility of separation, and along with the unity of essence goes the unity of their destinies. The student can never abandon the teacher, and teacher can never abandon the student, for they are one being in two separate bodies. It is clear that the relationship of students and teachers is closer than the relationship of mother and child, for it is the relationship of essential unity.

I was at times asked when I will “graduate” my students, give them the confirmation that they have finished learning. I will do it when I give my arm and my leg a diploma, that's when. Such questions are the essence of stupidity. What kind of a diploma

does the wind need to blow in harmony, or the ocean to exist in harmony? That is the diploma of the student on the Path. The only confirmation and the only diploma is the inner voice that values the steps, and the steps of harmony. In that way the harmony creates and lives itself, and there is no “I” to accept praise or reproach.

The harmony is. Students and teachers form a harmonious whole, independent of mental considerations and limiting imaginations. The higher level and order of consciousness is manifested, in various degrees, always in harmony and inner balance, without regard to superficial impressions. The relationship of student and teacher is the relationship of the unity in the essence of spirit, and not a relationship of stuffing the mind with mere information and data. From the inner unity the knowledge manifests, descending the understanding into the physical being.

The contact of student and teacher on the physical level is secondary, not even necessary, if the spirit of the student is refined enough to be able to follow the perfection of the inner voice without falling prey to the illusions of the ego. The physical proximity of a teacher is of great importance, for in physical proximity all the other, higher aspects of the teacher are also focused, and in direct perception the student can absorb them and align himself with them; the student then perceives the teacher as a living example of what he himself can become, as a realized promise of perfection. The teaching is, thus, conferred through existence and reality.

The majority of students have never on the physical plane met their teacher, and neither do they know that they have one. The teacher then speaks from within, with the voice of silence, the voice without words, with that indescribable something that cannot be pointed toward, something too inner to be pointed out as something, apart from one’s own existence. Meeting the teacher on the physical plane—actually meeting a physical body that is refined enough for the sublime nature of the teacher to be manifested through it—is a sign of readiness to live awakened and open on the Path. It is often that the teacher shows himself to the student through several different bodies, through many beings. That is perfectly natural, for the nature of the teacher has outgrown one body and identification with just one being. The teacher is a field of consciousness that lives through the harmonious multitude, united within and only apparently divided.

The refinement of the student inevitably leads to the situation where the student becomes the teacher—quite literally, and not in the sense where he would be proclaimed a teacher, but in the sense where his essence is united with the essence of the teacher, and that essence is in its entirety manifested through the student. Thus is the disciplic succession maintained. It is a frequent situation that a group of persons is initiated in such a manner, often in a way that every person within the group manifests some quality of the teacher to a greater extent, so that harmony and width are manifested on a broader scale. The disciple follows and serves the teacher by following his innermost nature, by acting, living, thinking, existing in harmony with the deepest reality that he is capable of experiencing. That deepest natural spontaneity is the voice of a teacher that leads amidst the darkness, the voice that is never silent.

The acceptance of the initiation is the recognition of that voice and opening of one's nature to that voice—the devotion to that voice, fusion with that voice. That is the real meaning of devotion to the teacher. Devotion to the teacher is revealed in manifesting harmony and perfection in one's own life, and in lives of all other beings.

It is wrong to see the teacher as a physical person. It is also wrong to see the teacher as a non-physical person. It is wrong to see the teacher in any way other than as the voice of one's own concealed power and reality. Everything else is just limitation and illusion. The teacher, on the physical plane, will be what the student needs in order to advance in the manifestation and life of the Divinity. That means that the needs of the student form the teacher; the reality of the teacher is not static and changeless, it is in perpetual change, it is never possible to make a pattern and explanation and point a finger, "that's what it is," for in that very moment it changes, it is different.

The teacher is as constant as the wind; always different and new, while remaining changeless and constant. That wind is to be opened up to and allowed to cleanse us. When only the wind remains, the nature of the teacher will become apparent. Such a student has himself become the teacher. It is needless to seek the teacher in the physical body; it is needed to find the teacher within oneself and observe his voice. Only then will the teacher become apparent in the outside world as well, in a body, if need be. Only

be careful that you, expecting a king surrounded by the company of angels, do not overlook a carpenter's son.

Natural simplicity, and glory within, are the qualities of a teacher. Outside glory and the symbols of power are the most frequent sign that we are looking at the wrong way. The greatest of powers is so vast that it is beyond expression; the power that can be expressed is small and insignificant. This is the reason why the outside appearance of the teacher is mostly common and unimpressive.

Why is that so? Because the nature of teaching is simplicity, the natural inner flow. From that it is obvious that the teacher will embody that nature. The nature of the teacher and his activity is harmony. As the wind that blows and might disturb many things, and yet is a means of a wider harmony, the teacher might also disturb many things, that being a part of the wider perspective of harmony.

It is often expected from the teacher to always tell the truth and to fill the mind of the student with information. Most often the teacher will, quite opposite, tell nonsense, lies and trivia, so that he breaks the student's expectations. The student would expect the teacher to master every situation, and all of the sudden the teacher might appear to be anxious, confused and insecure. The student will expect the dramatic revelations, and that he will get, all as false as his expectations. Then the student will renounce either the teacher, or his expectations and preconceptions. Often will the teacher pose as a negative example—something not to be. Then will the student, recognizing the line of rightness within, renounce the appearance of a teacher without. Then has the appearance fulfilled its purpose and it can vanish.

The greatest mistake of the student is to expect patterns. Where there are patterns, the truth is not present. The truth resembles the flow of a swift, great river. In its flow there are no patterns, and the only constants that remain are life and change. Those who expect a static teacher and a static teaching will get a false teacher and a false teaching. Then they protest, saying that there are no real teachers and teachings, but that they are all just fakes and their deceptions. What are they surprised at? They just got what they asked for. They asked for a fixed teaching founded on ancient dogmas, and then they are surprised with its falsehood. They sought at the wrong place; one can't seek jewels at the garbage dump, and expect to find a fortune.

The permanence of the teaching is different, it is the permanence of the wind, always new and different, steady in its dynamic changing nature, not content with firm shapes and stillness. The river that stops flowing becomes a lake. Likewise, when a teaching takes a firm, determined form, it stops being a teaching, and becomes an obstacle to be abandoned, so that the footsteps along the path could be continued. Persons in whom the spirit dwells in the highest degree will hardly be considered spiritual by anyone; they will be considered geniuses, they will be regarded as brilliant, fresh and new, their deeds will be admired and chosen to be followed.

And then again, that core of eternal life will not be seen as something spiritual, but as something natural. It is obvious, thus, that the term “spiritual” denotes falsehood and fallacy and that it should be cast aside, and said that the spiritual is what is creative, powerful and beautiful, for those are the qualities of the spirit, and those who repeat God’s name in rigid consciousness, proscribing limitations to themselves and to others, are merely pitiful disordered beings in need of help.

Music that tends to be spiritual is most often desperately bad, boring, tiresome and predictable. For that reason I often say that we should find music that is good, and in it we should recognize the spirit. We should seek art and other human deeds that praise the Lord in the same manner in which the wind does: nowhere is there God’s name and its chanting, nowhere are there dogmas or scriptures, nowhere is God explicitly praised, and then again the wind praises the Lord with the beauty of its existence. Spirituality is not what invokes God, but that in which God is manifested. And least related to God are the things that mention him explicitly. For where God is mentioned, he is being separated from oneself and regarded as something external—but where God is lived and felt, and where from that consciousness, might and joy deeds are done, real spirituality is present. The most powerful materializations of the Divine are the work of people who would by no means think of themselves as spiritual, and those deeds are not the result of a desire to make something spiritual, but the result of reaching for the power within.

Life

The truth is universal and omnipresent. The law of gravity applies equally here and on the other end of the world, on the other end of the solar system, and on the other end of the universe. The same applies to the laws of the conservation of energy and of angular momentum, and others.

God is the sun that shines indiscriminately on the good and the wicked.²³ How can we, in the light of that knowledge, accept any form of exclusivity in observation of God's nature?

The only sensible and possible form of thinking says that God gives equally to all, but not all choose to take equally. Therefore is our reality a consequence of our choices, not God's.

The world is governed by certain rules, rules that punish some sorts of thinking and acting, while rewarding others. If we observe carefully, if we look deeply enough, we can see that deeds of harmony and order, deeds of harmony with the Divine order and with the nature of the world, are the ones that are rewarded, while deeds of chaos, entropy and disorder are punished.

When spirit enlightens matter, it opposes chaos and disorder, introducing order. It opposes ugliness and introduces beauty. Those who identify themselves with the forces of disorder, chaos, misfortune and ugliness, will find themselves in the way of the

²³ Matthew 5:43–48

spirit and they will be destroyed. The law of cause and effect is in fact the law of greater beauty, greater consciousness and greater power in manifestation. He who has, will be given more, and he who has not, will be taken from.²⁴ So the one who lives in harmony with God, he who lives the beauty, the truth and the harmony, will be increased in God's presence, for God is indeed the whole of those qualities. The one, however, who identifies himself with ugliness, disorder and chaos, will in God's presence be expelled as a stain from the face of the world and destroyed, for where there is beauty there is no place for ugliness; where there is order there is no place for chaos.

With our choices, thoughts and deeds we therefore choose sides, whether we want to be a factor of harmony or disharmony. By choosing the harmony we will perceive ourselves as a part of the earth, as a part of God, as a part of the universally present order. By choosing disharmony we will perceive ourselves as separate from the earth and from God, we will perceive the world as a chaotic and terrible place in which the separation, hatred and fear thrive. From that fear the need for safety will come, which we will attempt to satisfy by accumulating things, by ownership of things, ownership of persons and their lives, by a false sense of control over events, we will try to control for the fear controls us, and our inner core will be filled with terror.

When mother earth starts spanking naughty children, it won't be good. Therefore we need to consider our actions, our thoughts and their foundations, and change those foundations—by choices of harmony, acceptance, service and understanding, instead of attempts to rule and control, and instead of struggle and chaos. The spiritual way is not the way of control and government, but the way of recognition, recollection and understanding. It is not the way of unification, because unification implies a new element that is unknown to us; it is the way of recognizing the unity that is already here, that already is.

Often are those qualities of understanding and acceptance thought to be female, while the qualities of government and domination are thought to be male. That is not true, not entirely, although there is a lot of truth in it. For those are not male qualities, but perverted male qualities, male qualities that have been distorted

²⁴ Matthew 13:12; 25:29.

and perverted by fear, as much as there are female qualities perverted by fear—retreat from the reality, forming false security in the world of fantasy, and all sorts of crazy and deluded thinking. The male quality is the penetration of the Divine consciousness into the world and making the world divine, a fight against chaos and entropy, and protection of all that is beautiful and good in the world. The female qualities are acceptance and nurturing, understanding and gentleness. The male and the female qualities are mutually dependent; there is no existence of one without the other. It is for that reason that there must be no war between the male and the female, for they are meant to unite and to cooperate.

Kindness alone without determination, as well as determination without kindness, lacks balance and is unable to produce harmony. Harmony is to be produced only if every human being, regardless of sex of the physical body, nurtures in itself both male and female qualities equally, if they are united within and manifested without in alignment with one's own nature—to some one way is more convenient, to some is another, but if the actions are in themselves balanced, they will be actions that convey the inner harmony of being into the outer harmony of the world, and the world will be reborn, and the heaven will reign on earth.

The way things are now, both men and women are bitterly frustrated and unhappy, cast out from their inner core of peace, and forced to struggle for their lives in a hostile world. They both try, in the best way they can think of, by investing all of their will and efforts, to change that condition and to attain happiness.

There are frequent, at first glance justified, criticisms that interpret the actions of people as bad intentions or inner malice; that is simply untrue, there is such a small number of beings who choose evil by willing choice, that it can be completely ignored in any serious analysis. Even beings that appear to be evil, selfish, cruel and who exploit others do it out of a deep feeling of unhappiness and incompleteness, out of a feeling of being severed from their roots, the feeling of being rejected by God and mother Earth, and out of that feeling they cry, protest, act like a child deeply hurt, who feels that the good and the beautiful makes no sense, because he is deprived of it, he was never shown the good and the beautiful, and all his actions are a reflection of that inner suffering. Such a child will spitefully do everything that is prohibited, in hope that the parent will pay attention to him at least with punishment,

if not in any other way, then at least by showing himself, letting him know that he is important enough for the parent to at least show himself in order to punish him, if not for any other reason. I do not believe in evil people, I believe in deeply hurt people. Most people, however, are really doing their best in the difficult circumstances that they are in, so that good would prevail in the world, so that the good and beautiful states that they feel within would be achieved, and yet the majority of unhappiness and suffering in the world is the result of their very activities, for they do not act in the right way, because they were never shown, and they, guided by wrong examples in an environment of chaos, even contribute to that very chaos.

The majority of mankind consists of good, sensitive and kind men and women, who find themselves in infernal circumstances, and it is enough to show them the path by our own example for them to awaken, remember their inner strength, and become immensely beautiful and powerful. The spiritual path, in that sense, is not something that needs to take years of difficult practice; what it takes is often that mere recognition and exaltation, a sparkling joy because everything is finally right. Such experience is the moment in which we choose the Path, and begin to take willing steps.

And the goal is attained in growth of that inner brilliance, wholesomeness and happiness, until it can encompass the whole of reality; when the whole of reality is observed in harmony of one's own inner being, when everything is permeated with perfection and when that perfection becomes completely realized in the life of a being, then it is known that the goal was here all along, present, that we grew and evolved from the goal, that we were breathing in the goal with our whole being in the moments of bliss on the Path, until we managed to bloom in its entire glory. For in our lives we often used to feel the qualities of the goal... all the profound, powerful, sincere feelings, admiration, adoration, ecstasy, profound sincere joy, the feelings of knowledge, magnificence. Unfortunately, we keep misinterpreting them: we keep thinking that those states are caused by external stimuli, that something from without is responsible for our realization. Something favorable happened, so we are happy. So we attempt to reproduce a similar experience in order to feel the same thing. And it is exactly the opposite, it isn't the external stimulation that caused it, it is not to be held responsible, it is just that we for the moment

remembered a fragment of our true nature, that shone through us at that time. Favorable external circumstances simply helped this to happen, and the similar met the similar. It is equally possible to feel blissful knowledge without stuffing the mind with information. It is possible to feel pure happiness without an external stimulus. It isn't even that difficult—once we manage to feel it, we can willingly maintain it within our consciousness—that is the true meditation, during which we will not ask ourselves whether the prescribed time for that day is up or not, but we shall on the contrary forget everything but the bliss, and all our deeds will be colored with bliss.

When we live the life of realization, it will appear utterly stupid to us to be asked: “what have you realized?” For the realization depends only on itself, and on nothing else. And then again, although our personal happiness depends only on the inner, our happiness on the wider plane depends on others. If we want to establish a relationship with another being, his or her happiness becomes ours, and his or her unhappiness becomes our own.

We are, therefore, no longer in a position to say that our happiness depends solely on ourselves—actually, we even can, for in that situation we see the other as a part of ourselves, a part of our own being, and that being of many bodies finds happiness within itself. Seeing the other as other is the source of separation. Feeling the other as oneself is the sign of unity. That unity will give birth to harmony, which will change the world.

It is common for purified persons who know each other well to become unable to feel where one begins and the other ends—it isn't even about telepathy, about mind reading, but literally about sharing common thoughts, feeling common emotions. One being acts in many bodies. Such profound relationships of unity are the point of human relationships, unlike the superficial contacts that never touch the core of the other person with one's own. When the cores touch, they will make love and unite, and there will no longer be two people, for love will make them into one.

The time will come when all of mankind will act this way, as one being, and then will heaven reign on earth. It is obvious that I speak of manifestation, to the highest degree, of what is eternally true within: that we are all one being, one consciousness. When we begin to live that truth naturally on all levels of existence—when we begin to feel the other not as the other, and not

by nurturing correct thoughts, but literally, when we begin to feel the other as a part of our greater body, then we shall live the goal.

The question arises whether that unity is by itself the goal. It is... to a degree. But everyone who felt love also felt the need to make that love deeper, to feel its higher aspects, to share something higher, more beautiful with the other, to express that love through songs and deeds, to show the low to the other and to go somewhere, together... to the depths of unity. Somewhere where everything is all right, where the laws of consciousness and love apply, where there is harmony and order. Such consciousness and such desires are the bond with spheres of existence higher than the material one.

There are spheres of existence in which life is something so much more beautiful compared to what we mostly experience on earth, so much purer, so much mightier, that it surpasses the highest love that we were ever able to experience. And those levels are merely a beginning, a beginning of the beginning compared to the vastness of what follows, of what is yet before us. It is important, therefore, for one who loves and wants the beauty and consciousness expressed, to explore the depths of his spirit and discover those hidden levels, which lay buried under a pile of gross and unimportant things with which we incessantly cover our spirit. We need to dive into the depths and feel things that surpass the very ability to comprehend. The magnitude and consciousness of those levels are more than enough to instantly crush the impure and soiled spirit of an ordinary man, if he could by some strange chance come in touch with them. Such purification is attained by the yogic practices that I gave in the beginning of the book: they help to naturally remove the impurity and roughness from one's consciousness and all the energetic bodies, so that the depths are revealed.

I once read an excellent story of a man who invented the radio-telescope. He could use it to observe the radiation of the galactic center, but only at moments when the local mill (or some other workshop) didn't work. The galactic center is much larger, but the mill is closer. Likewise, the inner levels are infinitely more powerful, but if the lower levels are dirty, we will remain unable to feel them in any but insignificant way, for the roughness of our spirit will claim our attention.

The fact that not all people have equally developed higher bodies is an entirely different matter. In the same manner in which the

physical body serves as our bridge toward the physical, the higher bodies serve as our bridges toward respective higher levels. Those bodies are gradually developed, with repeated incarnations dedicated to development of progressively subtler elements of spirit. If a critical mass of development of those bodies is not attained, man is unable to even conceive the ideas of the spiritual, of the need for self-development and similar. For such a man these things simply have no appeal, for he hasn't yet developed the "taste," the subtle senses with which they can be recognized. Such a man must gradually, through experiences, quests, recognition and understanding—basically by means of trial and error—develop the organs of his inner consciousness, to a degree at which the spiritual begins to make sense to him. For without that he will take no steps in the direction of the spirit, and for that reason will the things, that might otherwise be easily revealed, remain hidden. It is not difficult to know God, it is difficult to want to know God. When we have felt that desire, we have traveled the majority of the Path, and we are practically at the goal. That's why my brother sometimes says that all yogic techniques are meant for the last five minutes of the Path.

But it is not said when those last five minutes will take place; it is quite possible that the first five minutes are the last—for it is the greatest amount of time and effort, that is lost on moving in the wrong directions, and on moving in circles. It is possible to reach the goal from any part of the Path in a practically insignificant period of time, if we walk in the right direction. We can also waste lifetimes on something that might have been avoided. Still, it is not really a waste of time, for by moving in the wrong directions we gain experience that might be useful to others. If we look from the perspective of the goal, then there are no wrong directions. None whatsoever, because everything is already attained. The matchless bliss is ours from the beginning, and it can by no means be lost. We can however lose the life of that bliss, we can separate ourselves from that bliss and suffer, but the bliss is ours at every single moment, and in each moment we can choose to end the game. In every moment we can love and observe the unity that binds us with everything and that is in everything, that I am, but we can also divert our views from that unity and look in the direction of separation, we can judge and separate ourselves from the others with those judgments, make ourselves into others

by judgments. Our judgment of others is reflected upon ourselves, for indeed by judging others in whom we recognize our own nature, we separate the parts of that nature from ourselves, we isolate them and we refuse to accept them.

Once we dare to accept and love others, we shall see that our inside is healed, that our consciousness spreads throughout the fields that were fenced away with thorns of fear and rejection. It is through acceptance of others that we accept ourselves, that we heal ourselves, for entire Creation is a mere mirror of ourselves, and whole and loved we shall observe the wholeness and love in the world. Everything that we perceive is the mirror of ourselves—we indeed create the world that we observe.

When someone tells me he doesn't hear me, I tell him: "Take that banana out of your ear then." Likewise, if someone sees nothing but malice, hatred, spite and filth in the world, I would advise him to rinse the excrement that blocks his vision from his eyes. It is not necessary to put on rose colored glasses in order to see the beauty in the world, it is the dark glasses that need to be removed. The world is beautiful by itself and it is perfect in its very nature. It is therefore sufficient to remove the dirt from our own spirit, and the world will change, we shall see it with completely different eyes.

The world is a stage of choices, a shop-window in which everything is offered to our choice. The things that we choose will manifest in our lives. If we choose to observe hatred, fear and malice, then they will indeed manifest in our lives. If, however, we choose love and a free flow of perfection, then we will undoubtedly get it. Let us, therefore, choose the greatest perfection, what we really want, and let us not be content with less, let us not cast aside pure water and drink mud instead. The inner nature of the reality does not judge, does not reject and is not divided. That is the reality to be manifested without adding to it or taking something away. It is not difficult to achieve, not at all. We only need to renounce everything artificial and false, renounce all forms of coercion and imagination, in order to disclose the inner flow of reality. The reality is not a set of regulations to be learned and upheld; on the contrary it is what it is always known, and what we need to turn ourselves toward and what we need to live, in every single moment, with every single thought, word and deed, with every act of our existence in this and the other worlds.

The truth is never merely an expression of objectively accurate information; the truth is a testimony of the reality through our existence and through our actions. It is our actions that convey the truth throughout the levels of reality: without distortions, by opening ourselves toward that, what really is. Therefore the reality is observed, and that observation is spontaneously made into right thoughts, words and deeds—what spirit witnesses, the organs of action implement, in a true and right way. The truth will often remain unspoken, for there is no need to speak it. If the expression and testimony of the truth is pointless in some situation, then it will remain unsaid—often is the expression of the truth inappropriate because it can cause pain without improving over the silence. Lying should, however, always be avoided, and it is always better to remain silent or to avoid the question than to lie, because lies separate a man from the reality of his inner being, becoming the means of his demise.

Since the thoughts, words and deeds are merely different aggregate states of activity, it is obvious that what applies to speech must also apply to thinking and doing. Thinking, forming judgments, must be transparent and act in service of the inner rightness, and the words and deeds will follow. The only judgment that one should pass is that which contributes to the harmony, happiness and bliss in the world. All other judgments should be renounced. If one tells a lie, or in some other way commits a deed that is opposed to his feeling of rightness, he should by no means justify it, not in any circumstances. The bad should be called bad, and there are no circumstances that will make it good. Once we give our faults the right names, a heavy load will be cast aside; justifying one's flaws and making a philosophy out of those justifications is the path that leads to hell. For every mistake we should instantly repent, say that a mistake is a mistake and do everything in our power to rectify it, in a way that will leave no one at loss. How will we become able to criticize the faults of others, the things that we know to be wrong, the things that don't contribute to the blissfulness of the world, if we do not first disclaim and renounce our own faults? We won't, we will be able only to be silent and suffer within, while the inner child of our personal innocence weeps in a dungeon of hypocrisies and lies. Let us, therefore, say that sin is sin and that righteousness is righteousness, and we will become able to breathe with full lungs in happiness and

harmony, walking tall and straight, filled with the dignity and happiness of our own existence. We will then feel no need to prove things to others and to criticize them, and we will hold no blame against anyone, for we will live harmony and transparency; the inner nature will live in the outer, and outer will live in the inner, and there will be no divisions. In such a state it will be possible for us to criticize someone's actions, at the same time accepting and loving the criticized person, and it will be felt, the acceptance will be felt, and falsehood and sin that are criticized will be seen as an obstacle that can be freely discarded in order to dive into the ocean of truth and endless love. It is one thing to attack the person as sinful, and quite another to say "beloved, why do you trouble yourself with such trivia?" Thus the love will wash away all the impurities and the inner unity will be shown in one's life. If we are unable to live the inner gentleness and innocence of our souls, then we are on the wrong path. Harmlessness and innocence are signs of the purity of spirit; the purity sees nothing but purity, and is happy. "The one who is not as these little ones, will not see the kingdom of God."²⁵ The unity of the childlike innocence, the mature wisdom and deep love is what will establish the kingdom of heaven in the world. Divinity is not mildness or witlessness; on the contrary it is clarity, depth and reality, the love as deep as the sea and as bright as the stars of heaven. In the Divine love there is no dimness of perception, nor is there any decoration of the reality. The one who sees needs no decorations. It is not necessary to pretend or to decorate; the one who looks with the Divine eyes will be able to speak the truth even if it is ugly and painful, for he sees the beauty and perfection beyond appearance and impression.

The truth of things is often concealed beneath the surface, and perception of the surface shall not reveal the reality within. Harsh words and deeds can be immensely healing, while gentle words can bring death. It is for that reason necessary to dive into the reality beneath the veils of appearance, where the waves on the surface do not dim the view of the oceanic depths. The surgeon's knife is very unpleasant, but it can save lives. Sugar is, however, tasty and sweet, but it can cost a diabetic his life, and besides it corrupts the teeth.

²⁵ Matthew 18:3.

Never, however, should needless harshness and mercilessness toward the feelings of others be justified with such higher reasons, if it is possible to convey love through gentle and kind means. We should also not act in any way, if we do not feel needed and called for within ourselves. The path to hell is paved with uninvited imposition.

Often people go to heal others without even asking them what their true desires are. They start therapy without setting a diagnosis. Such an approach is a result of arrogance and a lack of realization. A true healer does not act, he doesn't introduce any new elements, he instead allows his beloved to heal himself, by listening, by giving understanding and acceptance. Then his very presence serves as a catalyst that promotes the healing, the solution to the condition.

Those who want to give and to heal are most often the ones who themselves most need healing and acceptance. Seldom is healing achieved by adding energy; on the contrary, it is achieved by removing the obsolete, by removing the blocks that stand in the way of the free flow of energy. There are misconceptions that describe the energetic vampirism as taking energy. That has to be understood correctly, because by taking energy from a man we in fact heal him and make him stronger; by accepting love, which is also an energy, we strengthen the flow of love through the man, thus cleansing him and making him stronger. Vampirism is therefore not to take energy from someone, but to take away his energy, by separating him from his inner resources. A mighty draw of energy through a man will result in a powerful surge of energy and a blow-through of his energy centers. Severing a man's energy, by placing oneself between him and his inner resources, weakens the man, who withers separated from his roots; he becomes ill and dies. On the contrary, by placing a man between ourselves and his inner resources, and accepting energy from him, we increase the flow of energy through him, strengthening his connection with his inner resources, and such a man thrives, grows and is healed. What is needed grows, always, and by accepting energy in such a way we make a man needed, we affirm his value and usefulness. His inner sense of value grows and makes him stronger, and he stays rooted in happiness and bliss that flows through him. Which person is happier, the one who is loved and needed, or the one who is unloved and rejected? Rejection and

denial of love makes a person obsolete; it cuts away the person's inner resources and the person loses energy. However, if we need the person, if we need his love and energy, energy will flow—except of course in cases where the person chooses to bargain with the energy and willingly disrupt its flow, conditioning its acceptance and the acceptable form, by which the person severs himself from the universal source—a bed of the fluent and quick river is cleansed; thus will the person, through which energy flows, shine and be cleansed, his or her energy centers and channels will function in balance and with crystal clarity, and all the systems of body and spirit will be balanced and shining.

For the man is cleansed by what comes out of him. We are cleansed by the love that we give. We should therefore be thankful for every opportunity to give love, to feel love, for it makes the healing force flow through us toward the other, keeping us in existence, for we are needed and wanted—we are a Divine instrument in the world, a radiating point of the Divine power, and all who want to drink love from a pure and unstained cup will need and love us, and love is what gives us life, what keeps us in existence. Like the Divine love within that keeps us in life, we are also kept in life by love and need for us without—and the more love we give, the more love flows through our being, the more we will receive. For love is merely another name for reality, and through love are we realized.

From all that it is obvious that we are incredibly dependent on each other. We depend on each others' love, our very life depends on the love of others, and on the love we give to others. It is so because we all represent the parts of One, and those parts need each other, and the more and closer they are mutually connected, the more they are rooted in their infinite source. Love toward other beings empowers our awareness of the bond with the Divine, and that bond with the Divine on the other hand empowers the feeling of unity and bond with the others.

Love is an autocatalytic process, which empowers, feeds and magnifies itself, until there remains nothing but love, on both sides, both within and without, living itself without limits. An infinite attachment to another being, and an infinite attachment to the Divine source within us are therefore one. People should open up to one another, give each other their gentle inner core, open up to each other and admit the need of the other—the need,

fulfillment of which means life. Once we feel such a need for one another, we will make love with such a force, and be united with such a force, that there will be no power or wisdom in this or in any other world that could find any separation between us. Let us drink and breathe one other, let us feel the endless need for one another, and we will become something most precious to one another, something most beautiful and wonderful, and we will live the deepest bliss possible in this world, for we will become materializations of God to one another, the Divine embodiments, and by drinking and breathing each other we will drink and breathe the Divine love, thus rooting it into the world so that no force in the world or beyond it can question it.

Often will mental explanations stand in the way of living the Divine love among the beings. Let us not listen to them. The mind will provide endless reasons to feed separation, and often will the voice of the heart helplessly cry under such a load. Let us not seek reasons to love, nor listen to reasons against love, but let us instead just follow love and purity when we feel them, let us follow the feeling of rightness that will guide us, and the mind will serve the purpose of showing us the way. Often the only obstacle between the lovers consists of the reasons of the mind that are rooted in the misunderstanding of the other; such reasons should not be listened to or fed, but on the contrary a deep and unbreakable bond should be established between the hearts, and deepest mutual love and understanding should be driven through that bond, and then the minds will be filled with reasons for love and acceptance. Love will fill all the gaps and heal all the wounds, and that love should be opened up to, allowed to cut our being and remove everything that is not itself, and then we will know love as a force of healing and purification, the force that wipes clean everything on its path, where nothing can stand in the way of its infinite power.

Let us not wait for others to make the first move and love us; let us love them, let us show unambiguous love and devotion, understanding and acceptance; let us take the initiative. Let us be brave and sincere. In that way will love spread throughout the world, but not if everyone keeps waiting for the other to make the first move and complaining about their misery. It is not necessary to say loving words, it is often more useful to show love with unambiguous actions without words, or by talking about

something else while we immerse the other in the aura of love and understanding. The feeling of love, unambiguous and open, can not remain unfelt, it is always clear as broad daylight, and it leaves the other person with a choice to accept or to reject the offered heart. If it is rejected, the love is returned to us, and if it is accepted, we have regained the unity once lost, and ended the appearance of separation. It is wrong to think that gentle love is something weak and frail; on the contrary it is the force of steel, gentleness is so powerful that it breaks everything in its path and goes straight to the heart. Sincere, open gentleness and vulnerability. That is the force to live and die for, the force that makes one fall on his knees in tears. The mutual devotion of two powerful, aware, equal beings, a steady adoration... a flow of understanding whose vibrant power outweighs words and thoughts. Let us not be content with the lesser goals.

And this great and almighty goal of total love is merely a speck in the ocean compared to the states that follow, that await us and dare us to face them, to mirror ourselves in them and see what we are made of. To have a long, long look at ourselves in them until nothing remains, nothing but those states that are so high that neither word nor thought, neither love nor wisdom can touch them. God is indeed an endless ocean, from which we can grab endlessly never to exhaust its treasures. There is nothing that could be so high, mighty, beautiful and fierce, that in God there would not be something even more beautiful, high, mighty and fierce in its magnificence. The range of God's expressions, the expressions of that infinity, is indeed infinite and abundant. The path is literally paved with bliss and perfection, and the goal is lived on that path. Such is God's greatness, such is His beauty, goodness, modesty, gentleness, omnipotence, perfection and reality, that it endlessly and hopelessly surpasses all comprehension and understanding, but it does not surpass the total and unconditional surrender to that greatness... it doesn't surpass the unity without difference, and being of that vastness. By devotion He is known, and in devotion He is realized.

The Levels of Consciousness

The way up leads to the depths of our inner being. The deeper, purer, clearer our consciousness, the higher we are in dimensional depth of experience. The deeper we go into our consciousness, the deeper are the levels of reality that we experience and feel. By refining our being we attain the ability to perceive things that would, in a more coarse state of spirit, be completely beyond reach.

A common mistake is to think that the “ascension” of consciousness means to leave oneself and go somewhere above; then the absurd ideas of the higher states as places where someone can take us arise—and then people, trying to figure out who it would be that would take us there, come up with all sorts of absurd ideas, so much that maybe the idea of an alien spaceship hidden behind a comet is not the most absurd idea that people have come up with.

There is no going out and away, there is no moving outward, toward an external condition. The deeper dimensions of existence are reached only when we refine ourselves, and through the perception of the subtle states of spirit. Those subtle realms, those dimensions of the reality, have names; some systems of belief have bothered to make a rather detailed, although often confusing, classification of those levels. But before we dedicate our efforts to any sort of reflection upon those levels, we must keep in mind, with a risk that my repetition might become boring, that we are not dealing with any kind of departure to some location, but with

deeper states of consciousness that are attained within ourselves, in ourselves. The fact that our inner being is essentially a focus of all levels of existence, and that it represents a multidimensional portal, doesn't change anything. Once we know our inner being, we will realize that we have also attained the ability to explore the real worlds higher than matter, and that we share this ability with other beings, often of immense beauty and consciousness, and the higher are the levels that we inhabit, the greater is the bliss of the very fact that we are never alone, and that we are surrounded with forces so benevolent and mighty, that we are surrounded with such a love, and with beings of such a consciousness, that the knowledge of them alone is enough to produce a state of eternal ecstasy.

This places the person who knows before very high standards. It is difficult, for a man who learned to hide himself and lie, to face a being that communicates only by directly opening its own existence to our inner eye. It is difficult to communicate with uncompromised sincerity and without a trace of deception. Then all our filth becomes apparent, and such a communication cannot remain pure, as our conscience cannot remain pure until we have removed all of our emotional and mental stains.

We should not be afraid of soiling the pure beings of the higher levels with our presence; on the contrary, their presence will help our purification, but our dirt and deception will bring us in touch with the lower levels, in which deception, lies and even worse things are quite common, and in which beings who exploit others for their goals reign.

So when I say that our consciousness is a lens that focuses all the levels within, and that our consciousness represents a tool of selection between the levels, I am neither joking nor speaking metaphorically, I mean it quite literally. With the state of our consciousness within, we literally choose the level of consciousness on which we want to live and function.

I am tempted to drop all the lower levels from my observation, because I describe by perceiving, and some of those levels are so obnoxious, and such is the consciousness of their inhabitants, that I am nauseated by the very thought of wallowing in that mud, describing it. On the other hand, it is necessary to describe, in detail, the very things that we need to avoid, so that we can identify them better.

Matter

The lowest of all levels is coarse matter. Its flexibility and receptiveness for the states of spirit is the least, providing the greatest resistance to the attempts of the spirit to break through and manifest divinity.

It is thus rightfully held that power over coarse matter tells most about real spiritual magnitude; before entering matter everybody is spiritual, pure and mighty, but the heroes are forged in the trials, and the majority of such “spiritual forces” are left lost and bewildered in the clash with matter, failing to either find their way or to manifest, while the material laws carry them through life, from birth to death. Never do they manage to leave their mark in the world, and to show anything really high and valuable. On the other hand, a really great consciousness is shown exactly in the forcefulness of its penetration through matter with the power of spirit; it is shown in the ability to manifest the strength and greatness of its inner nature in the nature without, in the ability to subdue the physical laws to the higher laws of consciousness and love and to laws even deeper.

Beings that possess such supernatural qualities are in some cultures called geniuses, and in other cultures they are thought to be divine incarnations, avatars.²⁶ Essentially, an avatar is a forceful Divine invasion of the world—so forceful that it gives impetus to a whole new era of human existence, it gives the creative impulse that leads mankind for thousands of years. A genius, however, brings into the world something that would otherwise not have existed. He is capable of molding inner perfection into physical forms: music, words, pictures, forms that inspire and show the inner creativity and power of the Divine forces, even in a medium as inert as physical matter.

According to their spiritual strength and ability to influence the matter, beings choose various forms of physical bodies through which they express themselves. Therefore beings that are capable to influence matter only insignificantly, who yet have to feel matter, to adjust themselves to their new environment and simply

²⁶ Avatar means literally “descension,” of God into the matter.

exist within it, choose the physical carrier (vehicle²⁷) in the form of a mineral, a simple “dead” matter.

The fact that there is no really dead matter, and that every form of substance of all levels, from a rock to divine bliss, is merely a wave on the ocean of the infinite life and consciousness, and that the essence of every rock is the highest reality, consciousness and bliss, is a completely different matter. From the perspective of the relative, however, the rock is a dead and inert energetic form through which the Divine is manifested in practically no way other than the physical existence.

Of this level the esoteric works speak as of the earth element.

In man’s daily life the earth element is related to states of security, meaning the security of one’s own existence as a physical person. The term “grounding,” therefore, here designates a condition of safety and peace with earth in the form of one’s own physical body, where the harmonious functioning of the earth element in a man means natural functioning through one’s own body, without strain, and acceptance of one’s own physical existence as beautiful and good.

The state of safety, the harmony with the earth, is manifested as absence of need to control and possess, for those needs are born out of disturbed sense of safety, out of the feeling of insecurity of one’s physical existence, which is a grave condition for a physical being that longs for a controlled and arranged environment in which its needs will be met—the needs for food, shelter, excretion and reproduction.

Often are those needs designated as lower, and yet no spirituality on the physical level is possible if those needs are not fully met; for the harmony must exist on all levels, including the material level. It is therefore obvious that the disturbance of the harmonic perception of the earth will reflect itself in disturbances of eating (for example excessive and immoderate eating and excessive weight, as a consequence of insecurity), disturbances of excretion (it is a common situation that people have problems with excretion when they change their dwelling-place, for instance on vacations; when we find ourselves in a new and unknown environment there is a disturbance in the regular cycle of excretion until we are

²⁷ From Lat. “vehiculum,” “vehicle.” In Sanskrit the term “vahana” is used, also meaning “vehicle.”

adapted to the new environment), the need for possession of material goods (the fear of deprivation, and deprivation in youth often produces people who are obsessed with ownership and fortune, and who are inclined to excessively amass money and other substitutes for safety and lovingness in the material), and disturbances in the sexual behavior, such as possessiveness and jealousy, and often a physical need for sex as means of marking one's possession, and projection of one's unaccomplished material longings through physical offspring, who are observed as an extension of one's will and existence in the world.

Disturbances of safety, related to the earth element, can be easily healed through the love of the heart center, which fills the gaps in the wholeness of one's personality, and accepts the lost and alienated elements of one's existence. As long as our body is not perceived as good, beautiful and perfect, we will move in the vicious circle of depreciation and underestimation of the physical, distance from the physical, and states of rejection that can result in violent behavior and hatred pointed toward one's own body and bodily existence, as well as toward the bodies of others.

That attitude produces various forms of perverted violent behavior, deeds of hatred and destruction of oneself and others. It is the reason we need to love our body, love the bodies of others, and love the earth as such, to acknowledge its beauty and perfection.

Prana

The next level is energy—subtle matter, or prana, chi. When I say “subtle,” I don’t mean any extraordinary form of subtlety; this energy even has mass, it is, let’s say, a more subtle form of matter, where prana and matter together form the physical phenomena.

Whenever the energetic movements within the body are mentioned during various experiences and yogic practice, we are dealing with prana; pranic movements and discharges produce the twitches of the body during the awakening and movement of kundalini, by stimulating the nervous and muscular tissues of the physical vehicle.

Prana and matter are so connected and mixed that some forms of matter, such as alcohol, can be approached as pranic forms and assimilated directly into one’s system with no need to assimilate the physical carrier (the gross matter) into one’s physical body. Energetically speaking, with our pranic body we envelope and assimilate the pranic body of the alcoholic drink, and in this way even physically change the structure of the physical substance—one can’t get drunk from an alcoholic drink that has in this way been altered, for the “energy” of alcohol has been removed, and this very energy is responsible for the feeling of intoxication.

So, there is an unbreakable bond between prana and our perception of the physical world, to a degree where we seldom perceive it as something separate from the other aspects of the material, and we are not making a mistake there, for that it is. The only possible confusion arises when prana becomes noticeable in the form that cannot so easily be reduced to conventional ideas of matter and its behavior. That is the group that encompasses strange and apparently supernatural phenomena such as psychokinesis, levitation, and some other, more frequent events that we can find in our daily lives—light bulbs burning out during disturbed movements of the energy of a man’s thoughts, or stress or some other change in the environment.

On the kundalini mailing list²⁸ I had the opportunity to read about a known phenomenon of navy wives, whose domestic appliances abruptly start to malfunction or behave strangely whenever

²⁸ <http://www.kundalini-gateway.org>

their husbands go to sea or return. It appears that in such a situation the prana in the atmosphere destabilizes, and some “surges” of prana, discharges of high energy, can go through an electric appliance, and since these appliances are unstable by their nature and subject to all sorts of influences, their functioning is easily disturbed, and they can be easily damaged or destroyed by such a pranic surge.

A frequent example of the effect of unstable and “ungrounded” pranic flows on electrical equipment are the streetlights that go out when an unstable person passes by them. This is most often cited as an example because it is easiest to notice. To be honest, I think that most of those “phenomena” can be explained with more “down to earth” methods, for public lights are activated with a light sensor that is set to turn off the lights whenever the intensity of the environmental light that it detects rises above the threshold, or to turn them on whenever the light drops below the threshold. This is why a man passing in front of the sensor, or automobile lights shining on the sensor, can confuse the sensor, resulting in lights turning on and off. Of course, that does not explain the occurrence of the same phenomenon with lights controlled by a time switch. It is not really that much of a supernatural phenomenon; mercury and sodium light bulbs, which are most often used in street lights, are very unstable, very sensitive to changes, and with aging they become even more sensitive. Some of them are so sensitive that a mosquito’s sneeze in their proximity is probably all that it takes for them to turn on or off. It is, therefore, no wonder that even a small imbalance in our energy can show on them.

It is visible, to a person who can perceive the energetic occurrences that surround people, that a person under stress, a person who has been set out of his balance and inner safety, radiates incoherent flashes, thunderbolts of energy, shaky twitches, forceful discharges. One doesn’t need any parapsychology to immediately identify those people and see that they are shaken out of balance. And when they are out of balance, the energy they radiate tends to put other people (if they allow it) and electrical equipment out of balance. They are often called “ungrounded.” I don’t know how the term was originally forged, but since it is currently used to denote a whole set of completely different states and occurrences, I am unable to give its general definition, or the definition of grounding. It is, however, possible to say, with reasonable accuracy, that it is in this case related to the connection of prana

and the earth element, and their joined harmony and permeation. When prana is “torn out” from matter, from the earth, it starts to lash around forcefully, in an attempt to regain its lost connection to earth, to find its own balance, and when in such lashing it passes through some sensitive device, it can disturb its functioning. So, in order for prana to function harmoniously, it needs to be firmly grounded, which means the stability of the environment, inner harmony and peace, and a sense of being loved, accepted and safe in our surroundings.

The most frequently encountered form of the pranic body’s activity through the physical is so-called “sexual energy,” meaning prana that is lived through sexuality. Here, we find that ethereal sexual fluid, the sexual tension that is felt between people, sexual chemistry. In its pure form, sexual energy is manifested in a fulfilled and complete sexual life, in joy for all that gives us physical pleasure (which includes masturbation, as a pure and natural form of a pranic flow, fulfillment of the natural need for pleasure), joy for all the activities that create physical pleasure in the other person: lightness and freedom of touch, kisses and caresses, exchanges of pleasure and a pure flow of sexual energy. Such a pure sexuality is a carrier and a medium of expression of love for the other being, which is no longer felt as merely physical, but energetically-emotional as well, the pleasure of other is felt as one’s own, and vice versa. The stimulation of that sexual fluid and a feeling of mutual joy is the foundation of sexual techniques of caressing, such as karezza, in which caressing and a physical feeling of love and closeness with another being is the goal, not just a means to achieve orgasm. For orgasm is the pranic explosion, the pranic discharge, through which this fluid is directed; in men it is directed into the force of ejaculation, energizing the sperm and thus increasing its vitality, and in women it is directed into the contractions of the uterus and sucking in the energy that has been released by the ejaculation, into acceptance of the sperm and its integration into one’s own body. Here is a clear difference in the physical sexuality of men and women: men are generally emptied in orgasm, while women are filled. Accordingly, since orgasm in men is tied with ejaculation, which represents an energetic explosion and an intense release, men are physically left drained of energy in a short while.

Sexual techniques that are meant to make it possible for a man to have an orgasm without ejaculation are often mentioned.

Personally, the approach that doesn't take the orgasm as a goal feels much better, for then it is unnecessary to intervene in the physiological mechanisms (which can be harmful, as much as any form of coercion). With such an approach there is no need for an orgasm at all, which in a few hours results in a state that at first touches the level of an orgasm, and later exceeds it, since the caresses, touches and kisses are moved up from the physical and pranic levels, while at the same time being continued on them, which includes the higher bodies in the lovemaking. At a point the partners may completely stop all sexual activity on the lower levels, for they become so immersed in the depth of the mutual permeation and perception on the higher levels, that the lower ones add nothing to the experience, and they can only get in the way. The closeness that is then established can never again be questioned, and never will the signs of love be needed for such lovers, because such love and its reality stays so deeply rooted in their being, that it can never be erased; even if they don't speak, or think, or feel, or act, that bond remains as an eternal constant of their existence. That is the orgasm of the soul, the unity of essence of two persons, who have been so mutually permeated in lovemaking, that they can never again separate, for they have become one being. Prana is, therefore, a means, with which we begin, but with which we do not end.

There is a frequent use, related to sexuality, and with a lot of religiously charged connotations and negativity, of the pejorative term "fornication." Fornication is every form of sexuality that in any way reduces the dignity and value of persons. It can therefore be concluded that the emotional states that go along with the expression of the term "fornication" are the filthiest of all. Such thinking devalues sexuality and physical pleasure, and attributes to them qualities that are not specific to them, and in this way it creates frustrations and blocks the normal circulation of energy. That, however, doesn't mean that the term itself was invented for no legitimate reason; there are, indeed, activities which I'm inclined not to describe in length, and which are based on various forms of rape and prostitution, on violation of the inner dignity of a person and his devaluation, subduing and general humiliation, in which sex and violence often play a major role. Every form of deception of the beloved person, of breaking the bond of inner sincerity and fidelity, also fits the definition of adultery.

For if sexuality is in function of enforcing unity, and such unity is breached, then it represents a grave form of disruption of harmony, and a powerful destructive force.

We should, therefore, see sexuality as a mere extension of the spiritual force, not as a self-sufficient force, for that it is not and it never can be. All forms of sexuality, that do not threaten the harmony of a relationship, all forms of sexuality that are a pure and unsoiled means of expression of love and joy, that are free of rejection and jealousy, are pure and beautiful. As we had the opportunity to see, sexuality is not surpassed through its repression, but through its natural outgrowing, when the state of unity, superior to the sexual one, is achieved.

When we speak of sexual energy, we must also touch the issue of pregnancy, which is an obvious result of sexuality; it is clear that the persons who have an intense sexual life, as described above, must have an awakened kundalini, for if it was not previously awakened, it will be in the first of such forceful unions. Therefore pregnancy will go along with the kundalini movements, which will often forcefully control the body, producing intense kriyas on the physical level, as well as turbulent emotional and intellectual experiences. There is a logical concern regarding the well-being of the child, which is being formed within a mother subject to such a condition. Those fears are completely groundless, because in all cases of kundalini and pregnancy that I have had the opportunity to hear of, not only that there were no negative effects, but exactly the opposite; the children of kundalini-awakened mothers were healthier, firmer, more intelligent and aware. It is therefore to be assumed that a mother's kundalini movements by some form of synchronization cause the kundalini awakening of the unborn child, which is consequently born with great advantage compared to other children. Since children don't have a dirty energy system, which causes forceful cleansings in adults, the kundalini awakening of a child can be seen only in the greater intelligence and natural depth of consciousness, in deeper understanding, greater maturity and the like.

The next form of prana and its activity is speech. Speech is a means of expression, of the flow of energy, as much as sex or any other form. The right, pure energetic flows are manifested as harmonious and honest speech, speech that doesn't object, but only

describes the truth. The second energetic center (chakra²⁹), therefore, besides being a center of sex, is also a center of speech, the center of truth. Unfortunately, it is often a great source of suffering, for in its corruption dwells a source of unhappiness—it makes both sexual life and speech tainted, so this center is often identified as a center of adultery and lies. Adultery is sexual behavior that has been contaminated by incorrect flows of energy, which includes dishonesty, abuse, violence, indulgence in lower instincts, hatred, fury and other corrupt movements of energy. Those disturbances are always caused by incorrect pranic flows. The cause doesn't have to be the same kind as the consequence (manifestation); it is, for instance, quite common that unsettled financial affairs, issues of money, time and labor, are manifested as an extremely corrupt sexual energy. It is because money is one of the forms of prana, a materialization of the pranic movements; therefore a materialization of the invested labor. If someone deems that his work has not been adequately rewarded, that he has been deprived, then will the flow of his energy be disturbed. Feelings of victimization, deprivation and resentment will arise, accompanied by great contamination of sexual energy, in which the abusive and perverted flow of prana is reflected.

In the esoteric terminology prana is regarded as the element of water.

When we speak of prana, we must not forget to mention the pranic phenomena of kundalini, which are often confused with the kundalini itself. We must also speak of the organs of the physical/pranic body that conduct, channel and direct the energy according to the will of the higher aspects of a being. The energetic organs are divided into two groups: energetic conduits (nadis³⁰) and energetic centers (chakras). In spite of the fact that these organs are most often mentioned in relation to energetic flows (meaning prana), these organs, like man himself, are not limited to prana alone, but also exist on other levels of reality, but then we do not perceive their activity as energetic, but in ways specific to the respective levels. When we speak of kundalini as a

²⁹ “Chakra” means “circuit,” “wheel,” descriptively translated as “energetic center.”

³⁰ “Nadi” can be descriptively translated as “energetic channel” or “energetic conduit”—a concept closest to the nadis are the energetic meridians in acupuncture.

pranic phenomenon, we must keep in mind that all the statements and testimonies of “raising/movement of the kundalini energy” have to be interpreted as “kundalini-directed raising/movement of prana.” Kundalini is, therefore, never perceived as energy, although it incessantly directs the energies, for we do not perceive life as an energy, although we can easily speak of the energy of life, thinking not that life itself is energy, but “something” that controls energies, the movement of which we perceive as life. Therefore we do not observe life itself, we observe its consequences—and the consequences are the preservation of existence, reproduction, and the like. It is therefore apparent that, if we recognize kundalini as life itself, that it cannot be seen as a phenomenon specific exclusively to human beings, but to all beings in general, although the process is present in a more complex form in a human being. The pranic organs are originally pure and transparent, but various stressful situations in life cause them to become obscured and covered with dirt; we don’t even need to observe these things energetically, it is enough to merely observe a man in order to see that he has for instance retreated within, or that he has a corrupt or perverted functioning of some elements of personality.

Although these things are present in the vast majority of people, kundalini awakening makes them apparent in all sorts of dramatic ways. How come? It is obvious that kundalini awakening, as an integration of life and consciousness (to an extent, of course) increases the interaction of the higher and the lower bodies, where one’s higher bodies are attempting to manifest an increasingly greater presence through the lower ones. Such an interaction amplifies the pranic flows through the physical body, so that every sort of blockage, which could previously be rather obscure, now becomes a hurdle that has to be removed. The passage of prana through the partially blocked nadis causes twitches on the physical level called kriyas;³¹ likewise, the need of the system to open the obscured parts redirects energy in a way that can result in an unbearable urge to produce sounds (resonance), to place the body in different strange positions (which are often similar or identical to the yogic asanas³²), to breathe in a certain rhythm, or similar;

³¹ The term “kriya” comes from the same Sanskrit root as “karman”—kriya is best translated as “action” or “activity.”

³² “Asana” is translated as “posture” or “position.”

one may have visions of light of different colors, or hear different sounds, created by a passage of prana through specific energetic organs. Those sounds are most often simple and powerful vibrations that powerfully affect the consciousness, often producing blissful states of consciousness as a side effect. Likewise, a passage of prana through certain systems can often result in a release of repressed emotional or intellectual states, release which is extremely traumatic, since those states were repressed because of their very forcefulness, which a person's spirit could not face at the time of their conception. This is the cause of existence of the more efficient ways of release of such repressed energetic states, ways which are a part of one's very energy system, and the activation of which I have compiled in the techniques of resonance and upstream kriya.

Every system of yoga that tends to work with kundalini, and which does not recognize and use these systems in one way or the other, is irresponsible and dangerous, for experience of such traumatic states can result in damage to certain organs of a one's consciousness. Systems of yoga, which are ignorant of the appropriate methods of the system's relief, often suggest reducing the "flow of kundalini" by applying further load to the system (by heavy food and the intake of toxins), which appears logical at first glance: if there's excess of energy, let's turn down the valve and it'll reduce. It might seem logical, but it is the exact opposite of the recommended behavior; for energetic phenomena are in fact side effects of the pressure of prana on the impure energetic organ; instead of attempting to reduce the pressure by reducing the amount of prana, we should do the exact opposite, increase the flow of prana while simultaneously opening and purifying the energetic organ; when the energy starts flowing without restraint, all sorts of symptoms will vanish, and previously inaccessible parts of consciousness will become open—all those energetic organs in fact correspond with the perception of certain aspects of consciousness within the physical; not only the organs in the brain, but throughout the body, the entire body corresponds with the consciousness, not just a few of its parts.

The most frequent example of the pressure of prana on the impure and closed nadis are the itching points, which are most frequent on the arms, legs, face, top of the head and on the genitals. Essentially, it is about pranic irritation of nerve endings. An

automatic reaction of a person faced with an itch is to scratch. Scratching, on the other hand, works like a form of acupressure, with which we push the pranic flow away from that nadi, so it is diverted elsewhere. The itch, of course, surfaces on some other spot, and sometimes there are strange emotional states, which are the result of the movement of the repressed pranic flow to some other location. This method obviously doesn't solve a thing, like the heavy diet, which only apparently contributes to the solution and in fact it only contributes to the problem. The solution is to let go, open up, surrender to the itch and allow it to grow into orgasm of a sort, which will spread throughout the body, and to enjoy it and surrender to it, as unpleasant as it might seem, and such surrender and opening widen and open the nadis, which then allow the free flow of prana, which rinses out the impurities. Often will such opening be accompanied by the upstream kriya or resonance, basically dissolving and releasing the blocked contents from the system and balancing energy. Knowing the nature of the process, and consciously applying that knowledge, we have now obtained a technique of yoga.

There are two cases in which the itching spots will appear: one is the pollution of the system, which makes the energetic conduits unable to conduct the usual amounts of prana, and the other is the rise of energy in the system, which makes the existing level of openness of the nadis and chakras insufficient. In both cases the solution is the purification of the system. The activities that are meant to purify are based on two aspects: cessation of further pollution, and the removal of already present pollution. The system can be polluted on different levels: for now, we will confine ourselves to just pranic and physical pollution, because at this point we have not yet reached the issue of the higher levels—and since their pollution is also possible, the description of pollution that observes only its lower aspects must be incomplete. Likewise, the process of purification that would work only with the physical and the pranic aspects would have to be as incomplete, and it is therefore necessary to observe the problem and the solution in whole, and that is what we are about to do, but not before we observe the individual aspects, which will give our vision additional sharpness and clarity. So, when we speak of physical and pranic contamination, we mean the intake of harmful substances into the system, with food, water, breath and touch. Likewise,

the contact of the pranic body with harmful influences from the environment, even without any physical contact, can result in contamination, but this form of contamination is so closely tied with the levels higher than prana, that we will go back to it later, in the description of these levels.

When we, therefore, take into consideration only contamination that is taken into the system directly, it becomes apparent that all toxic substances, the most of which are scientifically classified, contribute to pollution of the system on the physical level; most of those substances, if not all, contaminate both physical and pranic body simultaneously, because of the intimate affiliation of matter and prana; the organs of the physical body correspond to the organs in the pranic body—glands and interior organs are “materializations” of the chakras, while the vessels for the bodily fluids (blood and lymph) and electric impulses (nervous fibers) are materializations of the nadis, and therefore contamination of the physical level will certainly not help the pranic flows in their manifestation through the physical, but it will, on the contrary, produce undesired effects such as blocks and detours of energy, which result in diseases on the physical plane. Likewise, the contamination of the pranic body will, when distributed to the physical plane, bring about all sorts of disorders; the flow of the impure prana through matter will produce diseases and other unpleasant phenomena. Strong contamination of the system will also slow down all the healing processes of the system itself; the pure system will react forcefully to contamination: by vomiting, diarrhea, change of bodily temperature and similar; this is the phenomenon of automatic pranic cleansing, which takes place in all cases in which the rise of the states of spirit demands manifestation through the lower levels, and so an automatic process of rinsing the impurities is activated. The phenomena of shamanic initiation, where intense cleansings take place, resistance to which can lead to death, also fit this category.

The criterion for estimating the pranic value of food can be quite successfully approximated to the theory of transformation of the solar prana, meaning the energy of the sun. Plants directly assimilate the solar prana and transmute it into nutrients. Vegetable nourishment, therefore, represents the first transformation of the solar prana; this form of food is physically and pranically purest and most intense, and it should be the foundation of the human diet, since it provides the least disturbance of the transmission of the

higher levels through prana to the matter. Herbivores feed on plants, and so their eggs, milk and meat represent the second transformation of the solar prana. This form of diet is heavier, denser, of a lower scale of energy, and transmits the higher levels through prana and matter in a lesser degree, since its energetic inertness (compared to the first transformation of the solar prana) and lesser receptivity aggravate their manifestation in matter. Therefore, the higher the vibratory frequency, the intensity, of a certain form of prana, the more energized becomes the pranic body of a being that feeds on it, and with such higher energy it reaches the higher planes with greater ease, since the gap to be bridged is smaller. The flesh of carnivores, who feed on the flesh of herbivores, and the substances created by decomposition and decay, represent the tertiary transformation of the solar prana, which is not proper for human consumption, for instead of adding energy to the system it takes energy away, since its specific frequency of vibration is below that of the body. All such substances are to be avoided.

Besides the solar type of prana there is also tellural prana, the prana of the earth. This type of prana is contained in roots (carrots, potatoes and similar), and especially in mushrooms. Tellural prana is also known as lunar prana, since its specific energetic taste differs from the brilliance of solar prana and resembles the night and the pale light of the moon. Since they gather energy from both sun and earth, all plants contain a mixture of solar and tellural prana, but roots contain tellural prana in extraordinary amounts. Tellural prana, as well as solar prana, is necessary in the human diet, since it represents a bond with the earth and a grounding factor. The excess of solar and the deficiency of tellural prana cause a lack of grounding and detachment from the earth, which is manifested as rejection of the bodily nature and attachment to immaterial goals, causing imbalance in life and frictions in relationships with other people. Likewise, the excess of tellural and the deficiency of solar prana cause heaviness, loss of touch with the higher spiritual states, and generally too materialistic thinking, with all the attachments that go along. It is therefore essential to find balance. I already mentioned mushrooms—since they contain only tellural prana, they represent an almost ideal means of balancing the extreme excess of solar prana, but they have to be handled with care and tact: it is easy to exaggerate and bring the situation to the other extreme. We should, therefore, combine

mushrooms with food that is richer in solar prana, but the problem is that mushrooms can mismatch such food in both taste and energetic charge, and their very intense tellural accent tends to associate with compounds whose solar charge is of lesser intensity. The combination of mushrooms and cereals, as an example of the extreme charge of both solar and tellural prana, can seem, to a sensitive energetic system, like a mixture of very hot and very cold. The natural charge that a food itself possesses can be modified by certain procedures, like bringing states of the higher levels in touch with the food, which increases its specific energy; the techniques meant to achieve that are the common rituals of expressing gratitude to God for the food, and offering food to the deity. Another effective method is becoming aware of the love within the food, through the entire chain that brought it to our table, which re-establishes the balance, if it has somehow been compromised.

We need to stress that the food of animal origin, meaning animal tissues, represents a significantly negative intervention in the destiny of other beings, and represents a significantly greater source of stress and suffering in the world compared to other forms of diet, and the more spiritually developed and aware the beings that have been killed for food, the greater the negative influence. Therefore it is wise to completely remove such food from our menu, and to choose a balanced vegetarian diet, except in cases where the physical/pranic constitution of a person is incompatible with it. In such cases we should keep in mind that the existence and functioning of a human being, by his strength and usefulness to the world (if we, of course, live a life consistent with a human being, a life of love and higher consciousness), outweighs the existence of other beings by so much, that the sacrifice of the physical existence of those beings for the purpose of maintaining the human being in an optimal condition is acceptable. In spite of that, through the consecration of the food we should provide an “injection” of harmony into the chain that would otherwise be abundant with suffering and disharmony, thus using our greater abilities in order to not only rectify the imbalance caused by some aspects of our functioning, but also to add a new, positive impulse to the evolution of the consciousness and existence of the beings that have been sacrificed in our favor. This is the reason why some tribes that are forced to kill animals for their own preservation apologize to the soul of the animal they kill, giving it

love and best wishes on its journey forth, awaiting the inner consent of the animal's soul that allows them to end its physical incarnation. In this way, the harmony is preserved and there is no disturbance of the natural cycle. But to kill because we can, because we are physically more powerful, is a grave offense, and this is probably the reason behind the frequent paranoid delusions regarding alien abductions and experiments performed on humans by the naughty aliens; for such a worldview places humans in the following position: if we, with our power and consciousness, with our technological development, give ourselves the right to be cruel to beings lower than ourselves, to perform inhuman experiments on them for the sake of science, and breed and hunt them for food, what moral law remains then for us to call upon if there happens to be a race of extraterrestrial beings superior to us in technology and intelligence, which starts performing experiments on us that we perform on rabbits and rats, at the same time breeding us as food for themselves or their pets? This situation leaves those people without an adequate answer, forcing them to accept the rule of the force when applied to themselves. In nourishment, therefore, man is also soiled not by what comes in, but by what comes out, by indifference and cruelty, and the lack of love and compassion for others.

It should be noted that water is an extremely powerful carrier of prana, that it attaches the pranic charge to itself, either positive or negative, with a much greater force compared to the other forms of matter; it is the reason why terms such as "the water of life" have more than just a metaphorical meaning. Water attaches to itself the pranic charge of everything it comes in touch with, since its power of association is greater than that of other forms of matter, and so the qualities of the water we drink depend heavily on the things that water went through on its way to us. Fresh spring water, which contains the ideal proportions of minerals and a strong pranic charge, would be ideal. Water that comes from urban plumbing is often physically polluted, and pranically "dull." The ability of water to associate itself with prana is of great importance; rain, for instance, "rinses" the negative pranic charge from the atmosphere of cities, along with the impurities of air, thus significantly improving the quality of life and contributing to the decline of latent negativity. Fog, however, has exactly the opposite effect: since it is an aerosol of water in air, the tiny

drops of water that associate themselves with the negative charge remain suspended in the air, and thus the negative charge is preserved longer and in a more concentrated form than usual, contributing to the latent negativity and tension in the atmosphere. The ability of water to “rinse” prana is quite applicable to the human pranic envelope, the aura. It is the reason most religions prescribe ritual bathing, the real meaning of which was unfortunately forgotten. Bathing in the “holy rivers” is recommended above all, meaning the rivers whose water not only rinses the impurities from a man’s pranic envelope, but also replaces them with its specific pure prana. Such baths release the tension and purify the thoughts, thus facilitating the descent of the higher states of consciousness into the physical body. The ionic balance and humidity of the atmosphere is another factor of great importance for the health of the pranic body; an ideal atmospheric condition is present in the forests (the plants create a balanced microclimate), the sides of the seas, rivers, lakes and other great water surfaces. Having a stream of water in the proximity, even if it is merely a small fountain, or having the plants in the room that we dwell in, is of great importance. An inadequate ionic balance and insufficient humidity of air corrodes the pranic body (the aura), thus contributing to the disturbance, to the sense of insecurity and stress, causing depressive states and unbalanced behavior.

The most significant source of prana, to which food is merely a supplement, is respiration. Besides the exchange of gasses in the organism, on the physical level, breathing also performs a role of exchange of prana in the organism; the pure prana is inhaled, and impure is exhaled. The correct respiration, in other words breathing that is natural, even and balanced in all aspects, is of great importance for the hygiene and health of the pranic body; the state of spirit that accompanies the breathing is infinitely more important than the mechanical act of breathing itself, and the most important thing of all is knowing that one should by no means voluntarily control the breathing, because the very act of voluntary control cuts the natural dynamic processes and can lead to serious disorders on all planes. The sense of filling the body with prana is easiest to recall if we inhale deeply after a period of breath retention, inhale with our whole being. Such inhalation will fill the entire organism with prana—the awareness of a certain part of the body in a certain state of spirit during the inhalation, and

inhalation and exhalation through that part of the body fills that part with prana and cleanses it. An ideal exercise is breathing peace through the parts of the body; first through the hands, then through the feet and legs, then through the shoulders, belly, anus, genitals, and all the others. As we breathe the peace, the muscles are relaxed and the tissues are revitalized. We should always exhale with resonance, thus letting out the feelings that have been repressed in the respective body parts. Once we have relaxed the entire body with the inhalation of peace, we can begin with the inhalation of joy—in the same order, part by part. When our entire being bursts with joy, let us begin inhaling the orgasm, through each and every part of the body, let us feel the ecstasy within our entire being, and use it to rinse all the impurities, blocks, et cetera. If the process is interrupted by some disturbing event or a memory, let us go back to the peace, let us feel the peace within all parts of our body, and release the unease and disturbance with the resonance during the exhalation. With the rise of pleasure, the sounds during the exhalation, the resonant mantra, will become the moans of pleasure, joy, happiness, an ecstatic murmur. With such exercise, we will forcefully fill our body with energy and revitalize it, with a healing effect. We literally make love to our tissues, organs and the entire body, we feel and love each and every part, and we are thus healed.

There is a similar exercise that can accompany the basic meditation: once we feel the warmth and love in the heart, let us spread it from the heart outward; let us feel every single part of our bodies in that healing love; love, relax and accept it, integrate it into ourselves and experience it as ourselves. Then we move to the space outside our physical bodies, and fulfill it by breathing the love of the heart. How far we manage to spread is unimportant, what matters is to fill that space with love and acceptance. It is quite likely that kriyas and other similar phenomena will occur during these exercises. It is then important to discharge the repressed emotional contents with kriyas and resonance, and to start the exercise from the beginning. The prana must flow, the organism must be a river, not a lake. The organism must be filled with prana, purified, and the impurities have to be exhaled out. This is the formula of balance and health. It is important to mention that the purification of the pranic body purifies and opens all the centers and energetic conduits in the body, of course on the level of

prana. All the energetic states that are felt on the level of the physical body represent the movement of the prana through matter. Opening of the chakras on the physical and on the pranic level is very intermixed; for instance, the feeling of warmth in the heart is an opening of the heart chakra on the pranic level. Opening of the throat—in the sense of acquiring the abilities of correct pronunciation, expression, represents the opening of the throat chakra on the levels of prana and matter. The ability to see auras, the tension on the forehead and similar, are the symptoms of the opening of the brow chakra on the levels of prana and matter. The opening of the nadis in the head, the tension on the top of the head, and the sensations of crackling, expansion, openings in the head, are the symptoms of the opening of the crown chakra on the levels of prana and matter. Therefore, the pranic openings of the system are quite concrete, often extremely physical sensations. These openings, although of the low level, are necessary in order to convey the higher states of consciousness into the body, so that we become able to experience them—since we experience things through our bodies, the entire line of mediation of the levels of consciousness has to be transparent, so that we would be able to experience the higher states. If the line is interrupted or soiled, we will be able to experience only the coarsest aspects of physical reality.

Regrettably, the opening of the higher chakras on their lower layers is often regarded as a high achievement (since the opening of these centers is in the holy scriptures identified with the highest states of consciousness), and someone who sees the blue light and feels the tension in the throat can often feel that he has mastered the throat chakra and the causal level. That is very remote from the truth—the pranic and physical sensations do not necessarily mean anything more than the fact that the energetic state of the chakra is brought into a normal state of functioning, which does not have to be related to elated states of consciousness. I have often encountered people who have insisted that, after reading my descriptions of the higher chakras and the associated levels, they have mastered these levels, while simultaneously displaying a perfect lack of higher consciousness that is supposed to back such claims. Later, as I describe these states, it will become apparent what I mean.

Likewise, people who have experienced spontaneous kundalini awakening often describe the difficulties that they have experienced

on the physical and pranic level during the ascent of kundalini toward the crown chakra, and they regard this achievement as enlightenment itself, or some other lofty condition. They forget that the ascent of kundalini, in that sense, from the root to the crown chakra, is the most elementary aspect of the shaktipat initiation; it is practically the beginning, one of the basic prerequisites, never the goal. The fact that someone had difficulties with that most often means that he walked the wrong paths for a long time, and resisted the process. The time and effort spent on the path are no indication whatsoever of one's realization; I know people who have been practicing some forms of kundalini-yoga for more than two decades, and who are merely beginners, regardless of the high opinion that they have of themselves and of their own achievements. However, I know people who have in less than a year from their kundalini awakening attained an extraordinary depth of consciousness.

The pranic phenomena of kundalini, therefore, do not represent the final goal of the process, but merely one of the necessary links in a chain; often will the people who have in their past incarnations mastered various lower aspects move directly toward the higher aspects, and they will be confused by the absence of some symptoms in their experience, the symptoms which they will possibly regard as signs of spiritual development; this is the very reason the greatest spiritual forces in the world are often not regarded as spiritual, while beginners who are troubled with the lowest of ladders can even be regarded as Divine incarnations—all it takes is to explain some less common trivia as signs of enlightenment, and the distorted image is already made. Often will the ability to perceive auras be seen as more spiritual than the understanding of a situation and the instinctively right behavior, although the latter quality belongs to a sphere of existence so much higher, to a so much higher aspect of the functioning of the brow chakra, that no comparison is possible. And it is most often the case that persons gifted with such understanding are not capable of seeing auras and like.

Why do I mention that? It is so easy to be trapped in some form of "spiritual" arrogance, in pride of our own achievement, that we forget the vastness of the road ahead of us; we forget how infinite the ocean of God really is, and what depths dwell within him. And once we forget that, a muddy puddle on the road might

seem an ocean to us. For that reason are modesty and devotion such worthy qualities of a disciple on the Path. The disciple perceives only God, without having the time to give himself any thought whatsoever. Thus perceiving only the reality and living in reality, he attains the greatest of realities within himself, and he lives that reality within the world, testifying for it. It is equally useless and harmful to envy others for their achievement, and to long for what they have attained. For God knows best what we need, and so in any case we must turn our faces toward him, for this is the only direction from which we will receive.

One of the great perils that prey on the students on the Path is speaking of one's "achievements." This is the most effective way to separate ourselves from those experiences. Since we have described them as our own, we close ourselves to them, and they are not repeated. Only when we forget ourselves and our role, and when we focus ourselves on God and nothing else, we attain something of value. Focusing on ourselves closes us to the experience of that what surpasses us. The intoxication with God is the Path.

From the things written so far it is obvious that the perception of the higher states of reality in the body depends directly upon the purification of the physical and the pranic body. The depth of consciousness and the "impression" that the higher reality makes on the body depends directly on the purity and transparency of the cerebral tissues. This transparency can be increased by opening the nadis in the head. First, we have to use the previously described exercises of peace and joy to calm and energize the body. Once we start feeling the movements of energy within the head, it means that prana has started to "break through" the closed energy conduits. We should assist the process, and the way of achieving that is very simple. Once we feel the tension and pressure, from within outward, on a certain part of the head, we should gently pay attention to that part, and feel it. Nothing more. Just paying attention, awareness of the process, is enough to alleviate the opening of the closed conduits. It has to be done in complete peace, for a long time, for as long as it takes for prana to break through, outward from within, through each individual conduit and tissue in the brain. Strange sensations are possible, for instance the sensation of cotton balls passing through the blood vessels of the brain toward the heart and lungs, which can be extremely weird and not particularly pleasant, but this is the

symptom of rinsing the brain tissues, because the opening of the nadis is accompanied by the opening and greater transparency of the blood vessels within the brain, which leads to the rinsing of the physically-pranic impurities that have been agglomerated within these tissues. Weird sensations of crackling and movement within the head are also to be expected, as well as the discharge of the sinuses and like. After such purification and energizing of the brain, the consciousness will be so much purer, clearer and more profound, the perception of the higher levels will be so much clearer, that it is beyond comparison.

The procedures during the opening of the crown from the opposite direction, when the energy comes into our body from above, are quite similar. Then it helps to imagine thin straws of pure, deep violet light which apply a very delicate form of pressure to each part of our head, gently penetrating the brain and going further down to the feet, and through them into the center of the earth, as the nadis are opening up to them. It has to be repeated on all parts of the head that resist the entrance of energy. It is very important to keep the visualization nonviolent: it has to be about gentle lovemaking and “seduction” by both sides, the straw “convinces” the nadi to open up, and then the nadi accepts the straw that penetrates it and makes love to it; the unity with the energy takes place, the acceptance of the energy. Any other form of violent penetration of the nadis might result in the irritation of the cerebral tissues and nasty headaches. At the time of such rinsing of the cerebral tissues, one needs to drink lots of water, and restrain oneself from food almost completely (which is no real problem, since your concentration will be completely drawn into the process of cleansing, and food will be the last thing on your mind), because in this way the process will be alleviated and accelerated. The water helps to rinse the impurities from the system. The spontaneous occurrence of the pranic cleansings—diarrhea, vomiting and like—that can accompany or precede such a procedure should not surprise us; for this is the way in which the system automatically prepares and cleanses itself.

Another extremely powerful way of rinsing the system is to go out to an open space, during a strong wind, and open up the entire being to the pure earth’s element of air, the element of wind, which literally cleanses us, washes us, blows away all the impurities. To straighten up in the wind and open up toward it,

to let it take everything away, without holding on to any attachments, to let all attachments go and let the wind cleanse us. We should pay attention to every respective part of our body while the wind blows through it and rinses it.

The same thing can be done with the element of water—to go out in the rain, into the shower, and let the water cleanse us, rinse us, go through our being and carry away everything on its path. That can, as a daily ceremony of purification, be quite simply done in the shower.

The same can be done with fire as well—the fire walking ceremony is a nice example, but since fire is much more dangerous than the previous two elements, one should under no circumstances take such steps without expert leadership, because severe physical injuries may occur.

It is also possible to cleanse oneself with the element of earth—the small children who wallow in grass and sand, and who can immerse themselves completely in mud, are a great example. The same rules apply for earth as for water, air and fire. It is essential to experience the natural element as perfectly pure, and surrender to its purifying effect, to be united with its purity.

The body can also be revitalized with sexual stimulation. The mild and gentle stimulation of the genitals should be used to induce pleasure, which then spreads as warmth from the genital area throughout the body, in concentric circles. When the pleasure encompasses the entire body, it should be maintained, with a simple sense of pleasure and joy. The orgasm is not the goal here, but when it occurs, it will be extremely strong—the orgasm should always flash through the crown chakra, and not through the lower systems, and that is achieved with surrender and devotion. We should completely surrender to the experience, without a trace of control. We should completely free ourselves from guilt and repression of all sorts.

One of things that has to be avoided in as wide a circle as possible is any form of the patterned rhythm of breathing. The most common of such techniques is the puraka-kumbhaka-rechaka pranayama, or inhalation-retention-exhalation, where one consciously maintains the 1-4-2 ratio between inhalation, retention and exhalation. Such an attempt of conscious control is extremely harmful and dangerous, and useless as well, since there are much better methods of charging the system with prana. These methods

are already built into the system—yawning and deep sighs. Breath retention, which is attempted artificially in such techniques of energetic rape, should in fact be the result of the calming of the spirit and drawing the consciousness inward. We should therefore go from consciousness, and the breath will follow, with no need for coercion.

After you try out some of the techniques for the revitalization of the body and charging it with prana, it will become clear to you, after a certain degree of purification of the matter of the body is attained, that it is possible to charge the body, by breathing the bliss, to such an extent that its systems begin to regenerate all by themselves, and to produce all the necessary substances. The extreme form of this is the absence of need for taking food; the physical vehicle of the food becomes obsolete (or needed in a significantly lesser degree than usual), and the majority of prana is assimilated and eliminated through breath anyway. It is true, however, that it is necessary to keep the feelings and breath in the state of bliss for the whole time in order to preserve the body on prana alone, which is practically impossible to achieve in the normal circumstances of life. Besides, it is much more important to purify the higher bodies and master the higher states of consciousness than to preserve the body in such a self-serving condition. Once you attain the highest spiritual states, matter and prana will become utterly irrelevant anyway, except as a means of manifestation of something greater. But before there is something to manifest, insisting on such an extent of purification of matter and prana is pointless.

The Astral Level

The third level in a row, counting upwards, is the astral,³³ the sphere of the desire mind (in the esoteric terminology there is the term *kama-manas*, which translated means “desire-mind,” the mind of the desires, the mind that is colored with desire). The astral is the sphere of images, impressions, desires, longings, passions, ideas. This is the sphere of control, of will, direction and manipulation. All the images that can exist within the spirit, separated from the reality, are astral. The very term “astral” is rather strangely forged—not only is it used in quite different contexts, but it is also non-descriptive; *kama-manas* is a much more fortunate solution, but since it is not used widely enough, I will keep the term “astral.” Every attempt to speak of the astral faces a problem: the fact is that we are dealing with a level that, in quantity of its aspects and in its inner diversity, surpasses matter and prana by far, and things are complicated even further when we deal with the relationship of the astral and these levels, which makes it necessary to describe, in detail, every form of their interaction. All human experiences of the astral level are somewhat colored with prana and matter, because human beings are by their very nature capable of perceiving only the things that leave some sort of a mark on the substance of their physical body, meaning primarily their brains. In the higher aspects of our existence we are therefore capable of experiencing things that greatly exceed every possibility of understanding by our physical being, but all those experiences are necessarily colored and limited by the abilities of our physical minds to process, display and feel them. Through practice and outgrowing of some common linear patterns of thinking and feeling we can become capable of feeling much more of the astral level’s aspects, but never to the extent common for beings who do not possess the limitations imposed upon us by the existence of the physical body. Likewise, it becomes apparent that a

³³ “Astral” is a Western term, dating from the period of the Ptolomeian geocentric system, when the “astral sphere” was a name for the area of the stars, which was in various interpretations given the meaning of the sphere of the angels etc. The Indian systems don’t have a distinctive name for the astral, the astral body is most often called the subtle body (*sukshma sharira*), with the respective names for the astral worlds.

human being is never incarnated in the entirety of its aspects, it is not fully embodied in the physical, because of the very fact that the astral level is superior to matter in its qualities, and the lower cannot completely grasp the higher. On the other hand, even the partial perception of the astral through the physical body represents a significant “cultural shock” for a human being who has been accustomed to the constant limitations presented by the inertness of matter. Since the astral’s basic substance, the substance everything is built of, is basically the substance of thoughts and desires, and not of matter and energy, a completely different set of rules applies here—thoughts and desires are the building substance of reality! Let us clear this up for a start.

It is said that we are dealing with the substance of emotions and thoughts. These emotions and thoughts form more or less complex and distinguished objects, which are on that level perceived as completely real; the desire for an automobile creates an image of the automobile in the spirit. In the astral, this image is a physical category, a real object. We are accustomed to, since we operate in matter and energy, that we first need to set a goal, and then invest energy that will modify matter, so that we become able to accomplish this goal. In communication with beings of the astral level (to which we will dedicate our attention later, since it is a wide and demanding issue) we find ourselves in a situation where the intent is also the manifestation; where the idea is identical with its realization, and where the thoughts are objects. The desires are their own fulfillment. Therefore with desire and mind we create the object to begin with, and with later investment of energy into its manifestation we attempt to realize that goal in the material world. All the desires, states of mind, plans, hopes and fears that dwell within our spirit, can be seen as physical objects on the astral plane.

As there are aggregate states of the subtlety of physical matter (solid, liquid, gaseous and plasma), as there are degrees of subtlety and intensity of prana, there are also degrees, aggregate states and layers in the astral, but their complexity is such that it could make a man despair, if he set a goal for himself to study them all. For the astral is a whole new dimension of the reality; the theories that speak of division of the reality into dimensions therefore make lots of sense. If we say that height, width and depth are the three dimensions of space, if we take prana, the energetic state, as

an additional dimension, then the astral is the fifth dimension of the reality. I deliberately didn't count time as the fourth dimension, since I think that time is specific to all the other dimensions as a special category, and besides that, the flow of time is subjectively very different on different levels, so I will leave it out of consideration for the sake of clarity; the situation is hopelessly complex even without it.

While we see the astral as an additional dimension of the reality, we can simultaneously see it as an entire independent universe, with the criteria of space, time and reality entirely different from those known on the lower levels. What is it about? If we have in mind that, in the astral, thoughts and desires are the building blocks of the reality, then it is clear that thoughts and desires of different beings can create entire worlds, that all occupy the same space, in which time does not flow with equal speed, but is dependent on the spiritual state of their creators; the worlds, refinement of which depends on the ability of their creator to form his desires and thoughts in a clear and complex way. Likewise, change of the physical location in the astral is a matter of a desire, of directed will. It is sufficient to wish to be elsewhere and we are there instantaneously; the change of location is immediate. For beings accustomed to traveling by a process, and not by intent, it is a great shock, and there is a common situation where the unskilled beings in their contact with the astral world change their physical location with great speed, not understanding completely the nature of the situation.

But that is not the worst of all; if we know that in the astral the thoughts are actions, that to desire is to realize, we can imagine the horrors that an unskilled being is capable of, with its uncontrolled thoughts and desires, that change the surrounding reality. By thinking about a person we literally apply our will to him or her, and by expressing our inner judgment we make the person fit our mold. By judging, we literally rape others, we perform a clear act of violence. Not to even speak of the stronger forms of violence, such as, for instance, a malicious intent pointed toward the other being, the desire for its destruction, and the like. With our thoughts and desires we can literally rip the astral bodies of other beings and kill them, if they are not sufficiently trained or willing to defend themselves from such violence. In order to protect beings of the astral level from such forms of abuse, there are the supervisors, so

called portal guardians. Those beings prevent immature, unready and undeveloped creatures from accessing the open astral.

There is a logical question regarding the whereabouts of beings that use the astral substance, the thoughts, feelings and desires, and different forms of creative intents, if they are not allowed to move freely within the open astral. The answer is also quite logical: in their own personal astral. The personal astral is a “bubble” made of astral substance, the astral body of a being, in which its personal fantasies, desires, worldviews, imaginations and plans are contained. Such a body of desire-thoughts is specific to all undeveloped beings, and represents a form of an astral uterus, the personal world in which beings live and evolve before they manage to be born in the open astral world.

These bubbles are never completely isolated and separated from the rest of the astral world; on the contrary, they are linked to each other with a multitude of cords, ties made of astral substance, which bind together the astral bodies of the beings that interact, also binding the astral bodies of the beings with the various limited aspects of the astral reality, with which these beings are capable of relating. All the bonds between the beings are formed only with mutual consent. The knowledge of that is extremely important; it is literally a jewel to be cherished within our minds—for nobody can contact us, let alone harm us, without our voluntary consent. This means that it is enough to merely wish that all the ties that are not meant for the greatest good of the others and ourselves are cast away, and it will instantaneously take place. The only problem is the possible, in fact quite frequent, belief that the harmful things that are done to us are in fact done for our good, and that the evil things that we do to others are done for their good. Therefore it is said that the path that leads to hell is paved with good intentions. The bonds among beings are formed when one being thinks about the other; since every being has its own “taste,” “mantra,” “name,” our thought that is flavored with that being’s taste reaches out and touches the astral body of the other being, where it can be either accepted or rejected. The thought that reaches out toward the other can be seen as a thread that binds beings—the firmness and thickness of the thread depends on the strength of the emotional and the intellectual bond between the beings. Such an “invocation,” which is meant to form a connection with another being, does not necessarily have to be

limited to the astral, for if we invoke the “name” of a being that is located in the levels above the astral, if the invocation resonates with this level, we can come in touch with that being. For that reason, it is rightly said that liberation is attained through the invocation of God’s name. The ability to “pronounce” God’s name in fact means to invoke God into our own consciousness, and if we are able to invoke God into our consciousness, if we are able to reach out for God and touch him, with that very act we have raised our consciousness high enough, that the very ability to perform such an act represents a quality of liberation. It is thus correct to say that those who have attained liberation can invoke God’s name, while others cannot. The majority of beings, when invoking God, in fact invoke something on some lower level, but often above the level that they themselves inhabit, so that such an invocation is still of use; although it does not invoke God himself, often it finds a beneficial response from the worlds of the angels and similar elated beings. This is the reason some religions and beliefs give such an importance to thought and speech; what we think and speak, we come in touch with, and invoke into our consciousness.

When we speak of establishing connections with other beings, we should have in mind that the majority of people are so self-involved, that they never actually form real relationships with real beings, but that they create images, events and conditions within their astral bubbles, which they regard as real, and which they themselves identify as the reality. That is maybe fortunate, for it is unpleasant to even imagine what beings, who are so self-oriented that they do not even perceive other beings as real, but more as objects to be used and manipulated, would be able to do to other beings if they were by some chance able to come in touch with them. The tragedy of the lower levels, meaning the physical and the pranic, lies in the fact that they make such a contact possible, they make it possible for someone to identify the real other person with some image within one’s astral body. Then we get the examples of horrible mistreatment of other beings, who are treated as objects, who are never really felt, and who are constantly projected upon with one’s own frustrations and inner darkness. Such a form of projection results in horrible deeds and misery in the world. For if others were accepted as others, then there would be no attempt to control them in a way in which we control our own inner images, but they would be treated with acceptance, appreciation

and respect. Without the physical and pranic bodies, any form of association between the other person and such inner images would be impossible.

We should also have in mind that there is a reverse procedure: that people are attached to other people because they perceive the very qualities in them that they themselves lack, that they themselves need. It is for that reason that they “fall in love” with others, that they stay with them until they have learnt the needed lesson or until they have developed the desired qualities, and then they leave the other, now uninteresting, person. This is a bad way of doing things, for it is far better to use one’s own astral for the purpose of identifying the ideal person/quality, and then to gradually acquire and integrate these qualities into oneself, and then there will be no need for projecting one’s missing qualities onto others.

A frequent example of such projection is the projection of one’s own elements of personality of the sex opposite from one’s physical body’s into the person of the “perfect beloved,” or identification of one’s “missing gender” with the parent of the opposite sex which then serves as a merit of the “ideal partners.” The cure for such a problem is to recognize of what we have displaced out of ourselves and given to the other, and to find wholeness within oneself. This is a form of inner tantra: the union of the self-woman and the self-man, lovemaking between these two aspects and their union. Then we become capable of feeling the *other*, without projection, the real person, and if love is then developed between persons, whole persons, not love for one’s own missing qualities, then will this love be powerful and steady, made on real and firm foundations, and will result in a permanent union. Somehow it seems to me that the sexual relationship between two people who are whole within could be the best by far, because it would be founded on love for the person, which in any case surpasses the hunger for one’s completeness, which often forms passionate, but shallow and temporary relationships.

Among people of spirit, the astral level has a bad reputation in general, and now we will see why. It is obvious that the astral is ruled by appearances—images, impressions, conditions, spaces and time flows which are often completely unrelated to anything objective, but which are, on the contrary, a mere reflection and a product of the spiritual condition of their creator. It is why the astral is often called the world of illusions, and sometimes the world

of evil. All sources of evil, without practically any exception, have their root in the astral, and in the beings that dwell there. Within the astral, it is not possible to determine the difference between truth and illusion. Skillful beings can, therefore, make an appearance of themselves that is different from their nature. Such beings are called sorcerers, or magi. They divide themselves into black and white, but beings of truth see them all as liars and beings who live in illusion, who use their will to create disharmony and to interfere with the will of others, thus creating a great confusion in the world. Schools that train sorcerers teach them to use the astral laws to implement their own will; “white schools” teach the use of these laws in a harmless and beneficial way, while “black schools” teach the use of these laws in any way suitable to the practitioner, because the will and the benefit of the sorcerer are thought to be superior to the will and the benefit of all other beings, thinking that a mage is allowed do whatever he is capable of, and that there are no limitations other than his skill. Both schools use practically identical techniques, and bloody conflicts are possible between their members, in which one or both sides can be harmed, and since they are scared and wary of each other there is some sort of a peace treaty between them, which is very seldom breached. Seldom will a mage attack another mage, or a person whom he feels is capable of defense or retaliation. The exceptions are the utter fools among them, who lack the intelligence and tact necessary to control their vile temper, and who can meet a darkness more powerful than themselves and then are often destroyed. They are much better off if they confront a being of the higher levels, which for some reason dwells in the lower levels, for such a being can adjust things in such a way that the energy of the assault is directed in a way that will produce the greatest good for all. In such cases a black mage can get a lesson that will divert him from evil and make him repent.

Schools of magic teach basic practices that, among other things, include a couple of generally useful ones, such as exercises for concentration of consciousness on an object, exercises for detachment of consciousness from undesired or disturbing influences; they also teach techniques of visualization in which the student creates objects within his consciousness, simple ones at first and more complex ones later on, while being corrected by the teacher. In this way students are trained in creating and maintaining the astral forms,

and they develop a great measure of control of the astral substance. Unfortunately, they do not do these things in order to learn about them and outgrow them in search for something better, by raising themselves above the appearances of the astral into the truth of the mental, but, on the contrary, they do it in order to implement their selfish desires and lower goals.

These schools also teach techniques of breaking into the open astral, of overpowering or cheating the portal guardians; techniques for dressing oneself in different deceptive appearances used to control other beings for one's selfish goals, and the like.

The techniques used in these magical ways are extremely useful—it should be noted that they, for the most part, represent instruments of clear thinking and feeling, which can be a strong tool for spreading knowledge and truth, if it is not misused. For instance, the ability of prolonged focus of attention on the object results in clear and sharp thoughts that can spread the truth in undisturbed, long and sharp expressions. Thoughts that are not sharp and clear cannot be used to reflect and convey the higher states of consciousness to the matter. Likewise, if the mind is filled with a multitude of unclear and dull desires, that move a person like the wind moves a feather, the person will most likely be lost. This is why, for instance, the techniques of raja-yoga³⁴ are based primarily on the principles of attention, concentration and maintaining the long and undisturbed flow of consciousness. The mind of such skill is an immensely precious tool, which instead of being an obstacle, becomes an aid to the expression of the spirit. The person filled with desires and unclear thoughts cannot function as a means of manifestation of greatness in the world. This is why it is necessary to exercise and purify the mind.

The only problem with the magical paths is the malicious and selfish intent in the background of such efforts—the mind is not purified and trained in order to allow the undisturbed implementation of God's will in the world, but in order to disturb it, and implement the will of the practitioner instead. They use their increased ability of concentration in order to subdue others, who do not possess such a power.

The fortunate circumstance is that their sphere of influence is extremely limited by the very nature of the intent, so they are

³⁴ Raja-yoga, or the royal yoga, is the approach that strengthens the mind using the techniques of meditation and concentration.

easily avoided. Likewise, all black wizards act in a way that would force me to invent them, if they did not already exist—they are here for our greatest good, an expression of God’s love for us, and we should send them a handful of kisses of gratitude.

That is because of their attempts to control us through our shortcomings and weaknesses. A powerful and pure person cannot be controlled. And since they work with our shortcomings, by magnifying them and bringing them up to the surface of consciousness, they make it possible for us to see our weaknesses with exceptional sharpness and accuracy, and thus remove them. Since the sorcerers are often extremely skilled, they can find even the smallest weakness and use it to manipulate a person, and so they represent an absolutely ideal means of purification for the spiritual practitioner. Visiting sacred places can never be as useful as an encounter with a malicious black mage. Such an encounter will force us to face our shortcomings, and to handle them, because we do not have the option of a delay, since our shortcomings pose a threat to us, by making us dangerously vulnerable.

This is such a useful situation, that I have formed one of the techniques that makes use of it: when we feel some form of our inner trash, let us not repress it or throw it out! Quite the opposite, let us magnify it, pet it, so that it relaxes, grows big, leads us to its friends and relatives, and then we can take them all and pull them out. This is exactly what the black magi do, with bad intentions, but to our greatest service. Evil people are God’s greatest gift to sincere seekers for the truth.

Believe it or not, the greatest danger does not come from educated sorcerers, but from “natural” ones. I already wrote about different ways in which lower beings manipulate others, often higher than themselves, by simply looking for the weak spots and implanting “Trojan horses” into the consciousness: ideas that at first seem harmless or even good, but whose adoption results in long term bad effects. One of the beautiful examples is a reasonably frequent idea that a man should feel guilty for choosing the better over the worse. For if he already believes that he should sacrifice himself for others, this is merely a logical consequence; the situations in which he should sacrifice for others are “painted” before him for his entire life, and he is thus controlled. Yet if he chooses to do the thing, which he feels to be good and right, and feels good and right for the reason of doing it, the previously

implanted misconception which makes it look bad will be recalled into his mind, producing the feeling of guilt that will throw a man out of his inner balance, which is when the vampire will suggest activities that are supposedly meant to bring the man back to balance, and which will in fact prolong the imbalance and create dependency on the vampire, making the man an instrument of his goals. It is for these reasons, and also for the reason of the extreme frequency of this type of manipulation, necessary to keep reexamining all our conceptions and beliefs in every situation in which we feel even a slightest bit of discomfort, and also to reject all such distorted ideas, together with those who use them to control our lives.

Once we pay attention, we become aware of the frequency of the situations in which a person tests, within a few seconds, every form of manipulation of a man: one will attempt to call upon a man's "conscience," actually the feeling of guilt. Then one will call upon "love," and need to "live for others," which will often be backed up by a quote from some sacred scripture. Basically, all that it takes is to observe the things those people call upon, to isolate the mechanisms of reaction within one's own spirit—all the things that produce anxiety, fear, guilt, responsibility, and throw it out altogether. The way toward God goes through happiness and harmony, not through manipulations and similar astral rubbish. In like manner we should throw out all images that others attempt to project onto us, and hold on to our own essence, no matter what.

We should, however, avoid the possibility of going into the other extreme, into arrogant assumption of one's own perfection and preaching to others from that arrogance, and denial of responsibility for one's own thoughts, words and deeds. We should follow our inner harmony and joy, not the self-absorption of the ego.

The second danger that preys upon a man are those who act from the "best intentions." This group is populated with all the preachers of various religions, who are obsessed with the need to save people and control their actions "for their own good," as well as with all the people who are guided by intellectual concepts of what should and what should not be done, instead of God's will manifested through the inner voice of rightness. We should also avoid all situations and persons that lead us toward obtaining unreal and illusory perceptions of the reality, thus leading us into

the world of imagination, instead of life in the real world. For some people, the real world is a terrifying place, because of its very openness and complexity, so they feel better in an imagined world of simplified rules; various forms of science and religion are a wonderful example. Every attempt to limit the reality, to set limits of possible and impossible, means to create an illusion, therefore projecting an astral image upon the reality. This is the very reason why awakening in the reality is the first step, with which every spiritual path begins. Spiritual development which takes place within a movie projected inside the astral bubble is not spiritual development, but an illusion. Spiritual development begins when the bubble of illusions becomes transparent to us, and stops obscuring the reality without.

The third, greatest danger, is the man himself. No evil can happen to us if we ourselves do not invoke it into existence. Nobody can attack or abuse us if we do not allow him to. The greatest majority of all evils that we suffer are in fact done with our consent, we bring it unto ourselves. Someone will attempt to argue with this claim, using the fact that some things happen to us by the force of natural laws, and not by our choice; for instance, floods, earthquakes and other disasters. A deeper insight, however, shows that we have chosen our entire life in advance, agreeing with the general goals that we intend to achieve, which have conditioned the line of events that will bring us toward them. Our desires are therefore materialized as an entire line of events that we did not choose as such, but which are an inevitable part of the process, which is supposed to lead to the goal, which we *did* choose. For instance, a woman wants to have a child to bring up and to love. She might not have chosen the pains of labor, which are a part of that process, she might not have had in mind all the unpleasant situations that will most likely be attached to that decision by the nature of things, but she did unconsciously choose this line of events, deeming it acceptable compared to her goal.

The astral level itself is divided into sublevels. These sublevels are quite simple to determine: the criterion is the coarseness, or the subtlety of certain forms, desires, thoughts and longings. The subtlety is on the top, and the coarseness is on the bottom of the ladder. The states of people's consciousness resonate with these sublevels, which serve as the foundation of their individual forms.

One of the interpretations of these sublevels defines them as layers of the respective elements. The lowest level is matter (earth) of the astral, then goes prana (water) of the astral, astral (fire) of the astral, mental (air) of the astral, buddhi (ether) of the astral, atmic sublevel of the astral and finally the paranirvanic sublevel of the astral. The high sublevels sound indeed lofty, but we should have in mind that these are the layers *within* the astral, where the highest of these levels ends with pure feelings and thoughts, where the lowest sublevel of the mental level begins—the earth of the mental, which surpasses pure thoughts and emotions and represents their goal.

As far as the astral is concerned, it is obvious that the lower levels present more opportunities for abuse, because of their coarseness and lack of refinement. And, indeed, those levels represent a scene for all the worst things in existence. All the malicious intentions, fear, hatred, anger, cruelty and other abhorrent things have their foundation in the lower spheres of the astral plane. The lower we go in levels, the more rules, limitations, laws and separation we find. All kinds of insisting on the rules to be upheld are rooted in the lowest astral, since this is where beings obsessed with arrogance and egoism dwell, the beings who constantly think of their rights and value, who constantly judge others and who see themselves in clear and firm limits of separation—the separation of religion, nation, party, street gang, it does not matter. The roughest levels are inhabited by murderers, thugs, drunkards and adulterers, persons who are void of compassion, whose feelings are terribly filthy, and who are, altogether with their habitat, so disgusting, that it is wise to describe them in the fewest words possible. These are the places of possession and bargaining with energy, the places of property, ownership. The higher we go, the less is considered to be one's own, and already on the mental level there is nothing that is considered to be one's own; on the contrary, what is, is accepted, and everyone shares the common reality and acts according to their preferences and interests. This does not exist in the astral; here is where “me” and “mine” are the law of the land.

If we know that even a slightest trace of selflessness and love automatically leads one out of the astral as such, not only its lower levels, then it is clear that the astral is the level of selfishness, self-absorption, lies, hypocrisies, material thinking and separation, and

that it should be avoided, after we have learnt its lessons. If, however, we do not become familiar with the astral, we will be in danger of being pulled into it by others, because of our lack of understanding. There should be no sympathy for evil; it should be abandoned, without a trace of emotion. We should simply adhere to love and truth, and that will make us free from all possible and impossible astral junk.

In order for us not to form an impression that the astral plane is inhabited only by dark beings, it should be noted that the astral is also inhabited by persons whose degree of natural development does not allow them to outgrow it. These are persons who learn to control desires, thoughts and feelings, who do not know how to think or feel clearly, so they are unable to find their way around very well. They dwell within their closed worlds of thoughts and desires, which they explore, in which they learn to create increasingly more complex forms; this is the domain of intellectuals, who develop mental ideas to the extreme, attempting to encompass the reality with them. They accomplish success in realization that this is not possible, thus outgrowing the astral. Persons of forceful and intense temper also dwell here, persons driven by powerful emotions, who learn to find reality and harmony in the background of such emotions; when they realize that harmony is not dependent on these emotions, they outgrow the astral. It is for that reason said that such persons develop their astral body. When their astral body, the body of thoughts and emotions, is completely developed, it disappears, or more precisely said, it conducts and manifests the reality, without forming its own images. Such an astral body becomes transparent.

We should write something on astral communication. I already wrote about how beings communicate with each other by establishing bonds made of astral substance, which bind their astral bodies together. This is one of the forms of communication, which sums up to this: beings establish a contact, which looks differently on each side, because the astral substance is in different minds “translated” differently, into target images, which are seldom identical to the original images. The problem, especially in communication through the physical body (in communication with incarnate beings), is to find information within the body’s mind that would be identical to the original information, which is necessary in order for it to come across correctly. Also, when establishing contact with

a certain place (in a so-called astral projection) the image of the place is reconstructed within the mind of the receiver, instead of being transferred in whole, and the faintly transferred parts of the image are replaced with the parts of the receiver's memory which create the appearance of the consistency of the image. The problem with such a picture is that we cannot tell how much is real and how much is a fill-in. Perception of the open astral³⁵ is a whole different story, where there is no possibility of a mistake, but it is also not possible to convey the experience into the physical body, since the linear physical mind is simply too narrow for such an experience, and for that reason every form of description is destined to sound incomplete at best. Perception of the open astral is so rare, that I personally know only an insignificantly small number of people who are able to come in touch with it and retain a more or less continuous memory, while mastery of the open astral level is an even greater rarity.

Contact with the open astral is such an enormous opening of consciousness, opening of the horizons, that the whole human vision of the world, which is described within this book, appears silly and trivial. The experience of the open astral is equal to the experience of God, who is dreaming the world. Like the man who experiences through the physical body, and sees the astral as some sort of a world of dreams and imagination, which is less real than the physical and which can be altered by thoughts, the man who plugs himself into the open astral sees the physical and the astral worlds as his dream, and by mere movements of will within the dream changes the events in past, present and future. It resembles a passage through a mirror into the world in which the commonly experienced reality is merely a content of the spirit. This is an experience that would cause the majority to "crack" under its force and get permanently lost. The experience of the open astral looks somewhat like this: "I am one in all beings; this is all a dream within my spirit, and since I in these beings desire the continuity of the dream, it is maintained within my consciousness. My self is in all beings, they are all within my spirit. I manifest myself as one of the beings, I manifest myself as the dreamer who dreams all the beings. I am both at the same time. I am the

³⁵ "Open astral" is astral as such, not just astral substance but the "universe" that defines this substance.

dreamer and the dreamt. I can, at any moment, wish to be returned into the dream as some other being, and not the one from which I have unplugged into the realization of the dreamer. All the states of the past, present and future exist within me. I can bring them into existence and erase them at will. The manifestation of my dream is experienced by the beings within the dream as supernatural powers: when an image within my spirit becomes transparent, disappears, when I create several images which I dream and through which I act, when I change some of the basic rules that determine the functioning of the character that I play in the world, it is perceived as supernatural powers. There is nothing supernatural about it, on the contrary, it logically follows from the nature of the dream.” Here we obtain the answer to the question which we have all asked ourselves in the childhood: “How come that only this is me, and not something else? Why this, and not something else?” The answer is that I am all, and looking through just one pair of eyes is an illusion. When we move in the physical, the movement of the self does not follow the movement of the physical, the self is always steady and present everywhere. Let’s say that we have a white paper, over which we put a green one on which there is a hole. We perceive this as a white spot on the green surface. The movement of the green paper creates the appearance of the movement of the white spot; in fact, the white spot is the white paper, and it does not move, it is always the same by always being different. Likewise, the self is the steady reality of the being, indifferent to the changes of the body, mind, energy, feelings and other.

It is thus apparent why an unprepared being can easily become completely insane in confrontation with this aspect. The astral is a level superior to the physical; this should not be forgotten. By passing through the mirror, with the change of perspective, we perceive a reality completely different from the one that we are accustomed to. We should, however, know that in spite of such superiority and unplugging into the open astral it still remains the astral, with its very limited depth and subtlety, and there *are* much higher levels, regardless of how impressive my description of the open astral might seem. It is the state of a great apparent power, but of a small depth of consciousness, and the depth of consciousness is the only thing that counts, the thing that represents our degree of participation in God. Therefore it is often seen that a

being that has not switched into the open astral has a significantly greater depth of consciousness and is rooted in far higher spheres of existence than one that has, but to whom it unfortunately represents the highest accomplishment. The inflation of one's importance as a result of the switch is also common—such a person will have the impression of being enlightened, awake, aware, that other beings are “food,” characters within his dream, with whom he can do whatever he wills. However, such a person could experience surprise when it turns out that although he feels that he can do everything, he can in fact do practically nothing; he is still a mere participant in this consciousness, switched into it, and the only thing that really acts is dharma. When such people return to the physical they often speak utter nonsense as the truths of the higher order, because it appears much more real to them. On the other hand, it is clear that when we look at the reality from that perspective, utter nonsense is no less real compared to the so-called “great truths.” It is all arbitrary, everything is merely an image within the mind.

Among the more limited forms of this are the experiences of *déjà vu* and the prophetic dreams—situations where we have already dreamt of some event, or we recognize it as something that has already taken place. It is the result of experience of the astral, and its rather strange definitions of time and space. For all those reasons, I repeat that the mind of a human being, as a physical being, cannot comprehend the astral and its laws in their entirety, and a mere attempt can result in madness. Because of those things it is wise to stay away from such forms of “enlightenment”—let us better go back to the perception of the astral that is possible through a human being as such, without switching into the open system. On one hand, the existence of the limited human being within the dream, the being that focuses the qualities of the high levels in itself, is something incredibly precious and fair—and it is also the purpose of the dream, and on the other hand, it is easy to figure out that there are open states of the levels above the astral, compared to which the astral is, altogether with its omnipotence of dreaming worlds, mere child's play. For the dreamer is being dreamt in levels beyond his wildest imagination.

Cultural shock, which people experience when they are told of astral, and of astral substance, is caused by their inability to accept

the claim that thoughts and feelings are in fact mere forms made of some substance. People have accepted, through education, that their physical body absorbs different material substances, eliminating others, thus incessantly exchanging substances with the surrounding physical world. It is, however, more difficult to accept that our thoughts, too, represent a form of a substance, which belongs to us in the same sense as does the matter that we eat and release; it is the substance of a certain level of subtlety, which our astral body assimilates and eliminates all the time. The same goes for emotional states. The very knowledge of this principle gives us an enormous ability to control our thoughts and feelings: knowledge that, for instance, a feeling of anger is merely a form of the astral substance's vibration which passes through our emotional body, will keep us from the temptation of justifying and preserving such a feeling after it is gone; we are not angry, anger has no reason of existence, it simply is, we witness its presence and we experience it, it vanishes, it is no more. There is, therefore, no reason or need to find the purpose of anger, which so often forces people to do silly things in order to feed their astral states that would otherwise, by the nature of things, be long gone. Such an approach to thoughts and feelings, observation of them as states that come and go, without attempts to make them into a philosophical system, represents a key to what is called *vairagya* in Sanskrit, and *detachment* in English: the ability to witness our states during the experience, non-involvement of self in the objects of consciousness. That, however, does not mean indifference: feelings and thoughts are experienced indeed, while they last, but we have power over them, not the other way around. We witness them as something separate from us, and when we thus distinguish ourselves from them, we attain freedom. But we must be careful not to turn such a form of a witness-attitude into an unhealthy extreme, in which we would constantly consciously control our feelings—spontaneity is a great virtue, and it is often necessary to follow some emotion, to let it lead us and to learn from it. If we take control of our states, we freeze our spiritual growth at that state and in that moment.

The rules that apply to witnessing anger apply to witnessing the other emotions as well, for instance love. With such witnessing we can discover that love is simply a condition of consciousness, which is independent on external stimulus in the form of a person, and

that we can feel the love as such, not only love for something or someone. In this way, we discover love as something that can always belong to us, and not only in moments of favorable circumstances. To outgrow the need for a stimulating form means to outgrow the astral itself. The astral is outgrown when we cast away form in recognition of the essence. Thus rooted in the essence, we may wish to express it through form, but then we are dealing with a completely different phenomenon, not with form as an (incomplete) means of *experiencing* the essence, but as a means of *expressing* the essence, it is about the descent, not the ascent of consciousness. The truth is, therefore, neither in the material forms, nor in the pranic forms, nor in the forms of any level, the truth is the universal reality that surrounds us, within and without us, and through all those levels we can wish to express it through our existence and activity. Such a way of implementing the free will, from the state of realization into the expression, represents the manifestation of the Divine law, and this is the true meaning of the statement “do as thou wilt, and that will be the whole of the law.” Indeed is such will the manifestation of the Divine will, for it leads to the life of reality and truth.

One of the qualities of astral, and of the astral substance as such, is the natural decay of the astral forms that are not charged with energy. Also, when the astral objects reach a certain degree of complexity, and because of the qualities of astral substance (a certain degree of intelligence and consciousness), they start behaving as somewhat conscious beings who tend to preserve themselves. If we know that the all mankind incessantly maintains certain astral forms in existence, it is to be expected that they will start having a life of their own, and tend to keep themselves in existence by motivating people to feed them. Typical examples are the images of collective fears and paranoia, which create various phenomena. For instance, the doomsday fears, the Armageddon psychosis. The fear of death and often a death-wish, the wish for a change, the fear of change, all these mixed emotions feed a “being” of Armageddon fear in the earth’s astral, and that being tends to preserve itself in existence by providing the reasons for fear, by feeding human fear with “reasons.” The more we feed such constructs, the more powerful and difficult to remove they become, and the greater becomes their power to really influence the course of destiny and realize themselves. The similar applies to all sorts of channeling-cults that

represent a mixture of all sorts of trash with which the astral beings feed beliefs in their existence. Through the process of channeling, people are connected to different fragments of the fantasy world, that have occupied the human consciousness to an extent sufficient for them to leave a more permanent mark in the astral, they become connected to the fragments of teachings of the various religions (belief in the teachings creates strong astral impressions), and worst of all, to some of ancient forms, which are left as the remains of the old civilizations that engaged themselves in practices of ritual magic. This is the origin of all the Sumerian, Egyptian and Indian names of the “alien commanders” and their “headquarters.” If people only knew what rubbish this is, and what kinds of beings use these prints for their impure goals, they would never even think of giving them their energy, but they would on the contrary turn their hearts away from that and dedicate themselves to the perception of the reality.

For all those reasons, the astral of earth is in turmoil, filled with chaotic forms of fear, panic, insecurity, delusions, hatred and other junk. And instead of dedicating themselves to purifying and harmonious activities in life, people harmonize themselves with such patterns and manifest them in their lives, thus additionally feeding them with energy.

The astral is, therefore, a junkyard, it is the level in which there is nothing that could not be stained, in which the truth is relative and dependent on the appearance, it is the level that feeds separation and forces that are opposite to love, it is the level that separates reality from appearance. Astral is the world of lies, passions, desires, arrogance, pride, ignorance and the like. It is the consequence of the separation of consciousness and energy, in order for consciousness to control energy. This is essential in order to control prana, which on the other hand controls matter. The best astral is the pure, transparent one, void of images, which simply conducts the reality of the higher levels. The lower levels of the astral are so material that they are immersed in prana, and they are thus able to interact with matter, introducing the higher qualities into matter, making it conscious. All the higher levels reach matter in that same way: by passing through the lower ones. It is thus apparent that the experience of the higher levels depends directly on the degree of purification of the lower ones, for they would otherwise be mixed with the filth of the lower levels. It is

thus apparent that there is no substitute for the purity of a man's consciousness, and that we should work really hard in order to purify our consciousness to the extent which makes it possible for higher consciousness to manifest itself in our lives. The true words of power spoken by such beings are anything but unclear and vague. These are the words that cut, bursting with power; love is not expressed by repeating "love, love" but with clear deeds, with an uncompromising life in reality.

When we speak of astral, we must also tell about the symptoms of the movement of the awakened kundalini in a man's astral, since a great deal of kundalini symptoms are to be found precisely here, often in close connection with the symptoms on prana and matter. Such symptoms can be divided into sensory, emotional and intellectual, according to the different ways in which the astral substance manifests itself in the physical body. Sensory symptoms include changes in sharpness of the senses; clairvoyance, clairaudience, meaning the perception of the astral images and sounds, the beauty of which greatly surpasses anything perceivable in matter; telepathy, occurrence of different forms of astral abilities (the ability of astral travel, precognition and the like), and generally all forms of enhanced perception of the emotional and mental states of the others.

Emotional symptoms include reliving extremely intense emotional states—either pleasant or unpleasant, which sum up to two basic groups: experiencing the repressed and blocked emotions, and gaining new experiences needed for our growth. The second group includes, among other things, experiencing the intense "movies" of desires, in which we project the desired states and in which we learn, but also the encounters with the real astral beings that are drawn by our "astral taste." This taste, the vibration that we radiate into the environment, is equivalent to, for instance, the emission of the pheromones on the material level, the scent of the body, which signalizes our emotional state. With such taste we can signal fear, need, and generally any emotional state. In a pack of dogs, for instance, it is quite easy to recognize the dominant and the subordinate animals by the very astral impression: the subordinate ones taste like fear, impotence and the like, while the dominant ones taste like power, aggressiveness, imposition, violence and so on—they impose fear with their presence, so that

the subordinate ones have no will to test them, but rather submit to their will. The same relationships exist between humans. Once we have made ourselves familiar with these laws, we can change our astral taste at will, so that it won't attract negative situations into our lives. For instance, if we have a taste of a victim in our astral, of a person who is treated unjustly and who is abused, let us guess whom will the thugs and robbers choose to be their victim, if they wish to rob, kill or rape someone? They will certainly not choose a master of martial arts who radiates an aura of invincible strength, but rather someone with whom they instinctively feel a greater chance of success. Likewise, if someone wants to present someone with something of value, he will choose a person who radiates inner value and dignity, not someone who radiates impotence and unworthiness.

The taste of our astral, therefore, determines the quality of our encounters with other beings, either in pure astral, or in our daily encounters with physical beings, which exist in the astral as well. The awakened kundalini merely intensifies these situations, accelerates them, so that they become more apparent. Every emotional, intellectual and energetic state of the person with the awakened kundalini is manifold brighter and more noticeable in the astral compared to the similar states of unawakened beings; that alone will make the encounters with other beings more likely and more intense, making our messages more noticeable. All the emotional experiences will be more forceful, faster, more intense, thus alleviating spiritual growth, since the things that we need to learn and to control will become clearer and more present in our consciousness, than would be possible in a dormant state. On the other hand, the very intensity of the experiences makes it possible for some people to have their attention completely preoccupied with them, thus becoming completely involved in symptoms and astral phenomena, instead of their meaning and background. The increased energetic charge of the astral brings the problems and the repressed astral forms up faster, and their forcefulness makes it more difficult to delay dealing with them.

It should also be noted that the emotional impressions that kundalini awakened people convey to others are significantly more intense, really significantly. This can be a rather problematic thing, since people seldom know what they are doing; for instance, when I used to argue about something with people on the kundalini

mailing list, I usually felt as if someone had unloaded a truck full of bricks onto my astral. The worst ones are not those who rage openly, but those who hide their anger and try to be “spiritual.” They produce the worst forms of astral violence. Those who rage openly blow out their steam quickly. Besides that, their rage is more often focused on some idea than on person, so there is no harm.

Intellectual symptoms include changes in personal philosophy: new ideas, different ways of thinking, often quite opposite to conventional ones. There can also be complete interruptions in the flow of thoughts, in the ability to think, as well as the ability to feel, at the moments when the astral body is put out of function. There will often be abrupt falls or rises in mental and emotional ability—exchanges of intervals of incredibly intense emotional experiences, and of utter emotional emptiness and indifference, are possible. As far as mental activities are concerned, periods of purity of thoughts, brilliant intelligence and the ability to comprehend, alternate with periods of stupidity, lack of understanding, dull and unclear thinking, and a general decline of the mental abilities, are possible. All those symptoms represent movements of kundalini through the various energetic levels, and they can often be optimally directed without much trouble; the easiest way of achieving that is to recognize the goal of the process, and to give energy, with conscious intent, to the realization of that goal. Sincere prayer to God for guidance and help is of great value, since we use it to surrender ourselves to harmony, to shape us in the best way possible—a way far superior to anything that we would be able to come up with ourselves.

In the process of cleansing the astral body, the moment of de-identification with one’s emotional and intellectual content is inevitable: in our environment we find the source of every content, and we become utterly unable to recognize anything as “me” or “mine.” Such an experience can be frightening, but it inescapably leads to the recognition of self as the essence in the background of all those states, instead of *as* those states. The death (purification) of the astral body is often experienced as the death of the ego—which it in fact is, because it leads to the loss of all the lower desires; the higher desires, for realization and fulfillment with God, remain until the achievement of the highest state, which infinitely exceeds the astral.

I must again state that everything I said about the astral stands for the human perception of the astral, which is extremely limited and dull—for thoughts and feelings, and the emotional and intellectual attachments lived through the body. The astral level, if perceived more directly, represents a world of greater freedom and consciousness compared to matter, a world of greater clarity and insight, which is more receptive to the activities of the spirit than a human life lived in matter. Still, in all moments in which I have perceived the astral directly, I thought it to be far too material and limited for me to wish to act in, and I tended to naturally ascend to the higher spheres of existence. Even when I moved in the pure astral, void of all possible nuisances that could be found there, the forms of expression that were available to me, and the limitations that I was subject to, resembled the limitations of physical matter and prana too much for me to be able to feel comfortable and at home.

This is the level in which I am not certain that I will be understood—ignorance and misunderstanding are possible. I can be judged by appearance. My essence is not seen, and I must look out for the limits created by others. This is why this level is repulsive to me, regardless of the fact that it is deeper and clearer than matter, and regardless of the fact that the astral senses are far more powerful, penetrating and clearer than the physical ones; the vision is spherical, there is linear telepathy instead of hearing (the thoughts and desires are “heard”), and there are other senses that have no equivalent in the physical body: the very broadness of the spatial perception that is specific to the direct perception of the astral is such a positive shock for a human being used to the significant limitations posed by the physical senses, that it is difficult for some to return to the material body. I didn’t tell anything about the beauty of the “heavenly gardens” present in the higher parts of the astral; the astral matter itself is vibrantly conscious, and the beings, flowers, trees and objects of the astral radiate life, they continuously convey meaning with their existence and form, they speak the messages; everything is broader, brilliantly clear, clear as a crystal; one can look through objects and yet they are firm, they change and they are the same. Consciousness and matter are mixed, the physical nature of the object is mixed with the nature of the spirit, forming a much more interesting blend than is the case with matter and prana, and that is increasingly more so

in the higher sublevels of the astral—in the lower, material ones it is not, they are hardly deeper than the surface, and hardly aware, while the higher ones literally blaze with life, bursting with colorful light that speaks the messages of joy. Everything in the higher spheres of the astral shows and radiates beauty and joy. And still, the vision and understanding stop on the displayed, on the visible and radiated, for if it were not so, it wouldn't be the astral level, but mental or higher. Let us, then, outgrow the tightness of the astral, let us spread the wings of the heart and fly to the mental sphere.

The Mental Level

The next level in the row, above the astral, is the mental. According to the logic of the dimensions, this one is the sixth. In some terminologies (for instance in the one used by Sri Yukteswar in the *Autobiography of a Yogi*) it is not regarded as a level per se, but as a higher part of the astral level; it is not that far from the truth, because the border between them is not that qualitatively strict, and the analogy made by Sri Yukteswar, that the higher astral (mental) relates to the lower astral (astral) as sun relates to the earth, is quite appropriate.

The problem with the name “mental” is that it is non-descriptive; the mental level contains the very things that *exceed* the mind (Sanskrit “manas”, Lat. “mens”) by which the level is named. It was most likely meant to say that this is the level of the thing toward which the mind (manas) leads, and that should be kept in mind, so that we would not make mistakes thinking that we are dealing with the level of intellectualizing. On the contrary, we are dealing with *realization*, understanding, with things that are often considered to be the *goal* of mental activity. The other names for this level, mentioned by C.W. Leadbeater in his works, are Devachan (“the dwelling place of the gods”) and Sukhavati (“the pure land”). The majority of human concepts of heaven are related to this level. Likewise, the descriptions that I am about to give will create an impression that it is about an extremely elated state of consciousness; yes, indeed it is, compared to what the majority of people experience, but this is in fact a reasonably low level, compared to the states that exist above it. Although there is only a small number of people with direct experience of this level, and with the ability to move freely and consciously within it, there is a much larger number of people with indirect experience of this level’s substance. Everyone who has been in love at least once has experienced the mental plane.

It was already said that the lowest sublevel of the mental exceeds the highest sublevel of the astral. This is a level of love and understanding, the level of the reality of the heart that far surpasses lower images, thoughts and emotions. It is also the level of understanding, not of something that leads to understanding. Therefore it is said that everything that contains understanding

of its own essence, that conveys the inner meaning, has the mental objects within itself. Let us clear this up a bit.

I said that the astral is the level of appearance separated from the essence, so that in the astral it is possible to create a lie, if the appearance, the illusion created in order to show or explain something, is different from the thing behind the appearance. A nice example is the bad witch's candy house from the fairytale: on the outside it is beautiful and made of sweets, but it cloaks danger in the form of the cannibal witch. The wise people who understand this truth avoid the astral, and these are the very reasons why it is gladly inhabited by liars and abusers, to whom the astral is a heavenly gift. Shankaracharya described the astral wonderfully with the following sentence: *In the jungle of things dwells a great tiger called manas. Pure people who desire liberation do not go there.*³⁶

It is, however, the quality of the higher sublevels of the astral to attempt to use names, forms, images, impressions and sounds in order to express and articulate the essence, so that it would appear within the spirit of the observer who experiences such phenomena. It is apparent that these efforts become realized in the state in which pure essence and knowledge are conveyed, without any need for the mediation of symbols and other means of expression. The level on which beings communicate through direct insight of the essence of the other, without the possibility of hiding and without need for symbols that would convey understanding, but through direct contact with the consciousness of the other person, and through the experience of one's essence. The mental is therefore the level of highest sincerity, perfect selfless love and profound emotions lived and experienced by angelic beings. This is the level of the profound lovemaking of lovers who have renounced all but the life of the other within their hearts, and to whom appearance and form mean nothing, except means through which their love is manifested on the lower levels. This is the level of understanding, which, saturating the lower levels, crystallizes itself into words, thoughts, images, feelings and deeds that are abundant with understanding and greatness. This is the level of withdrawal of consciousness from the objects of sensory perception and from the mind. Such consciousness is rooted in pure realization, void of need to reach it through senses and their objects, since it is lived directly and

³⁶ Vivekachudamani 178

intimately. Although there is no need to realize through mediation of things, through things it might wish to manifest the realization. Thus will the touch of a mental being, to a being that feels through the lower levels, flow as a fountain of beautiful sounds and images that convey the emotions, as fragments of memory that carry the parts of realization, all shaped into a complete understanding of what the being of the mental wanted to communicate. On its way down, such realization is dressed in the astral, prana and manifested in matter—this is the way in which great, profound and powerful deeds of mankind are inspired, such as inspiring and inspired, powerful and profound music, capital works of science and literature, and other examples of great human achievement. Since there is no attempt to convey the reality through appearance, beings who would adorn themselves with “spiritual” symbols and behavior, who take care of appearance and regulations, are not present here. On the contrary, beings of the heart and knowledge are open and natural, and they speak their truth through existence. Everything they say is witnessed in that moment, so that every word and thought is accompanied by realization, which needs only to be accepted. The reality and sincerity are manifested through all their deeds, without any sort of coercion or reservation. We can thus speak of the sublevels of this level only if we keep in mind that reality and the essence of realization are its basic substances, and naturalness is its means of expression. We can speak of existence of love (matter), energy of love (prana), feelings of love/feelings of the heart (astral) and the realization of the heart (mental).

By mental in the limited sense, when I mention it as such, I mean the mental of the mental, pure understanding and consciousness, the state of realization, the peak level of the heart chakra. So with this simple rule we have encompassed the physical, pranic, astral and mental sublevels of the mental level, without need to make things more complicated. Maybe it can be spoken of the higher sublevels of the mental (buddhic, atmic, paranirvanic), but I see no purpose in that: it is sufficient to say that all the sublevels, that are rooted in the heart, belong to the mental level, like speaking from the heart, looking with the heart, and other similar states lived through the physical body, in which the higher chakras are used. People who move within the mental level and who function within the physical body observe that it is essentially the heart

that cleanses and directs the cleansing of all the other centers, both lower and higher. This is the truth, and it is supposed to be so, and my techniques of yoga are based on that very principle, since the mental is the level that gives the reality and cleanses the lower levels with that reality, thus empowering bodies of the lower levels to accept the levels of energy far superior to the present ones. The heart accordingly cleanses all the lower sublevels of the higher chakras. One of the frequent misconceptions regarding this matter is that, since these chakras are cleansed by the heart, they are subordinate to the heart. Fortunately it is not so, for in comparison to the peak sublevels of these chakras, the entire mental level—including realization and love of the heart and everything else—represents a very tight and narrow place of a lower form of consciousness, which is exceeded by the peak sublevel of the throat in the same way in which the ocean exceeds the mud-filled boot print; and it is utterly pointless to even mention the higher levels in this comparison.

So, if we identify the system of the levels with the tonal scale, the heart purifies only the octave of the heart chakra, which encompasses the higher chakras within the octave, but the lowest tone of a higher chakra's octave exceeds the highest tone of the previous chakra's octave—the low C of the throat chakra exceeds the B of the heart chakra. We can, therefore, see each level as an octave, in which the thing that I call “the peak sublevel” represents the mid-tone, the carrier; matter of the matter, prana of the prana, astral of the astral, mental of the mental and the like.

It also appears that the amount of things that can be said about a certain level is in reverse proportion to its height, since the higher levels are increasingly simpler; the complex and marginally relevant divisions get very scarce, while the reality is reflected more. Likewise, the higher levels are practically impossible to describe because of their depth, and also because of the rarity of the states equivalent to these levels in human experience. Quite unlike that, the experience of the mental plane is very common; naturally, these experiences vary in depth, intensity and duration, from the scarce moments of realization and love, to the experience of entire universes within one's heart. People with some sort of experience of the mental plane are extremely numerous, and represent the largest majority of the mankind; people who *master* the mental are so rare, that they are encountered mostly

among those who have mastered the higher levels as well. Mankind as such is in a situation in which it needs to choose the final ascension from the lower levels of consciousness to the mental, and renounce all the lower forms of communication and activity. It will have to act from sincerity and reality, with unconditional giving and acceptance, clearly, openly and without deception. It will have to purify itself into the spontaneous and playful activity of the perfect purity. Without such a purification and ascension, the world will be crushed under the load of fruits of wicked deeds, such as environmental pollution and the destruction of natural resources. The projection of our inner impurities into the world is the instrument of our doom. These impurities must therefore be abandoned and surpassed, for we will otherwise be erased from this world. The life of pure love is in fact easy to achieve, with simple choices and decisions. It is not some unattainable goal, but merely acceptance of what surrounds us from all sides. All we need in order to accept that love is to breathe the heartbeats of the mother earth. The earth's aura, as such, vibrates in the frequency of the heart, the frequency of the mental; the mental is its defining quality at this point—the ripe, rounded, perfect and complete mental, and all the techniques of healing human beings essentially add up to harmonizing with that vibration of the earth. It cleanses, rinses, refines and elevates, it is very easy to harmonize with, and this is exactly what we need to do right away, without delay. My technique of basic meditation results in such harmonization, as does any form of pure love in which the life of the earth is felt. Let us, therefore, harmonize ourselves with the life of the beautiful motherly world of oceanic love, of which we are a part.

If this is true, someone is bound to ask, how is it possible that there are so many horrible things in the world? How come love and harmony aren't manifested? The answer is awfully simple: we ourselves do not allow it. We are the ones who close the doors, with our reasoning, intellectualizing and limitations of the reality. Jesus spoke two thousand years ago that we have to trust that God will provide for us, if only we let Him,³⁷ and that we are safe and loved. And what did we make of it: everybody is frantically amassing material goods, in fear that they will perish if they do

³⁷ Paraphrased Matthew 6:26–34; Luke 12:22–32.

not take care of themselves, because there is none to provide for them and love them. This is what it turned into: the merchants of fear, calling upon the name of Jesus, yelling the dark invocations of the judgmental and vengeful God from their altars. This is the result of lack of faith in love and harmony of the world, which we are a part of. The mere presence on the mental plane will lead us to experience such acceptance, such unconditional love and such harmony of all that is, such understanding and respect among its inhabitants, that all fears and coercions will be cast away from us. It is enough to simply be, and being automatically makes us loved, accepted and completely safe. The only things that can harm us are the consequences of our conscious choice of the lower worlds of fear, hate and evil. Therefore, these states should be renounced, and we should live the states of the heart—consciousness, love and acceptance—on all the lower levels. This is the level of which Jesus spoke when he said: “Judge not, and you shall not be judged.”³⁸ Mental is the level void of judgments, which are the instrument of separation; it is the level of simple acceptance. If you can imagine how it feels to meet a being, the feeling of whom represents pure love, deepest understanding of our essence and our needs, understanding of all our actions and motives without any need to explain, and deep acceptance without any need for justification, then you can imagine how it feels to meet an angel, a being of the mental plane. The ability to feel such emotions and to function in such a way, and to move our consciousness within the mental, makes us an angel in the body. The state of our consciousness will then be bathing in the universal love that surrounds us, and its emission in the world, as our cup runs over to fill others.

This of course isn't the first place in which something like this has been said, and many have attempted to come close to that, but unfortunately, in a completely wrong way: love and light on the outside, the sweet chosen words and the “spiritual” form, and on the inside there are the cut away parts of self that were deemed “unspiritual,” unfit for existence, that growl and emit venom within their dungeons. To prick such a person's delicate spot brings on such a terrible assault from the darkest astral, that it's beyond anything the world has seen. That is the reason I avoid “spiritual” people the most. People who embody the mental are the exact

³⁸ Paraphrased Matthew 7:1.

opposite: these are the unburdened, balanced and wholesome people, for whom it can be felt that they are the cornerstones of consciousness, who speak naturally without paying attention to form, who simply live, who do not judge themselves nor others—for if they judged themselves, they would think that they have to be something and must not be something else, and in that case they would also accept others only in cases when they fit these artificial criteria. People who live the mental have no demons to fight—only kind friends with whom they enjoy the harmony of life without any form of pressure. The qualities of the enlightened ones—up to the mental level—are therefore freedom from form, naturalness, inner harmony, inner realization and fulfillment, and the feelings of harmony and fulfillment that spread around them. People with a completely developed mental are full of life and harmony, inner understanding and strength. They are the real lighthouses of the world. And this is really not a distant goal; all that it takes is to accept the facts of the world that surrounds us. It requires us to reject the illusions made within our minds, and accept the fact that we are loved, secure, unjudged, that we can be whatever we want to be, and there will be no rejection. Once we feel that we can do anything we want without being rejected, our hearts will open up and change; such love creates the unbreakable safety on which a harmonious life in the world will be made.

Of course, there are many shades of gray in it, things are seldom black or white, and we will most often meet people who understand some of these truths, but who do not dare to live them because such a belief is not stronger than other beliefs given to them from other sources. Often will beings who understand the high laws be manipulated by beings who do not, and who implant the wrong ideas into the consciousness of people with their misinterpretations and misconceptions. Often will terms such as “doing good,” “mercy,” “goodness” and the like cloak ideas that force us to sacrifice our inner balance and give energy to negative forms. If we give energy and love to a virus, it will cheerfully reproduce and kill us. If we feed the ideas of sacrifice, exploitation and misfortune with energy—only because they were sold to us as good—then the misfortune that is the result of their presence will increase, and we will practically become the instruments of the evil in the world. We should renounce negative patterns and pay no attention to them. People choose their own attachments,

and we should always accept the person, not the attachment to a pattern. We should never accept them together. When a man chooses not to cling to the negative pattern of exploitation and rejection, he will discover that he is accepted, and before that, the exploitation and rejection will be experienced as a consequence of his personal choices. If we feed the wrong patterns of behavior, we keep the person that is attached to them believing that they pay off and that they function. If the wrong pattern makes them suffer, the sooner they will notice the connection between cause and effect, and renounce the wrongdoing. We should, therefore, always give understanding of the essence to the person, but systematically ignore negative patterns through which the person attempts to relate to us. That might be confusing, but those who feel the love on our side, and who need that love, might easily decide what is more important to them, our love or the pattern that prevents its flow. Therefore is the person healed by love and acceptance, and not of the negativity; by understanding that it isn't necessary to own the other and rule over the other in order to be happy, but that it is possible to act in the world with kind awareness and understanding.

My method is, when I talk to someone who justifies his actions, to simply radiate understanding, the feeling that he can choose whatever he wants, and often this person decides that he doesn't really need something, because there is something better. I don't even have to judge—I simply ignore the negative, I give it no reason to exist, and it vanishes, giving way to the healing power of understanding-love. But to be honest, often the opposite will be the case, someone will decide that the negativities are more important to him than I am, and when I simply witness my existence and testify for the truth that I see, such people feel it as an insult or a dark assault, and they leave. They, in fact, see me as the mirror of their darkness, and since they are unable to accept it or to heal it, they reject it—together with me, on whom it is seen. This, of course, stands only for those who are yet to be elevated from the lower levels to the level of the heart; for those to whom the states of the heart, all the states of the mental, are self-understandable, a different set of rules applies. I often used to admonish my most advanced students as the worst fools, for something that appeared to be an insignificant lapse.

But let us go back to the principles of the mental: things that we are able to open up to are solved; those who are able to open up to the darkness and face it have outgrown it. Those who are able to face and accept the light have mastered it. We should therefore master things, instead of being enslaved by them, we should face things instead of running away and hiding. When we see something we don't like, let us observe its essence and know *why* we dislike it. This knowledge of something, whether good or bad, is the mental. And this realization tells us that inacceptance and rejection are the causes of evil. Paradoxically, the ideas of inacceptance and the repressed inner darkneses are often the cause of deeds that appear to be good—doing good deeds, missionary activities, etc. Often is the background of such deeds the attitude that the world is essentially a terrible and cruel place and that good should be introduced in it, for it has none. Such an idea is the extreme untruth, since the world is made of love and knowledge, since we live within God's heart, and there is no need to introduce something new, but only to take off the dark glasses. Those, who have realized that, are the ones who act spontaneously and without motivation, and from their existence can the message of their essence be read, and the words and deeds simply go along. This fact alone makes it almost impossible to find realized people among the members of missionary and "salvation-selling" religious movements; realized people feel simply too good to do such things, and God is too close for them to need a religion. This is so pronounced, that such people will practically always declare themselves to be some sort of atheists—what they themselves perceive as God is completely different from the alien force that is preached by religions, so they will spontaneously declare that they don't believe in such a force. It amuses me greatly to see how the "religious ones" try to convert those people to the "only true faith."

The situation where someone has a strongly expressed touch with God, and on the other hand imagines God as something different, in what he *does* believe, is also common. Then unpleasant frustrations can take place, when the divine voice of conscience finds itself in conflict with the imagined concept of God and his "commandments." Those are the problems of the saints who live within religious groups, and uphold their theological forms. Seldom do such conflicts initiate a change in such religious

communities; more often they result in a situation where the saint is isolated, abused or even killed by the community for disturbing the comfort zone of their illusions.

Having all that in mind, it becomes clear that angels are in fact gentle, kind, deeply aware beings who live in relaxed harmony with themselves and their surroundings, and that their proximity and the touch of their consciousness is a healing and transforming experience for beings wounded by the thorns of divisions, judgments, intellectual concepts, coercions, rejections and deprivations. An enormous thing, that puts a man at his knees in touch with the angels, is their accessibility, openness, and absence of conditioning. They are extremely accessible beings, it is enough to wish for them and there they are, always, without exception; there is nothing to be deserved, there is no need to wait for the audition, there is no red tape. This is a thing that needs some getting used to: the higher the beings on the ladder of consciousness, the greater the degree of their participation and belonging to God, the more accessible, gentle, open and powerful they are. God is the greatest, the highest, and therefore closest and most accessible. God can literally be called and felt everywhere and in everything. All it takes is to believe that it is possible, and it will happen.

As much as we need to get used to the instant accessibility of the angels—they don't have to be invoked for long, all that it takes is to "blow them a kiss," to love them, and they will instantly appear within the horizon of our consciousness—we also need to get used to the directness and the immense speed of the communication on the mental plane. The first time that I met my "guardian angel," a woman-angel—I'll call her *Devi*—I had a load of such problems in communication. Her essence had a taste of understanding, acceptance that was turned into pictures, words and thoughts on the lower levels, through which I indirectly absorbed the knowledge that she gave me. The thing that follows surprised me: when I answered her, I felt what I wanted to say, and started to form sentences in Croatian language within my mind, and at the very moment in which I felt what I wanted to express, before I even started to express it, her answer already came. After a while, encouraged by her gentle smile, I learned to leave the words (the imagined speech) out completely, so we started to exchange images through which we expressed love and understanding. Later, she

taught me how to completely leave out the images and simply feel, and convey the realization of the essence, understanding of what is communicated, through that feeling. She also taught me, with nothing but her spontaneous example, by simply doing it, that the change of focus of the spirit and thinking about some level can instantaneously put one on that level, to feel its context, feel its qualities. In that way she showed me her beautiful world and her “friends,” let’s call them that, the angels of her kind who dwell there; I was given to her care, and she guided me through critical situations, which were frequent in my life, providing comfort, so that I would survive those moments; I was almost never aware of her, but she was here, waiting to be called.

When I became skilled enough, she showed herself directly to me and started teaching me, explaining things to me—some of those things I was unable to understand, especially those regarding myself as such, regarding the way she perceived me. For the whole time I saw her as a being far more perfect and beautiful than myself, I saw her as my superior, which was completely obvious from the very ease and naturalness of her communication with me: through the transfer of the infinity of the immensely complex objects of the realization, with such a stunning fluency and ease, while I practically mumbled, learned to think, speak and feel, my thoughts and feelings were rarely pure—there was dirty astral in abundance, and who knows what not; limiting concepts, ideas of ownership and the like—basically, my side of the communication was comparable to children’s drawings done with an insecure hand, while her side was comparable to entire movies of precise, clean, infinitely refined and elegant ideas and thoughts, full and defined images, profound meanings, songs giving impressions of the far and unknown, and at the same time known and familiar spaces, deep openness and perfect purity of sincerity that is so much a part of her nature, that I can think of her only in terms of embodied honesty, purity and simplicity. For those reasons, and also because of the admiration that I had to feel for such a beautiful being, it is clear that I was utterly confused when I soon found out that she perceives *me* as her superior, and that she was chosen for the service of preparation of my lower vehicles because of her deep connection with me. To me, being extremely sad and feeling unneeded and obsolete on the earth, feeling that I could die on the street without anyone missing me, it was something inconceivable,

something I could not accept, and I still can't, for I have always seen her as one of my dear teachers, and I'm eternally thankful for her love. And these are the criteria of these worlds: mutual adoration, worship of God through service to the other, through admiration and acceptance. These criteria were an enormous novelty to me, since they are immensely different from the criteria on earth, where dark persons with lots of money and influential positions enjoy a great reputation. It was shown to me that there is a completely different view of things, and that the views that apply on earth don't mean anything at all. I accepted her view, since I could hardly understand it, but I always regarded her as my teacher and advisor, as a being greater and higher than myself, for I couldn't see it any other way. The greatest part of my skill in communication on the higher levels I owe to her alone; the value of what she gave me is such, that I cannot even imagine my present functioning without the things she taught me, and there is no way in which I could possibly repay her for such a gift, except by giving her my deepest gratitude and love, and accepting her as a precious, immensely precious and beautiful part of myself.

In my communication with her, some of the exercises for concentration that I did in the earlier months were immensely useful, for instance staring at a dot on the wall for hours. Without those practices, I can't even imagine following her, since my mind would change five levels within a second, and a prolonged communication on a certain level, with a specific being, would be impossible. Even in spite of those practices, the difference between her degree of concentration and mine was enormous, and the communication was possible only because of her infinite patience with me. The cause of these interruptions of attention were interferences on the lower levels: astral, prana and matter, which are necessary in the communication of human beings. If the interferences become too great, the whole thing is hopeless. For that reason it is necessary to stabilize those levels, through the basic techniques of work with the astral, for example (concentration, visualization, attention), so that the untamed abilities of the spirit wouldn't scatter like the leaves in the wind.

When I speak of the mental and the experiences of the mental through the physical, I have to mention that not all experiences were so mildly gentle as the experience with Devi. There were situations in which I came in touch with a being of such forcefulness,

power, magnificence and depth, that my lower bodies saw such experiences as a motive for immediate purification, unless they wished to be destroyed on the spot. I have already described how the purification of the levels has to come from above: there is a certain experience, and then the lower levels are automatically purified in order to be able to take such an experience. There happens to be a slight problem if the touch with such a higher experience is so abrupt, forceful, if the situation puts such immediate demands on the lower vehicles, that in these situations I thought that people will have to scrape me off the walls with a toothbrush. The most forceful of such experiences is the one I experienced in the time when all the elements of my heart chakra were being developed and integrated; in a tram, with a being whom I'll call Mataji. If Devi is gently kind and caring, Mataji is brilliantly conscious, evidently powerful, omnipotent, uncompromising and such an embodiment of the personalized Divine attributes in a female form, that it is quite appropriate to say that she is God.

Being under the influence of Yogananda's autobiography, I perceived and I still perceive Babaji and Mataji as utter perfection embodied in human form—and here we are definitely not dealing with beings of lower levels such as the mental, but with beings of the infinitely elated levels, that are reflected through the mental, astral and the others in order for me to be able to perceive them through my body. But basically, if this experience of Mataji didn't blow me to bits and make a real mess in the tram, then I guess that nothing ever will, because I cannot think of anything more intense, since my lower bodies were then in a much worse shape than they are today. I felt her presence, and at that moment not some, but literally all the nadis in my body fired up, all at once. I did not perceive her in my world of body, mind and the like; her world of immense consciousness was driven into my body, devastating it, ventilating it in an extremely fast and mercilessly forceful way. Within a few seconds, my consciousness was expanded up to previously unimaginable clarity and presence, which was when I became able to feel her presence and the things that she was communicating—her very calm presence, the sense of that depth, is something beyond the wildest imagination; it literally means to observe God's consciousness and glory, expressed through a calm dignified female form, so focused in its depth that

it knows no thoughts, nor feelings, nor states, nothing, pure reality and God's essence embodied into something that is and is not a person, it is a person in sense that it is more personal than anything that could be thought of as a person, but still it is an ocean of consciousness beyond all limitations.

What did she communicate... I don't quite know how to understand it, and everything I have to say can at best resemble an attempt of a Neanderthal to describe the Houston space center—doomed from the start. The very identification of this Goddess in the highest sense with Babaji's sister who sleeps under a rock in the Dasasamedh gath in Varanasi is merely the closest equivalent in my consciousness for such a being—Babaji's sister as the most powerful female Divine embodiment that I knew of and could think of, and the analogy presented itself. The bottom line is that I half-consciously imagined what an ideal woman, that I would want as my wife, would look like, and it involved lots of limitations on my side, there were lots of things that I didn't dare to desire, and where I would be content with something ordinary, not daring to wish for more. And the thing that she gave me was a forceful flash, to which I could only surrender because anything else would have destroyed me, the greatness of her consciousness that said "I will give you myself as your wife." I was appalled, confused, I felt unworthy, undeserving. "Will you be content with less? Are you saying that I am not good enough for you?" I feel the opposite, no, I don't want to be content with less, but I am not worthy of such an honor. "Then accept me and be worthy." I accept. I will be worthy. Orgasm is nothing compared to the state that I was in, the clarity, consciousness, power, realization... accepting that I am worthy, surrender to Her, the deepest adoration, the prayer to Her that I become worthy... after a few minutes the experience of supraconsciousness ended and I returned to a state of extreme liveliness, fulfillment, joy, happiness. I radiated for days, although I could understand very little of the experience.

In spite of many such experiences, my nature was such that, after a few weeks, when their forcefulness faded from my memory, I would again fall into limiting and humiliating perceptions of myself, from which the Divine beings would have to bring me out, again and again, showing me the hidden reality of the things that I learned to fall prey to. Again and again I fell into some stupid ideas of modesty, which essentially meant self-humiliation

and separation from God, which essentially said that I shouldn't desire God because it is too exalted a goal for me, but that I should instead be content with something "more appropriate for me." How often I made such mistakes! I didn't dare to wish for the thing that mattered the most to me, thus separating myself from it. It is so often that we, thinking that we are not worthy of the higher being, reject that being, not knowing how much it wants us! We so often humiliate and reject the very things that we admire so much that we are afraid of showing it. And the fact is that we do not need modesty; we need devotion.

The movement of kundalini on the mental level often causes cleansings, openings of the heart chakra accompanied by the opening of the energetic conduits, which is often accompanied by phenomena such as strong itching points all over the body. If we remember that the higher orders of energy control the lower ones on their way toward the manifestation in the physical, it is clear that the process of cleansing, the technique of yoga in the frequently used meaning, is something that will happen all by itself in an optimal way if we adhere to the higher order of energy and if we don't interfere, by attempting to supervise, control or stop the process. The other form of cleansing sums up to conscious cooperation with these higher forces in their manifestation, and a form of that are the techniques of yoga given in this book. It is obvious that the process is opposite to the frequent assumption: first comes the higher state, whose manifestation is assisted, and it is a mistake to think that the techniques of cleansing will result in a higher state. This is partially true, but only partially, for in the application of effective techniques the lower bodies are purified and do not offer that much resistance in the situation when the higher consciousness starts to manifest.

Another aspect, that is seldom being associated with the mental level, is the experience of the Absolute through the mental—the various forms of savikalpa samadhi and nirvikalpa samadhi. It is the experience of pure consciousness in form of knowledge, reality, bliss. Often those who experienced this think that they have attained the summit of realization, and indeed it is hard to believe that they haven't, having in mind the unquestionable reality of the experience. But if we remember the things said about the open astral, it will become clear that the open mental, pure realization and the substance the mind is made of, the substance love and

wisdom are made of, has got to be something incredibly magnificent. If we understand what it is about, we can understand the meaning of what Sri Yukteswar says in the *Autobiography of a Yogi*: that the worlds of the higher astral (the mental) are inhabited *exclusively* by beings who in their last life on earth attained the state of nirvikalpa samadhi at least once. Such beings literally live in these worlds, immersed in realization.

We should not make the mistake of underestimating such an experience, of saying that it is not in its essence Divine—for it definitely is. It is experienced by the individual being, in spite of its perception of unity with the Absolute, only up to the level of limitations of the mental plane. The absolute itself is manifested in spheres even deeper than love and wisdom. About these spheres I will also speak, although I am afraid that it will be misinterpreted, since only an insignificantly small number of people have ever had an experience of the levels so high. Even among persons whom I am certain that they exist on the highest of levels, the ability to perceive it through the body and to act from it in the world is a great rarity. But I repeat, God is the infinite, vast ocean. The human spirit, and the spirit of the saints, angels and archangels, is unable to comprehend it in any but an extremely limited way. Even in direct touch with God and in the direct realization of his essence we feel just an infinitely small fragment. Even when we observe the entire worlds within our heart, we encompass such a minor fragment of the reality, which is so completely beyond the understanding of our being, that we perceive God in a way in which two-dimensional beings that live on a surface would perceive a three-dimensional object, for instance a sphere. They would perceive the passage of the sphere through their world as a continuous change of shape and size of the circles on their surface; they would perceive the sphere as a continuous change of the projections of the body onto the surface. This is the only way in which we can realize God, and every attempt to understand and explain him with our minds is sentenced to failure, by the very nature of things. The higher reality can be known only through its reflections on the lower realities, because of the mere fact that we will not be able to remember anything that is not reflected on all levels between the source and the matter of our physical body—and for that reason it is obvious why the purity of the lower levels, together with the development from the bottom

up, is essential for the ability to perceive the higher aspects of the reality.

The development of a particular energetic body is complete when all the elements of the personality are withdrawn from it into the higher body—then it is said that the body “dies”—the person has no trace of the definition of self on that level, but only a channel, a “projecting canvas” that reflects the higher states and drops them toward the lower levels, so that these states could be experienced and manifested. All the states of beings of all levels and worlds are merely the manifestation of the infinite unmanifested. The form of the bodies on the levels, and the formless state and essence of these levels, mirrors only a fraction of that infinity. The Absolute Subject, the essence of all manifested, lives itself in everything. It is being known and its knowledge is lived. Those, who recognize themselves as That, will have no need to run away from the world, since they will see That in the world and anywhere else, see Me with their existence. They will not speak of the realization, they will live it, feeling their body as a ray of light coming out of Me, reflecting My shine and joy. In the world of division they will live my inner state through love, joy, pleasure and happiness, until the inner perfection is reflected in the outer without interference. The way of the kundalini awakening and its movement is twofold: the way of the dove and the way of the serpent. This is the hidden meaning of Jesus’s statement that we have to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.³⁹ We should therefore act transparently for both principles, and embody and enliven them both within ourselves. The path of the dove is the path of descension—through the crown chakra down to the core of the earth, and the path of the serpent is the path of ascension, through the feet, and then elevating the potential energy hidden below the root chakra through the crown and forth. Only by acting from both those principles it is possible to attain wholesome and permanent perfection, through acceptance of the descent of Grace (the way of the dove, the sky path), and through personal refinement (the way of the serpent, the earth path) and ascension, the sky and earth are united through us and within us, realizing and manifesting the greatest perfection of the spirit and of the world. Once the difference between the spirit and the world

³⁹ Matthew 10:16.

is lost, the perfection is attained; the last illusion on the path of Disciplehood is lost, the illusion of the difference between samsara and nirvana. The Kingdom of Heaven is here. Now.

But there are many aggregate states in the Kingdom of Heaven. There are many levels of the subtlety of consciousness, and many levels of enlightenment. It is wrong to see the lower states of enlightenment as the final attainment, for the perception of the reality in them encompasses merely a small fragment, usually a quite coarse one. When the lower levels of the reality are extinguished, this knowledge becomes our practical experience.

Vajra (The Causal Level, Lower)

I await thee, on the top of the world, alone,
Dressed in love for thee...
God, my beloved one.
My heart bleeds the tears of bliss while I await thee
And emptiness of soul fulfills me.

You fulfill me while I await thee, my beloved one,
And my heart busts and vanishes
While I scream the silence unstained
Screaming voiceless
On the top of the world, alone,
Fulfilled with thee,
Fulfilled with the longing without you.
So close you are to me, my beloved one,
And how this veil slays me
The veil that blinds my immortal eyes
Breathless.

There you are, flashing the glacial firmness of thunder through me
Enlightening the diamond of my being
And I don't see you, I love you
Within you alone I die
Without you
My beloved one.
And so thin is the veil that hides you
From my immortal eyes
My soul.

So thin that the power of thee within me tears me apart
Failing to reach you, longing for you and breaking apart
In the beauty of thee, depth and consciousness
Breathless
I breathe
Breathless
I shine
Breathless
I live, with a force of the flash

Of the millions of suns
The dance within the hearts of the stars I outshine
And I watch
How vague, shallow locks of matter
Come, go,
Cold, dark and transparent, dull,
Insignificant
While my spirit dies without you
Just a little, little while...

I long to see you so much, veiled,
I love you so, veiled,
With a veil just so thin,
In endless power beyond
Where my immortal eyes are blind,
My love,
Whose name I cannot say.

Indigo (The Causal Level, Higher)

Everything...
Everywhere...
God!
Everything!
No boundaries and no center.
Depth. Reality.

Peace, beyond the unreal,
Beyond movement, the motion,
Everywhere, at once...
Do I move? No.
Everywhere.

The white star on the blue, blue,
So blue that it outshines the brightest of stars
Blue beyond the deepest darkness
On this side of the creation.
Almost.

Reality.
Depth.
Consciousness.
Realization, insight, existence.
I am. The worlds of the temporary play their flickering game
Beyond my attention, on the mere edge,
Horizon far below.
Peace. Power. Depth.
The power without object and movement,
The power without thought, the consciousness without motion.
Is.

The flash of blackness within the blue.
The star is born in the utmost darkness
Beyond.
Peace.

Violet (The Buddhic Level)

The Crown of the Goddess. Shining, the endless power,
Tearing
Knowing no mercy
Knowing no weakness
Truth. Reality. Power.
Unbound, steady, calm,
Forceful as an endless storm in an endless sky,
Where power seeks no boundaries,
Seeks no permission.
The robe of the ultimate power,
Shining in the sunlight of God's soul,
Enlightened from within
Where within and without are void of meaning.
The ultimate without, which is within in the shine.
The crystal that is the light,
The light that is the crystal,
The difference that is not,
The violet that is black,
That is never black.
I ask not for the limits,
I ask not for the possible,
Care?
I have no limits.
My self I outgrow.
Void.

Shiva. Shakti. (The Atmic/Nirvanic Level)

My body, beautiful as the deepest light of the soul of God
Is worthless
For my beloved sees no body.
My wealth, abundant as the treasures of Kubera
Is worthless
For my beloved renounced all wealth.
My womanly youth, eternal as the snows of Himalaya
Is worthless
For my beloved is older than the stars.
The only value
Which gives purpose to my being
Is devotion,
Unconditional, utter devotion to Thee, Lord.
There is no other purpose and other existence for me
Other than you.
I live to adore you,
Shiva,
Lord of Yoga.
The worlds are threaded on thy being,
On thy smile the stars are kindled.
You have renounced, you have created,
You maintain and you shall destroy,
Everything.
Everything. You are the soul of the world,
The only purpose, the only reality,
The Greatest Lord. I have none but Thee,
My Master. At Thy feet I worship the greatest of realities.

Darling, beloved, endless,
Thy devotion leaves me helpless,
And I can do nothing but bow,
For with such a gift you have won me, forever.
I bow to Thee, my beloved,
Force, endless power,
Beauty beyond time,
Essence. Shakti.
You are the reality that gives me meaning,
And for Thy sake alone do I act,
Within Thee and with Thee.
Together, apart.
One with the other, friends forever,
United in penance and death.
Cremated together we shine
Beyond life.
My beloved husband. My beloved wife.
The only purpose we have
In each other. Anywhere else the peace is not,
Anywhere else is emptiness.

Golden (The Paranirvanic Level)

Undivided, one,
We dance, peace.
Not quite within, not quite without
Buddha in the golden lotus.

Purusha

The spirit without the body. Fulfillment.
The desires are gone,
All gone. There is nothing more to be attained.

All goals are realized
All hopes came true
Beyond the wildest of hopes.
Om Bhagavate Namah
Om Namo Bhagavate...
Om! Namo Vasudevaya
Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya!
Om Maha Parama Bhagavate Namah...
Om!...

Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna!
Krishna, Krishna! Hare, Hare!
Hare Rama, Hare Rama!
Rama! Rama!, Hare! Hare!

.
Son of Yashoda and Nanda,
Son of Devaki and Vasudeva,
In Thee I find my ultimate reality.
Thou art the origin of all worlds and the goal of all worship.
To Thee I surrender utterly and completely.

Practical Spirituality

It is common for people to treat the spiritual as some separate aspect of their lives, without much influence on the rest. The more primitive forms of this phenomenon can be noticed in people who are content with performing some religious ceremony, as a form of social activity, local custom or a form of “posthumous insurance,” if God does exist, so that they can tell him that they went to church on Sundays.

The more extreme forms of this are the various forms of religious fanaticism, which often attempt to heal one’s feeling of incompleteness, inadequacy and non-belonging with something that most resembles the sense of value which some teenagers gain by joining a street gang. I see no particular difference between such religiosity and the religious sentiment of the soccer fans for their club. In both cases the feeling of inadequacy is compensated for by the narcissism of exclusivity.

What is interesting is that this very kind of believers is the most vigorous, ready for the greatest deprivations and the greatest violence, they are the ones who are the most intrusive in their attempts to convert others, or, if that isn’t possible, to physically remove them from existence. Likewise, it is common for such believers to change all aspects of their lives according to the rules prescribed by their following. Having that in mind, it would sound strange and inappropriate at least to say that they see spirituality

as something utterly separated from the reality and from the other aspects of their lives. But this is nevertheless so, for if it were not, would they feel a need to make other aspects of their lives “spiritual”? Most likely not; it is more likely that they would feel the presence of spirituality that is already there. Since they do not feel it, and see spirituality as something separate, some system of belief, thinking and functioning that is apart from everything else, and to which everything else has to be adapted, their behavior becomes understandable.

It seems that all these views have one thing in common: belief in God who is separated from the world, who is present practically nowhere in the world, with a few exceptions—prophets, for instance, to whom God had declared himself, declared his will, and returned to his cloud somewhere, to contemplate his perfection, probably. The people are then left with no choice other than to believe the prophet or not; if they believe him and start practicing what God declared in his commandments, they will be saved, and if not, they will be damned.

It is interesting how frequent these views are, regardless of the differences in theological concepts and form. Of course, it would be an exaggeration to say that all religions could be reduced to this, but beliefs in God-the-strict-judge, who is not present in the daily reality, are nevertheless extremely widely spread.

Such a God is some sort of a “superior enemy,” to whom we should yield or be punished, and if we suck up to him clearly enough, we shall be rewarded. People who believe in such a God can be divided into two groups: those who don’t want to suck up to such a God and therefore they think of themselves as atheists, or oppose such a concept in some other way, and those who are pathetic enough to pray to such a God out of fear. With such a God, it is a greater symptom of moral virtue to be an atheist than a believer. It is, however, interesting that those, who declare themselves as infidels regarding such a concept of God, often believe in some more subtle and true concept of the supreme reality, only they don’t call it God, out of sheer spite and contempt for the meaning, which this word implies to them. It is common that such “atheists” criticize such a false God to their inner voice of Divine presence, dwelling thus in God’s arms.

Regarding God as distant and difficult or impossible to reach produces all sorts of strange results. One possibility is for people

to conclude that if God is so distant, he can be practically completely ignored and left out of consideration in one's actions. The other possibility is to turn to the lower forces instead to God, because they are seen as closer and easier to reach.

No such misconception would be possible if people knew what God really is.

God is the foundation of all reality. God is the reality above all realities. God is closer than the closest, dearer than the dearest, more real than the most real. Everything good has its origin in God and comes from him. Every form of creativity, intelligence, brilliance, power, consciousness and love is made of God. God is the foundation on which the human soul is built.

Therefore when we seek God, we should not look for something far and inaccessible, but on the contrary we should seek the closest of the close, something that is perfectly close and dear to us. Having found it, we will find its source that exceeds it infinitely in everything, the source of everything that we hold dear and beautiful, the thing that we strive for throughout our lives, as the greatest happiness and the ultimate goal. God is the source of all knowledge, all consciousness, all love, all reality, all beauty and all truth. God is the perfect source of all that is beautiful, powerful and good. Tracking the beautiful and powerful, the real and the true to its source, we will reach God. That is beyond doubt.

Another widely spread misconception is that God's very greatness makes him hard to access, or even completely beyond reach. It is wrong: that very greatness makes God universally present. God is so great that he is everywhere at once. He is so great that he saturates everything at once, and that is what makes him extremely easy to attain. God is present in all of us all the time, he permeates our essence, he is present in our daily lives, but that very presence makes him seldom recognized as God. It is true that this presence is mild and unimposing it is not forceful and mighty as it could be, because our consciousness is involved with other things and turned in other directions, away from God, so that our perception of God is dimmed and silenced, to say the least. But it is never completely gone, it is always there, so close. It is the inner perfection that we confide to without words, often even without direct knowledge that we do so.

If God is present in us, then he is undoubtedly present in other beings equally. That very universality guarantees impartiality, because

God is the sun that shines equally on good and on the wicked.⁴⁰ God is not biased, and actions rooted in God will be equally unbiased, they will be saturated with the quality of universality that is the attribute of God.

The way toward God is not the way from illusion toward the reality, it is the way from the lesser reality toward the greater reality, from the lesser truth toward the greater truth, from the lesser light toward the greater light. For that reason is the path toward God always filled with truth and reality, and consciousness always has to dwell in truth and reality, to the extent that is possible in a seeker's current spiritual condition.

Misconceptions that speak of the need to renounce the worldly in order to attain the spiritual are as frequent as those that speak of the distant God. It is true that such a statement has its valid meaning and an area in which it applies, but it is unfortunately most often misused.

Let us analyze things a bit and find out what we are dealing with here.

People are generally obsessed with desires for money and various forms of pleasures, which of course do not fulfill them and they are therefore unfulfilled and unhappy. Then someone came up with the idea that it should all be abandoned and that God should be desired instead, God who brings fulfillment to all needs and thus extinguishes the flame of desires. This is of course true, but in order for that method to succeed it is necessary to show God to people so that they can cling to him, and, thus fulfilled, naturally renounce all desires for the lower, for if they renounce the lower without first attaining the higher, they will be even more unfulfilled than they were to begin with. People desire things not because of the things as such, but because of the feelings that they associate with their possession. For instance, the feeling of happiness is associated with the possession of a new car, a big house, a happy family and wealth. Translated, it says that a person feels unhappy, and projects the feeling of happiness into the state of possession of all those things. The problem with such an attitude is that happiness is a state of spirit, independent of external circumstances. A man can be happy even in very unfavorable circumstances; a soldier can be happy amidst the horrors of the

⁴⁰ Matthew 5:43–48.

battle, heavily wounded and surrounded with sights of death and destruction, if he at that moment helped his friends. Even if he dies at this moment, it will mean nothing to him, his happiness will remain undisturbed. Likewise, a man who does things incompatible with his conscience will fail to find happiness even in the most ideal of material conditions.

Happiness is the state of harmony, of finding “one’s place,” and acting from it. A man has to find his own path, and walk this path, move from his normal depth of realization toward the higher realization, observing the world in an increasingly subtler way, observing how God’s law functions on the increasingly subtler levels of the Creation, until the subtlety of his consciousness reaches God’s inner nature, when his vision of the world becomes equal to God’s.

Happiness should not be projected into the future, near or far, it should be felt in the present, and we should then move from it toward the greater happiness. As grave as the circumstances can be, we can always find something to be thankful for, and express our gratitude to God for the mercy and the beauty that he bestowed upon us. The man whose child has just died, who has lost his job and whose wife is mortally ill, is at the same time gifted with existence, he is gifted with a privilege to watch the beauty of the sunrise and the sunset, he is gifted with the peace of the trees whose branches are caressed by the wind. He is blessed with a gift of the immense and matchless beauty of the universe. The situation is never so bad that it would be deprived of existence, and existence is God’s innermost attribute, because everything exists by God, and the very existence of a thing leads to the foundation of all existence, which is God. Existence itself, therefore, leads us toward the treasure of infinite bliss.

One could say that this is so simple, that countless people have to be enlightened and united with God’s peace, but if we look more closely, how many people are aware of existence? Unfortunately, only a few. Most either take it for granted or run away from it. Existence can be felt in the peace of the moment, in presence in the present, with no need for the future and with no thought of the past. By feeling existence we can dive deeper into its nature, into God, and drink our fulfillment from its source.

“What is so great about existence”—someone will ask— “everything exists, now we’re supposed to do something with it.” The

one who asks such a question is not aware of his own existence, he runs away from it somewhere else and he is not firmly rooted in it. The one who is firmly rooted in his own existence acts with peace and harmony, with no coercion or haste, with no fear or restlessness. The very existence itself gives one the immense peace and happiness, the very existence itself is the way toward the heart of God.

When I therefore say that the way toward God leads from reality toward greater reality, I mean it literally: within us are the keys to our salvation, and all we need is to use them and be free. It is not necessary to be born in India and to know Sanskrit in order to correctly pronounce some mantra from an inaccessible scripture, which will lead us to enlightenment; these mantras are given within us, in the peace of the nature in the sunset, in the sunlight shining from the water on a leaf, or in a child's eye. It is all within us. All those things will remind us of something that we have forgotten for a while, and what always was and is within us, only forgotten, unused.

If God is therefore everywhere, in everything, what could be the meaning of the statement that everything should be renounced for the sake of God? It is obvious that we should renounce everything that is not God, therefore everything that is not the reality, and the majority of such unreal things can be found in our very consciousness, which is preoccupied with the unreal for the whole time. All those things need to be renounced, the entire jungle of unreal trivia on which people spend their entire lives. We should dedicate ourselves to the concrete reality of the moment and live God in it. From that reality we should move in depth and become capable of the more subtle perception of the reality. This is the true meaning of renunciation: renunciation of the unreal for the sake of the real, renunciation of the illusion for the sake of reality. Those who have renounced all are not necessarily the monks behind the monastery walls, who are often the ones with many things to renounce, but those who are dependent only on God in all circumstances, on reality, surrounded with all the things that do not disturb their balance.

Love and inner balance are also a way toward God—and those states (I won't call them emotions) have their foundation and origin in God, as is the case with the reality. We could in fact say that love and joy are the basic aspects of the reality; the real is filled

with inner joy and love, and the unreal is vain and hollow. We should not understand it in the sense that the ones who smile and who are apparently happy are especially close to God, for there are religious groups in which a smile is included in some sort of an obligatory dress code which is supposed to show the depth of their inner joy and enlightenment to the “tourists,” but such “joy” turns my stomach. True fulfillment has no need for form, and it can often be seen through tears rather than through a smile. It is something ethereal, intangible, that can only be felt, and not defined and classified. Love is something that is seen in the natural instincts and responses, in the spontaneous form of interaction of the being and its environment, where there is no clear difference between one and the other, but where a being feels others in the same way in which it feels itself; there is no clear distinction, because the borders have been melted down by love and compassion.

For love is the force that unites, that breaks through walls and differences, that makes the existing inner unity visible on the outside. Love is what makes a man unable to sleep if his neighbor is hungry or in trouble; love is the reason we rejoice in another’s happiness, and mourn in his misery. Love is not a form or a sentiment, it is the foundation of the functioning on which everything else is built—it would be most accurate to say that love is an aspect of the reality, one of the forms of the bond between God and the world and of God’s manifestation in the world, for where there is God there is love, and where there is no love, God’s presence is utterly silenced and invisible.

We should, however, distinguish love from attachment.

It is a common situation that everything is called love, which is especially so in the case of pleasant variations on the theme of attachment. Various forms of projection of one’s desires and their satisfaction onto the other person are usually called love, while the illusion lasts, and then the thing starts to look far less appealing, then the problem shows its ugly side. This type of attachment is the opposite case of the log in the eye:⁴¹ in the negative example of the projection of one’s own condition the faults of others are the easiest to notice, so others are demonized and rejected, and in the “positive” example of the projection, one notices one’s missing

⁴¹ Matthew 7:3–5; Luke 6:41–42.

qualities in the other; others are seen as a cure for one's problems. The lack of one's inner balance is thus often compensated with all sorts of "love affairs," in which there is least love, and which are primarily based on the attempt to heal one's inner emptiness.

In the "log in the eye" example, the advice is to take care of one's own faults first. The similar applies here: we need to work on our inner wholesomeness first, and base all our relationships with other people on that wholesomeness, so that others wouldn't be reduced to mere means of achieving our goals.

The only successful love relationships are between wholesome and balanced people. That is the very reason why self-examination and self-development are of great importance, turning within to find the causes of dysfunctional behavior, so that they could be healed from within, before we turn outward, toward others.

Because they fail to do so, proselytes of various religious groups start vigorously preaching and doing "missionary work," instead of turning to themselves. It is quite obvious that it is a mere strategy of distracting attention from one's own problems, and not the desire of the fulfilled spirit to share its wholesomeness with others; it is, on the contrary, the desire of an empty spirit to share its emptiness with others and to subdue them, for they never see their potential targets as wholesome Divine beings to be respected and loved, they do not see them as their lovers, but as a "raw mass" of humanity to be converted to the "right path"—the "conditioned fallen souls" to be "brought into the Krishna consciousness," as it is formulated in one of the most obvious examples of the phenomenon.

Basically it functions by splitting the world into two groups, the group of the damned and the group of the saved (to which the missionary of course belongs). In the group of the saved the missionary has his place, his importance. In the group of the damned, he is a meaningless figure of marginal importance. Through the process of conversion of persons from the group of the damned into the group of the saved, he in fact brings the people into the sphere of his own importance; he then becomes something important and valuable to them, thus affirming his ego (which is in fact a mere bunch of ill weaknesses that need love to be healed). It is most often the case that such a missionary is always a step above those whom he has converted, so that the conversion of new subjects is in fact affirmation of his own importance. It is an unfortunate fact that such "conquests of men" look more like

seduction in order to subdue, than like creating a marital relationship of equal partners and lovers.

On that very example of matrimonial union, the fault of the missionary approach becomes visible: one wishes to form a marriage with someone whom he considers to be his equal, with someone with whom he wants to spend his life, with whom he wants to form a platform of love on which the rest of his life will be built. Such a set of motives is quite different from the desire to somehow lure the potential partner into one's sphere of influence, in order to control him and inflate one's ego on his account. Unfortunately, I am afraid that the example of marriage is far from being ideal, since it looks to me like most marriages are the negative example.

How can we distinguish good examples of human relationships from bad ones? It seems that the best method is given in the thought that the true leader is the one who wants to serve and not to rule,⁴² that the true leader is the one who is willing to sacrifice for those whom he serves, whom he leads. There is no love greater than this—to give your life for your friends.⁴³ That is the criterion, it seems. The ideal marriage is the one where the husband is at any moment willing to die for his wife, and in which the wife is at any moment willing to give her life for her husband. Without much thinking, instinctively. That is the relationship in which one's partner is valued more than one's own life. This is the relationship based on true love.

The spiritual community must in all regards be like marriage, except in the number of people that make it. Its foundations must be mutual respect, reverence, and love. Its purpose must be selfless giving and caring about the members of one's spiritual community, as spontaneous as the mutual care of the ideal married couple.

Do not make a mistake by assuming that by such love I mean some icky imitation, where everyone acts intentionally and consciously, taking care always to speak with chosen words and in a polite tone of voice. A relationship made on such weak foundations, on form alone, can never be successful. Sooner or later a difficult situation or a crisis will occur, in which it will be necessary to discuss some issues with a dose of sharpness, and if a relationship is based on formal politeness, it will be destroyed. Lovers

⁴² Matthew 20:25–28; Mark 10:42–45.

⁴³ John 15:13.

and best friends will often argue bitterly, but if the foundations are right, such arguments will never turn into ugly abuse or attack on the person; there will be loud disagreements, but they will look more like a pillow fight than a drunken brawl—in the first case the background of the fight is cheerful love and mutual respect and friendship, and the goal is to play, while in the other case the background is hatred, and the goal is violence and murder.

In the spiritual community there will be lots of pillow fights, but there will be no drunken brawls with knives and broken bottles. This is the difference. The difference is in the fact that in the first case lovers are doing something *together*, as a whole and a community, and in the other case enemies are doing something as individuals, one against the other. The pillow fight unites, and the knife fight separates.

Here we come to my concept of spirituality: spirituality in life is not one thing among other things, it is the foundation on which all other things are built, and if they are not, they will collapse. If we take an example of a school that teaches different subjects, spirituality is not one subject among other subjects, like, mathematics, literature, chemistry, spirituality, biology; spirituality is the foundation on which the sum of all the teachings is built, which merges them all together and saturates them all, giving the meaning to everything, but it does not exist as a separate subject to be learned and exercised.

Love and Sex

Love is a subject on which much is written, both good and bad, but no matter how much is said, more and better can be added, because love, as a topic, is of great potential, I would dare to say endless. One of the problems that I'm facing is the unclear definition of love, which starts in the very shallow waters where everything is called love, some temporary attraction for instance, and then goes far deeper, where love is felt not as an emotion, but as the deep reality of a being.

It also seems quite common that persons, who have had some experience of the higher levels of reality, usually describe such experience as love, even if the levels concerned are different; the deeper the level, the more vague the descriptions, but it is always about love as a basic element of which the experience is made. It therefore seems that "love" is the term used by human beings to denote a higher state of consciousness.

It also seems that love, the deep and real love, is in fact the normal reality of which our being is made, for whenever the storm of thoughts that disturb our peace ceases, we feel love for all, love for God, and deep peace. Love and peace of the soul are so closely connected, that they apparently always come together.

Such peace and fulfillment have the tendency of expansion, they tend to radiate into the environment. Someone who lives in harmony, and wants to come in touch with others, will have the natural quality of love and harmony in his actions, without giving it much thought or effort. If he finds acceptance on the other side, and love equal to his, a platform of love in the world is made, and a "power circuit" is formed to keep it in existence. This is the meaning that Jesus had in mind when he said: *For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst.*⁴⁴ A man alone cannot be a platform of the higher presence in the world, because for such a thing there must be a need; a power circuit needs appliances in order for the current to flow. The power source alone, with no appliances to consume the power, will not produce the light. It has the value of a potential, but this potential is not utilized.

⁴⁴ Matthew 18:20.

An example of such a power circuit, in the simplest form, is a marriage based on deep love. The love that would, without such a community, represent a mere potential at best for both partners, thus finds its means of expression and radiates into the world, two people start to live their inner love, making a platform of love on the physical plane.

Every human being has “receivers” and “transmitters” of love, the means of radiating and receiving love. A human being, as a physical being present in the world, feels fulfilled only when its needs for giving and receiving love are met, only when it is in the “power cycle” of love. The entire physical and psychic construction of a human being is made to fit in such a wider circle, not to be isolated as an individual but to interact with others. On the physical level, the sexual organs are the very physical connectors of the power cycle of love, with which two beings form a union, merge into one, in order to make possible on the physical plane the thing that is already a fact on the spiritual, emotional and energetic planes.

A frequent mistake is to think that sex can function apart from the higher planes—that a sexual relationship without the accompanying spiritual, emotional, intellectual and energetic ones is possible; that is simply not so. Such attempts are most often the source of pain and inner spiritual injuries, since such relationships are unsteady and temporary. The very unsteadiness and transience are the things that are completely incompatible with the sexual union: by its very nature, it tends to unite people on all planes. Such union happens to a degree, because lovers open up and surrender to each other, and if such a relationship is broken, if it cannot follow its natural course of complete mutual merging and unity. The inner and outer ties then collapse, and there are the nasty emotional wounds, which after a few repetitions seriously aggravate the establishment of a really profound relationship, since the instinct of surrender is replaced with the instinct of defense from the injury. The partner is seen as some sort of an enemy on the battlefield; the partner is a temporary means of satisfying one’s sexual needs, after which he will be rejected, and the inner resources are isolated and protected, in order to remain out of reach of such a relationship.

This very promiscuous approach based on the superficial, short and mostly sexual relationship is the reason why the astral of

homosexuals and promiscuous heterosexuals (especially those who “visit” prostitutes) is in extremely bad shape, bad enough for one to sit down and weep, having seen it. All sorts of fears, blockages, dirt and inner insecurities can be found there, and the process of cleansing of such astral can be quite demanding, and it will always be necessary to completely break the cycle of dysfunctional behavior and to have a strong desire to change. Why especially homosexuals? Well, it’s not because homosexuals are in some way inferior to heterosexuals, but because the entire system of educational and socially-moral regulation of sex is designed for heterosexuals. Marriage is designed only for male-female couples. This is the reason why most homosexuals will feel as a sort of social outcasts, outcasts from the ideas of sex, marriage, faithfulness and other similar categories.

It resembles a situation that would take place if a new species of beings were to appear, similar to humans, but unprotected from abuse and murder by the laws that protect humans. Then we would see how much of human thinking and behavior is conditioned only by social and educational constructions, and how much is a reflection of our real inner being and its feeling of rightness.

If you think this is a hypothetical situation, you are in for a surprise. A couple of centuries ago we could find an exactly similar situation in our own civilization: slavery. Beings who were considered to be almost human, but not quite, were the African Negroes, who were imported to the American continent as slave workers. There was a system of educationally-moral views, even legislated on the level of the states, according to which a black person was not quite human, but a slave. Things that a white man would consider to be utterly mean and immoral if applied to another white man, were considered to be quite normal and acceptable when applied to a black man. True, there were white people whose sense of moral rightness did not allow them to treat black people badly, or to treat them in any way different than white people, but they were a small minority. The majority of white people guided themselves by customs and educational programming, without using their own heads, and without any ability to sympathize with others and to feel the context of the situation.

In the same manner, the majority of homosexuals are guided by social programming regarding sex, where the only “regulated” sexual

liaison is the one between heterosexuals, and the homosexual liaison is considered to be some sort of a dark fornication. Since they feel like outcasts and fornicators, they often behave according to such a concept, and the sexual life of homosexuals often sums up to changes of a great number of superficial partners, where every relationship sums up to sex alone. For that reason their sexual system becomes non-transparent, closed, damaged, and looks generally disgusting.

Exactly the same thing happens to heterosexuals who “visit” prostitutes, or engage themselves in short, superficial sexual relationships, “one night stands.” Their emotional and energetic system is an ugly sight.

One will ask how is it possible for such people to have a closed and damaged sexual system if they have sex all the time; one would expect the system to benefit from such a “workout,” to become more transparent with use. Well, this is exactly the problem, such relationships don’t make use of the sexual system; on the contrary, they close it up even more. The primary function of the sexual mechanism, on all levels, is opening up, uniting persons, creating deep bonds and unity. With *such* use the system becomes more transparent, open, beautiful, *then* it does shine. The system becomes clean and beautiful when love flows through it—union of the sexual organs has to go along with the energetic, emotional, mental and spiritual union of the persons, so that the background of love would be present on all planes.

Does such a relationship really need sex, in the sense of uniting the sexual organs? Of course not. In fact, all higher spiritual and emotional exchanges are non-sexual; often will in such states even the breathing stop, let alone sex. But in the meantime most of the functioning will be physical to an extent, and human beings tend to express love on the physical plane by touch: hugs, caresses and the like. If the relationship of two lovers does not include their bodies, a part of them will feel rejected and unloved, which will create frictions and problems. If the focus is, however, completely turned to the physical, the awareness of the higher planes of existence is lost, and *that* creates problems.

The monogamous marriage imposes itself as an optimal and reasonable solution for the majority of people. It provides the feeling of safety, it creates the environment in which the expression of love in all its aspects, from sex to deep meditation, is quite

normal, expected and supported, and on such a platform love grows and spreads further, through conception, birth, and raising children.

Without such a platform of safety, without love that spreads through all planes of existence, the steady development of children's personalities is also not possible; the children of divorced parents often have serious problems with the feeling of security, because they lack faith in stability of human relationships, the faith in their steadiness under the waves of hardships. If there is knowledge that difficulties and external circumstances can be overcome, that the bond between people is strong enough to overcome the obstacles, there is a deep faith in people, in their stability and value of love and mutual faithfulness.

Today, when it has become common to abandon one's partner when one is tired of him, or on the first insignificant difficulty such as the change of a job, the vows of life-long faithfulness have become a laughingstock, they are regarded as something outdated, a relic of a time past. I would ask one question: to whom would you wish to open the inner resources of your soul? To someone who might leave you tomorrow, or to someone for whom you know for sure that he will die for you or with you, if need be? Which relationship will allow God's nature to be manifested more, the one where the partners take care primarily of their own interests, and if those interests are not fully gratified, they leave the partner, or the one in which both partners value the needs and desires of the other one more than their own, and where they take care not of themselves, but of the other, leaving the other one to take care of them? Which one will be more Divine? That is what I'm asking you.

And Divine does not get outdated, it does not get out of fashion, no matter how much people in their actions and thoughts separate themselves from the Divine laws under which the world is made. The facts are, that if something is in alignment with God's will, it functions well, and if it is not, it doesn't function at all, it perishes. God's nature is manifested in the steadiness and selflessness of the true love. Such selflessness is primarily visible in the loss of the "I" perspective in favor of the "us" perspective. The couple becomes a new functioning being, like the multicellular one that is created by fusion of the monocellular ones, and each individual in the couple perceives its identity as the identity of the

couple, not as the identity of the individual. “We” are the married couple. “I” is the married couple, not a person in that couple. And this is not something that would have to be imagined, or something that would exist only as a conviction, it has to exist on the level of basic existence. These are the foundations on which the spirituality of a community can be built.

One will ask whether marriage is the only possible type of a platform that enables the flow of deep love among people. Of course it is not. It is merely one of the good examples. There are other, equally powerful forms of expression, but here I will speak only of those that involve the sexual component, since the image has been formed, through history, of a spiritual person as an ascetic who has renounced the world, who meditates on the distant transcendental God.

The reader will now probably expect me to attack such an image as wrong, but I will not. It is not wrong, it is right, but it needs to be properly understood. Persons *deluded* by the world, in fact by the appearance of the world, become hopelessly involved in all sorts of attachments, all sorts of projections of their inner states onto the situations, and other similar illusions, and thus they never manage to raise themselves above the coarsest attachments. No spirituality is possible on such foundations, and that is why it is *necessary* to start the path by withdrawing oneself from the world—by closing the gates that lead outward, and opening the gates that lead inward, into everything that we run away from by dwelling in the worlds of images and deceptions.

A man will be attracted by women, and he will want to unite with them in order to come in touch with his female side, which he sees as the perfect woman. A woman will in the same manner want to unite with her male side, which she sees as a perfect man. There is nothing wrong or bad in that, except for a “small detail,” the fact that this is impossible to achieve through another person, through a partner on the outside, but only by diverting the vision from the outer world inward.

Such a revolution, often a rather violent one, is absolutely necessary in all cases in which people need to stop the dysfunctional habits that they have acquired, and which would, if allowed, imprison their existence in a vicious circle of projections and disappointments, when the partner fails to meet the expectations projected upon him. It is therefore necessary to break

such a circle at a point, and make a radical change of the dysfunctional behavior, which is possible only through a change of perspective. We should therefore stop looking for the speck in our neighbor's eye (the beauty of the opposite sex) and observe the log in our own eye (the perfection of our "inner partner"). The inner partner of a person is the perfection that he wants to be united with. The desire for unity with this perfection is projected outward through the sexual desire, desire for merging with the other person, in which the qualities of this inner perfect partner are visible. When a person finds out that the qualities of this "ideal external partner" are merely a projection that does not at all correspond with the actual state of that other being, there will be disappointment. It is presumable that some will, after such a disappointment, identify the problem, but the majority of people don't; on the contrary, they believe that the problem is the fact that they didn't find "the right partner," so they keep on searching, and they find the next object on which they will project the fulfillment of their needs.

Our needs can be fulfilled only by God.

This sounds radical, but it is utterly correct. Our quest for an ideal partner is, in fact, our quest for God, who is the entirety of all perfections, and who can never be replaced by anything. The attempt to replace God with something lesser necessarily leads to disappointment.

And the way to God is so simple, that it is indeed incredible, it is so madly simple that nobody will ever come up with such an idea, except by accident, for since God is so immensely great and perfect, one is more likely to use a telescope to look for him, than to look into what our entire being tells us for the whole time.

God is our ideal partner. God is the image that constantly occupies our consciousness. The image of our ideal partner is made of all of God's attributes that we were able to put together; in fact, the majority of people will not dare to put these attributes together, out of false modesty, because they think that they are unworthy of something so wonderful. Now, what is the way to God? It is something so good, that most people will not dare to even think of it, because they see themselves as unworthy. And it goes like this: we should dare to put all those attributes of perfection together, into one person, and accept this perfection, accept "this" as our partner. And unite with this partner.

You may think that one can imagine making love with such a being. Indeed, lovemaking is quite imaginable, God will immediately accept it, but the very vision of such perfection will result in a situation where the only lovemaking will be to sobbing at God's feet, where every such sob is an experience immensely deeper than orgasm, a sob of joy that we are accepted by such a perfection, that it exists, and that it is with us.

It is not necessary for the projection of the ideal partner to be sexual; it can be for instance a projection of intellectual perfection, a perfect mind, a being so wise and aware that its consciousness overwhelms us. Whatever perfection we imagine, God is that, among other things, but better—we can by no means exaggerate, we can only vastly underestimate the reality. It doesn't matter if we do underestimate it, as long as we go up to our limits, if we include everything that we can feel as perfect into our concept of perfection.

The majority of people, because of their particular interests, project perfection outward on several different fields. It seldom consists of just imagining the perfect partner, imagining the perfect mind or the like; we are usually making several such projections. Often will there be the separate images of an ideal partner and of God, as the ideal. During our sexual fantasies we will often create the ideal person out of several completely different persons, not even merged into one—the images, states, thoughts, impressions, all of them together will blend into a wider aspect to which we will offer our adoration; one big patchwork. Likewise, a Christian who adores Jesus will most likely adore not one image or event from his life; such an image will most often be made out of all events, speeches, states and inner visions of all that he knows about Jesus, and what powerfully impresses him with Divinity.

If we now go back to that ascetic who meditates away from the world, and whose spirit is immersed in the observation of such perfection, as well as states far deeper than anything that we are able to imagine or perceive, he abruptly stops giving the impression of a poor guy who is deprived of all the wonderful things available to us, and starts looking like a superior, magnificent being that enjoys something that is beyond the reach of our raw and unrefined spirits. Such an image will make us wish to be like him as soon as possible, and to experience the Divine nectar enjoyed by such a perfect being.

Such a state of spirit, inner self-sufficiency, is the primary prerequisite of every successful human relationship on the physical plane.

When we speak of spirituality and sex, a question of celibacy naturally arises. Celibacy is one of the answers that people have come up with, trying to figure out a way to regulate their sexuality, when they concluded that the simplest solution is to simply forget about sex altogether, and to declare it undesirable.

There are, of course, two possible ways to achieve this. One way is obvious: the spirit is so involved with the higher states, that the question of sex never arises, because sex is not an addition or a positive factor in these states, but on the contrary, it represents an obstacle and a fall, so the desires will naturally be oriented toward the higher spiritual states and away from sex.

The other way to achieve celibacy is repression: the desire for sex exists, in one form or another, but it is repressed and proclaimed undesirable or sinful, and consciousness is somehow coerced to move in directions that are regarded as more socially or religiously acceptable. It is clear, from this very analysis, that the first form of celibacy functions perfectly because it is natural and spontaneous: no voluntary effort is involved in its realization and maintenance, while the other form of celibacy is unnatural; it is done against the natural alignment of the system and as such it is bound to produce one sort of problems or another.

There is a quite simple way to determine the type of celibacy that we are dealing with; we just need to see if thoughts of sex occur in the mind of the practitioner. If the answer is positive, then we are dealing with the second, coerced form of celibacy. If we are dealing with natural celibacy, the question of sex will never even arise, sex will not be thought of, in neither positive nor negative context, the consciousness just doesn't dwell on sex but on something else, and the absence of sexual practice is then simply a natural consequence of such an orientation of spirit. The fact is, however, that a configuration of the energetic system that is needed for proper functioning in today's society requires use of the energetic layers that are below such states, that do not possess the inner qualities of utmost fulfillment and self-reliance of the spirit, and so the needs for sex, food, air and other things will remain, and the only question that arises is whether they will be satisfied

in a way in which they will not represent a problem but a possible assistance, or are we going to deny or repress them, and thus accept the risks consequential to such an attitude.

There is a positive correlation between the need for sex, the need for food and the need for air. When the state of spirit is high enough for sex to represent an energetic fall, instead of a rise, then the breathing and the intake of food also represent an energetic fall, and so they are spontaneously stopped, during the switch of the system to the higher “vibratory levels.” During the replacement of the lower energetic levels, such as the matter, prana, astral and mental with the higher ones, for instance the basic operative substances of the throat, brow and the crown chakras (vajra, indigo and violet), the lower energetic flows are spontaneously extinguished; for instance, instead of assimilating the prana and the coarse matter from food with the lower chakras, vajra is assimilated through the throat chakra, which gradually replaces all the matter and prana from the physical and pranic bodies. The bodies of such yogis, who have successfully completed such a switch, resist post mortem decay for decades or even centuries. Of the body parts of such yogis, the area of the larynx is the one that decays slowest. Such an energetic rise, switching to the higher energetic plane, does not take place only on the levels of prana and matter, but also on the astral level (thoughts and emotions) and mental level (realization, love-wisdom), where the emotional and intellectual processes of the lower order are replaced by those of the higher order, so that the whole person’s existence is transformed. The existence of the physical body is maintained, but it is no longer entirely physical, it is maintained from above, and it is so much saturated by the higher orders of energy, that the function of what is perceived as matter is quite passive and utterly submitted to the influence of the higher levels, and the demands of the lower levels have no real say in the decisions and functioning of the spirit, which is by no means the case with the “ordinary man,” whose functioning is mostly determined by the needs of his lower bodies, and only when those needs are met can there be talk of the ascension to the higher levels of functioning.

This very situation makes celibacy, in the majority of cases, impossible and harmful; most often will attempts to uphold celibacy force the practitioner to use some more or less extreme way of repressing sexual desire, and to draw extremely negative

images and perceptions of this desire's object. Men who would like to indulge in such celibacy will mostly demonize women within themselves, or picture sex as a form of an inferior animal activity that is unworthy of a man. Such methods often end with homosexuality (when a woman is replaced, in the role of a desirable partner, with a man, as a remaining option) or with cauterization of the energetic flows related to sex, which makes a person hard, insensitive, cruel, merciless and void of all forms of life's joy.

My advice to those who have somewhere heard that celibacy is a very spiritual thing, even necessary as a prerequisite of any spiritual development, is to take such statements with a grain of salt.

It is a fact that no spiritual progress is possible if the inner eye constantly dwells on the projections of the visions of one's ideal partner upon other persons, thus spending life looking in the wrong direction. Those reasons made someone come up with the idea that it might be better to forget about sex altogether, thus making a mistake; for sex is not some aspect of human functioning that can be so easily written off, for it has the interesting quality to unite the majority of the positive elements of the personality, and therefore blocking sex will result in blocking all of the related elements, which is not to be done, or grave consequences will arise. It is much better to turn sex inward, toward God, to make love with God, and then will the balance in sexual life be established all by itself, without any need for violent methods.

Whether the person, whose inner vision is pointed toward God, enters a relationship of love and sex with another such person, or not, is quite irrelevant, for such a union will not be an obstacle to the spiritual development, but an assistance. A coerced form of celibacy, or any other form of sexual repression, however, will become a serious aggravation that can ruin a man completely.

The Meaning

If a being is self-sufficient and perfect within, and if it drinks the nectar of the utmost pleasure within, you will ask yourselves: what could possibly motivate such a being to act in the world?

This is probably one of the smartest questions of all, and I would hardly dare to say that I know the answer beyond any doubt. On one hand yes, the inner states of the Divine reality are so powerful and magnificent, that every form of motivation for the activity in the outer sphere is lost, all the pleasures and goals are found in God within. On the other hand, once God is found, there is a realization that all Creation is in fact made of the substance of God, as a sphere of expression and experience, in God and yet outside him, where it is not possible to determine which one of two is the greater truth. It is clear that God is the eternal reality that can never by any means be lost, which awaits us eternally as the ultimate certainty. And this very certainty of God, who can never be lost, to whom we belong at the end and in the beginning, independently from all the games of experiences and activities in between, makes it possible for souls to separate themselves from God in order to attain experience.

If there was any possibility whatsoever for us to lose God, there is no doubt that no being would dare to make any move, that would in any way cause it to separate from God. But since such a loss is essentially impossible, and since it can exist only in appearance, beings can dare to do things that can appear to be absurd or senseless. Imagine yourself in a position of a being that is aware of God's presence and of the eternal nature of its own unity with God. Such a being wishes to attain some experiences, in order to feel some things, through the relative. It desires to attain the feeling of pleasure. It desires to attain the experience of a painful death. It desires to attain the feeling of loss. Practically an infinite number of experiences, the entire range of possibilities.

I often used to play a certain computer game from a deliberately aggravated position, after finishing it in a normal way. I made it difficult for myself merely in order to find out if I could do it, if I had control of the situation in all possible circumstances. I used to test, when I had nothing else to do, the different ways to "die" in the game—merely to see what it looks like. Would I do such things

if I identified myself with the character in the game enough to think that I can really die, if I, as a character, fall from the tenth floor? Somehow, I don't think so. Such tests are possible for me only because I sit in a comfortable armchair in front of the computer, having a nice time. Likewise, all the experiences in my life are possible only because my real being dwells in God, forever safe, no matter what happens. It is quite clear, at least to me, that I would never choose to be incarnated if I had any doubt at any point if it could have some effect on my relationship with God. Only the perfect and unbreakable inner union makes separation possible.

Looking from that perspective, what is the goal of the whole thing?

On one hand, we play roles in some sort of a movie. This is not the reality, at least not in the ultimate sense. This is reality in the sense that it exists, but it is defined within something, as much as the computer game is real because it exists, but it does not represent the ultimate reality, it is but a form of a sophisticated illusion—it is both real and unreal at the same time. It is real because it exists, it can be played, but it is not what it appears to be, it is not the ultimate reality but a simulated world, which is real in the same sense in which dreams are real.

What roles will we choose to play? Well, to me it appears that we will choose the ones that reflect our desires, our worldview, our nature, at that moment. We will play the game in the way most natural to us, and when we see some of our flaws, we will change our approach to the game, we will play differently. For example, we choose the role of a “bad guy,” a person that deliberately inflicts harm and causes pain. It might be fun for a while, and then we see the consequences of that choice—we see that it is far more pleasant to play the game differently, to express the beautiful Divine qualities, for then our experience of the game looks far more appealing to us, we can identify more with the character that we play. The more the character looks like us, the more attributes of our inner nature it possesses, the better and more comfortable we feel in the game. We will meet our friends in the game and spend a beautiful day. Within those given boundaries we will show mutual love—let's say that two friends play a game filled with limitations, each at his/her own computer. The girl commands her character to wave its hand in greeting. The boy gives the command to return the greeting. They both direct their characters

so that they touch hands, and then they go and do something together—anything, that reflects their friendship. In such a non-obligatory scenario full of unreal things and limitations, the way we choose to behave and react plays a major role. Knowing that they are safe behind their equipment in their rooms, the friends can choose to play the game violently, try to kill each other, knowing that it makes no real difference, and that their mate will be unharmed. That is true. But this is the very reason why it is so beautiful if, in spite of that, in spite of knowledge that nothing bad will happen if they wage war, they choose to act in a mutually loving manner. It has the qualities of final beauty and devotion—to act, within an artificial world in which it is quite possible to act in any way without any harmful consequences, in the same way as in the reality. This is the utmost victory in the game, the game then becomes obsolete, the friends then choose to end the game, and most likely continue in the real world—if they decide that they have no other needs of the virtual world besides loving each other and doing nice things to one other, as well as in real life; then the game, as a field of creating the alternative realities, becomes pointless. Since it only needlessly limits the higher reality, it is extinguished, and friends in real life, who choose to be friends in the simulated life as well, will simply go back to their real life and to their friendship, which will be strengthened by mutual experience and the mutual choices of love.

And maybe not; perhaps they will continue playing together and thus express their love. Whichever, the realization and the inner balance are the basic prerequisites of the correct functioning in the world, and for that reason it is necessary to attain realization before involving oneself in various relationships, with both persons and situations. It is necessary to find one's own perfection within, to firmly root oneself in God, and then, if it is God's will, to act in the world—not before, because if action is not rooted in God, it cannot be right, and the world is already abundant with wrong actions. The one who seeks the truth needs to conscientiously perform all the duties that he has already accepted, so that others would not suffer, but one always needs to avoid burying oneself into excessive activities that keep his consciousness on the outer. The examples of such burying can be seen everywhere on a daily basis; people bury themselves in work and obligations in order to protect themselves from asking questions about purpose

and meaning, and when they don't bury themselves in work, they watch the TV all day long, "entertain" themselves and divert their attention from all the things that really matter. Such habits need to be broken.

Often will one need to discontinue the former way of life, or at least introduce radical changes. This is the case with the greatest majority of people who live in a way that cannot be interpreted as something that God would see as good, even with the most vivid imagination. Someone who is, for instance, selling drugs or firearms on the black market, or is a prostitute, or a hired assassin. Such a person will have to discontinue such a way of life even if such revolution means death, for even death is a lesser evil compared to a life that opposes dharma. The majority of people live in ways that are in much greater harmony with God, and they only need to find a deeper meaning of everything, without making such radical turns in their lives.

When I say that the majority of people live in a much greater harmony with God, it should be seen as a very relative statement, in sense that on one hand, in a wider context, everything is in harmony with God, but harmony with God has a very special meaning in the life of an individual. Harmony with God directs a person's life in a way that gives it deeper meaning and creates harmony on a wider, outer scale. I therefore mention harmony with God in a context in which a person who sincerely cares and sympathizes with others, and who lives his life in friendship with all beings and with God, is in harmony with God, and the one who sells drugs to children, and every now and then kills someone in a dark alley, isn't.

It doesn't mean that we should now spit on such a person and call him a sinner, he should be seen as a brother in trouble, a man who is unhappy and who therefore spreads unhappiness. Really evil people are quite rare; most of those who are usually seen as evil are simply unhappy and feel rejected. Maybe all of them, I don't know. But it makes sense to speak of the evil in the world, evil so present that it threatens to utterly destroy the world and all its inhabitants along with it. We should not remain silent about it, because if the illness is ignored, it tends to become worse. For this very reason I will dedicate a large portion of my writing to the issue of the evil in the world, in order for us to assess the condition and to devise possible ways of improvement.

Ecology

Thanks to various groups of people who have dedicated their work to the issues of environmental protection, it has become a matter of common knowledge that our environment is being systematically polluted; a lot has become known of the causes of such a condition, as well as of the grave consequences that might occur in the future if the condition doesn't start improving radically. In spite of such reasonably good knowledge of the matter in the general population, I have no choice but to award the matter with a great amount of attention, because of the very gravity of the problem, as well as its actual causes.

As much as the problem of the environmental pollution is common knowledge, it is rarely known how *serious* the problem actually is. That is why I will now attempt to analyze the current situation, of course with a remark that everything that I write is limited by my knowledge of the matter and that it does not represent the scientific material, but my personal observations. In order to obtain actual, scientifically relevant data, one should consult the experts.

Environmental pollution exists in several forms:

- pollution of the soil
- pollution of waters
- pollution of the atmosphere
- damage to the ozone layer
- the greenhouse effect
- damage to the food chain and to the ecosystem
- electromagnetic pollution
- acoustic pollution
- mental and spiritual pollution
- moral pollution

Pollution of the Soil

Although it doesn't seem so at first, since other aspects of the pollution look far more alarming, pollution of the soil is a serious chronic problem that is not going away just like that; it poses a serious threat to the life on earth. The main aspects of this pollution are the unresolved issues of the disposal of garbage, which is being created in vast amounts on a daily basis by human activity. Every modern household has a need for "excretion" of a certain, not small, amount of garbage each day. A part of that garbage is biologically degradable, another part is recyclable, used as a secondary compound, but a rather large amount of the garbage remains an unsolved problem. Some developed countries have dealt with this problem rather successfully, mostly by declaring laws that oblige people to sort the waste by categories: paper separately, plastics separately, cans separately, glass separately, bio-waste separately, and so on. The problem with this approach is that, at a certain point, sorting waste becomes so complex and demanding (and also expensive: the disposal of certain categories of waste costs money) that people decide to break the law and dispose their waste in wild junkyards, rather than to engage themselves in recycling. This problem is not yet solved in a satisfactory manner, but I assume that it soon will be. The far greater problem is that the less developed countries in most part have no elaborate strategies of waste control, and these countries represent the majority. In fact, some of the countries that appear to handle these issues successfully, in fact merely change the form of the problem: for instance, badly implemented incineration of the waste only replaces soil pollution with air pollution.

The greatest problems occur when the issue is handled non-methodically, and it is not at all solved, and also when the question of waste disposal is met with shrugs of resignation, as if the problem was impossible to solve. Fortunately, the positive examples have shown that it can be solved in a more or less satisfactory manner.

The greatest problem with the domestic waste is that it exists.

The majority of domestic waste is, in fact, the packaging of various products, which is discarded after use. For instance, plastic bottles of refreshment drinks at first appear to be a handy solution, as well as square paper packs for milk and fruit juices.

Not only it is not a handy solution, it is a serious strategic error that could cost us dearly. Before someone came up with such a “handy” and “practical” solution, these products were packed in returnable glass bottles: milk, mineral water, juices, it was all in returnable bottles, which means that you bring the empty bottle to the store and you pay only the price of the product, without the price of the container. This is the ideal solution, especially because broken glass bottles can be excellently recycled. Instead of that, and instead of the standardization of the glass containers, they started the process of producing disposable plastic and multi-layered paper packaging, which represents pure waste and an ecological problem. It is clear that if something has to be thrown away, if it cannot be reused, that it is a pure loss, which can even be financially expressed. Recycling resources is therefore not a luxury and extravagance; it actually saves lots of money. It is logical that if we have a limited amount of natural resources, that consumption of those resources will have to be reduced as much as possible in order to preserve them, and that the consumption will be much decreased if the resources that are already used are reused; thus the double positive effect will be achieved, by reducing the amount of waste and simultaneously reducing the consumption of the natural resources. The largest part of such solutions is possible through a mere change of industrial strategies, with no particular deprivation. Domestic soil pollution can therefore be solved adequately and quickly, if decisive actions are taken by those who are responsible.

The second serious form of soil pollution comes from dirty industry. We should distinguish between two types of pollution, primary and secondary. The primary type of pollution is the one produced by the industrial plant itself. The secondary type is the one produced by the plant, which itself doesn't pollute, but which utilizes resources, the production of which is accompanied by the pollution. The example of this is an aluminum factory, which itself is more or less ecologically clean, but which utilizes large amounts of electricity, which is most often produced by dirty methods, for instance by nuclear fission, so that it turns out that the aluminum factory produces radioactive waste.

A large part of industrially produced soil pollution can be handled by adequate methods of waste processing, like active filters. The other part, unfortunately the most problematic one, cannot be solved

in practically any known way. It is about the stable byproducts of different chemical or nuclear reactions, such as dioxin and its derivatives, and radioactive isotopes with a long period of half-life. Both these types of waste represent a problem that cannot be solved in a satisfactory manner, and the only real solution is to strategically shift to processes that will not have such byproducts, and the replacement of all materials that are acquired in such a dangerous way with more acceptable alternatives. It might seem costly and problematic, but the history of such situations has shown that the largest majority of materials can be replaced with suitable alternatives in a satisfactory way.

We should not forget military pollution, the pollution of the soil with explosive devices and poisons as a result of military activities, as well as the inadequate handling of military equipment that contains toxic substances. One destroyed tank is not merely a bunch of scrap iron, but also the source of pollution of soil with the fluids from its systems (hydraulics, engine and others). Maybe the largest problem of this sort are mine fields, which remain active for years after military activities, and which pose a latent danger to life. Atomic explosions and accidents at nuclear power plants are better left unmentioned.

Pollution of Waters

The same things that apply to pollution of the soil also apply to pollution of the waters; it also comes from different sources. One such source is the waste water of the households, and the other is industrial waste water.

As far as households are concerned, their waste sums up as biological and the chemical; the biological, mostly human excrement, does not represent a particular problem, because it is made wholly of bio-degradable substances that pose no threat to the ecosystem. The problem is that the release of those substances into the water flows is unfortunately badly engineered, so that not even the minimum of processing that is necessary in order to neutralize such waste is performed, which results in bacteriological contamination of underground water flows, rivers and seas. The other aspect of pollution that comes from households is chemical, from various washing powders, soaps, shampoos, and other substances that are more difficult to decompose. All those substances can mostly be decomposed in a satisfactory manner, if adequate filters and waste water processors are installed, for instance basins containing bacteria that will decompose detergents, with algae to decompose nitrates and phosphates, and other similar devices. Of course, here too the problem is that these measures are not implemented in practice, and unprocessed waste is released into the water flows and the seas, which causes serious disturbance in the ecological balance.

Far more serious forms of water pollution come from the chemical industry. There are factories that use rivers and seas as an endless reservoir for the release of toxic substances, some of which are hard or impossible to decompose, for instance the heavy metals and the substances based on them. Some of these substances have toxic, mutagenic and carcinogenic effects on living beings. The toxic waste of such factories has to be treated in a way that neutralizes toxic substances and renders them harmless, and only then released, or, if their neutralization isn't possible, the factories have to be changed in a way that such chemicals are not produced at all.

Here, military pollution represents a far greater problem than in the case of pollution of the soil; the uncared for nuclear reactors of submarines in an advanced state of decay, and the "wild"

disposal of nuclear waste into the rivers and the seas, which is especially the case in the area of the former Soviet Union, represent a permanent and difficult problem. The effective process of removing the radioactive contamination from the waters and from the soil has not yet been devised, and so the solution to this problem remains open.

We should stress the fact that some aspects of water pollution, for instance the emission of heavy metals and stable toxins, represents a problem whose gravity has yet to show in the future, in a way that doesn't really have to be predictable.

Water pollution might result in shortages of unpolluted drinkable water, which is a problem that potentially threatens the existence of the human species, since water is the essential resource that cannot be replaced in any way.

Atmospheric Pollution

This form of pollution has many layers, and I decided to divide it into three categories: toxic pollution of the atmosphere and deforestation, damage to the ozone layer, and the greenhouse effect. Let us deal with toxic contamination first.

Quite obviously, harmful gasses are being emitted into the atmosphere, either from personal sources such as automobiles, domestic heating by solid fuels (wood and coal) and liquid fuels (crude oil), or the industrial sources, such as for example thermal power plants and factories.

Still, we should note that a lot has been done about toxic pollution of the atmosphere since the problem was first noticed; some aspects of pollution, for instance the huge emission of sulfur into the atmosphere as a result of coal combustion, are the ones that can be most easily controlled and reduced. Strict regulations have been enacted regarding atmospheric emissions; the problems of the philosophy of the high chimneys have been noticed; the new generation of automobiles produces practically no environmental pollution compared to their ancestors... the problems are being solved. They still exist and they are acute, especially in some critical areas, but their solution is possible or in progress.

A great problem with pollution is not merely pollution in the sense of harmful emission, but also deforestation, the loss of forests caused by the excessive and utterly irrational devastation of primarily tropical rain forests. If we combine the increased pollution with the loss of the forests, which are the earth's natural mechanism for purifying the atmosphere and its enrichment with oxygen (along with the sea forests of algae, which are also endangered by sea pollution, maybe even more than the forests of the land), then it becomes apparent that we have a serious problem.

Damage to the Ozone Layer

Damage to the ozone layer was caused by atmospheric emission of stable and otherwise harmless chemicals that contain chlorine (mostly from the family of CFC, chloro-fluoro-carbonates, utilized as propellants in sprays, and as the operating fluid in refrigerators and air conditioners). Once released into the atmosphere, those chemicals ascend to the higher altitude, since they are lighter than air. Once they reach the ozone layer, these molecules act as a catalyst, which breaks up the molecules of ozone; one molecule of chlorine is capable of breaking up thousands of molecules of ozone. This causes great damage to the ozone layer. The process of ozone decomposition is most efficient when crystals of ice are present in the atmosphere, which is why ozone is destroyed fastest on the poles, which is indeed where the largest ozone holes are observed.

What is the real significance of the ozone layer? The fact, that there was no life on earth's soil before the stable ozone layer was formed, speaks for itself. Ozone is formed when ultraviolet rays from the sun hit the molecules of oxygen in the earth's atmosphere, and these same ultraviolet rays break up the ozone, thus exhausting their energy and becoming weaker. This is why ozone acts as a sort of a protective layer, which shields the earth from the sun's ultraviolet radiation. The high energy of the ultraviolet rays is extremely hostile to living organisms, which it damages and destroys; it causes mutations and cancer on the skin, damages the eyes and so on. The excessive amount of UV radiation has an extremely harmful effect on plants as well.

One of the most sensible hypotheses about the extinction of the dinosaurs says that the earth was hit by a comet, in the area of the Yucatan, sending a great amount of dust into the atmosphere. This dust seriously corroded the ozone layer, so that it, once it was ablated, left the earth completely exposed to ultraviolet radiation. This blinded the animals, making them unable to survive; the vegetable kingdom was less substantially harmed, but maybe enough for the great herbivores to be left without food and die. Extinction of the great herbivores caused the extinction of the great carnivores—basically, there was a disruption of the food chain and a mass extinction of all species that were unable to adapt in a very short period of time.

Let us presume that such a degree of damage to the ozone layer takes place in our time. People would mostly find ways to protect themselves, but who would protect the plants and animals? In the mildest of scenarios we could have a massive loss of the less adaptable animal and some vegetable species, and severe disturbances in the ecosystem. The balance of the ecosystem is very delicate; it has inner methods of self-preservation, but they are not infinitely effective, and if we inflict too much damage, the system might not survive it, which would mean our end as well.

Fortunately, effective measures of damage control have been taken: the production and utilization of CFCs were banned; the majority of such chemicals was or will be taken out of circulation, and it seems that the emission of such chemicals is under control and that it will soon be completely stopped. The problem is that we are now feeling the consequences of the ascent of the chemicals that were released into the atmosphere in the 70's, so that the results of the reduction of CFC emission will be felt only after a while. It is a great fortune that the worst damage is limited to the polar areas, which are uninhabited, so it is possible that the damage to the ecosystem will not be fatal.

The Greenhouse Effect

The greenhouse effect is the phenomenon in which the system takes more energy than it releases, and so the temperature of the system grows. Planets such as earth take energy from the sun in the daytime, and they cool down during the night by radiating the heat into space. Certain gases, such as CO_2 (carbon dioxide), methane and others, have the quality of keeping the thermal radiation in the atmosphere, thus aggravating the natural cooling of the planet. The extreme example of the glasshouse effect is Venus, on which the majority of the atmosphere consists of CO_2 , and whose surface temperature exceeds the values expected from its distance from the sun—basically, the temperatures are such that tin can flow in streams, and temperature variations between day and night are insignificant.

The problem with CO_2 is that it is being produced by our entire industry, both clean and dirty. Automobiles with ecologically clean exhaust have an unchanged amount of CO_2 compared to ones ecologically impure—maybe even greater, because better fuel combustion decreases the amount of CO in favor of CO_2 . Gas powered thermal power plants, which are much cleaner compared to those powered by coal or oil, have unchanged CO_2 emission, because CO_2 is the result of the process of oxidation, meaning combustion, and it is produced by everything, from living beings to industry. Probably the only clean sources of energy, that do not produce CO_2 , are photoelectrical elements and water and wind propelled generators. The only process that reduces the amount of CO_2 in the atmosphere is photosynthesis, the process through which plants produce oxygen and glucose out of water, light and CO_2 .

It seems that the earth's balancing systems aren't that fragile, and that the earth takes care of the condition of its atmosphere—once the amount of CO_2 increases, the plants grow better and bind the atmospheric CO_2 , replacing it with oxygen. Once the percentage of CO_2 drops to the normal level, the plants return to average, less intensive growth. Why bother with the CO_2 emission, then? Well, if we know that human activities on earth have, among other things, the consequence of deforestation, and pollution of the oceans in which the algae that produce 90% of the oxygen live and bind the largest amount of CO_2 , it becomes clear

that we have created a situation in which we have infected the patient with a disease, and then attacked and damaged his immune system. It is obvious that we have thus reduced his chances for recovery, and increased the probability of our own extinction as a species.

From all that has been said so far, it is evident that all the problems of pollution are more or less solvable or being solved, except the problem of the greenhouse effect and the problem of exhausting the earth's resources in favor of increasing the amount of all kinds of waste.

How big a problem the greenhouse effect really is? Is it really an issue that justifies panic? Actually, yes. The global temperature has increased measurably. The temperature has risen a couple of degrees; so what, the summers will be warmer, we'll buy an air-conditioner, what's the big deal? The problem is not the temperature rise, not in this sense anyway. The problem is that earth's entire system of water flows and air currents relies directly on the temperature. The rise of temperature can cause the detour of the, up to the present date, stable streams of water and air masses, which can result in temperature extremes, disruptions in the cycle of seasons and the like, and that's just for starters. If you don't think that this is something to worry about, think why the shores of Canada are so cold, and the shores of Europe so warm, and what would happen if the Gulf Stream, which warms the European continent, started warming up Greenland, and Europe cools down to the level of Siberia of the same latitude. Naturally, such radical changes would be accompanied by extreme weather, such as hurricanes that wipe out everything in their path, and which could suddenly become stronger and more frequent. Global warming could cause some places to cool down dramatically, while overheating others; for instance, the desert areas are on the constant rise—increasingly more agricultural soil is being turned into deserts.

The global rise of temperature also causes melting of the polar ice, thus raising the sea level—some Pacific islands have already experienced this as their reality, becoming uninhabitable. All coastal areas could meet a similar fate. And this is not the worst problem of all. The shift of position of such huge masses of water such as the polar ice cannot fail to affect the geometry of the planet's mass. When the position of the masses and the pressure on the earth's crust changes, there are earthquakes and volcanic

eruptions. It is even possible that shifts of mass big enough could cause some sort of a chain reaction, like unpredictable oscillations of the flows of magma in the layers closer to the earth's core, which could have quite unpredictable consequences to the condition of the earth's crust. These are all just speculations, but I would rather not wait and see what happens, I would prefer things not go that far. And judging on all, the glasshouse effect is the very problem that can be solved only when human extravagance and greed for the earth's resources come to end, because these very "human virtues" are the real cause of the present situation. Increased CO₂ emission is the direct result of excessive use of earth's resources, in a way that exceeds all questions of need, and which can be explained only as wastefulness and extravagance.

Damage to the Food Chain and to the Ecosystem

It is quite understandable that the degree of pollution and changes to the ecosystem that I have described can't continue without severe consequences to life on the planet; and indeed, the extent of the extinction of species in our age is unmatched since the extinction of the dinosaurs. How does extinction take place? Well, there are several causes. Some species become extinct because their natural habitat is wiped out, and they are unable to adapt quickly enough to survive. The hewing of the tropical rainforests causes the extinction or the existential danger to the vegetable and animal species—some of which are among the most advanced life forms on earth, for instance the primates. Whaling has almost completely wiped out several species of whales, which are also among the most advanced life forms on the planet. Fish are also seriously endangered by extensive fishing. But maybe the greatest problem of all is the explosion of the human population at the expense of all other life. Humans spread like viruses or wildfire: they reproduce without control until they completely exhaust and destroy their habitat. Then they move to another habitat, destroy it and adapt it to their needs. It is logical to expect that such behavior, if continued, will result in the destruction of all available habitats first, and then of the human species, for a virus that kills all available hosts must eventually perish. And the speed with which it all takes place is such, that it will not be long before we are faced with this situation, unless something radically changes in human behavior.

What happens when the species begin to extinct?

It depends. Sometimes a species is extinct, and its place in the food chain is filled by another, more successful species. Sometimes, however, the entire food chain breaks down.

Let us imagine a grassy plain, on which cattle and antelopes graze. The local carnivores, like hyenas and jackals, feed on the herbivores, with the ubiquitous of flying vultures. They all depend on the existence of the herbivores, which depend on the grass, which depends on the rain. Let's say that the rain stops falling because the greenhouse effect has shifted certain air currents, and the grassy plane starts turning into a sandy desert. All the animal species in the habitat, the entire ecosystem, will either

migrate to another habitat, or die out. And these things are already happening to us.

Let's take the example of a marine habitat. The foundation of the food chain is sea plankton. It is the food for smaller fish, which are the food for larger predators, et cetera. Let's say that a certain type of pollution reduces the efficiency of the plankton's reproduction, or even destroys it completely. The entire food chain will face extinction. And we are indeed experiencing such situations.

Humans cannot function independently from the entire ecosystem of the planet, and those who think that they can, are wrong. If the ecosystem collapses, people will perish as well; there is no doubt about it whatsoever. Care for the ecosystem is essential. People have to become a part of the system, instead of attempting to subdue it and subject it to their needs to a degree where their own existence is in jeopardy. It is quite possible and imaginable for the entire advanced human civilization with a supreme technology to function perfectly integrated into the environment and its needs; all we need is to integrate care for the environment into our thought processes, to integrate care for the other beings with which we share the world, and to subordinate lower values, such as gaining financial profit or trivial saving of time, to that care. All we need is to give some things different priorities, and everything will change. Love does no harm to the fellow man, says St. Paul.⁴⁵ If we love our world and the beings in it, we will do good to it, and the needs of the world and of its inhabitants will make a difference to us, and we will be happy only if all the others are taken care of. This is the only recipe that can produce harmony between people and the rest of the world; otherwise, we will all undoubtedly perish.

⁴⁵ Romans 13:10.

Electromagnetic Pollution

This form of pollution is relatively seldom mentioned, but it is definitely present. We are surrounded by a multitude of electric and electronic devices, from power lines through cellular phones to computers... not to mention the electromagnetic emission of all the radio and TV stations that we can pick up on our receivers, military and civilian radars... Those are all nominally small sources, but they all add up, creating a background that surrounds us all the time, without giving us any possibility to dive out. The consequences are not scientifically processed, mostly. The stronger sources of electromagnetic radiation such as microwave ovens and cellular phones most likely contribute to some form of tissue damage, including possible mutations and tumors. Not to mention high frequency radiation (X and gamma rays)... It all makes a man think. Are we really aware of the consequences of our choices to ourselves and to our children? Do we really know what we have gotten ourselves into when we decided that the automobile and the microwave oven are worth working eight hours a day in a crowded office? Electromagnetic emissions of mobile phones are proven to disrupt functioning of the electronic equipment—they can most likely disrupt functioning of our bodies as well, if we are exposed to them for a long period of time, which we unfortunately are. It is obvious that these things need to be carefully studied, in order to take steps to protect ourselves from such electronic noise—fortunately, such steps are already being taken, by forming international standards of quality and protection from radiation of electronic equipment. Likewise, radio broadcasts can be replaced by a cable network, which is a better solution in the long run, looking from the perspective of usefulness as well, thus removing another electromagnetic pollutant from the environment.

Acoustic Pollution

One of the basic side effects of technological civilization is noise. This noise is so universally present, that it never goes away, it never stops, just varies in intensity. A human being is adapted to function normally in an environment filled with sounds, but those are natural sounds, which do not cause strain that is so specific to the exposure to artificially produced noise. Automobiles, aircraft, working equipment on the streets such as pneumatic drills, sirens, music from many sources, mixed with additional noise and thus barely recognizable, noise of the neighbors from the surrounding apartments, noise made by children playing basketball on the nearby playground, noise made by the TV set... it is all too much. Such noise contributes to irritation, stress, strain and a generally bad feeling, it disturbs our privacy and peace, and we really could do without it.

How can that be achieved? We live in communities that are too big, in cities that are too big; this seems to be the essence of the problem. It is not possible to make a human community so big, and to keep it fully human. People are not made to live in ant-hills; the natural human environment is a family house within a neighborhood of several other family houses, forming a functional unit. Such an approach solves several problems; the problem of transport, among others. Today advanced telecommunications can make traveling to work, in order to move papers in the office, obsolete—it can all be done at home, and the results delivered via Internet. The technology that we have can be used to make our lives easier, if we apply it intelligently and functionally, and not in a way where 99% of all activities are essentially a waste of time and energy.

Small, technologically brilliant village communities, quite independent in terms of food, water and energy, as an opposition to the great cities. Ten families makes a town that's big enough. A hundred families makes a metropolis. All jobs that need to be done, can be done locally, on the spot, and if transport is needed, it is there, but there will be no real need for it, except if we wish to visit a friend from another village. We need to change the basic concepts.

Mental and Spiritual Pollution

What is meant by this? It is obvious that the problems, which people encounter on a daily basis, have their causes somewhere, that they didn't just fall from the sky. The majority of people seldom think about their philosophy and their worldview, but they most certainly have them, more or less clear and determined, more or less sensible. This personal philosophy is made up of one's personal answers to the questions "where do I come from," "who am I and where am I going," and "what is the meaning of my existence in the world." The way in which we answer these questions will also decide the direction of our actions. It would be a mistake to assume that it is common for people to find those answers themselves—most often they just accept, by inertia, the answers given to them by their environment, especially by their personal authorities. Their concepts of a desirable way of life and behavior come from the same source as well.

As I previously wrote, the majority of people don't have a strong enough inner voice that would guide them regarding the rightness of some action; in the situation in which one human race was underprivileged, declared inferior and the race of slaves, the majority of the privileged people (the white ones) agreed with this assessment by mere inertia, and acted accordingly, and only a minority felt that something was fundamentally wrong with this, and treated black people as their equals. This minority is apparently immune to the mental and spiritual pollution such as described in the example of the slavery laws, but the fact remains that most people are subject to this form of pollution. People will mostly, more or less uncritically, accept what propaganda gives them, which is visible in presidential elections, because this principle is utilized in campaigns.

A great source of spiritual pollution is science.

Let us first see what science actually is. Science is essentially a method of gathering and processing information, nothing more. The scientific method goes like this: first we determine the boundaries of what we want to observe. Then we perform basic observation, and based on that observation we form a hypothesis. Based on the hypothesis, we make a prediction, and we verify that prediction by experiment. If the results of the experiment are in agreement with the prediction, the hypothesis has been confirmed.

Is that all? Yes, that's mostly it. This is the entire philosophical basis of science.

Is there no mathematics, no secretive laboratories in which "scientific experiments" are done, all those handy gadgets? No. There's none of that whatsoever. All those things are created only as a result of the application of the scientific method to a certain field of study. Physics was created as a result of applying the scientific method to matter. Mathematics was made when the scientific method was applied to mental abstractions. Psychology was made when the scientific method was applied to the states of human psyche. And so on. Every such field of study demands specific methods, and thus the methods utilized in mathematics differ significantly from the methods utilized in psychology or chemistry.

Science, however, poses as the basic merit of reality, as some sort of a sacred cow that is beyond question, or mindless chaos will arise. The word "science" is repeated, creating the impression in the minds of the unacquainted that is identical to the impression created by the word "Gospel" in the minds of medieval scholastics. For most people, science is an abstraction used to declare something true and valid: all it takes is to say "it has been scientifically proven..." If people only knew what things are regarded as scientific evidence, and how many mistakes history has recorded in such "evidence," they would put less faith in them, and they would approach it all with a dose of skepticism, which is also an essential part of the scientific method: a scientist usually knows that his observation is limited to the field of his study, and that it is quite possible that something beyond this field, which has not been included in his study, will influence everything in a way that would disprove his apparently correct hypothesis; and that is something that happens on a daily basis, new and better hypotheses that are supposed to explain reality are formulated, and the old ones are discarded. This is the essential aspect of science, the skepticism toward one's own ideas, that are accepted or discarded depending on observation which either confirms or disproves them. When a scientist becomes emotionally attached to his hypothesis, to the extent of starting to ignore the observation in order for his theory to hold, he stops being a scientist, and becomes a dogmatic. And this is the very thing that happened to official science.

If you ask a scientific dogmatic what he thinks of psychic phenomena, he will put on a superior, smug smile, and say that these

phenomena are not scientifically proven and that they belong to the area of quackery. If you ask a scientist, he will say that the existence of these phenomena has been proven by measurements on a statistically relevant sample, which means that the existence of the phenomena cannot be denied, but the nature of the phenomena is such that it is inconsistent with the existing scientific paradigm (their worldview).

The difference between a scientist and a dogmatic is that a scientist is a person to whom the most important thing is the truth, and a dogmatic is a person to whom the most important thing is to be right. A scientist will adjust his beliefs to fit the truth, and a dogmatic will attempt to fit the truth into his beliefs.

When we speak of a scientist, people most often see the image of a gray-haired professor with glasses and a white coat, contemplating some issues from the field of nuclear physics. The image of a yogi, meditating in a cave, will never even cross their minds. And still, they are both scientists, the only difference is in the area of their study and in the methods that they use.

The gray-haired professor chooses the field of study: it is for instance the physics of the atomic nucleus. He forms a hypothesis, for instance that the impact of a neutron upon the nucleus of a heavy element will cause it to break. Then he performs experiments to determine the conditions in which the nucleus will break, and based on that, he makes a prediction, which he then verifies with a new series of experiments.

The yogi's field of study is not the atomic nucleus, but God and his own consciousness. The yogi first studies the relevant texts and talks to people who are themselves engaged in some form of a spiritual practice, and thus gathering information he decides what is worth further engagement; he chooses a method that is most likely to bring him to his goal. Like nuclear physicists, who will discard some possible methods of breaking the atomic nucleus, such as a hammer hit, prayer to God, invoking demons and jumping from the third floor, the yogi, too, analyzes the available means and determines which ones are useless or do not lead to the goal which he desires to attain, or they lead to the goal but not quickly and effectively enough. If he wants to know God and his true nature, he will discard methods such as "let's dance naked in the moonlight, invoke the devil, and then sacrifice him a goat," because he has seen what the practitioners of this method look like

and saw that they don't really look like people who have been in touch with the supreme reality. He will accordingly eliminate other possible methods that are proven not to lead to enlightenment. Once he eliminates the obvious nonsense, he will be left with a small number of sensible solutions from which he will attempt to choose the one most suitable to himself. Then he will inform himself of the chosen method in detail, and then completely devote himself to the method. If he, after prolonged practice, decides that it doesn't produce results, he will re-examine his thinking, in order to find out whether the problem is in himself or in the method. If the problem is in himself, he will correct it and continue the practice, and if the problem is in the method, he will abandon it and look for better one. For the one whose primary interest is God will value all the methods by how close they make him to God, and if they don't, he will discard them.

It is thus obvious that the quest for God can be considerably scientific; why is, therefore, the attitude of official science on God expressed by physicists, instead of yogis? This is an interesting question; the official scientific attitude on protons is not expressed by historians, but by physicists. Why do physicists have a say? They will say that the existence of God isn't proven. Who says it isn't? Let the physicist use his accelerator to prove the existence of Julius Caesar. Of course, cannot, because that is the field of study of the historians. If we ask the physicist whether Julius Caesar existed or not, he can answer only from his general knowledge of history, which is similar to the source of his statements on God. The reason we, therefore, in a matter so important, consult amateur theologians, or amateur historians, is utterly unclear to me. Why are the yogis, who have seen God, not asked the question of His existence? They are the ones who are competent in this field, not physicists or historians. They are the ones with direct experience of the object of their study.

Who were, in biblical times, considered competent regarding matters of God: the prophets or the craftsmen? The prophets, of course. They were often not believed, but when the things that they talked about came true, they were believed all right.

Regrettably, as there were always false prophets, there were also false yogis, persons who claimed to have had the experience of God and who didn't, because it was either their hallucinations and illusions, or their deliberate lies. This is the reason why it

isn't so wise to just take someone's word for it, but to see how such a person functions, what is the impression of him as a person, what are the results of his actions, and even then we can be wrong. The difficulty comes from the fact that we are not dealing with an exact science; the complexity and diversity of spiritual states exceeds the problems faced by physics, and this is the reason why the answers given to us by physics are more reliable. Unfortunately, they do not touch the things that really matter to a human being, they deal with the marginal questions, while the questions "who are we," "where do we come from," "where are we going," remain unanswered.

Let us go back to the start, to the issue of intellectual and spiritual pollution. The civilization in which we operate gives answers that can be divided into two basic groups.

The first group consists of the hedonistical-materialistic system which represents a sort of an official orthodoxy. It says that a man is merely a body, that his consciousness is a product of the interactions of certain subtle systems within the body, that consciousness is extinguished in death, and that the question of the meaning of life remains open, and usually adds up to leaving a trace in the world, and collecting material goods in order to achieve happiness in life.

It is obvious that such answers sooner or later lead to a feeling of futility, and that the people who believe in such things often become utterly demoralized and try to find the solution in drugs, alcohol or suicide, or attempt to find some higher purpose, which brings them into the sphere of influence of the second group.

The second group is made up of various religious organizations: churches, religious communities, cults, all sorts of followings, which provide people with answers to the question of meaning, often completely incoherent, but often quite coherent as well. Their worldview is most often based on interpretation of some form of God's revelation, upon which they build their dogmatical-theological system, which is sometimes even worse than the answers provided by the first group: here, the views are sometimes so absurd that they demand a form of a mental anesthesia and separation from the reality, in order to preserve the appearance of sense.

There is, of course, a third group. This group is made of people who are in touch with their inner voice of rightness that leads them, and who are unwilling to unconditionally accept the things

that they are told in school, on TV or in church, but who build their own worldview from the truth that they see at the moment, and from the feeling of rightness which guides them. Some of them will recognize this inner voice as God, but the majority won't, it will be just "that feeling" which guides them, which makes them feel good when they follow it. This book is meant for this third group. They are the only ones who can find it useful, and they are the only ones who can understand it.

If we look a bit more carefully, the members of the third group are the ones who have provided examples of light throughout history, they are the ones who followed the higher ideals of their own deeper consciousness, in spite of the inertia and stupidity of those who surrounded them. If the world was left to them, it would become heaven, for God's will would be reflected perfectly in the world. It is the others who are the problem, the ones without the pronounced instincts for truth and dharma, the ones who are subject to all sorts of influences, from flattery to threats, the ones who accept any form of common illusion as the unquestionable truth, wallowing in the mud of lower passions, smugness, hatred, violence, egoism, greed and the like. *If* they are capable enough, that is, for these are the ones who crawl through life like a fog: they are born, and they follow the well paved paths designed for members of their environment, such as education, work, marriage, procreation, retirement and death. They seldom or never think about those things and decide to make changes, for creativity and courage are not their qualities, their "virtues" are those of laziness, stupidity, inertia and cowardice. Such are not freed from the shackles of illusions until they learn how to oppose the numb forces of the flows that lead them through life. Mental and spiritual contamination as categories make sense primarily when applied to this, largest group of people, for they are the ones who will eat everything that is placed before them, without asking questions; the official attitudes and beliefs of society are the norm and the ultimate law for them, and they guide themselves and adjust their lives accordingly. If the majority of mankind is programmed to do evil, by polluting the environment, making noise, performing acts of violence and cruelty upon humans and animals, how can mankind as a whole survive and progress? Hardly, if at all. If people are flooded from all sides with nonsense, which they might not be able to disprove with their own analytical powers, they

will become confused at best, and most likely entangled in the inert mechanism of the wrong and evil activities. People can often be presented with some sort of a lie as the truth, the lie so cleverly formed that it can be difficult to disprove if one lacks a powerful and skilled mind, which is, in spite of what people would like to believe, an extremely rare quality. But those same people who will be unable to disprove a lie, will be able to accept the correctness of its disproof, if it is disproved by someone else; it is easier to look at two hypotheses and choose the more sensible of the two, than it is to invent an original hypothesis from scratch. Therefore, it is the duty of people of deep understanding to enlighten their brothers and sisters on the path, to share their understanding of the world with them, thus opposing some widely spread misconceptions, which would be unable to hold for even a moment, if someone faced them with their inner inconsistencies. Mental pollution, in the form of wrong ideas and beliefs, needs to be opposed by expressing the truth about the reality.

Moral Pollution

When the questions of rightness, meaning and righteousness are answered by those who are the least competent, then we become faced with the problem of moral relativism and general moral contamination. What happens when you force an engineer of electronics to deal with the issues from the areas of medicine, or molecular biology? The very same thing that happens when you put a lawyer or a scientist in a position to decide on moral issues: being completely ignorant or semiskilled in that field, he is unable to reach any conclusion worth mentioning, and his improvisations have the same value as the opinion of a child on quantum mechanics: pitiful. Like all other areas of human activity, morality requires deep dedication, thorough involvement with the field of study, and actual, concrete and prolonged practical experience; and even then it is possible to make mistakes. Even if the position, which forces one to make moral decisions, is occupied by a priest or a saint, who has dedicated his entire life to the study of ways to align human existence with the Divine will, we can still get bad results, but if we give this place to a person of relativistic moral views, we will face an utter catastrophe.

Science and technology deal with answers to the question “how.” They do not deal with the question “why.” Science and technology can produce a weapon, but they cannot provide us with answers to the question of use of this weapon, and whether it should have been made in the first place. Science and technology can provide us with the solution to the issue of hunger in the world, but they do not deal with the questions of whether to feed the hungry, or to simply let them die. Science and technology are unable to give clear guidelines regarding the meaning; they are morally indifferent. It is therefore logical that someone who takes his answers from science will have unclear attitudes (to say the least) on the issues of meaning and morality, and this very system will become an ideal shelter for people of a highly questionable moral value.

It is a rule that people of low spiritual value, who are subject to all sorts of personal weaknesses, have a greater tendency toward moral relativism, compared to the strong, stable persons of high ideals, who often have a cloudless worldview.

What is moral relativism in the first place? It is an attitude that says that nothing can be known for sure in matters of rightness, or that the matter of rightness is subject to circumstances, or that it depends on agreement. The facts say otherwise: there are certain laws that every human community and each being in that community has to uphold, or it will otherwise perish. Since those laws are clear and universal, it is apparent why they are often regarded as God-given, some sort of a regulation declared by God, the obeisance of which is rewarded, and disobedience punished. This is close to the truth, but it would be even closer if we said that the disobedience of certain natural laws brings about problems, without any need for additional punishment. The human soul itself has been made from the pattern of love, and if physical actions are not in harmony with that inner nature of the soul, they perish, together with the man who continues such vicious deeds; likewise, if the deeds of love are performed, a man's soul flourishes through his body and he and his environment prosper, and live according to God's plan.

Once we start to pay more attention to various God's commandments, looking for the essence, we will come to the conclusion that the realized, living love is what upholds all those commandments; for love does no evil, love does not kill a neighbor, it does not wish to steal his wife or his home, it is not envious of his prosperity nor does it rejoice in his misfortune. Basically, love is the force that makes the foundation of all morality, for the deeds of love are the ones that produce harmony in the world.

We should not understand it in the sense that love will be unable to use radical means, on the contrary: a man who loves his family will take a rifle in his hands and defend it, if it is threatened. But this happens only in the extreme case, when all other options have been exhausted, for peacefulness is the quality of love, the desire to form harmony with the neighbors; such people will never wage wars of conquest, but they will be extremely forceful in defense; they will not seek the others', but they will defend their own with all their might, and they will have no rest while there is injustice.

The world is overwhelmed with cowardice under the mask of peacemaking, which is despicable. Is peace, made against righteousness, possible? No, such peace will never hold, and war is a far better solution than such peace. If the oppressed fights the

oppressor, it is a conflict, but a righteous conflict, which should end not by interrupting the conflict so that the oppressor could continue oppressing in peace, but by permanently stopping the oppression, which will end the need for conflict. The attempts to achieve peace at any cost are despicable. What is the value of peace that has been achieved against the interests of righteousness? None, war is a better solution than such peace, if it serves to produce the righteous solution. And still we constantly observe pathetic politicians in their attempts to silence all conflicts, just so that they would have less work to do, and they invented sacred cow called “peace at any cost” to justify the status quo, although this status often means the utmost injustice. The moral relativism is here in service of cowardice and laziness, which culminates in situations where they attempt to stop war by preaching the values of peace and nonviolence to both the victim and the aggressor at the same time, while simultaneously trying to convince the outer world that there is no difference between the conflicting parties, because they are both savages who reach for weapons and fight.

The politics of the world should be tailored by measures of love and harmony between all parts of the whole, from minerals, plants, animals to humans; everything must be in harmony, and only then can there be real peace. If politics is tailored by the measures of arrogance, might, government and possession, if the only criterion is selfishness and one’s own interest, I’m afraid that such a civilization will not have a long life, it will drown in the consequences of its failures. The foundation of harmony among people, as well as the harmony between humans and the rest of the planet, has to be made of love, which will be implemented in the world in an active, creative way. Such a world will be made on perfectly clear moral grounds, that will not be subject to discussion or agreement, but which will be beyond question, and the clearer the moral grounds, the fewer laws, regulations and administration we will need.

One of the aspects of moral corruption is our insistence on the qualitative difference between humans and other living beings.

At the first glance, this statement seems to make sense; a human being is most certainly a special phenomenon. Its potentials surpass those of plants and animals, and therefore a human being has to be treated with a special respect, as a sort of a crown of the evolution on earth. Still, how much of the difference between humans

and higher animals is qualitative, and how much is quantitative? Is it the difference in essence, or in intensity? This is a more difficult question. Some religions state that only human beings have a soul, while other beings do not; others state that all beings have a soul. The simplest way to resolve the dilemma is to treat both humans and animals with as much love as we are capable of feeling, and if it somehow turns out that animals don't have a soul, the only consequence of our "mistake" will be our increased ability to love. If, however, we treat animals cruelly and mercilessly, thinking that they don't have souls, we can only live to regret it if it turns out that they do. The same applies to plants and other beings: it is much better to treat everything with nobility and wisdom, lovingly interacting with our environment, than to act from feelings of superiority, arrogance and cruelty, and regret it later.

A large portion of the environmental devastation, and of the general endangerment of the earth's systems, is done under the excuse of the greater importance of human needs compared to the needs of other beings, because of the greater value of human life. As noble as it might sound at first, it is a monstrous statement. Does a group of rather stupid human beings, after they have destroyed their previous habitat with their lousy functioning, have the right to clear-cut a rainforest with fire and chainsaws, in order to turn the newly cleared land into agricultural soil that will last only one or two seasons, after which it will turn into a water-worn ravine or a desert? Does such a group of utter morons have the right to wipe out several animal or vegetable species, and to destroy an entire ecosystem, just because they are lazy or unable to find more efficient ways to survive? There have been cases where the entire forest of Brazilian nuts was cut in order to plant corn; that forest could have fed many more people than a plantation of corn, and not only for one season, but for generations and generations. After one generation, the corn plantation was turned into a desert, and people had to move on, devastating everything on their path. Can a race of such idiots think of themselves as privileged compared to animals? It cannot, I think, since apes will be able to make better use of a habitat, and their thoughts will probably be deeper than those of such members of the human species.

This is, of course, an extreme view, which has been put here not because I would think that it is correct, but in order for one

extreme view to nullify another extreme view, which says that humans as a species are by the nature of things so privileged, that the interests of all other beings need to be sacrificed to human needs; that even the least of human whims makes reason enough to infinitely sacrifice the animals, plants and the other parts of the earth's ecosystem.

It is true, a man can and has a right to intervene in the ecosystem, he can take from it, but this very fact makes the demands placed before him much higher than those placed before other beings. The one to whom much is given, much is also expected from. It is expected from a man to be an improvement more than just worth the sacrifices made for his functioning. He is expected to be the mind and the heart of the world, to use his enormous potentials to draw from the earth's resources of consciousness, and give the physical plane flexibility and power beyond all expectations.

The potentials that open up before earth, on which human beings would be as aligned with dharma as the rocks, plants and animals, are incredible, worth even a risk of earth not living to see such future, for there is a possibility that people will completely exaggerate with their destruction and that only dead wasteland will remain.

The possible gain justifies even such a risk. Such a gain represents such a beauty and depth of the reality manifested in the world, that people today are unable to even imagine such functioning. It is not a quantitative, but a qualitative improvement over everything known so far, and over everything that is considered possible. But, the way things are today, the man is merely a parasite, a disease of the world, a disease that could become mortal.

Man is the only being whose functioning doesn't take the natural flows into consideration, who constantly lives in the fog of his illusions without noticing the real world that passes him by.

This is the reason why human existence is superficial, incomplete, and empty. It needs to be changed, right now, because we have no more time left to waste.

From all that has been said, it becomes apparent that something will have to be thoroughly changed in the functioning of humans as a species and as individuals, for earth will not be able to keep up with this kind of abuse for much longer.

The analysis that I have expressed so far isn't anything special; finding the problem is a reasonably undemanding task. Such analyses are usually very accurate when they speak of the bad present state, but when it comes to offering a method of improvement, it usually adds up to something utterly absurd, which would most likely even aggravate the present condition.

Every cult that wishes to recruit followers will first offer a list of all the faults of the orthodox, "mainstream" civilization, and when it motivates people to do something about it and improve the situation, it will serve them with some absurd thesis; the range goes from converting to some religion, to awaiting the landing of aliens next Tuesday.

Basically, sensible suggestions are extremely rare, and that is because it is far easier to list the existing, than it is to invent something better and to be really creative.

People in fact do not lack good philosophical systems and theories, there are enough of those, from Christianity to Vedanta. What people lack is the example to follow; that is what is missing.

People follow those whom they see walking in the direction in which they themselves want to go, and where they are unable to go with their own strengths. They follow the example of those individuals who embody the Divine force, the force that is capable of turning the world into paradise. People need examples of people who are perfect in love and in depth of realization, who have seen God, who look at God's face and who can take them to God. This is what is missing in the world; it is easy to tell stories and to preach.

We lack true, living spirituality, not the spirituality of words and regulations, but the spirituality of the powerful consciousness, which takes us to the utmost heights. Powerful consciousness is easily recognized when it appears, for we need no candle to show us the sun. But unfortunately those great forces are few, and in the absence of the sun, we are forced to follow lightning bugs.

We need more of powerful, conscious beings of deep love. They will change the world. Stop admiring the Divine incarnations, people, and inherit them. Be like them. It is a high goal, but the high goals are the very ones we should strive for, for we will otherwise be stranded in the mud of lowness.

The saints and avatars should be adored, they should be admired, but in such a way that by adoration and admiration we

accept into ourselves more of their qualities, and not in a way that would pronounce the difference between us and them. We need to absorb the spirit, which radiates from such brilliant beings and realities. This is the real yoga, the yoga of the spirit.

What does such yoga look like in practice? Feel the highest Divine state that you are able to feel—I already described all the technical details⁴⁶—and when you experience a Divine vision, approach it with the desire to be utterly consumed by it, that nothing of your present being remains. Melt in this vision until only the vision remains, without you, and then will the qualities of your life be the qualities of God of such vision: they will have this specific depth, intensity, reality, love.

Your life will be consecrated, it will attain the Divine qualities. This is the goal of worship and adoration, not being blinded by admiring someone for his sake. We admire in order to open up toward the power, in order for the power to consume us and saturate our lives.

We do not admire in order to remain small and pitiful, adoring a powerful figure. Such a thing is utterly pathetic and unworthy of a man, as a Divine being, which he can indeed be, if he realizes his potential. But this realization will not drop from the sky, we have to work hard for it and outgrow our limitations.

The challenge is before us.

⁴⁶ Basic meditation.

Religion

Religion and spirituality are two different categories. Religion was, in its original form, designed as a crystallization of spirituality into form, grounding the transcendental reality into the lives of people, in order to harmonize their activities with the deeper principles. Unfortunately, it seems that the form often outlives the content, and something that was once a valuable form of spirituality becomes dead ballast, which becomes an obstacle to the flexibility and vitality of the spirit, and instead of liberating people, it binds them.

Often can even such a dead ballast play a constructive role: for the people, who do not possess the pronounced inner voice, who lack the guidance in life, the rules and forms of some sort of an official religion can be the very thing they need in order for their activities to be rightly directed, until they develop the inner qualities that are the prerequisite for the aware and awakened travel on the path. Then will such persons leave the protection of the official religion, and if they do not, they will act within it in a spiritualized way—if it is possible at all, for there are the religious organizations whose very principles are inconsistent with anything really spiritual.

Am I saying that all religions contain a part of the truth, that they all lead to the same goal, or some similar thing that is usually expressed these days? No. What I want to say is that the evolution of the human spirit is a process, leading from the lower to the higher. To someone who is on a lower ladder, and who is unable to judge what is really right, some sort of leadership will often come in handy. The theological systems of various religions are made from the different ladders of understanding, and indeed someone on a certain ladder of spiritual growth will find a religious system to be ideal and perfect; and that it will indeed be, exactly because it is appropriate for his level of understanding the reality. Gradually, walking the path, asking questions and seeking answers, a man finds the weak spots of the system, and eventually he leaves it, looking for the better one. Often will the spiritual seekers change the systems of belief, in quest for something that would perfectly reflect their vision of the world; the systems are here to be outgrown, in quest of the reality that is too great to be

encompassed by any system—any of them in particular, and all of them together.

Are, therefore, religious systems useless?

This question is easily answered in a case of a man of great moral strength, who listens to the Divine voice of rightness, and bases his actions on it. To him, an institutionalized religion is completely useless. But what do we do with a man who doesn't know whether to kill his neighbor when he envies him or not, whether to kill his neighbor when he is angry or not, and whether to rape a woman on the street if he is sexually aroused, or not? From the very list of things that cross his mind, it is obvious that his inner voice of conscience isn't something that could be trusted with the well-being of his neighbors; such a man has to be given a system that would tell him the difference between right and wrong. There is therefore a need for a system of rules and regulations that would tell about right and wrong, at least in the beginning, but a considerable problem with the majority of religious systems is that they create more problems than they solve—for instance, the approach to the female sex in the majority of such religions is appalling, as well as the approach to sex. It can almost be said that the equality of sexes within the teachings and practice of a religious organization is a measure of its value; if one sex (most often male) is privileged, the entire system is worth abandoning. The same goes for the approach to sex: where sex is pronounced, in the sense that it is either extremely criticized or extremely practiced, the approach is most likely good for nothing. Extreme stands on all other issues are equally indicative.

Since practically all religious communities suffer from one form of those problems or the other, the question of how justified it is to join any of them arises. Maybe this way of looking at things is wrong: sure, a person who is aware of those problems will not join such a community, he will choose another path. But someone who is unaware of them will join it and function within it until the problems become clear to him, and then he will abandon it. A religious community will thus play a role in the spiritual progress of its members, although not quite in a way which it would prefer.

Said in blunt language, religions are meant primarily for people who are on such a level of realization that they need to be threatened with hell if they do evil, and promised heaven if they do

good. People who seek God, who seek the inner voice of reality, love and knowledge, are better off without those religions.

It often happens that those, who avoid the traditional religions for that reason, fall prey to the next pitfall: small followings and cults. Cults often advertise themselves by criticizing the “main-stream” religions, thus getting the attention of malcontents, but the problem with them is that they indeed are different from traditional religions, but by being much worse. If traditional religions are a problem, then cults are the problem to the square. During their long existence the traditional religions have learnt about their flaws, things that don’t work the way they’re supposed to, and they’ve mostly managed to eliminate them. The case with cults is that they exist mostly for just a short while, so that their problems didn’t yet have time to show in practice; the value of a movement will often show only after a century, or more, because in that time most of them will be gone and forgotten.

What are the criteria for assessing a following, then? Should one wait a couple of centuries in order to establish if a following is valid? And even then, often it is not the best, but the most aggressive and cruel one that survives. It turns out that nothing can save the individual from the very criterion that everybody wants to avoid at all cost, and that is trusting one’s instincts and judgment of what is good and what is bad, for us personally, at that very moment.

What should, therefore, an ideal religious organization be like?

In any case, its foundations have to be made on the deepest reality, and that reality needs to shine in the world through the entire organization. The religious organization needs to be a light-house of Divine reality in the world; God has to be clearly visible in the actions. Without that, everything else is merely an empty form that it is best to abandon.

I see the future of religion in a somewhat expanded relationship of the student and the teacher; without excessive formalities, without many scriptures and dogma, based on the direct transmission of the truth and on teaching by living example. Everything else can be built around it, but the relationship of the student and the teacher must exist; it can never be left out. Without that relationship, religion stops being the Divine presence, and becomes a mere hope in God’s appearance. The teacher is the aspect that makes the enlightenment probable; without the

teacher the enlightenment is possible, but only for extremely powerful individuals of iron devotion and will for the liberation that is utterly unbreakable, because they are guided by the spirit, by the Divine inner reality, which is the supreme teacher of all teachers. Without a teacher, only those whose consciousness is so strong that they would attain enlightenment in any circumstances whatsoever, in any time and any place, can attain enlightenment. For those people it suffices to read a line from a holy scripture, in order to come to the perfect and unmistakable understanding of the read and to heighten their consciousness, guided merely by their instincts. And even they will have serious, grave difficulties on their spiritual path, for they will have to resolve their dilemmas through long self-examination, dilemmas that might have been resolved by one teacher's sentence. If every teacher manages to produce at least one student, who will be able to live states of consciousness equal to his own, and to transmit it further to his own students, it will suffice, and the essence of religion will remain present in the world. Without it, it will vanish, and only empty form and ignorance will remain.

Education

Can a man, who cares about his children, trust the system of education, the way it is today, with them, without fear? Hardly, especially if he has been through the system himself.

The system of education varies between countries, but some qualities are prevalent. The basic quality, that appears to be in common to all the examples, is the faith in the power of information.

Judging by the quantity of information that is placed before children, today's educational system surpasses everything that was known throughout the history, by far. Judging by the quality of information in certain areas, today's educational system is also matchless. Judging by the quantity of essential knowledge, necessary for a man's right functioning, the system is a complete failure.

The expansion of computerized communication has shown the human faith in the power of information, as something that will lead us to knowledge and liberate us. The information is at everyone's hand, everybody can reach it, but the problem is that people don't know what to do with the information. The information as such is worthless if we don't know what to do with it. The information has to find its place in the wider context, to fit in the wider aspects of human functioning, and once that information is in the context of the functioning whole, we call it knowledge.

The knowledge is therefore a category higher than the information, the knowledge is the thing that makes the incoherent flow of information, which is difficult to memorize, into a sensible, usable whole, which is in service of human functioning in the world and of understanding the world.

The next higher category is wisdom. The wisdom is knowledge that has outgrown itself; it is the deeper vision of the world, the understanding of the essence of things, the deep background of understanding in a person. The wisdom is the thing that the system of education should strive for. Instead, it manages to fill the minds of young people with excessive amounts of information, which is seldom or never digested into knowledge, and even more seldom does this system lead one to wisdom.

People have already been noticing that something is wrong with the system of education, but they have rarely managed to notice the essence of the problem, and even more rarely have

they managed to offer a solution. It frequently happens that noticing the lack of moral awareness in education results in a school based on dogmatic principles, in which some holy texts and dogma are taught instead of the subjects of natural sciences. Such an approach is the cure that is ten times worse than the disease, for instead of leading forth into the future, it attempts to reinstate the past and discarded methods, which failed the tests of evolution. Such an approach was already tried out, it was used for centuries, and was discarded after people identified its limitations and weaknesses. Now we have a new system, better in many aspects, but which also has weak spots, which will result in either dismissing the system and replacing it with a new one, or in introducing changes into the system, which will correct its flaws.

I will take liberty to imagine one such form of solution to the problem of assimilating information and its conversion into knowledge.

The things people memorize and associate the best are those that they once needed, that they found useful. They integrate these things into the wider context of their personalities, thus broadening their horizons. The best way to learn is, therefore, to create a context in which knowledge will be *needed*, in which the children will acquire new knowledge through their natural functioning. Let's say that children are included in a conversation, which is on a somewhat higher level than their present one: the children will acquire, through the conversation, by asking questions and through normal functioning, things that are new to them, and incorporate them into their normal horizon of operation.

Such an approach is obviously more demanding on the teachers, who should work with children in a much better way than they are used to so far; they should talk, improvise methods, answer questions; they should be creative, and that would create a deep interest in children, and the rate of synthesis of knowledge would be increased significantly, maybe even by several scales of magnitude. It is possible, within a week, to wholly master a subject that is usually studied for a year, if all topics contained within the workbook are studied during that week, if the children's questions regarding the topics are discussed, and if the entire material is worked through in that manner. The greatest advantage of such an approach is that children probably wouldn't even notice that they're "studying," they would have fun and chat, they would

feel acknowledged and important, as a significant party in the discussion, not as objects. And all that has been acquired wouldn't be "boring schoolwork," but something interesting, something worth studying and devoting oneself to. In that way, the more or less same material that is studied today would be worked on, the same subjects from the fields of science, culture, etc., but the acquiring of information would be far more efficient, faster and deeper.

Essentially, such an approach is not untried, I personally use it daily with my students—they, by the way, almost never have the impression that they are *learning* something, we just talk about certain matters that interest them, and they don't even notice the process; they often ask me when are we finally going to "do something," because they don't see a free discussion as a method to do something "smart," but more as some sort of a rest; and this very free conversation creates the situation in which they assimilate not only information, but mostly knowledge and wisdom. The results of this method are encouraging enough for me to be ready to suggest it as a basis of all forms of education.

The question that follows is *what* to learn, now that we know *how*.

The thing that is served to children as truth is often merely a present hypothesis; they are often provided with worldview, along with information, which is highly problematic. The atheist worldview is being served along with science, and it is imposed as a necessary conclusion, instead of just stating the known information, leaving the children with freedom to make their own conclusions in the places where there are paradoxes. All the options have to be brought out, and the choice has to be allowed, where things are *not known*. Everything that is known has to be brought out honestly, as well as the things that are not known, allowing each individual to form his own conclusions and to form his own, original worldview.

There is a question whether leaving the issue of worldview open implies a certain degree of moral relativism. It is not necessarily so. Moral issues are something that needs to be discussed within the school program; children have to be faced with moral authority, they need to be told of worthy and noble examples, they should be introduced to virtue and righteousness, but they should be left to decide what they want to be. The example needs to be shown, the door has to be opened and left open, and only when

they come through that door, by their own free will, will it be clear that they have absorbed the lessons.

Likewise, the clear line between right and wrong has to be drawn in education; the wrong has to be immediately penalized, and the right has to be commended. Children *expect* parents to confirm their inner sense of rightness: when a child does something wrong, he will feel very good if he is punished, for his feeling of rightness will be confirmed, and it can be relied on. Likewise, it is necessary to confirm that the child has done something right. The punishment for a mistake must be closely related to the mistake, balanced and appropriate for the mistake. Psychological blackmails and manipulations as a form of punishment have to be utterly abandoned, and instead one should rather choose a mild form of physical punishment or a loudly spoken scolding. A clearly expressed dissatisfaction with the child's actions will most often be a sufficient punishment, and in the cases when it is not, some sort of a mild physical punishment has to be applied.

When expressing dissatisfaction one should always point the criticism to the action and the immediate circumstances, to the child's behavior, and never and by no means to the child as such, because the criticism directed to the person will leave lasting psychological consequences in the form of insecurity and a shaken sense of one's value. Example: when a child does something wrong, the right reaction is to express dissatisfaction with the action, simultaneously affirming the child's value, letting him know that because of his value he is expected to do better; to tell a child that he is naughty, bad, unworthy or the like, and all because of some action, is a serious error. Excessive indulgence, as well as excessive strictness and harshness, are both inadequate approaches, and either of them will result in certain problems: overindulgence will aggravate or make impossible for a child to adequately calibrate his inner sense of rightness, and the excessive strictness will damage the child's self-confidence and sense of safety. A reasonable middle solution should be found, the children should be brought up in an environment of deep and pure love, and clear and pure consciousness, and all mistakes should be clearly pointed out and condemned. Parents should always be an example, and they themselves should do the things that they expect from their children; only then will they be able to act from a position of a moral authority, which has a right to impose high standards of behavior and functioning.

Vegetarianism

The cessation of taking stimulating substances (alcohol, drugs etc.) and of eating meat is often assumed to be a prerequisite of spirituality. As valid and reasonable as those things are, on which I'll write in more detail, the problem occurs when someone starts thinking that the vegetarian diet itself means that he has attained some height of spiritual development, and starts seeing himself as superior to "sinners" who eat meat, or smoke, or indulge in some other form of "impure activities." Such an approach is a ten times greater aggravating circumstance in spiritual progress than eating meat, smoking, drinking alcohol and abusing drugs together. It is better for a man to do all these things, and be kind and good to his fellow men, than to "live a pure life" and for that reason become proud and despise "impure ones." Rejection of others, and thinking others to be lower than oneself, is the greatest of obstacles in spiritual development.

Once we have eliminated this aspect of things, the valid reasons why it is not wise to eat meat remain. First of all, the meat is a low quality nutrient filled with all sorts of toxic and almost indigestible substances, and it doesn't provide anything that one couldn't get from other sources, such as milk, fruits, vegetables, legumes and cereals. So, from a nutritional standpoint meat is of low quality. From the energetic point, the prana contained in meat is either the second or the third transformation of the solar prana, so that it is at least one, and sometimes even two scales of magnitude inferior to the pranic charge contained in the vegetable nutrients. And the most important factor of all, there is the karmic aspect of killing animals. It is a sin to kill any being, either plants or animals, but there is a vast difference in degree, and most often it is not even necessary to kill plants for food, if we feed on the fruits and seeds (that includes all the fruits, cereals, legumes and most vegetables), so that the issue of killing, drawn by those who say that it is a sin to kill plants as well as animals, so it is equally problematic to feed on both plants and animals, is pointless. Besides, maybe the greatest problem with eating meat isn't the killing, but the indifference to the suffering of other beings, which creates karma that will sooner or later lead to facing the consequences of one's deeds, when we figure out what it takes for a

piece of meat to be brought to our table. Those who say that it is the same problem to kill plants and animals were probably not in a position to test this principle by choosing the lesser of two evils: to pick soybeans and wheat from a field, or to slay a cow with a knife. It is clear that it is the same problem to pick a can of beans or a can of meat in a store, and people, who think about food as something that is made in the store, will logically assume that it is the same thing. But it is not. The meat industry includes a great amount of suffering of the animals, as well as the horrible sights of the slaughterhouses (which I would advise the advocates of meat eating to visit), and a man cannot accept such things as normal unless he has hardened his heart to the suffering of others. For this reason it is best to exclude food made by killing animals from the menu, and thus be freed from moral paradoxes.

There are people who are the exception to this rule; those whose bodies are physically unable to survive on a vegetable diet; they exist, but they are few. Likewise, when a man finds himself in a position to either eat meat or starve, it is better to eat meat, for the optimal functioning of the human body is of great importance; a human body is difficult to create, it takes lots of time and effort, which makes human existence extremely precious. It is thus justified to sacrifice other beings for a man's sake, but it should be done with measure, and a man who feels for all beings will avoid taking more than is needed for his functioning.

Within the vegetarian nutritional style people often make mistakes, failing to understand that the natural cycle of plants should not be interrupted, so they feed on the freshly sprouted seeds, cauliflower and similar transitional phases in the life of the plants. Such an interruption of a life cycle creates an ugly form of stress on the astral and prana, and such food can seriously disrupt the functioning of a human energetic system, and if it becomes a common practice it can lead to cancer and similar diseases. The pranic layer of the sprouting plant is such, that such prana, when assimilated into the system, has a tendency to continue the speedy growth of the tissues, thus disturbing the natural pranic-physical balance of the cells; such an abrupt growth usually means cancer. It can thus happen that people who lead "healthy lives" die from cancer on everything.

Also, before meals we should remind ourselves of the source, from which all the blessings and gifts come to us, and notice the

omnipresent Divine nature in the food, accept the meal with gratitude as a gift from God, for all the aspects of our lives have to be aligned with God and devoted to him. We should strive toward making all our actions, including eating, aligned with the Divine laws, for if we allow the disharmony to penetrate any aspect of our lives, we will lose the criteria of value, and our actions will become disorganized, chaotic and wrong.

Such strictness in judgment should be applied only to oneself; toward oneself one should be strict and apply the most severe criteria; toward others, one should be kind and tolerant, one should see others as saints, seeing oneself as a sinner, and only then shall we attain true spirituality. Resenting others for the things that we see as their flaws is a sign of severe spiritual fall, and it is a distraction of attention from one's own faults, and once we do that, it means that we have diverted our sight from the true goal.

In nutrition, as well as in all the other aspects of our functioning on earth, we should uphold the principle under which it is most important to keep in mind our own problems and solve them, looking at our own flaws instead of the flaws of others. If we want to change others, let us first make ourselves into the perfect example, on which we would want to build the world.

Choices

How much do others influence us? How much of our functioning is determined by the environment? What are our influences on others?

The answer to all those questions is: significantly. The environment determines a vast part of our functioning, of our action span. The pressures of the environment make the basic rules of the game in which we will have to make the decisions, the active choices, without delay. The positive and the negative things that we experience will force us to make the choices, they will make it impossible for us to prolong the inactivity, for inactivity in a world that demands change and activity most often means death. Life demands improvisation and activity. Every decision has its consequences, and judging by these consequences we can determine which choices were right. Not all influences that determine our functioning come from the physical plane: we are under the influence of beings and states of the higher levels as well, contributing additionally to the complexity of the matter.

But there is one thing that is universally valid: we are determined primarily by our choices. The environment provides the circumstances, but the choices that we make in those circumstances are what reflects our consciousness, the level up to which we have grown. If our thinking is ruled by cowardice and conformism, then will our choices be on the line of personal safety and inertia. If, on the contrary, we decide to base our choices on the feeling of rightness, then will our life be marked with the qualities of uncompromising straightforwardness and clarity. Depending on our choices, we embody certain qualities in our lives. Whether those qualities will be the lowest demonic, or the highest Divine, is a matter of our choice.

It is not a matter of some particular spiritual experience, but a matter of basic choices and of the moral quality, which determines the nature of these choices. When somebody is in trouble, someone will help him, and someone else will try to make use of his misfortune—these choices, to help or to exploit, have their roots in human nature, in a man's spiritual strength, and these very daily choices are the true reflection and an indicator of a man's real spiritual advancement. Artificial actions are null and

void; by this I mean learnt behavior—let's say that someone has regulations within his religion according to which one should act, and so he does good deeds according to these regulations. Such good deeds show only that such a man would want to be a good follower of his system of beliefs, but they don't show whether he is a noble person or not. Only the deeds that are spontaneous, that are done by reflex, are the ones that reflect our true nature, the deeds that take place automatically before we had a chance to think.

We seldom see ourselves in ourselves; more often we see ourselves in others. By rejecting something in others, we reject this very thing in ourselves. By criticizing others, we attack our own flaws, the ones we are unaware of—or we attempt to explain to ourselves why something is good or bad. Often, most often by far, we use external circumstances and persons as mere excuses to avoid facing our own problems and to avoid our inner states. Often we will do anything just to silence that inner voice, so that we won't hear the questions that it is asking us. And often such an attitude of ours sets us up for an awakening, which is the more radical and forceful, the deeper our dream. We essentially walk through the world in a dormant state, without noticing the reality, noticing merely the illusory images of small power, which are usually the mere reflections of our inner states, and thus we never notice the real persons and the states around us—we float within a dreamworld, surrounded by our small astral bubble of fantasies and worldviews, and it takes quite radical measures to bring our personal world in touch with the real world: these are most often the tragedies, one's own or other people's, in which we become aware of the transience and the mortality, in which we understand that the inertia by which we move has its end, that our personal world has an end, and that there is a wider reality which does not necessarily care for our illusions.

The like is attracted by the like. Our inclinations attract the persons and situations that resonate with them the most. It is not always based on the principle that drunkards associate with drunkards and poets with poets, but mainly on the principle that dharma is a system of fulfilling needs, and that our true needs attract their fulfillment. What was the true need, and what was its fulfillment, can be seen only from a great distance, for it is in human nature to confuse pleasant with beneficial, and unpleasant with harmful, while the Divine laws that control the world have a slightly different

criteria of judgment, and so will something that is pleasant often be harmful, while something unpleasant will be beneficial.

The breakdown of one's system of belief and thinking will often be an extremely painful experience, but there is no growth without such breakdowns, there is no qualitative change of the present condition. The question if it is possible to grow without such painful breakdowns arises. I fear that this is a contradictory statement. If one has grown fond of an illusory thing, he will necessarily have to abandon it, if he wishes to attain the truth. If one's will for realization is strong, abandoning the unreal will be an easy task, but if it is not, the entire process will become more painful, for our spirit will be attached to the things placed before us by God in order for us to cast them aside for something better and higher that is ahead, and the more we resist the thing that is good for us, the more consequences of our illusions we'll have to taste. It might even be good to try out all the possible illusions, for it seems that we decide to choose God only after trying out all possible alternatives. All the experiences and relationships among people therefore fit in this group of illusions to be tried out, in order to be all cast aside, realizing that there is no real alternative to God.

Is there an alternative to learning through experience? What is it all for, why not simply choose God to begin with and save ourselves all the trouble and pain of all those experiences of one kind or another?

But, who is the one who makes the choices? Can a child make the decisions of an adult man? No, he cannot. Likewise, the soul is unable to choose God until all other possibilities are tried out, until it reaches the situation in which it has no other alternative, for all choices other than God have been cast aside along the way, they no longer represent a possible alternative. God is therefore realized only by those who no longer have an alternative.

The Master and the Disciple

When the flame has just been lit, it takes a mere breath to put it out again. As it grows, it resists all forces, and becomes able to light up others, without losing any of its brightness. This is the nature of a master. A disciple, who is just starting to experience the subtle inner states, needs to practice with zeal, to dedicate whole days to spiritual practice, to ceaselessly experience the deep states of the spirit, so that they become common in his consciousness, so that he forms a habit of the high states. Once he has attained that, and it takes no more than a couple of months of practice, he will be able to preserve perfect inner peace even in the most difficult and grave of circumstances. It will take a mere shift of consciousness to put him in the Divine presence. But if a student who has merely begun to feel the higher states attempts to function like that, he will be lost, involved with worldly activities, he will lose the memory of the reality, and it is possible that he will not be able to return to the path easily.

This very stability of a master in the context of a difficult condition is the thing that makes it possible for a disciple to observe deep spiritual states and their consequences through an example. It is easy to read a scripture that talks about the enlightenment and spiritually advanced people, but what is it to us if there is no real example on which we could see how truly elated states function in the real life? It can even mislead us. The various paths that glorify passivity and laziness, and “detachment from the world,” in which the worst of human flaws are glorified as the greatest of virtues, are the very result of wrong interpretation of the holy texts, because of the absence of a master’s living example, which could demonstrate the form of the worldly presence of a truly enlightened person. Once the attitude is formed regarding what sort of a person can be regarded as spiritual, it is possible that a true master will be laughed at and rejected, for he will never meet such standards. Let us take the example of Jesus, and observe his behavior. He associated himself with adulteresses⁴⁷ and enemies of the people (the tax collectors,⁴⁸ who were in fact local traitors

⁴⁷ Matthew 21:31–32.

⁴⁸ Matthew 9:9–13.

who collaborated with Rome) and drank wine with them,⁴⁹ he healed on Saturdays,⁵⁰ he called himself the son of God,⁵¹ he told the holy persons that they were the children of the devil and faithful servants of their father,⁵² he ate meat⁵³ and produced it as food for others,⁵⁴ he didn't uphold the principles of purity; basically, he was the exact opposite to anything "spiritual." A "spiritual" person would never break a God's commandment, he would uphold the rules given by the clergy; he wouldn't drink alcohol nor eat meat, wouldn't associate itself with "impure people" such as adulteresses and tax collectors, and he would by no means publicly address God's men with a derogatory tone of voice, but always with due respect. The only problem is that such a "spiritual" person would, compared to Jesus, appear as an utterly insignificant and pathetic individual. All such rules on how spiritual people should look and act are utterly senseless and pathetic. In *Bhagavad-gita*, Arjuna often asks Krishna what the people who realized brahman⁵⁵ look like, and Krishna always tells him of their spiritual state, never of their appearance and behavior—it is because the appearance and behavior mean nothing, and they can only deceive. The false saint will look more saintly than a real saint, the false God will appear more godly than the God himself. Imitation will always meet the demands of appearance, but it will utterly lack the essence and the foundations, which are the only things that count. It is easy to decorate oneself with symbols of spirituality, but it is always a mere mask that hides laziness, arrogance and inner emptiness. Those who have the spirit will be quite comfortable without form and symbols, for their greatness depends on the spirit, and not on these things.

The mere presence of a master is sufficient to make a person examine himself, to observe himself while observing the master's actions and see how much of that greatness is present in himself, thus placing himself in perspective and seeing his own shortcomings. If he did no more than providing such an example, the master

⁴⁹ Matthew 11:19.

⁵⁰ Matthew 12:1–19.

⁵¹ Matthew 11:25–27.

⁵² John 8:44.

⁵³ Luke 24:41–43.

⁵⁴ Matthew 14:19–21.

⁵⁵ Bhagavad-gita 2:54–58.

would do an enormous deal, for this very example of the higher state, where we could see what we ourselves do not possess, is what is missing; this very example is what is most needed. In a case when we are not sure what state of consciousness is the right one, and what will be its results, the master's example is the thing that disperses a man's doubts and leads him on his path.

The master is by no means a person to whom one would come to obtain advice in order to avoid making decisions and solving one's own problems. The teacher is not someone who would think and live instead of us, the teacher is the one who will make us strong and independent, but in the sense that the greatest strength and the greatest independence are the qualities of those who have surrendered themselves to God. The surrender to God is the true cure for weakness, for it means to absorb pure power and consciousness from its source, thus being the source of our greatest strength.

The qualities of strength are not immortality and invulnerability. True strength is steadiness under pressure—when the pressure becomes too strong, we die, but we don't break. Only true Divine power is the one that enables such functioning, for under serious pressure nothing that is not real and good can survive. Endurance in the context of a difficult situation will tell us much more about the master, than would his normal, common state, and much more than his indestructibility and invulnerability would, if he would display it. The inner forces, which are the source of his strength, are shown under pressure, and the master will be a greater inspiration to the disciples in the moments of his illness and death, than he would be in his best edition.

Another quality, that makes the presence of a master so important, is the contagiousness of the higher consciousness. In the presence of a mighty consciousness, we become capable of comprehending the things that we couldn't comprehend alone; we absorb the master's radiation, until we have absorbed his essence, and began to radiate in the same way ourselves.

Through his very existence, the master conveys understanding of things, and if the student harmonizes himself with him in a right way, this understanding will become his own. The process of alignment with the master, and of accepting his consciousness, is devotion. Without devotion, admiration and adoration, we are utterly incapable of acquiring the higher states of consciousness—how could

we learn from someone whom we are unable to truly admire? It is not possible. Only where there are devotion and admiration, there is the relationship of the disciple and the master, only there is the transfer of the subtle states of consciousness possible.

The teaching itself is of secondary importance. The consciousness that is being conferred is what counts, and it makes the difference between a bookworm and a saint. What use is there in conveying information, if it remains mere data in the life of the disciple? None. But if the student attains the state of consciousness in which there is understanding of subtle principles, he himself will be able to read pages from the endless library of the reality, without having to hear about them first. This is the reason why the nature of a master consists of conveying the consciousness, and not of conveying the information.

Theoretical Spirituality

When our thoughts dwell on matters of spirituality—God, world, soul, rightness and other—the question of the theoretical background of such thinking and acting arises; the question of the meaning of it all. If God doesn't exist, there is no point in praying to him to help us; if there is no higher state of consciousness, there is no point in trying to attain it, and if there is no soul that outlives the body, the issues of morality and long-term ethics become meaningless. Likewise, people need intellectual support for their beliefs, they need an intellectual system in which they can place their belief, for it is often the case that people feel the presence of some Divine force in their lives, but they are ignorant of its nature, and so their experience remains suspended in the vacuum; since they can't place it anywhere, they most often shrug and go on with their lives, knowing that they should do something about it, but not being able to understand what it would be.

This gives great importance to the theoretical background of the experience, regardless of the fact that the theory itself, without experience, can be worthless. Theory alone, void of practice, will hardly result in enlightenment, but theoretical understanding of the enlightenment can guide one's life to a new, better direction. This is the reason why we will now engage ourselves in a discussion about the theoretical aspects of spirituality.

God

Who or what is God? Is there really such a being? What are its qualities? If it exists, what is our relationship with him, her or it? These are the questions that every person asks sooner or later—every religion considers providing answers to these questions to be its duty.

First of all, there is a question of whether we are capable of knowing anything about it. For it is commonly held that we are not, and that all of our reasoning on God is destined to remain in the sphere of belief, or in the sphere of speculation. That is most certainly not so. Quite opposite to the generally accepted view, God is extremely easy to experience; all it takes is to look in the right direction, and in order to do that we need to know what we are looking for, we need to know what God is.

In India, within the system of Vedanta, there are two basic theological “schools,” personal and impersonal. The personal school says that God is a person, and the impersonal says that God is a principle. I will now give the basics outlines of the both schools’ theologies.

The impersonal school, founded by Sankaracarya, says that brahman (the closest translation is the Absolute) is the supreme and only reality. Everything relative (maya) is merely an illusion, which says that there are the name and the form. Once the name and the form are removed, the undivided nature of the reality, that is one in all beings, becomes known; the Absolute is the self of the being, its innermost essence, and thus the being (jivan) by diving into itself realizes the undivided nature of the universal reality as itself. Within the relative, there is the quantity; within the Absolute, the quantity is a meaningless category, for the Absolute is void of divisions. The Absolute is sat-cit-ananda, being-consciousness-bliss, the quality that is not three qualities, but one that can be described at the same time as the being, as the consciousness and as the bliss—the absolute state is such a quality, described as sat-cit-ananda. Within the relative, there are various beings on different ladders of evolution, but the Self within them is one and absolute. Like two figures of clay, that appear to be essentially different, and when they are merged into one the difference

is lost, the involvement of the self in different bodies creates the impression of the division of the self; if the bodies of several beings were somehow merged, the beings would realize that the self in them is one, but dressed in different experiences and relative limitations (upadhis), which create the impression of difference. Like one moon, which is reflected on many surfaces of water, the one self is reflected in the multitude of beings, remaining in its transcendental and undivided nature. If we join two vessels containing water into one, it will have only one reflection of the moon. If we divide one vessel in two, each will hold one reflection. In infinite division each surface of water reflects the self (moon). Likewise, dividing and uniting beings does not have any effect on the nature of the self, which remains undivided and one, and each being experiences itself as the untainted self, regardless of the divisions and merges, and the only difference is in the relative layers of experiences, mind, body and the like. As the energy of the being rises and falls, as the emotional and mental states change, the “I” feeling never disappears and never changes, it is always the same. The experiences that surround the “I” change, from childhood to old age, but the feeling of self is the same, the I-presence remains. The Absolute is transcendental to the qualities (nirguna), for it is the foundation of all the qualities and it is not given in them.

One cannot know the Absolute, one can only be the Absolute, for it is never the object but always the subject of the realization: the one who eternally realizes. The Absolute can never be looked at from the outside to say “it is this, not other,” for Absolute is the looker and the looked. The direct experience of the Absolute takes place when the observer, observation and the observed are united, when they are experienced as one (triputibheda). Such a state is called the state of unity, turiya. The state of unity with the Absolute (samadhi) is divided into two degrees, with the experience of difference (savikalpa) and without the experience of difference (nirvikalpa). Savikalpa samadhi is a state in which there is the experience of the Absolute state but there is still a division between the observer, observation and the observed: in such a state the Absolute qualities are observed but there is still a difference between them and oneself. In the nirvikalpa samadhi this difference is lost, and it is realized that I am all, and there is no other. It is known that I am the cause of all the causes and the

foundation of all the qualities, that I am not given in them but that they are given in me; I remain eternally transcendental to the world of manifestation, although I carry it all and preserve it within my being. I am the reality and the truth in all beings, I am the essence and the foundation of all knowledge, I am the reality beyond the illusion. I am beyond space, time and cause, I am the causeless cause of all causes.

The personal school puts the accent on the existence of God (Ishvara or Bhagavan) as a person that possesses the whole of qualities of power, bliss, consciousness, reality and other. God is perfect and eternally free, a treasury of all virtues, a person who completely possesses the qualities of being, consciousness and bliss (*sat-cit-ananda svarupa*, the personal form of being-consciousness-bliss). The individual souls (*jivan*) are of the same quality as God, but they are separate and differ in quantity. The goal of a soul's existence is to worship God, in which it finds the meaning of its existence. The soul is in its original nature pure, but under the influence of the lower nature (*maya*) it acquires the lower qualities, which condition and limit it. Under the influence of nature the soul is limited by the body and its qualities, and for the reason of the consequences of actions (*karman*). Since every action results in an adequate reaction, a being is in its activities tied to the reactive seedlings (*karma-shayas*), which sprout in the right circumstances, forming various circumstances, such as fortune, misfortune, health, disease, death and rebirth in the circumstances that would allow the release of all the collected reactive seedlings. The soul can be liberated from such a process of action and reaction only if it devotes all its actions to God, for the actions devoted to God are transcendental to the laws of nature, and thus they do not imply a reaction. When a being is freed from all the reactive seedlings created by past deeds, and it doesn't collect new ones, it attains liberation from the shackles of nature and moves from the material into the spiritual world, in which there are no binding actions, for all activities are dedicated to serving the Lord. In the spiritual world beings grow in the love for God, and thus their positions in the spiritual hierarchy differ—persons who are especially attached to God get the higher place, through the depth of their devotion, love and service.

It is obvious that these two schools have completely different understandings of the world, and their concepts of God are also completely different. Still, within both schools there is a great number of enlightened persons of great spiritual strength and virtue, and their experience cannot be reduced to favor just one approach. Each of those schools has a place for the other one, seeing it as an inferior version of itself; the impersonalists think that the personal view is merely a phase in the process of realization of the impersonal Absolute, while the personalists think that the realization of the impersonal Absolute (brahman) is merely a lower phase in the process of realizing God as a person (Ishvara), for the light of the brahman (brahmajyotis) is merely radiation from the body of Ishvara.

As much as these two visions seem incompatible, my personal experience tells me that they are merely two sides of the same coin.

Impersonalism speaks of the Absolute, and it is obvious what follows from the very nature of the Absolute—its transcendence to the quantity, quality, relation, space, time and causality. Likewise, from the very definition of God as the Absolute it follows that God is the causeless cause of all causes, which defines God as transcendental to the causality, as a well from which the causality springs. From the nature of the Absolute we can derive the universal presence and the all-pervading nature, for the Absolute pervades the relative in all of its aspects, remaining transcendental in its Absolute quality. It is thus understandable how a relative being can know itself as the Absolute through the process of self realization, since the Absolute is the foundation of all reality, which includes the reality of every being, which can through its reality (the reality of self) realize the undivided nature of the all-pervading Absolute, which dwells in the essence of every being in the form of its self. But, in spite of having much to offer on the matters of the Absolute and its nature, the impersonal view utterly ignores and devalues the relative, and such devaluation is a bad move, to say the least, since the relative represents the very life of the Absolute, its other side, the manifestation as the other side of the unmanifested, the duality as the other side of the unity. To ignore the duality, the divided nature of the relative manifestation, as an illusion to be outgrown, means to diminish God, for the relative is Him as well.

Also, once it is realized that everything is in fact the Absolute, what happens to the individual being (jivan)? Does it merge with the Absolute and stop existing as the relative being? No, of course, for nothing can merge with the Absolute: the Absolute is already undivided in itself, and as much as nothing can be separated from it, nothing can be united with it. One can realize the already existing unity, but it says nothing about the existence of the being in the relative. It continues to exist, with its consciousness indeed switched into the Absolute, during which its body, on the level of the Creation on which the being possesses a body, remains inactive. The Indian scriptures tell about the worlds (Siddhaloka, Brahmhaloka, Tapoloka, Satyaloka, Muktaloka, Hiranyaloka, etc.) on which dwell beings whose consciousness is permeated with the realization of the Absolute. As much as their consciousness is switched into the Absolute, their relative being does not cease to exist, but it is only suspended and stagnant. As much as the advocates of the impersonalism express the elated truths about the nature of the Absolute, their disregard for the relative and its role leads to questionable results, to say the least, in which they attain the thing that is given from the very beginning, proclaiming it to be the goal. If the Absolute is the supreme reality, however, and if it is in itself undivided, and if it is the self in all the beings, then this very fact defines the absolute freedom (moksha, mukti) as the starting, basic state of beings, from which they grow, and not the goal toward which they strive. What kind of a goal is it, if it is given in the very beginning of the journey? The liberation is the inner reality of the being on which everything else is built; nobody could ever be destroyed nor truly enslaved, for such is the nature of the Absolute, of the supreme reality. It is the sun which shines equally on both good and the wicked,⁵⁶ making no difference.

Dualistic approaches, however, observe only the relative, with an utter disregard for the Absolute; in fact, they proclaim something as the Absolute in order to have their accounts in order, but it is obvious that they are speaking of something that is inconsistent with the very definition of the Absolute. Since they believe that the relative is less valuable than the Absolute, they will see the statement that God (Ishvara) is relative as a great insult, for it

⁵⁶ Matthew 5:43–48.

seems that the relative became some sort of a spitting mark in these circles. But it is logical that, if God exists apart from the soul, that we are dealing with two principles, and not one; we are dealing with God and the soul. Since they are apart, they must exist in some sort of relationship. Since the word “relative” is derived from the Latin “relatio,” which means “relation,” to be relative in fact means to be in a relationship with something. If the soul and God are in a relationship, it means that we are dealing with the relative, and not the Absolute field. These are the clear facts derived from elementary logic and semantics, which simply state the same thing without making any devaluation. The fact that some would like the relative to be the Absolute is another matter, but it cannot be done unless we change the definitions of the relative and the Absolute.

The relative is a means of expression of the Absolute; the relative is the life of the Absolute. In such life the Ishvara, as a being, wholly reflects the qualities of the Absolute in the relative, without even a trace of imperfection and impurity. Ishvara, in the relative, represents a goal to beings, for his beauty in the outer world represents the glory of their own soul in the Absolute. If beings do not want to park their bodies on some world dedicated to holy inactivity, and if they want to function in the relative, reflecting the qualities of the Absolute in their lives, then they will be devoted to Ishvara, to God as a person, who represents everything that is dear to them, everything most magnificent, most powerful, most beautiful and bright, everything that is worthy of love and devotion. Thus being devoted to God in the relative life, acquiring through their devotion the qualities of the Absolute, becoming more and more like God, and growing from the impersonal roots of the Absolute, the foundation of all foundations, they are closing the circle. It was for this reason possible for Shankaracharya to say that brahman is the supreme reality, and that Govinda (a name of Krishna) is the object of the deepest worship. These things are not contradictory, if the whole is observed; the whole of the relative and of the Absolute.

Unlike a large number of yogic approaches that stress the realization of the Absolute, I stress the development of the Divine qualities in one’s life, the aspect of evolution, the development in the relative. The knowledge of the Absolute is valuable, this is an experience that profoundly changes a man’s view of the world

and of the reality, but it represents a never lost foundation from which we grow. The Absolute nature of our own being needs not to be gained, for it was never lost, it is forever ours, it is our very nature from which we cannot be parted by any means, especially not by the experience in the relative, whatever its nature. But the goal of the relative experience is to acquire, through the relative, the qualities of the Absolute in our own existence, to master all the levels of emanation of the Absolute through the relative with our consciousness, and thus to attain everything there is to be attained, to close the circle in the greatest of perfections, dwelling infinitely in the utmost bliss of the Divine nature, in the relative as well as in the Absolute. Dwelling thus in the Absolute consciousness, and worshipping the Lord, as the greatest joy, we attain the highest, complete fulfillment. We will then be wholesome persons. And even if we don't bother to realize the nature of the Absolute and to unplug our consciousness from the relative, in the moment when we reach the knowledge of God it will become wholly known to us, for the glory of the Lord—as a being relative to us—carries all the qualities of God—as the absolute foundation of everything, as the highest Self.

In any case, when we make our personality divine we attain all the goals, whereas the premature switching into the Absolute leaves the knowledge of God as a person unknown to us, we cannot realize it because we are not pure, high and evolved enough as persons. Such a switch will undoubtedly give us great knowledge; the great mysteries will be revealed to us, but when we return to the relative consciousness it might happen to us, as it has indeed happened to many, that instead of humility we develop great pride of our “attainment,” and that we start to preach, to the persons who have surrendered themselves to God and who are on a higher ladder of spiritual evolvment than we are, that their spiritual evolvment is merely a relative illusion to be outgrown by the realization of the Absolute. And indeed we are the very ones who have to outgrow our own illusion and to surrender to God and to worship him, realizing in him and in ourselves the equal Divine nature, worthy of the highest love and adoration. Devotion to God fills us with the nectar of bliss, which cleanses even the slightest specks of impurity from our being, making us worthy of the whole and perfect surrender to the Highest, of the highest goal, of the state of fulfillment so great, that even the slightest trace of

desire, even the slightest trace of longing for the higher, vanishes forever. When the relative and the Absolute are united in our consciousness, when both sides of a coin are blended into one, then nothing remains, and our consciousness is no longer a being, but a fountain of bliss which unites the relative and the Absolute.

How is the relative built, anyway? It seems that the various philosophical systems have given several explanations, which, taken together, provide a good idea of the reality.

The relative consists of two fundamental parts, Purusha and Prakriti. If I wanted to simplify things, I would say that Purusha is the spiritual principle, and that Prakriti is the material principle. Purusha is the spirit that gives life, and Prakriti is the inert matter, which itself is passive, ruled by the laws of entropy. Within Purusha and Prakriti both there are the levels of subtlety; therefore we need to take the term “matter” in a very broad sense, for matter in the sense of the physical substance is merely the lowest aggregate state of Prakriti. Purusha is in itself fulfilled and eternally giving, and Prakriti is in itself empty and eternally taking. In the desire for manifestation, Purusha comes in touch with Prakriti, descending through its progressively lower layers—from Shiva the Dancer to physical matter. The touch of Purusha gives life to matter, it is the force of order, opposed to the chaos and entropy, and thus the evolution of organized forms in matter begins. Essentially, it is the finger of God, whose touch brings life to dead matter. Purusha is the spirit within the body. Of course, the thing that is usually regarded as the soul is merely the soul dressed in a body of a somewhat subtler sort.

Within Purusha there is multitude, there is diversity. The fundamental quality of Purusha is devotion, devoted service, and it is a quality of all the spiritual beings of Purusha. Such devotion is the quality of perfect inner wholeness, of independence from the outer, and all the beings adore God, as the ultimate Purusha (Purushottama), seeing him as their perfection. The state of consciousness of Purusha is so magnificent, that there is nothing that could possibly take its place in the soul of one who has experienced it; it is a state of such inner fulfillment, such a level of realization—both inner and outer—that it indeed is the goal of all goals and the fulfillment of all desires.

How does the descent into Prakriti, the drop into progressively greater limitations and divisions, take place? Maybe because the

original being, lacking experience of growth through evolution, is inferior to the eventual being, which finishes the cycle of descent to the bottom of Prakriti, and ascent to the highest Purusha. It seems that the experience of all the trials, and the rejection of all possibilities other than God, is the fundamental element of the spiritual growth, and in order for the possibilities to be tried out, they first had to be brought into existence, then experienced, and finally discarded.

Soul and Reincarnation

What is the soul? What is our original and true nature, if there is one? Did everything begin with our birth, and will it all end with our death?

I will definitely not try to prove anything to someone who, in spite of rather convincing evidence of the existence of the soul, which survives the death of the physical body (near-death experiences, astral projections, memories of past lives), doesn't believe in its existence, for if someone decided in advance to discard all the arguments, no matter what they are, I will most certainly not be able to provide him with something that he would accept. To one, however, to whom it seems that there could be something in all that, I can offer a couple of possibilities to think about.

The most frequently mentioned definition of the soul, which does not contradict itself, is that a soul is some sort of a spiritual particle, which associates itself with the body, but which outlives it.

Such a definition, although questionable from the position of facts, is the most useful working model, judging from the position of usefulness, and it can later be made more complete, to reflect the facts to the greatest possible extent.

First of all, one should have in mind that the soul doesn't incarnate directly into the physical body, but that it is, on its descent into the physical body, dressed with the bodies made of substance of all the energetic layers between the point from which it is being incarnated and the physical body. The lowest beings that are born in a human body are defined as souls in the astral; the astral is the highest level on which those beings have a conscious presence as beings, on which they have a definition of self. The highest of the beings that bear a human body are incarnated directly from Purusha, dressing themselves in all the layers of Prakriti on the way down to the physical level; such beings are called avatars, the Divine incarnations. The majority of people are from neither of those two groups, but from somewhere in between; they are incarnated either from the mental, or from some causal layer; the rare great souls are incarnated from the atmic or paranirvanic level. Essentially, the rule is that the soul, which sheds a body, sheds also all the lower bodies that do not contain its true elements of personality, which most often means that it sheds all the

bodies below its maximal reach, dwelling thus in the highest state of consciousness that it managed to feel during its last life in the physical body. The choice for the next incarnation is always the choice to continue growth, to stop prolonging the status quo; that's when the soul starts to "resonate" with the form of embodiment that is most suitable to accommodate its desire for growth. As it resonates with the situation more and more, it descends deeper into the Creation, until it reaches the point that is optimal for the desired kind of growth; it is usually the lowest vibratory point there is—the matter. If something can be accomplished in the astral, it won't be necessary to incarnate in the physical body, and the lowest body will be the astral one. If, however, the soul needs to be born in the physical body, the process of resonance of the similar will choose the physical body that is ideal for such a venture, the one that has the physical qualities and the social position that provide the ideal opportunity for growth. Since the precision of such resonance depends on the strength and greatness of the soul that is being incarnated, the older, greater souls will choose the body that fits their purpose exactly, and sometimes they will even directly create it through some sort of a materialization (either the materialization of the zygote into the uterus, or the materialization of the adult body from the higher energetic layers). The weaker and younger souls have a significantly weaker presence on the levels, and so the precision of their choice of a body is limited; the sex of the soul, the physical appearance, sometimes even the biological species of the body can vary within a certain range, but it is important to know that to those souls any body within that range is good enough for the realization of their intent, and that the precision is not as necessary as it is in the case of more advanced, older souls, which have exactly defined missions in life, which include other souls as well. Because of those circumstances, it is often the case that the entire group of karmically associated souls incarnates at once, in order to realize a common goal.

It is therefore true that we choose our parents, as well as the situations with which we will be faced, but not by the criteria of what would be pleasant to us; we express only our general purpose of life, and God takes care of the rest (God is here meant in the sense of dharma, the universal all-pervading law which takes care of everything in order to fulfill everybody's true needs).

Does the soul in the process of incarnation forget its true nature, its mission, and its past? In one sense yes, but actually no. The new body in which the soul is embodied, of course, does not possess the memories in the physical brain, which would have anything to do with the experiences of the past embodiments, but the entire existence of the soul is the result of past embodiments. Like a child on the physical plane, which in the uterus goes through all the evolutionary phases, a man in his life goes through all the phases of his previous spiritual growth, only accelerated, and the speed of this passage depends on the age and greatness of the soul; older souls will in the young age of their body display the kind of understanding that younger souls will fail to display even in the old age of their bodies. The memories of past lives therefore do not exist in form of recollection of events, but in form of personal qualities that are gradually crystallized in a man's life, and which make people different. The information is not transferred; the wisdom is transferred, the experience is transferred, the knowledge of what is worthy of experience and what should be avoided. The information, all the events from all the past lives, remains preserved in God's mind, which knows all the events, as well as in the deep memory of the soul. Sometimes it is possible to retrieve this information into the consciousness during one's life, but most often that is not the case.

So much for the view of the soul as an individual entity, the "atomic soul." There is a parallel view, which together with this one forms something that is very close to reality.

Let us imagine a source of light—sun, light bulb or whatever. Let us take several panes of glass coated with paint. Let us place the panes in front of each other, and put them all in front of the source of light. The source of light represents Purusha, and the glass panes represent Prakriti. Let us say that the light is corrosive to the paint, and that it decomposes it through time—it takes lots of time, but gradually the paint loses its qualities and pieces of it start to fall off. As the paint vanishes from the glass, the light starts appearing on the other side, in small spots. These spots of light on the glass represent living beings. Gradually the spots of light become brighter and brighter as the paint vanishes—this represents the evolution of the beings. When the paint is completely gone from all the glass panes on a certain area, it represents the enlightenment of a being, for its nature of Purusha, the light on the other

side, is perfectly conveyed to the other side of the glass, without any stain.

Let us say that the quality of some panes is such, that the uncolored surfaces are repainted; this represents the death of one of the being's bodies. But on the panes closer to the light, the uncolored spots remain revealed, and their transparency alleviates the corrosion of the paint on the remote pane, and so the paint on that place will soon be peeled off again; that is how a being is reincarnated, how it takes a new body.

But in all that, it is an illusion to think that the being is a spot of light on the glass, an uncolored spot. The being is the light on the other side of the glass, always and in all, independent of the play of light on the panes. The light on the other side is the true reality of all beings, the sun that shines equally to the good and to the wicked.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Matthew 5:43–48.

Karma

The word karma originates from the Sanskrit word “karman,” which means activity, action. Since it has become common in discussions on actions and their results, I will also use it to denote certain phenomena.

In one meaning, karma is the law of action and reaction, under which every action is instantly associated with a reaction of the same amount and of the opposite direction—a sort of an application of the third Newton’s law onto the spirit. In the second meaning, karma are the results of deeds, manifested or not. Karma is thus divided into the karmic seedlings (the results that have not yet been shown) and the manifested karma, the karmic seedlings that have sprouted. Some imprecise generalizations also count the subtle desires (vasanas) that determine the personality, as well as the impressions created by past experience (samskaras), as karma.

The karmic reactions as such are given in the causal body, where all the causes are associated with the effects; the system of association is extremely wise, and therefore the reactions are always in service of spiritual growth; they always arise at the right time to incite the spirit in the right direction.

Not all beings have karma of the same type. If we remember that some beings are incarnated from the levels higher than the causal, it is obvious that those beings will not possess karma of the type that would be related to the sphere of cause and effect; still, by wearing a causal body such a being chooses “disposable karma” that will be of use in this physical incarnation, and result in experiences that are in alignment with the needs. Beings, however, that are being incarnated from the mental or astral level (the majority of mankind) have karma that is completely conditioned by their need to learn through the experiences; such karma will confront them with the circumstances that will motivate changes in their ways of functioning.

Misconceptions in understanding of karma are frequent, and they cause ridiculous beliefs of such as that if one kills ten ants, he’ll have to be killed ten times as an ant, or something equally absurd. If we think about what is in function of the true spiritual growth of a being, then a system that would function in this way becomes monstrous and utterly senseless; the world that would

be designed on such principles of vengeance would be the result of a diseased mind, and not the spirit of God, and it would indeed represent a deadly trap from which the beings would have no possibility of salvation: since physical existence is associated with death and suffering of other beings, if the rules like “eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth”⁵⁸ applied, eventually everybody would be left without eyes and teeth, and nothing of importance would be achieved. The purpose of karma is not to collect debts from the guilty, but to elevate them above the sinful behavior, and that isn’t achieved by making it impossible for them to show their value. Karma puts a person, to whom it is normal to kill a man for money, in a position to be killed for money, and in this situation, when his life, family, future and everything dear and valuable to him in that life is lost for a trivial thing such as money, he will understand that such a thing is gravely wrong, that people should not be killed for anything. How many people he killed for money doesn’t count—once he realizes the essence of his mistake and a correct form of action in such a situation, it is no longer necessary for him to face the consequences of his actions in such an extreme manner. The goal of karma is, therefore, to confront people with the consequences of their actions in a constructive way, optimally designed and painful to the least possible extent, for karma is meant to teach one by experience, and not to imprison him in the endless ties of crime and punishment. Punishment is an elevating, not a binding force.

And still, true as that is, killing a mosquito or an ant will result in a form of karmic recoil, in a form of karmic load. It will not be so grave as to demand death or something as severe, but killing a certain number of beings can lead to expression of the accumulated karma through disease or something similar, that will equalize the potentials. Killing beings and causing their suffering results in acceptance of some sort of retribution, which is most often reasonably mild, but if one overindulges in such activities, they can result in chronic health problems, cyclic periods of illness and like. It seems that the karmic retribution is necessarily tied with the ability to choose and free will: where there is no choice, there is no karmic reaction. Free will is the one that creates karma.

We should not understand it as to embrace a mistaken belief that actions done indifferently will be free of karmic recoils; one who

⁵⁸ Leviticus 24:20; Deuteronomy 19:21.

sins indifferently, goes to hell indifferently. One who kills other beings without consideration will suffer from various problems with health and other things until he changes his ways. Nobody is spared from this form of karma, including the greatest saints, because for as long as they act in the world, they accept its rules.

Once we have correctly understood the issue of karmic retribution, it becomes clear why the avatars such as Jesus and Babaji needed to buy human karma with their suffering, by transferring it to their own bodies. With such an act they purified their disciples from the grave consequences of deeds from their lives, and prepared them for higher kinds of functioning. From this it becomes apparent that there are certain flaws in the very system of karmic retribution, which has some blind spots, in which karmic retribution will still be an aggravating circumstance in a man's development. In such situations, when someone is ready to accept the higher manner of functioning, and in which he is prevented by his karmic dirt, the need arises for the appearance of a higher being that will work through such consequences on its own body, since they are impossible to destroy in an easy manner—they have to be somehow spent. Some forms of karma can be cleansed energetically, by upstream kriya, sincere remorse and similar methods, but sometimes suffering on the physical plane is also needed in order to accelerate the process. This does not mean that it is wise to glorify every form of suffering as a purifying factor—most often suffering is a sign that we are doing something wrong—but in certain rare situations, it is necessary. The best evidence for that necessity is the example of the greatest yogis: if there was a more effective way to solve the problems, they, the greatest masters, would not be forced to resort to disease and death in order to cleanse the karma of their disciples.

The greatest part of karma is fortunately not of the kind that would need to be physically suffered through: most often it is enough to understand things, to understand the lesson.

One of the misconceptions regarding karma is to call the various forms of impurities on the pranic and astral body karma; that is simply incorrect. These impurities are of a vastly inferior order compared to anything that could possibly be called karma, and they are more likely a consequence of karma's manifestation than karma itself. Likewise, it is inaccurate, to say the least, to call some lower relationships of cause and effect karma: for instance,

if we smoke, we will have problems with breathing and we could end up with cancer; if we eat too much, we will become fat; if we walk carelessly, we can fall under a car. They are all relationships of cause and effect, but they are not what is meant when we speak of karma, which is a causality of a higher order, one associated with righteousness and the higher forms of morality, and not with the logical results of certain actions.

A karmic seedling, the karmic object of a higher order, in its sprouting—its transformation from invisible to visible—decomposes into the particles of substance of the lower levels; for instance, the karmic object from the causal body will decompose into the mental, astral and pranic particles, and the physical events. Such decay “contaminates” the lower bodies with something that is often called karma, but which is merely a result of decay and manifestation of karma, through which the karmic seedling ceases to exist; it is gone from our causal body. This is not to be confused with the fact that our mental, astral, pranic and physical activities result in certain things; for instance, prolonged functioning through some system of belief will reflect itself on the pranic and physical system, which is not to be confused with karma, because it fits in the same group with smoking and reduced lung capacity.

Dharma

When we reflect upon the relationship of God and the Creation, and upon our position within the Creation, the question arises whether we are left to our own devices and to the inert forces that are opposed to us, or if someone takes care of our well-being, someone we could turn to for help. Various magical paths state that we are dealing with the first alternative, that we are surrounded by merciless and inert principles, which we have to fight, and struggle for success with our own might, and that the success depends on how bitterly we fight throughout our lives. This is not the perspective of those who know the true nature of the world. The world is not made out of a dead substance, but out of God's love. All the laws of the world are subordinate to it, to this love that is perfectly righteous and which takes perfect care of everyone and everything.

This love, which takes care of fulfilling the needs, is dharma, which can be translated as "law," "duty," and "harmony." Harmony is perhaps the word that describes the phenomenon best, for the state of dharma is the state of perfect harmony. When a being is in harmony, it functions in agreement with dharma; when all the needs are met in an ideal way, it is because of dharma. Dharma is the system of fulfillment of needs. Now someone will say that it is obvious that the needs of all are not fulfilled; there are the hungry, the sick and the abused, there is evil and suffering in the world, so how can we in this context speak of the ideal fulfillment of the needs? Such a perspective is superficial, it doesn't observe the essence of things but merely superficial phenomena, and it misses the actual point. If the true needs of beings are known to us, only then we can see if they are fulfilled or not. If we look deep and far enough, we will see the reality, and it is that *all* needs, without exception, are ideally met. Everyone gets what is really needed, in that moment, and what will eventually bring him to perfection.

Are we dealing with some sort of an impersonal force, the law of nature, which acts independently from some aware intelligence? This might be the key to the illusion, that is typical for the superficial methods of observation, and which has lots to do with the way in which official science observes the world, the view that it

is the unconscious set of natural laws that function according to some automatism. But there are no such things as dead matter and inert laws! The mechanisms of dharma are made of conscious compassion, of the Divine nectar that floods the Creation, of God's very nature that forms the ideal functioning. Physical laws are merely a projection of these inner laws upon the material plane, they are merely materializations of these inner laws. The law of action and reaction, which creates karmic retribution, is not the law of punishment but the law of compassion; compassion is the force that produces the karmic response. The inner righteousness of the soul is the one that drives evolution and learning through experience.

There are beings of the higher planes, which represent the crystallization of these laws of love and compassion, and which incessantly help, driven by the fundamental tissue of dharma. The world is filled with benevolent forces that help, and the world itself is made from help, and as help, it is neither dead nor deaf, and all prayers will be answered. We don't need to struggle; all it takes is to make love to the universe and all our needs will be met, all our longings will be fulfilled. The Almighty resides in every stone, every leaf, every tree, in every being without exception. God pervades everything and supports everything with his nature, for in the beginning there was only God, and nothing has changed in the meantime; the only difference is that the undivided wore the clothes of division, created the possibilities of choice from its nature, created divisions between the real and the unreal, so that we would be able to discard the unreal and choose the real, casting aside everything but the Highest, thus rooting out all the doubts from our being, becoming immensely stronger than we were before making such choices. In the beginning, there was the possibility of temptation, the question "what if something appears, will I choose it or not, will it possess the attraction or not." In the end, there will be no more questions, only certainty that God is the only sanctuary, the only object of desires, for the only factor of appeal in anything is our feeling of a God's reflection in it, something is appealing only to the extent to which we feel God in it, and therefore, after trying out and discarding everything else, we remain forever firm in God.

And on the way there we are never forsaken, left to our own devices and to chance; for whenever we want it, God will help us, in an ideal way. All it takes is for *us* to want it, for these are the

rules of the game, we are the ones who choose. We can choose God and we can choose the world without God; we can choose mortality, suffering, limitation, and we can choose the limitless immortal bliss. It is up to us to make the choices honestly, to choose what we want in our lives, whether it is God or something lower. Whether we want to surrender to the perfection, or think that we can do better. For as long as we think that we can do better than what God has installed for us, we will be given the opportunity to achieve it, but let us not complain about God then, about his righteousness and love, because our experience is merely a result of our own decisions and choices. At every moment we can choose God, and discard everything else. And when we choose God, when we root ourselves in God, we can choose a life in the world of limitations, but also a life fulfilled with the Divine, life fulfilled with God, life that would radiate God into the world. Such a life is no longer an attempt to fulfill the needs, but the radiation of one's own fulfillment; it is no longer a quest for fulfillment, but the life and manifestation of fulfillment.

With such a life, we become the means of implementation of dharma—for only the one who is in perfect alignment with God's will, who knows God and who lives God, can serve dharma. He will be God's lighthouse in the world.

Yoga and Kundalini

Yoga is one of the terms that is often used in a multitude of different meanings, which mostly contradict each other. This is caused, among other things, by the fact that in India every system has a place in itself for all the other systems—of course, a place lower than its own. Thus will a system that advocates one approach display all the other approaches in an extremely simplified and absurd way, in order to convince its own followers of the senselessness or inferiority of these other systems. The followers of some bhakti schools will thus imagine a yogi as a person who practices some sort of a technique in order to attain special powers, which he wishes to utilize for the realization of his goals. The television reports that come from India can make one conclude that a yogi is a person who meditates on some spot for years in order to attain the ability to levitate, or to control other people's thoughts. After a couple of such reports, one who sincerely seeks the truth will definitely not regard yoga as something of interest and worthy of engagement.

Yoga is a far wider term than it is commonly given credit for. In literal translation, yoga means “yoke.” In a free translation, yoga is a practice that is meant to result in enlightenment.

If we put things like that, every practice in which a person is engaged in order to attain some concrete form of relationship with God, and which doesn't add up to blind belief, can be called yoga. This very broadness of definition is the reason for the existence of the infinite variety of schools and traditions of yoga, which are engaged in attainment of different goals, with different methods. If we classify these approaches, they can be put in several groups:

- the approach through the body
- the approach through prana (energy)
- the approach through feelings and thoughts
- the approach through the descent of spirit

Techniques that attempt to influence the spiritual state through the body contain various forms of physical exercises, postures, techniques of cleansing the body both on the inside and on the outside, and other similar practices.

Techniques that approach the spirit through prana include breathing techniques, techniques of short-circuiting the energetic conduits with the positions of hands, tongue, legs and other body parts, and other similar methods.

Techniques that approach the astral (feelings and thoughts) engage themselves in the observation of inadequate functioning on the emotional and mental plane, and use the means of concentration, control of desires and thoughts, detachment of consciousness from the objects of consciousness, and the like, to put it right.

Techniques of the descent of spirit observe that a man's endeavor toward enlightenment is limited from the beginning, and conditioned by a man's limitations, and they work on opening the man toward the higher influences that will guide his spiritual growth—these are the techniques of devotion to God, and the techniques of shaktipat, the descent of power.

The issue of kundalini now becomes of interest.

In the traditional symbolism, kundalini is described as a three and a half times coiled serpent under the root chakra (muladhara). This is the only thing that you will most likely never experience as kundalini.

The symbolism of kundalini is essentially the symbolism of the potential energy of a being, which sleeps, unrealized. The awakening of kundalini is the symbol for the awakening of the inner potential of a being, for the realization of his life. The tantric symbolism deliberately veiled the actual meaning of the terms, in order to mislead the uninitiated; it is thus perfectly ridiculous to observe how the ignorant ones, who have taken such descriptions literally, present themselves as “experts” on kundalini and tantra; for they literally convey the words from the tantric scriptures, and they should therefore be accepted as authentic.

It is especially entertaining to observe how these people attempt to handle the ancient statements on the omnipotence of kundalini, on its infinite power, and how they attempt to fit their limited understanding into that perspective. To say that some serpent-energy on the bottom of the spine is the source of infinite power is utterly stupid and ridiculous, and I don't know who would be more stupid, the one who would say such a thing or the one who would believe him. But to say that life in its capacity of manifestation of the Absolute is limitless, that Life, as such, is a means of association of the relative and the Absolute, and that it

represents the key to the enlightenment, makes far more sense, and if we observe the ancient scriptures in that light, they will start making sense.

The awakening of kundalini, of which tantra speaks, is essentially the creation of a bond between the consciousness (which dwells above the crown chakra, in the area of the unmanifested) and the life of a being, the foundation of which is the root chakra, the chakra of matter, of the physical body. Such an awakening represents the observation of oneself as a real being, and the observation of one's own consciousness as united with the body, the observation of one's awakened life. Such a kundalini awakening takes place most often through the touch of a master's consciousness, and less often it can happen spontaneously.

Such a process of plugging the consciousness into the body leads to the activation of the mechanisms of purification on the physical, pranic and other planes, which is observed as the "kundalini motion," where it is in fact the motion of prana, accompanied by twitches of the body, taking certain postures of the body, release of certain sounds and noises, visions of light and hearing of sounds, automatic adjustment of the rhythm of breathing and other like phenomena. Every such phenomenon is called "kriya." The thing that is known as the kundalini awakening, as well as the problems that occur during the awakening, are the result of the slow mutual "search" of life and consciousness, which can on the pranic level seem as if the ascending kundalini (the "serpentine" one) is entering the wrong nadi (energetic conduit), which on the spiritual level means the movement of consciousness in the certain field of illusion, and on the physical level it can mean the overheating of the body and sometimes even serious health disorders as well as the psychical disorders, which gave kundalini a bad name. The fact is, however, that this happens almost always to persons who resist the process of the awakening, since their consciousness is deeply rooted in the illusion, and besides, they don't have the guidance of the master who could rectify the movement of energy by a certain inner shift of consciousness. Likewise, the problem occurs when the consciousness of a person is not yet evolved enough to rise above the problem, and so the unpleasant condition can take some time before it is resolved, when the person discovers a "key" to the situation—it is enough to surrender to God, completely, to thank God, and the situation will immediately improve. The main

thing to have in mind when working with kundalini is that kundalini should never under any circumstances be observed as an external phenomenon, but only as one's own life in touch with one's own consciousness, and with such an attitude, we will resolve in advance the majority of difficulties that we could encounter on our spiritual path.

The second aspect of kundalini, other than the ascending one, is the descending one, and each kundalini awakening should include both those aspects. The descending aspect of kundalini is the wave of energy, consciousness and bliss that pours into the body through the crown chakra, thus refining its substance, making the higher states of consciousness attainable. If the ascending, "serpentine" kundalini represents the force of life that reaches toward God, then the descending, "dove" kundalini represents the force of the Divine that reaches down toward man; these two forces are united in a man, and soon any difference between them is lost. Such a merger of the ascending and the descending aspects of kundalini is what Jesus spoke of when he instructed his disciples to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves⁵⁹—one should, therefore, unite these two aspects in one's life, the worldly and the heavenly, and our life will find balance.

⁵⁹ Matthew 10:16.

Conclusion

Let us imagine a world, in which every man would be constantly aware of God throughout his life.

Let us imagine a world, in which God would pervade the actions of each and every man.

Let us imagine a world, that would reflect God's consciousness.

Let us imagine a healed world, the world of deep consciousness, of deep understanding, of deep love.

It can be.

But who will start such a change? Where to begin? Everything is in such chaos, that it seems that every right action is doomed. It appears that it makes no sense to act, that it is better to retreat and wait for the things to somehow be resolved.

This will never happen. Nobody will solve our problems. They are left to us.

If we want our homes clean, we must take the broom ourselves and make them clean. If we want our lives to be perfect, we ourselves must make them such, we must take steps in that direction. It will not happen by itself.

The world will become perfect when it becomes inhabited by perfect people, and each individual has to work on his own perfection. Let us forget the missionary thing, forget preaching to others. Forget the "joyful news", these are mere baits that divert us from our real problems. Let us turn to ourselves, and make

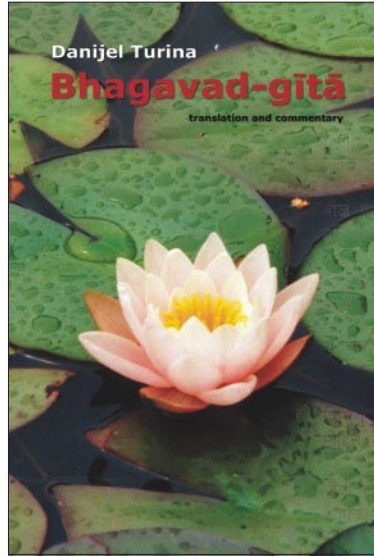
ourselves into the examples of men, that we would wish to the world. Nothing more is expected from us. Let us attain the enlightenment ourselves; let us not attempt to enlighten the others. If we ourselves are filled with God, others will feel it without us having to tell them, and if they feel the need they will come and learn. The treasury of secrets is before us. All the secrets will be revealed. We will inherit the kingdom of God.

Let us begin.

Ouroboros Publishing presents

Danijel Turina: Bhagavad-gītā (translation and commentary)

Bhagavad-gītā is a scripture universally accepted in Hindu spiritual traditions as the very essence of all holy scriptures; a revelation of God, which confers upon man the knowledge of correct action, consisting of recognition of God as the fundamental reality, and acting therefrom. In Master's transparent translation and commentary, the Gītā reveals itself to the reader as the voice of now awakened sense of truth and rightness, rising from within his soul.



*I am the flavor of water, o son of Kuntī.
I am the light of the sun and the moon.
I am the sound of Om in all the Vedas,
the sound in the space, the manliness in men.*

*I am the pleasant scent of the earth, and the warmth of fire,
I am the life in all beings, and the virtue of penance.*

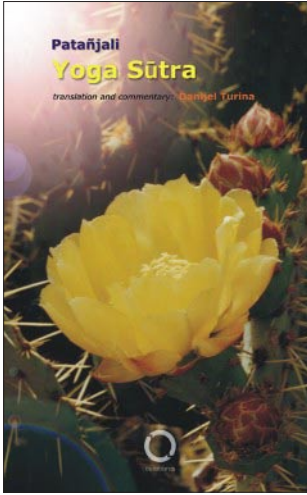
*Know Me, o Pārtha, as the eternal seed of all beings.
I am the wisdom of the wise, and the courage of the brave.*

*I am the power of the strong,
free from desire and attachment.
I am the yearning of all beings,
which does not oppose dharma,
o best of Bharatas.*

(Bhagavad-gītā 7:8–11)

Patañjali: Yoga Sūtra

(translation and commentary by Danijel Turina)



Yoga Sūtra is the basic scripture of yoga, in the sense of a Hindu philosophical view, essential for anyone who wants to gain deeper insight into the spiritual aspects of yoga. In translation and commentary by the founder and teacher of darśana-yoga, this text puts high demands before the reader, revealing the true nature of yoga as the quest for the highest reality through a union of study of the holy scriptures, the techniques of purification, and devotion to God.

Disturbed mind projects desires and their fulfillment into the sphere of the unreal. Within the unreal, there is no possibility of fulfillment, since fulfillment comes only from the real. Spirit turned toward the world therefore experiences suffering. Cessation of suffering is attained through cessation of projections, and by turning the consciousness inwards. Within his own consciousness, one observes reality, which is an aspect of the supreme reality. Calming the mind, and releasing multitudes of disturbances (kleśas) from consciousness, the subtlety of consciousness grows, and with it also the subtlety of the perceived objects. In observation of the object of greatest subtlety its objectivity is lost, or, in other words, there remains no difference between the observed, observation and the observer. Thus I Myself Am. I then perceive to be the sole reality. Left with nothing greater to attain, I stay firm in the highest of accomplishments.

(excerpt from the commentary)

Order books at discount price at
<http://books.ouroboros.hr>