

Spirituality and Prosperity - V

KARMAYOGI

THE MOTHER'S SERVICE SOCIETY

**5, Venkata Nagar Extn.,
Puduvai Sivam Street,
Pondicherry - 605 011.**

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First Edition :

Price : Rs.100/-

Printed at :

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Introduction

What is the Spirit in Life?

Spirituality is related to other life or moksha, not to Prosperity. **The idea that Spirit can play a role in life and bring in Prosperity is alien to our tradition, Indian or Hindu.** People in domestic life are wary of yoga, Spirit, etc., as they smack of sannyasa. This is meticulously shunned and children are taught accordingly. They are right.

A family in 1934 had a thousand acres of lands in seven villages and the six brothers of the family occupied the entire main street of the village. Suddenly they found an ochre clad samiyar in their house. They were glad of his visit and all of them paid their respects to the saint. He showed an inclination to stay there at night. Everyone felt as if they had received an electric shock.

Each of the brothers, under the impression that the sannyasi had been invited there by one of the other brothers, exercised a self-restraint of an

Acknowledgement by the Author

The hundred articles in this book have been previously published in the New Indian Express from 6th March 2004 to 1st July 2004. I would like to thank Mr. M.K. Sonthalia, Managing Editor of The New Indian Express for granting me permission to reprint the articles in this collection.

extraordinary kind and kept quiet. The sannyasi stayed there that night to the utter dismay of everyone. And he stayed on for thirty days. Finally, it came to light that he had not been invited by anyone. He left the house. It is our true belief that if a sannyasi stays in a house overnight, that family will be ruined. This family soon lost their all. Our traditional belief is valid.

Our being – the embodied being – has a body, a life (vital), a mind and a Spirit. This is one of the four parts of our being which when released from its embodiment by tapas seeks moksha. This is the Spirit which shuns life and is therefore inimical to householders.

The Upanishads have declared, ‘Sarvam Brahman’ — all is Brahman. So our bodies, lives and minds, too are Brahman or Spirit. Our Spirit is known as Jivatma, the Sakshi Purusha. It has its parts in each of our parts. Thus our minds, lives and bodies too have a Spirit, Purusha. They are called respectively Manomaya Purusha, Pranamaya Purusha and Annamaya Purusha. These too share the characteristic of the Jivatma. All of them are immutable, changeless.

There is Prakriti. She too has a soul, Spirit or Purusha.

It is the evolving Purusha, called the Psychic Being. It carries the essence of the experiences of Prakriti. That too has its representatives in our different parts. They are called mental psychic, vital psychic, and physical psychic.

Our tradition knew of the Psychic Being but never considered it as an evolving being. The evolving psychic being is the Spirit I speak of. It is this I ask to be evoked. As the mind is more powerful than the body, Spirit is more powerful than the mind. This is a benevolent Spirit which enriches the mind or life or body. This is a new concept in yoga, introduced by Sri Aurobindo. At the end of the following hundred articles as an appendix there is an article “How to Invoke the Spirit”, where the method of invocation is described in detail. It is this Spirit that

- ✧ can overcome karma;
- ✧ respond readily to one’s deep call;
- ✧ solve your daily problems;

☆ give an Inner Fullness that is richly Spiritual;
and

☆ make life on earth one of marvel.

In the New Indian Express column I am raising various aspects of this Spirit briefly with examples of devotees' experiences. The entire theory of karma or even punctuality cannot be discussed there. Readers write to me raising several questions that need longer treatment. I refer them to the original sources giving in my brief reply the essence of the originals.

In the Express articles I confine myself to the issues of daily life that can be readily solved by the Power of the Spirit. I rarely speak of availing of the opportunities the Spirit brings the readers because of the Invocation.

Pondicherry
20.3.2003

Karmayogi

Spirituality and Prosperity - V

1. The Nation's Growing Wealth is Personal Prosperity

A rich nation has rich citizens. People become rich not by being dependent on others, or the family or even their organisation. He who leads others, heads the family, or proves innovative in the organisation makes himself successful and rich. A nation thus becomes wealthy. **Such people are called entrepreneurs.** What are the characteristics of an entrepreneur? In short, one who does not conform to the social codes is an entrepreneur. Can we make it more explicit? Let us divide the population into two parts, leaders and followers. Our subject here is the leaders.

A nation becomes wealthy, rich, prosperous and famous by those who are willing to die happily for her, to give their all, who do not calculate or think of the future only, who never count their chickens, who **HAVE** in their hearts the glory of Mother India. Are you one of these? Are you willing to throw away your job and walk

naked in the street? In 1920 Gandhiji asked people to leave the British schools, British courts, British offices. Many followed him. Some became glorious leaders; others became volunteers. Even after Freedom, they remained poor volunteers. That was before 1956, before the descent of the Force. I invite you to throw away a lucrative bank job and start an industry. If you are an entrepreneur, I assure you your several thousand rupees salary will become several thousand crores of business.

At least one person listened to me, opposed his family, resigned a government job, and did what I asked him. **Today he has as many crores as he was earning in rupees as salary.** He is a tireless worker, has never deserted a friend, and not for one moment wavered in his loyalty to his duty. He is a top industrialist in the country. He started an unconventional energy project, introduced the latest agriculture technology, and sponsored ways of life that will inspire youngsters. He was betrayed by almost everyone. He had the Great Good Sense to say, "What they do is up to them. Let me do what is right and good". **He knows how to face every difficulty. Even his most virulent enemy was forced to change his attitude towards him.** He is an entrepreneur. India needs **NOT** salaried employees. India needs patriotic leaders. Everyone is a leader. Will you lead the leaders?

2. The Role of Education in Personality-building

What is generally considered in general knowledge is **Information**. Information depends upon memory. Ideas are superior to information. It is said children will understand ideas only after the age of 14. Mother says sometimes they do so even after the age of 7. If information develops memory, ideas develop Thinking. Beyond these two lies the Personality of the child. An old Tamil proverb says a litre, even when dipped in the sea, can contain only a litre, not more. **How much one receives does not depend upon the amount given but the quantity one can contain and retain.**

Modern schools are becoming nationally famous for the attainments of their children. Such attainments are information and ideas. The personality of the child grows, if it grows, by itself, not by any effort of the school. **The growth of the child's Personality is NOT a conscious aim of any school anywhere in the world, nor is the**

world conscious of such a phenomenon. In my view, all good schools can successfully try this.

What then is this mysterious element of Personality? It is not an endowment like intelligence of the mind or a skill of the body. **It is the endowment of the entire Being, still not fully formed, but ready to take shape when it is challenged by a situation character cannot handle.** A carpenter acquires physical skill. It is remembered by the PHYSICAL memory. Mind memorises formulas. Neither is knowledge; both are skills. Deep ploughing takes the roots down, preserves moisture, gives a great yield. This is not merely information, but an idea based on information. The Westerner discovered that pleasing the customer increases business. Though selfish, it is another man's point of view, **a spiritual idea**, as the Spirit considers the other man's profit as one's own welfare. What acquires this value is NOT manners, behaviour or even character. It is the Personality of MAN which new-creates and expands endlessly.

Can schools create this Personality and develop it? Here there is a selfish personality, selfless personality, social personality, psychological personality and finally **Spiritual Personality**. To create a graded scheme or syllabus to develop these levels of personality is not a difficult task. The teaching community should realise the TRUTH of these values. The crown is the Spiritual Personality that creates the GENIUS. As the mass of people do not believe in this possibility, this subject remains unexplored.

3. Advanced Stage of Cancer

Modern medicines cure almost all diseases that were not amenable to treatment in 1900. **That is the result of study, research, classification, systematisation, observation, observation of relationships, creation of scales and appropriate new instruments.** Still there are several diseases that defy treatment. One of them is cancer. There were two girls, one employed in a college and the other in a hospital. As soon as the father was diagnosed as suffering from cancer, he was admitted in the hospital and was operated upon. The doctors found it was at an advanced stage. They called it secondary growth. As the daughter was a hospital employee, the doctors called her and explained how the disease had reached a stage beyond redemption. Except the patient who was unaware of the real situation, the whole family was in a gloom.

The elder daughter was teaching physics in the local college. She had heard of The Mother. **She never lost hope. In spite of her higher education, she could not bring herself to believe the doctor's understanding was final. She shifted to prayer.** There was an unexpected

turn of improvement in the patient's condition. There followed gradual improvement. Over time, he was fully cured and returned to normal life. Neither the family, nor the doctors could comprehend what had happened. No longer was he a patient. He was a normal healthy person.

Man does not merely exist. He lives. His life involves hundreds of activities. **He acts. Many of his actions proceed smoothly. Sometimes all. Occasionally, some items fail. Man is not deterred by it. He continues to act.** There are two great wonders in human life. One is if man is endowed with great good fortune, after a while he forgets it or takes it for granted. When he meets with a misfortune, he is depressed for some time and takes it for granted as part of life. This family was no exception.

When a good thing happens, unless we continue to grow, life has a way of drawing upon the energy from another area and supporting this good thing. Man is indifferent, clever, selfish, and stingy. I once spoke of a man to whom we showed the possibility of 12 crores of profit in a company that was making two crores of profits. He was wise enough to see our insight, refused to employ us and discovered in ten years double the 12 crores of profit. He thought he was very clever. I would call him short-sighted. He achieved this phenomenal growth at the expense of his other eight establishments. When this one unit rose phenomenally, all the other units began to fail a little. Had he engaged us, he would have raised all the nine establishments.

4. Perfection of Magnificent Idealism

It was a privately funded university, founded by an uneducated wealthy man on financially sound lines. The founder was not making a profit out of it. It was not like a centre of academic learning but a huge collection of rural youth seeking degrees. **One offshoot of this unacademic adventure was that the place became a leader of the Freedom Movement of youth.** A national luminary was appointed Vice-Chancellor of the place to raise its status. In its 50 years of existence, he found out that the university produced a few PhDs. On enquiry he was told that the most brilliant young men there had no reading habits. An idealistic young man of great courage and vision joined there as the junior-most member. He was introduced to a student who was a political volunteer.

The student suggested to the teacher that they could together reform the place into a true academic centre. The university had no graduate constituency. In one year their combined efforts created that constituency, had this young teacher elected to the Board of Studies, Academic Council, to the Senate with 12 of his supporters, and to the Syndicate. On top of all this, the teacher persuaded a local Congress politician, a close friend of the Education Minister, to get elected to the Board of

Selection. **Their efforts led to the constitution of a high-power Committee to remove the uneducated founder and replace him by an educationist.** This affectionate, magnanimous, broadminded teacher, owing to his low social origin had a marked streak of meanness that valued ONLY social status. As the rule of life insists, he exhibited it towards his student colleague who was the inspirer, architect and moving soul of this venerable transformation of the university, all within one year.

The teacher lost his job, became a professor in a college where his classmate was the Principal. The teacher lost all his eminent positions when the university authorities raised the flag of fight. Tired of this relentless opposition of 12 determined young men, the university offered a seat on the Syndicate to their representative. **That was the moment when the young student was seeking a difficult admission.** The streak of meanness of this idealist Professor was on its shrewd guard and he defensively asked the student, “What are you going to do for your admission?” The sensitivity of the student made him refrain from asking for a favour, knowing full well the Principal of that college was a close friend of the teacher. As life always acts, the Principal of his own college, who was indirectly slightly related to the student, volunteered and got him the admission. The 12 years of idealist work done by the teacher, the risk he took in his job and life were magnificent. When the management offered a seat in the Syndicate, by the law of life, it went to the dummy Principal instead of the idealist professor, as one streak of meanness can cancel a mountain of idealistic sacrifice.

5. The Power of the Word

A lady moved to Pondicherry from Kerala and rented a house. Close to her office, an apartment complex arose. She had no idea of shifting in view of various problems. A young man was constantly speaking, “**This complex is coming up for you. It is God’s Grace. Don’t raise all your normal questions. Book an apartment here.**” All those around him knew the young man’s impractical propensities and saw multiple problems in the move, so it was taken as the Wisdom of the unwise. Some time later she rented an apartment in that complex, somewhat compelled by circumstances. **In the next few years, she bought the apartment.** That is the **POWER** of the word untinged by mental formations. Some people have noticed that several statements of that young man have come true in one fashion or another.

A young boy was staying in a friend’s house studying with absolutely no hope of passing SSLC. The friend, as a refrain, used to say, “ I wish you become an industrialist.” It passed for a joke. Today he is one of

the leading industrialists of the country, the leader in his sector. **The reader can recall dozens of such experiences.** *Words are powerful in the extreme, as it is one word that created the whole universe.* When we speak or think or feel, it is important we speak or think good thoughts, speak excellent words that will please the hearer.

A man became bankrupt. Luck or Mother smiled on him, his fortunes turned, all his problems were solved, and he became as affluent as he had been. All that happened through so many circumstances, but he got no job, no income. Therefore, sometime he became the object of ridicule by unfavourable characters. When asked ‘what is he doing now?’ a perverse man in a jocular mood took joy in replying, “Oh, he is being a husband!” The victim was mortally offended. Two years passed. The man who made that caustic comment lost his job and began living on his wife’s income. Of course, fortune smiled on him, his position too was revived for the better, but his **ORIGINAL** job was **NOT** restored. Words spoken by mistake gave Kumbhakarnan eternal sleep. The intention of Lord Krishna made Kuchela Kubera. One who was incapable of being a volunteer in a municipal election was told by a kind friend, “I wish you become the Municipal Chairman.” The other man took offence, felt fooled, protested, and shouted. **Years later, the protestor became a Municipal Council Member when an ad hoc committee was formed.**

6. Personality of an Act

There was a dull boy in a rich house. He was enamoured of an employment. In a local school he was employed as an attendant in the laboratory. Being a wealthy boy, he had access to every big officer and every VIP of the town. He was not inclined to work. Later rules changed, he became a clerk, known as a writer of the school. The headmaster, the office and others had several jobs to be done in the many local offices. These jobs used to be pending for months for want of access to the chief of the office. **This boy had an easy access to all of them. He could approach the local R.D.O on friendly terms, as he was a member of the tennis club where this boy was a star.** His son was a moron. Teachers passed him year after year. When he came to SSLC, many took a great interest in the boy unsolicited. It was a miracle he passed. He moved to the district headquarters. The same phenomenon repeated. This boy who could not pass 8th standard took a degree on the strength of the intense interest of so many kindly professors who were the beneficiaries of his father's benevolence.

This is a simple phenomenon. But behind it lies the spiritual principle of attention. Attention is spiritual. Pay attention to a book, a pencil, a tumbler, any object or anything. It pays it back to you with double vigour, even without your soliciting it. That is the power of attention. Attention matures into affection, which is the lower form of love. Love is the mental aspect of BLISS, a part of Sachchidananda. It is NOT known in life that what you have paid attention to failed to return it with gratitude. Spiritual attention continues to grow even after one stops it. Someone tried to teach some knowledge and a little English to another person. Life parted them. Years after when they met, it was discovered that the feeble initial effort, taken with serious kindly interest only for a few months, had led the other person to take one degree after another. It gave him degrees in succession. Attention is great. Spiritual attention is not only great, but is capable of growing on its own like a plant that has struck roots deep in the soil. Someone had a habit of helping whoever came to him with whatever help he needed, whether it was his duty or not. **Later in life, every half a rupee he spent unsolicited came back to him as half a lakh of rupees. Once or twice it became half a crore of rupees.**

7. Invocation of Spirit

For over a year I have been writing in this column about invoking the Spirit. But every letter I receive asks how to invoke the Spirit. I wrote a long article on it and sent it to the questioners. **Many caught the idea. Many more are still in doubt.** When you want to go to the post office, you walk. It is an act of the body. Negotiations are conducted at the level of feelings. It is a vital act. Sometime when you don't understand something, you close the book and think. It is a mental act of thinking. Spirit is of Silence. When you want to invoke the Spirit, sit down, close your eyes — it may not be necessary — stop moving the body, don't talk, **DON'T THINK**. A stillness descends on the mind. The stillness grows into a **QUIET**, a calm, and finally becomes **SILENCE**. Silence is an aspect of the Spirit.

As Silence is one aspect of the Spirit, Peace, Unity, Truth, Knowledge, Power, Beauty, Love, Joy, Infinity

and Eternity are also aspects of Spirit. As soon as Silence descends, a great power develops. You feel like getting up and running. When Peace enters you, you see it is full of energy. Light entering the mind answers unresolved questions. Beauty makes you lose yourself. Joy thrills. Love fills the heart. In practice **ONLY** one aspect enters you. Most people cannot keep quiet. They jump up and act. That is the end of it.

Human problems are very simple to the Spirit. For someone at the age of 41, employment is very important. If only he can **SIT** quiet for half an hour a day, before long he will find an employment. What I call invocation of Spirit is of greater value. Once some aspect of Spirit descends, one has to be extraordinarily **PATIENT** till many other aspects also descend on him. At a certain moment, the inner strength becomes sufficient to raise a voice. That voice is the inner human voice, calling the Spirit or the Mother who is the Mother of Spirit. **That call releases a spiritual peace, unattainable even in death.** It enters the nerves, fills the cells of the body, i.e. the very Being. After such a call is saturated, the inner Spirit itself begins to call the outer Spirit. It is Jivatma calling Paramatma. It is the Individual becoming the Eternal. Man, at that moment, ceases to be a **MAN**. He becomes the Divine.

8. Entrepreneur

One who undertakes an enterprise is an entrepreneur. Pioneer, adventurer, explorer, initiator, and leader are other words allied to *entrepreneur*. I wish to distinguish the word *entrepreneur* from other similar words and show how a nation's wealth grows out of it. As soon as a young man completes his education, he looks for a job. If he gets it, he becomes a salaried employee. Not many people have the courage to go in for self-employment. **Today not even 5% of young educated men will opt for self-employment on their own.** The truth is the entrepreneurs create the wealth of the nation. The salaried employees make their enterprise possible. A great many of those men who seek salaried employment will feel threatened by self-employment.

To seek self-employment, there should be a self. The Self with a capital S belongs to a great soul. Most young men are advised by their parents and friends to AVOID self-employment as a majority of those who try fail. In these days of generous bank assistance, a certain

section avails of it, with a clear intention of not starting a venture. We can leave them out. There are others who find their status suddenly raised by starting a venture. An illusion possesses them. Before founding an organisation – a company – they start living as though they have accomplished. At best, it is the best course to self-directed ruin. There are others who honestly and efficiently work. Some of them succeed, others fail. My interest is to show the difference.

The very first difference is that those who fail start doing things they have not learnt. Unfortunately in our country, there are not many well-established organised schools that teach entrepreneurship. The lender lends on the security of property, not on the experience of the young man who ventures. There should be a law insisting that such people pass such a course. Such a course could have avoided the bankruptcy of many honest men. Someone who starts such a course will be doing a service. The basic rules of successful entrepreneurship MUST be taught. Teaching does not ensure success. But teaching helps. The very first rule here is *not* to experiment with bank money or one's own capital in a work in which one has little or no experience. Experience is important. A dozen other things go with it. But Experience is most essential.

9. Every Gesture Has a Meaning

Those who fidget are nervous. Some people listen wide-eyed and intensely with great interest. They are the ones who can accomplish. In big companies, it is important to recruit the right person. When a wrong man is discovered after several years of service, it causes a problem. **The most important ‘recruitment’ is to select a wife or husband.** In our country, still it is done by the parents to a great extent. In the West, for the youth, it is very important. A man’s qualities are revealed only when an occasion arises. Often it happens after years. How to recruit the right man in an interview within a few hours?

There is one more problem. Two people of exactly similar qualities can exhibit opposite traits. Is there a solution? If there is one, can we acquire it? Before that, let us consider its various aspects. Tone, voice, manners, nervousness, physical movements, capacity to

sit quiet, smiling face, unsmiling benevolence, twitching of the eyes, mannerisms, calm, *quiet*, stability, poise, bearing, mien, first reception, type of send-off, hearing, listening, understanding, enthusiasm, energy, will power are expressive of one’s personality. Innumerable studies in all these fields have been conducted successfully in the West, even before the World War. **There is no study or knowledge or science that embraces all of them in one central category called Personality.** Supposing one such science emerges, it can certainly tell you what IS. It is incapable of giving us the knowledge of how to *create* that Personality and that too, entirely positively.

Spirituality of India has once studied this as a partial science to perfection. There lies hidden a great treasure. It is found in rural India as bits and pieces, just as a pot is broken into smithereens and scattered. **Still it is very valuable. Our people do not know its value. The Westerner, especially curious young people, will know its full value.** If Western youth live in Indian villages for a couple of years, they would gather a rich harvest. Indian spiritual leaders should give thought to making all of these fields into a *single* science. More than that, it is necessary to add a new future dimension to that *science*, if ever it emerges, which is, how that science can help us master life.

10. The Value of Scales

In a school where there are no exams and no marks are awarded, every boy is likely to feel he is above average. Many will consider themselves at the top. The scores in the exam put each boy in his real position. **The enormous advance in the field of medicine is, among other things, due to the measurement of temperature, pulse, sugar level, blood pressure and a score of other things.** Credit rating has almost become a science where the credit agencies know exactly the credit worthiness of each individual. In the West, if you want to buy a computer, there are rating manuals that evaluate the various computers on the market for their hardware, software, speed, accessories, scope of use, service, etc. so that one can choose according to his needs. I understand in the West most products in the market are thus rated. Even the popularity of leaders can be measured by sample polls.

Measurement of value is a measure of a nation's development. We, in India, wanting to choose a college or hospital go by impressions. The distance between impressions and exact measurement is like the knowledge of geography of an uneducated person and an expert in geography. Measurement has one more advantage. The field of measurement creates a vast field of employment. When we want to read a book newly published, it is a great help to know how it is presently selling. The *New York Times* has a list in which it tracks the best selling books. It even tells us how many weeks the book has stayed on the list. Unemployment of the educated is a real problem in India. Taking to the ways of the West where real progress can be made can create a vast field of employment.

To emulate something good from someone is wisdom. To apply it exactly here without modifying it to our local conditions is unwisdom. To acquire the mentality behind another's achievement in imitating them is to die to our culture. Our LIFE emerges from our own culture. It is more so in India where there is something deeper than culture, the Spirit. Westernising one's mind is a sure way of dying to the realities of one's soul. To borrow another's values, without borrowing their mental structure requires a spiritual awakening unique in itself.

11. Inexorable Law

Nehru decided to appoint Sastri as a Member of the Cabinet without portfolio and Nanda was disturbed as the palm leaf astrology – *nadi josyam* – said it would ruin the nation. **Nehru laughed and asked if 500 years earlier they had predicted what was to happen the next morning.**

God's creation is known as Prakriti. It is in Time and ruled by the force of Time. Seers have been there all over the world who have had a full insight into the past and future of Time. Sri Aurobindo says that if the exact moment of birth is known, astrology can predict precisely. Scientifically advanced nations laugh at astrology as a superstition. **It is more precise than the most precise predictions of Science.**

Bhishma chose to remain unmarried to oblige a wish of his parents. It was by a formidable will that he mastered his sex urge. But sex is a force of Nature unconquerable. Only a Rishi sublimates his sex energies into spiritual

energies called *tejas*. The force of sex, a biological force, does not yield to anything less powerful than the spiritual force. The unconquered force remained unconquered; it prevailed. At the battlefield Bhishma had to lie on a bed of arrows, suffering an intensity of pain that is inconceivable. It was Lord Krishna's Grace that relieved him of the pain. The law here is as long as one is in Time – *kala* – called 'becoming' in philosophy, the law is inexorable. There is no known force in life or Time that can overcome that law. It is said even Avatars cannot escape it, even if the act was done in an earlier birth.

Today it is the HOUR of GOD. The long aeons of work have borne fruit. The *Hour* has arrived. This is an hour that can overcome the Law of Nature, the inexorable law of karma. Sri Aurobindo is neither a Rishi, nor an Avatar, but rather an emanation of God's vibration who comes on earth to show men the path of the Lord. He is the Lord Himself; of course a portion of the Lord. He came down on earth to announce the arrival of the HOUR. We, mortal men, are ignorant of Him and The Mother who converted His Power as Grace in our Life. The Supramental Anniversary has come on February 29th and gone. None of us has felt it. Devotees in the hundreds are receiving the TOUCH of that Force as prayers answered. No one cares to know how it happened or where it came from.

12. Facts, Ideas, Original Ideas

Facts are given by the senses, as we see an object such as a pen. Ideas emanate from the mind. Mind collects the facts given to us by the senses, coordinates them and draws the essence from them as an Idea. A college degree may give us a job is not a mere fact. It is an idea, drawn from the experience of various people. **Original Ideas are there in a small number. An ethical treatise like *Thirukural* is based on thirteen or fourteen such original ideas.** They originate neither from the senses, nor from the mind. They issue from the Spirit emerging out of Mind. All great souls have given the world such ideas. Today the world lives by them. They are simple to comprehend, impossible to follow. Patience is essential to accomplish is one such idea. When a moment of excitement arrives, who can have natural patience? One may put up the behaviour of Patience. Patience is vastly different from a behaviour of patience.

Education gives us **FACTS**. They are stored in our memory. Unseen by us, some ideas collect behind by

the strength of one's personality. Personality converts the collected facts by the strength of our ideas into capacity for accomplishment. We see these ideas as our attitudes in life or motives of our being. Indian education as devised by the British lays emphasis on memory. Watering down the quality of our education has been one main reason for our poverty. People in the West progressed mainly on the strength of their education. They have a superior type of education by which children are trained to think. The amount of information they have about nutrition, health, civic life, science, machinery, etc., etc. is enormous. All this information goes to strengthen their ideas. **Ideas are powerful. Today the West is the rich West because of their ideas.**

There is more. They are called original ideas. There are not many that rule the world. Original Ideas do not come from education or thinking. They come from the Spirit. All original ideas from the time of the Greek philosophers have come from the Spirit. Not one original idea has emanated from facts collected by study. India is a land of the Spirit. She has realised the Absolute Brahman in the Spirit. The West has realised Brahman in Matter with an equally arduous endeavour. The future is for Original Ideas, not for facts or simple ideas. Sri Aurobindo has done one better. He has brought to the world that **ORIGINAL** idea which can wipe off karma.

13. Public Awareness

Democracy is a benevolent force gradually spreading all over the world. Fareed Zakaria has published a book that pleads for liberty, as **it is liberty that gives life to democracy**. Public apathy slowly leads to slavery. Public awareness step by step leads to liberty and democracy.

After the advent of the Consumer Forum there is an administrative apparatus to which you can go for remedy. When a telegram comes to Pondy from Delhi in one hour, the telegraph office takes four to five hours for delivery. Sometimes it is done the next day. Among businessmen, it is a well known fact that if any foreign cheque is routed through Calcutta, the cheque stays in Calcutta for months. Once to my knowledge, it was there for ten months.

Democracy can slide down to the tyranny of irresponsible administration, if the public is not aware. Corruption is prevalent everywhere. It is sometimes the experience of customers that they must pay Rs. 10 or

even Rs. 50 to secure a chalan from an office. Man submits to injustice, maltreatment, cruelty, tyranny, etc. The times are changing. Those who were sinned against earlier now turn as sinners. Teachers in professional colleges behave in the matter of 'discipline' as those of primary schools in 1940. If all this is tolerated, very soon democracy will lose its essential content. The public must awaken. When a fuse is to be fixed, one has to wait for a day or several days.

I wish all these anomalies could be wiped out by one stroke of the pen by officers at any level. Measures are simple. They do not require explanation. Suppose a neighbourhood is full of potholes, any amount of protest does not move the administration. When a telegram is sent for quick delivery, but is delivered very late, there is no remedy. At least the cost of the telegram should be refunded. Local citizens can collect money and fill up all the potholes and ask for reimbursement. There are millions of minor injustices. **It is not necessary to suffer them unless we are docile or submissive.** In a free country with our poverty (of \$486 per capita income), the chances of democracy are slender. A study says only when the per capita income rises to \$6000 does democracy have any permanency. Our democratic tradition is sacred but WEAK. Public awareness is spiritual awakening. One needs to preserve it.

14. The Future and the Past

People fall into two broad categories. One feels old is gold. The other wants to fully imitate the American lifestyle. Each is true, but the truth in each is partial. Neither can be accepted in toto. It is eternally true that times are changing and with the changing times, man too changes in his dress, appearance, speech, food, etc., known as lifestyle. **It is impossible to resist the modern way of life. It is equally impossible now to live as we lived a hundred or two hundred years ago.** That is not the end. There is more. To refuse to accept what is really good because it is modern or new is not wise. To insist on the old ways of life because they are old is also unwise. The new brings in convenience, comforts, progress, freedom from drudgery, speed of communication, clarity of mind, ease of movement, etc. Why should one refuse any of these things? Is it wise to refuse to use the phone nowadays?

On the other hand, how many can now be persuaded to give up coffee because once upon a time orthodox

people never drank coffee? **The essential value of the past – values of Truth, honesty, chastity, reliability, etc., – must be combined with the real advances of the present.** Mainly I wish the nation to appreciate such a value in education and industrial production. In education, we Indians are proud of our skill in memorisation. It was resorted to in days when there was no paper. For want of proper writing material, we resorted to memorisation. It kills thinking and makes us not only dull but prevents us from beneficially using our greatest advantage – our spiritual inheritance. In education, our spiritual inheritance lies in our subtlety, our capacity to understand without thinking – Muni – to see the truth as vision, which at later stages gives birth to genius.

In industrial production, our present efficiency is the lowest in the world. While we have a hoary past of the highest efficiency, we have discarded our past efficiency in favour of modern life. Computer is resisted in the USA when it comes to changing the old procedures, especially by the older generation. In these modern days where tufts, dhotis and cold rice have vanished, and the TV, cell phone and two wheeler have invaded our lives, we cling to *raghukalam* and all the rituals that go with it. **The result is we lose the benefit of either fully and in a sort of way combine the defects of both ways of life.**

15. Native Efficiency

It is an acknowledged fact that in matters of efficiency the USA and India are poles apart. **It is an unseen truth that the native Indian efficiency is far superior to any other.** It is a truism of life that, if such a fact is true, somewhere, in some measure, a little of it can be seen. If Indians look for such expressions, they will certainly find something somewhere. Of course, there are many silver linings. The actual truth is we look up to America for everything. Today an eminent speaker at a convocation said, “We all want to go to the USA. Very soon a day will come when Americans will wish to come to India. Not that we have no talents, but we are unaware of them.”

Some months ago, a bank held a three-day Expo to grant housing loans. Next to that building a newspaper under the immediate guidance of an American expert held another Expo for another purpose. It was a success.

A few days later, two people, one from the bank and the other from the newspaper met and discussed their respective success. **In those three days that bank had granted loans to the tune of 144 crores on the spot.** When the American expert heard of it, he said, “It would take a few months in my country to accomplish this feat. I never realised Indians had this efficiency.” He does not know what happened. Nor do I.

I guess in times of emergency, organisations like banks give a long rope to their employees. This means they are not bound by the very strict procedures of the organisation during that period. **Once that is granted de facto or de jure, the native talents of the employees come to the surface.** Basically they act within the rules of their organisation but on the spot they exercise their discretion. It means to me there arises an unconscious occasion for the Indian to be in his elements, unfettered by the dead rigidity of the alien bureaucratic organisation.

I see this as one of the silver linings of our Future. These are occasional sparks. What will happen when India is determined 1) not to imitate other nations thoughtlessly, 2) to discover her original spiritual strength and 3) to fashion a national ORGANISATION that expresses our genius through modern technology?

16. Levels of Management

Management means the capacity to produce profits in a productive venture. In 1985 it was said that each year the USA alone produced 450 books on management. In 1945 in an international conference, Peter Drucker was laughed at when he said that management was a subject. Today the world over, he is known as the father of Management Science. The wave of Tom Peters eclipsed Drucker for two decades. Management means technology and finance, nothing more. Just now there are a few hundred management techniques that are ruling the field. Most represent marketing. **All these principles are summed up in cleanliness, orderliness, the other man's point of view, punctuality and twenty other things.** They can be further abridged into honesty and reliability.

If you are fond of abstraction, you can call them by one word: commonsense. In our books we conceive of these innumerable principles at ten levels. I wish to write about only the two ends here. Talking about cleanliness, an American said in his country everything is extremely clean. When what is meant by cleanliness was explained in great detail, he agreed that his country's cleanliness was only 40%, maybe 50%.

Management is a science. No one approaches it as such. When it was found that there was a deviation of 43 seconds in a century in the orbit of Mercury, doubts were raised about the validity of Newtonian theory. When Einstein came into the picture, the doubts were confirmed and a new phase in physics started. **Management, being a science, demands that same precision.** We, being Indians, know the subtle and spiritual principles of such a life. Should we go back to such sources and **render those principles in terms of today's life**, the whole world would look up to India as a leader of Management.

Suppose a company is making very little profits and it takes up the above values – punctuality, regularity, customer satisfaction, cleanliness, orderliness, etc., etc. – and *follows* them very seriously, its profits will soar high. Any company where such values are followed, we can see, is making very good profits. This is only the first level. We have devised ten levels of the same thing. In the final level, if the proprietor DECIDES to follow all these values as seriously as any other company that follows them, even for that thought there will be great results. This is only thought. Actually doing it will raise a local company into a nationally famous company.

As an individual, one can do so at home. For the first level, his income will double, maybe it will rise five or ten fold. For the final level, he will rise from being a nobody to the status of a national celebrity.

17. Indian Buses on the Roads of USA

An elderly American reading what a young American had written was surprised. He asked where he had learnt to write so well. The answer surprised him even more. "I learnt it in India." **One may wonder how someone whose mother tongue is English can learn writing English from another person whose mother tongue is not English.** The standard pronunciation dictionary in English was written by a Danish linguist. When Tamil scholars came from Czechoslovakia to deliver lectures in Tamil Nadu on *Silapadigaram*, the audience was struck by their chaste pronunciation. The Right Honourable Sastri made the Englishman feel shy by his precise pronunciation.

JRD Tata in 1975 felt the same type of surprise when a young American proposed to him that his buses could be sold to the USA. After a prolonged discussion, Tata was convinced. Life took a different turn. Tata received continuous export orders from the Gulf countries and there ended our proposal. We know man does not know

his weaknesses. I would say, "Man does not know his strength."

My perennial theme is India has a treasure in knowledge, subtlety, insight, intuition, philosophy, and SPIRITUALITY. They are the treasures found nowhere else in the world, but they are not here in a usable form. They are found here as ingots of gold. Unless they are made into jewels, one cannot *use* them. Indians are unaware of their strength, greatness or value. **If the buried Indian talents are brought to the surface, Indian manufactured goods will have an edge over the products of any other country.** American parents who visit India marvel at the affectionate atmosphere in our families. One American husband after a few hours in an Indian house found that the lady of the house never came out to participate in the discussion. On knowing more about the feminine fairness of India, he declared, "This is great. I am unable to conceive of such an atmosphere."

Every good thing has its other side. The voluntarily submissive affectionate lady can either be enjoyed as an emotional treasure or taken advantage of for the purposes of masculine domination. Asia is an emotional continent. It is said that some American youth visit Thailand so that they may marry a handsome, affectionate Thai girl to whom divorce or insubordination is inconceivable. **The day India realises her inner strength will be a great day for us.**

18. Technology

When something is rare, it is the general tendency to consider it divine or meant for the rare gifted. There was a time when a car was so considered. Every new invention enjoys that rare status in the beginning for some years or even some centuries. **I have not met a single individual or read a single book which sees an exact parallel to life events such as technology and spiritual events.** Even in a country like ours where hundreds and thousands of God-men walked among us, the common conception is, “This is not for me.”

I do not like the phrase *spiritual technology*. For want of another elegant phrase I am incapable of coining, I wish to state that **the presently considered rare spiritual possessions – telepathy, spiritual cure, materialisation, de-materialisation, leaving the body and entering another body, performing miracles, etc. – can one day become common possessions.** As we witness technology spreading, one day spiritual technology too will spread all over the world.

There are people who can multiply 17 digit numbers by another number in a trice. It is one expression of genius. Genius has emerged in mathematics, music, language, astronomy, painting, dancing, literature and in general too. The spiritual hierarchy starts from the Absolute Brahman and goes down to Matter. It is, 1) Brahman, 2) Sat, 3) Chit, 4) Ananda, 5) Supermind, 6) Overmind, 7) Intuitive Mind, 8) Illumined Mind, 9) Higher Mind, 10) Human Mind, 11) Life, 12) Body, 13) Matter. Man is led by Mind. The genius ranges from Mind to Intuitive Mind. Silence organised and established takes one to the Higher Mind. Vision takes one to the Illumined Mind. Intuition makes one a genius. Even at the lower levels of Silence and vision, we have a genius of some kind.

Western life knows no such phenomenon, though presently it is superior to ours because they train the student to think, while we encourage memorisation. If our educationists do not have Westernised minds and if they realise the higher spiritual potentials of Indian education, **Srinivasa Ramanujams will not be an exception but the rule.** Instead of producing scholars, thinkers and experts, Indian universities will be producing geniuses. To explain the process of consciously creating a GENIUS is possible if I write a book on it.

19. Spiritual Light

Spiritual light seen on the face is called *tejas*; seen in the sky is vision, as Sundaramoorthy Nayanar saw Parvathi and Paramasivan. Light is one of the twelve expressions of the Spirit and it reveals in various ways and in various degrees. The primitive man who discovered that a stone can be used as a tool received the Spiritual light as an illumination in his physical mind that was activated by the overflowing energy of the body while it was in motion. The fear-ridden superstitious villager sees the same 'spiritual light' as will-o-the-wisp. Edison never went to school, but he patented over a thousand inventions. **He exerted his body to the utmost. His exertions released enormous energy. That energy was organised into skill. That skill needed an idea.** He is considered a genius, maybe a technological genius. His body thought and received spiritual light.

Tapas, spirituality, is to stop thinking and BE the Spirit. Between the body thinking and tapas, there are twelve or thirteen levels. India has amply accomplished at the 13th level in thousands of Rishis. Sri Aurobindo has taken Indian yoga a further step, a step where the Spirit will express in life. For that, one has to travel another six steps. Tapas is ascent. Expressing the Spirit in life is descent. **Such a life is called divine life.** It is God's work, not man's effort. Man's part is only surrender. Thousands of devotees do it when they pray. During prayer, they surrender themselves to Mother. Mother accomplishes for them what they cannot accomplish.

Stock accumulates for years. It is called 'dead stock'. It is sold off for a song. Suppose you have stocks worth a crore accumulated over ten or fifteen years. There is no solution other than throwing it all away for a throwaway price. For the devotee, the rule is different. He calls Mother to sell off his stocks. Before doing so, he must reverse every refractory behaviour that made the stocks accumulate. Neglect, arrogance, dishonesty, indifference, etc. are some of them. Should he remove his own contributions to the accumulated stocks and call MOTHER, the stocks will melt away in a short time. Once, in a long detailed article, I have explained how a young boy liquidated such stocks in seven days.

20. Politeness in Matters Spiritual

When people are introduced to Mother, in the first few weeks they declare, “I have worked for twenty years to buy a small piece of land. Now in the last forty days, ever since I came to know HER, two big pieces of lands came to me.” As they see event after event happening, their natural GOOD WILL impels them to speak of Her to everyone they know. This is not wrong, but leads one nowhere. Some people disbelieve them, others ridicule, yet others ask why they impose their faith on others. Most remain indifferent. The truth is to KNOW Mother is a spiritual privilege. Not all people can listen to someone’s enthusiasm. **There is one more factor. When your advice falls of deaf ears, later you become ineffective in giving valid advice to those who deserve it. It is a delicate situation or a ticklish question.**

An employer was a devotee. His purchasing officer called him at 10 a.m. to seek half a day’s leave. As the voice was tense and anxious, the employer desired to

know if anything was wrong. The Purchase Officer’s daughter was going in for an operation to have her appendix removed and the operation was fixed at 11 a.m., hence the anxiety. The employer was a devotee. He desired to suggest prayer, but very much hesitated. Instead, he asked his employee how urgent the operation was. The answer came that at that time his daughter might be inside the theatre and therefore he wanted to rush to the hospital. The employer was at his wit’s end and asked another question, “How essential is the operation?” The feeling the employer got was that the employee, though he was in a hurry, was anxious to avoid the operation.

“If the operation could be avoided” said the employer. The employee was in ecstasy to hear that. That made the employer give him a blessing packet. On reaching the operation theatre, the father of the girl listened to the discussion of the doctors about how the operation could be avoided. **It was avoided.** The words Spirit and soul are different. Our whole bodies, all their parts are made of Spirit. That is why it is Sarvam Brahman. The inner developed part of it is the soul. In times of urgency, the whole body rises in alert. The very Spirit of the being is awake. At those moments, politeness is a bar. When you are addressing the MIND and its opinions, politeness is essential. **The dividing LINE is often very thin.**

21. Man is Greater than Money

The wonderful civilisation we now live in is the creation of Man. There is nothing in this world of ours that is not created by **MAN**. **Man is the creator of his world.** The society we live in and its rules are the creation of Man. Men fall into two broad categories. All are Men but there are great souls and small minds. **Whatever is created in this world of human affairs is created by the great souls. The small minds make them a goal and become slaves of their own creation. MONEY** tops the list. Man has created money but we see everywhere **MAN** is a slave of money. It is easy to understand that Man is greater than Money, but not so easy to practise it. We find two opposite expressions of this rule. First, all men who worship money are rich. Second, all men who make **MONEY** their prime value are debt ridden, poor and pathetic. Let us try to seek the truth of this.

Money represents work. Work is done by man. It is man who *CONCEIVES* of work. **All work in this wide world is of man's conception. Philosophically the universe is created by the Self-conception of God.** If there is no work, there will be no money. **WORK IS GREATER THAN MONEY. MAN IS GREATER THAN WORK.** Man is primary, work is secondary. Money represents work and is of no consequence. This is not a rule only about money. It applies to every other thing. Knowledge is greater than a degree. Character is of greater value than dress. In fact, men of character are greater than the posts they occupy. Great men raise the value of the posts they adorn. Small men raise themselves by occupying the post. As soon as they leave the post, they shrink to their original size of smallness. Still, the mind values Money.

Think of a dozen families you know. Most will cherish money and evaluate any act in terms of money value. Generally they will be poor. If they are very rich, they will be men of small minds of low consciousness. Suppose some of them are oblivious of **MONEY**, you will certainly find them never short of funds unless they are casual, unorganised and indifferent. **To become a slave of his own creation is a human trait. It belongs to the smallness of human affairs.**

22. Who Will Pay the Two Rupees?

There are great occasions in life when vast opportunities knock on one's doors. Life is strange for those who do not know it. Those who know Life, know it is not strange, but its strange ways are its very characteristics. The story of Duryodhana preferring Krishna's army to Krishna illustrates this theme. When a panel to select a vice-chancellorship was constituted, its most influential member heard of a worthy candidate who was a government officer. He was desirous of appointing the officer as the vice-chancellor. On the day when the Panel member reached the metropolis, the good friend of this honest efficient officer traveled all the way from his place to introduce each one to the other. **The government officer had a strange inspiration.** He said he had other work. Another name suggested by this Panel member was appointed V.C.

The story does not end there. That V.C. was again appointed at another place as V.C. and was given a further term. Later he was elevated to national eminence in the

field of education. For all this, he who had other work was a far better educational material than the one who readily accepted the offer. Many can recall such instances where a small attitude cancelled a great opportunity. Someone who was chosen as a Chief Minister of his state lost it forever by an insistence on one such idiosyncrasy. A billion dollar project was cancelled when it met with such an attitude.

Small men enjoy being small. Their minds travel in small attitudes. The range is not only comfortable but gives pride of possession. When they occupy power they exercise it with a vengeance. Luck has various attitudes. It rejects such people once and for all. Sometimes it compels them to accept that piece of luck in spite of their insistent refusal. When it does so, the man enjoys the luck once and loses it for the rest of his life. A brilliant boy was refused admission in a famous university. Someone moved a senate member on his behalf. A compromise was offered. The boy was conscious of the travel expenses involved in that half success. On further insistence of the senate member, he was given the seat. But the boy had not yet received the admission card. When asked to go to the university again, he asked, **“What is the guarantee? Who will pay the two rupees of travel expenses?”**

23. Realities of Life

Life Response is a concept created based on the **Realities of Life**. Man grows wise learning of those realities. Their laws are inexorable. No one can overcome them. The Gods can modify their malignancy, but cannot cancel them. The theory of karma is based on it. Life is not final. Mind is greater than life. So, they said even karma can be overcome by mental illumination. The progress of the West is mainly due to their reliance on Mind, disregarding the subtle realities of life. When Man subjects himself to life, he becomes superstitious. Relying on the Mind, superstition recedes and rationality precedes. **Spirit is greater than Mind. The evolving Spirit – the Psychic Being – is still greater.** The Rishi is not bound by karma, as he often reaches the Spirit in his dhyana. The evolving Spirit can not only cancel karma, but when it comes to stay transforms misfortune into good fortune, disease into health, stupidity into intelligence, even genius.

Realities of life are of two kinds. One is positive and the other negative. In the book *The Mother*,

Sri Aurobindo lists thirty negative traits to be rejected. For each negative characteristic there is a corresponding positive characteristic. Each one of them is exclusive in its significance. Of the positive traits one thing stands out. **It is generosity.** The Mother defines meanness as the attitude of asking another to do what we cannot. We can construct a definition of generosity based on it. **To give another man, without his asking, what he cannot accomplish by his best efforts can be defined as generosity.** Even that generosity when it is tinged with ego is impermissible or at least will be a lever for him to hurt you. The opposite of generosity is meanness.

We can also say that jealousy is another opposite. **An analysis of life may lead many to the conclusion that jealousy is the only reality of life.** A proverb says one can escape a stone that hits, but not the **LOOK** of jealousy. I have noticed with curiosity and with much amusement a man who owned four cars being jealous of a neighbour who received a visitor in a car. For a long time, it intrigued me until I witnessed an event where the efforts of a multi-millionaire to prevent another person successfully seeking an alliance of a millionaire. What seems to be true is that, **more than one's own progress, to prevent the least little progress of anyone around is of psychological importance.** From then onwards I see that as the one ultimate reality of Life.

24. Skepticism

Experiences of devotees are unbelievable for those who have not had similar experiences. Though most people readily believe, some express disbelief or exhibit indifference. One reader chose to declare that all that I write might be true, but there must be another side of which I was silent. **It was beyond my linguistic or intellectual abilities to explain that MOTHER'S FORCE is infallible.** He said that at the age of 40 he was unemployed for over ten years and his prayer was not answered. His experience was true, but in these matters there are several sides which are difficult to see. It baffled me, if it was not a challenge. All my usual answers met with the usual replies of disbelief.

After some prolonged correspondence, it occurred to me that it was easier to give him the result – a job – than convince his skeptical thought. He obliged me when I requested him to visit a center. **On the day he visited the center, his daughter got a job.** That may have been

good, but it did not meet his mental requirement that all prayers are answered. In any situation, there are several issues that help and several others that hinder. Sometimes the person concerned may not know them or, when they do know, may find it difficult to disclose. My efforts yielded a partial solution but I was somewhat disappointed, as it contradicted my experience till then. Three months later came a letter from him saying he got a job after years of unemployment. I was relieved, not only because the problem was solved, but the law stood vindicated.

As I said, it is easier to produce the result than to know the process by which it is brought about. **The Process is not final. Beyond the process lies the essence.** To know the Process is to permanently possess the capacity to produce the result. One aspect of the Process is to know the correspondence between our inner thoughts and outer results. Most people know that they are ardently seeking something they intensely hate. One man who was selected by MPSC as a gazetted officer had not got the posting for 18 months. It baffled him, but not me, as I had known the fact that he intensely disliked government jobs and for that reason he had once resigned a government job. His own resentment stood in the way of the posting order arriving in time. When we do not reverse our past resentments, TIME heals them, taking its own time.

25. Prayer is Superfluous

A very intelligent person, often, does not think of himself as intelligent. He who often thinks he is intelligent or sometimes proclaims that he is, is one who is not really intelligent but tries to be so. It is true with wealth. Newly rich people are conscious of their wealth and never speak to others without mentioning how much they are worth. **Strength, when it is real, is not conscious.** Only during the period when you are trying to acquire something new, it occupies the mind. The occupation continues for one or two generations. This is true of power, money, talent, status, etc. This is very true of Mother's devotees. We say constant remembrance is the best attitude. What is better is the inability to remember Mother, as then we are identified with HER.

'Thanks' is a word used on social occasions to acknowledge a fortuitous help, a good attitude or even a good word. Gratitude is a spiritual emotion. When we

feel grateful we express it as thanks. We live in the society in considerable comfort and extended convenience. If you have grandparents, they can tell you item by item how they lived during their days in comparison with what we now enjoy. It needs no long explanation. We take all those comforts – buses, schools, TV, modern conveniences, etc. – for granted. **Those who have lived in both the periods occasionally wonder at the present facilities.** In fact, one should be grateful to the society for all these comforts.

There are some people endowed with subtle vision. They see the Gods in their dreams. There are others who are endowed with a further subtlety which is the vision of the causal plane, the Supramental plane. When two cars are about to collide, we often see the accident averted by a hair's breadth. It is seen as a white protective hand or a brilliant white light. They see in the bright smile of a child a flash of light or a vibration of sweetness or even God's face. At such moments the vision enters the Being and travels down to the very cells of the **BODY**. The body thrills. **It is an emotion of gratitude that issues from the knowledge that it is God, His Spirit, that upholds us all, all the time.** For such blessed souls, Prayer is Superfluous.

26. Upanishad in Life

“All is in each, each in all” is an Upanishadic formula. When a house is on fire, everyone in the village rushes to put out the fire. **Village life is based on our spiritual principle that one man’s misfortune is really the misfortune of all.** Insurance is based on this principle. A man who owns a godown with one lakh rupees worth of goods pays a fire insurance premium of Rs.500. Hundreds and thousands of traders do it. The premium collects in the company. In case of an accident, he who paid Rs.500 receives a compensation of one lakh. The society pays for the misfortune of a single individual. **Churchill described it as society ensuring to the last man the average benefit.** At the turn of the 20th century, Churchill said that if he had been a dictator, he would put the **STAMP** of insurance on every door.

Dr. P.C. Reddy of Apollo Hospital says if health insurance is introduced in India for an annual premium of less than Rs.100, the policy holder can be given coverage

for Rs.50,000 of medical expenses in the event of surgery. A private trust in Madras is advocating a similar scheme for auto rickshaws, an accident insurance policy of a lakh of rupees. As auto rickshaws are prone to accidents, such a policy is a boon to them. This is negative benefit for the community.

There is a positive side to it. Banana is a crop that can be destroyed by a cyclone. An insurance introduced all over the state will protect the affected area. All crops can be so insured. Once a crop is insured, the insurance company will insist that the farmer water, fertilise, and perform other essential operations in time. Otherwise the farmer will lose the benefit of insurance itself. **That will enhance the efficiency of farming.**

Suppose an insurance policy is introduced ensuring that the top ten or thirty boys in a college will be paid a salary until they get employed, there will be a rush from everyone to get insured. The insurance company will insist on the boy maintaining his scores at a certain level. This is a positive way of raising the standards of education. **Insurance is a boon. We have not availed of it even to the extent of ten percent of what the West has done.** It is possible for us to devise fresh insurance schemes suited to national development.

27. Spiritual Value of WORK

It is a job for the mother to compel her child to sit down and do its homework. It is equivalent to punishment. There are schools which give no homework. They help children to learn reading at the age of 4 or even 3. Such a child, as soon as she wakes up, takes a book and starts reading. **All day long that child is found reading.** The job of the parent is to continue to supply books. This is not only true in learning. If you teach workers the right skill of doing their work, they won't go home until their work is perfectly done.

In a school where rote memory was insisted upon, writing composition was a punishment. In a year the students used to write twelve compositions of half a page each. Then they were taught to write English. The whole atmosphere changed. Every boy was anxious to write. That year they all wrote 45 compositions of 1½ pages each. About ten students started summarising retold

stories. Most of them did so for ten or fifteen books. Two boys each wrote 600 pages summarising 52 retold stories.

Work has a spirit in it. To evoke that will give great results. The British Cabinet, in the First World War, was afraid of not getting enough soldiers and pleaded for conscription. A few members differed and relied on the patriotism of the population. It turned out that before conscription had been laid down as law, a greater number of youth than were required had enlisted in the army.

Management believes in authority. **Exercise of authority does work.** There is an alternative method, which is better. Release the enthusiasm of the worker. Then authority will be superfluous. Train the enthusiasm into a skill. In that case, no supervision will be necessary at all. Each will be conscious of his own skill. In such an atmosphere it is not easy to make the worker leave the factory at the closing hour. During the Second World War it happened in England. Workers came to the shift half an hour early and refused to quit when the shift was over. *It is the authority of work which is far better than the authority of the management.* **There is something even greater than the work. It is the Spirit of the work.**

28. India's Economic Growth

Over the ages societies have grown. The growth has been in population, wealth, lifestyle, comfort, convenience, education, welfare, well-being. Historians have offered various explanations for that growth and they are all valid partially. In India we witness visible growth in the recent decades. **The question is where does this growth come from?** Why has such a growth not been witnessed since 1947? Today we see the vegetable vendor on the road having a Rs.500 currency note. This is not only a question pertaining to India. Nowhere in the world has this question ever been answered satisfactorily. Most answers meet a partial requirement, not fully. They are all answers related to external circumstances. Is there any real answer that is ultimate?

The growth of a nation is the growth of Man, the individual. When the individual is timid, pessimistic, cowardly, and withdrawing, the nation sinks into poverty

and slavery. Optimism, courage, independence, venturesome nature, and self-confidence make a nation grow. Fifty percent of our population is below the age of 25 and **does not want to live like their parents — illiterate, dirty, unhygienic, in unsanitary conditions, living on one meal, etc.** They look for a middle class life of modern lifestyle. It has resulted in the daily wage on the farm in thirty years rising from Rs. 1 to Rs. 100. It means the economic aspiration has risen a hundred times.

Recently the top economists of the country met in Madras at a seminar. While speaking there, our Society member said economic issues must be looked at socially. Money is a part of economics. Economics is part of society. To understand the realities of money, he said, we must study it from the point of view of society. **Much money is in circulation because there is social aspiration for a better life.** As money and economy are parts of society, society is a part of SPIRIT. When the social aspiration rises to Spiritual aspiration, the country will be flush with abundant prosperity. We have no control over the society. We do have full control over ourselves. Invocation of the Spirit can mature inwardly into individual Spiritual Aspiration resulting in a life that is materially abundant, psychologically harmonious, and spiritually fulfilling.

29. Nirupama – India – Unconscious Man

Nirupama, age 16, is an only child of idealistic parents who gave up their profession of auditing and teaching to found a school. They never sent their child to school. They taught her at home. **It meant that both of them spent all their thoughts on how to teach a child at home and having that as the only mission in life, gave their all for her mental growth.** At the age of 16 she excels those who have taught at the university level for ten years or even twenty years. The child is not a prodigy. She is an ordinary child. The parents are not extraordinarily endowed in any field. They are just parents. Their ideal, effort, dedication, diligence, and unremitting application to educating their child is laudable, perhaps never witnessed anywhere else.

As pioneers they went through a lot of literature, considered every innovative teaching material anywhere in the world, and **tried their psychological best to look at the world with Nirupama's eyes.** They are at it full-

time even now. This shows two things: (1) What the educational opportunities are to a child when the parents are fully dedicated to her. (2) What a pioneer needs to undergo.

Now that they have achieved what is apparently unachievable, it is possible to reduce their phenomenal effort to a system which any school can routinely follow, if it chooses to be a pioneer in Indian education. Then it may come to stay as future Indian education, i.e. to produce an academic mind of 50 years by the age of 14.

The foundation they have laid in MIND is extraordinary. James Mill taught his son Stuart Mill and finished his education at the age of 14. Later Stuart Mill became a thinker and philosopher. Nirupama has a further advantage. Instead of raising her mental attainments higher, **her mind can be laid OPEN to the Spiritual ray of Light which is the source of all knowledge.** Should that happen, the world will discover what **TRAINING** can achieve in spiritual education. The opportunities in today's Indian society are economic, financial, monetary, educational, with openings to move up socially, etc. Above all, India is in a position to create **BALANCED** human beings in an integrated balanced society. To start with, a **SINGLE** circumstance of a willing individual is necessary. It will be better if it is an organisation.

30. The Spiritual Status of Help

The impulse of help makes one human. The phrase Good Samaritan is age-old. One offers to help another because the impulse of Selflessness is active. Society exists because of such help, which is often mutual help. Before the society created a government and its departments like police, justice and fire service, society existed as a collective because of the individual and collective impulse to help one another. If help is not there, there will be no society, no family and nothing worth living for. **As everything else, the helping tendency has its other side.** Man is endowed with ego. He is run by his ego. That too has good as well as bad sides. One important thing about the ego is that it is extremely clever. **Man is a perennial victim to his ego's artifices.**

Whatever we want to do for our progress or soul's progress, which is to blunt and dissolve ego, the ego has the ability to come forward and offer to do it itself. When we want to appoint a storekeeper, someone comes forward to do it. We are thankful to him, but do not

realise that he has done so to steal without being observed. Generally, such tricks never come to the surface. We often hear people say during a discussion on surrender to the Divine, "Explain it to me clearly, I can then follow it." The point is that when he **RIGHTLY** understands and follows it, he follows his own understanding, not the Guru to whom he must surrender. It is a subtle camouflage, very difficult to see through. When I want to surrender to the Divine, I never see that my ego comes into the picture and offers to do the surrender on my behalf.

I am unaware of it as I am identified with my ego. To the end, I won't be able to discover that my ego got the better of me. When we genuinely wish to help another, the ego enters the picture in a subtle fashion and offers the help. We miss seeing it. **It is an invariable rule in human relationships – with very rare exceptions – that the beneficiary never fails to offend the benefactor.** Inside the family and close friends group, **ALL** the problems arise **ONLY** from this rule. If one does his duty pleasantly without fail within the limits of the other person's good will, such an aberration is avoided. In intimate relationships, the idea of generosity is strong. One wants to give rather than take. Once it crosses the limits, the horrible rule I now described comes into operation.

31. The Length of One's Life

We Indians believe that the length of our lives is fixed. When the appointed hour arrives, no power is there to put it off. It is true for all men, but not for Rishis who can choose their hour of departure. **A man dies when his own soul and the Superconscient together sanction it and never otherwise.** Philosophically the same is true of all small events.

Sri Aurobindo divides knowledge into four types. (1) Egoistic knowledge, (2) Non-egoistic, subliminal knowledge, (3) Intuition, (4) Knowledge by identity. Moksha is knowledge by identity. Man dissolves in the Spirit and achieves identification. The only example that can be given for knowledge by identity is that we know we are alive, we exist. No one need tell me that I am alive because I know it, I know that I am alive—exist—because at that point I am identified with the Superconscient, the God. Generally we are unconscious

of it. The more we become conscious of it, the greater is our capacity to prolong our life. **As long as a man is aware that he exists, it is a spiritual awareness.** Spiritual awareness can prolong life.

Let us consider this high spiritual awareness or idealism and water it down to our human life. It becomes Self-Confidence. Self-Confidence raises one's capacity to accomplish materially. In the section on Love, *Thirukural* says if one is aware of the fact that he is loved by the person whom he loves, he has the pride of life. In our tradition it is called *mangalyabalam*, the capacity of a wife's love to lengthen her husband's life. In human life, it is the wife who carries that capacity. In spiritual life, one can prolong one's life as long as he wants, if he is aware that he exists — exists in **HIM**.

Suppose you own a company or you are a manager of 25 staff members or the head of a family, there also this knowledge will be of effective use in a great measure. When you know you are **RIGHT** in every aspect of the work, that knowledge is the knowledge of 'God in Life'. Only that you must be really right and not **THINK** you are right, which is an illusion. **Such a knowledge can make your accomplishments doubly successful.**

32. Initial Response of the Divine

Religious worship is for all. Spirituality is for those who have the call. **There was a time when bicycle was for all and car was meant for the wealthy elite.** This is no longer so. At least in America, everyone owns a car, which was at one time as much a rarity there as it was here fifty years ago. Again, those who needed a car were expected to deposit the full amount months in advance and wait for the delivery. It is again no longer so. Even loans are liberally advanced to salaried employees to buy a car.

Thousand years ago, when education was meant for the royalty and aristocracy of the priests, the common man was prohibited from reading on pain of punishment. Now education is widespread. Scholarships are awarded in plenty and all possible support, help, encouragement is given to everyone, down to the last person, to be educated and well-employed.

There was a time when spirituality was meant for one who could go to the forest, sleep on a bed of nails, etc. **Now since 1956 when the Force descended, the**

right to enjoy a higher spirituality is waiting at the door of everyone, provided he has aspiration. By aspiration it means the aspiration of the Soul.

For the mind to aspire it has to become silent, at least stop the running thoughts, which is a feat even for a yogi. That evokes the initial response which solves our ordinary problems. To explain the next level of response, the concentration required is the concentration of a student on the eve of the exam. A mere nobody who was attending to harvest in the field, by the merest chance was elected an MP. In that moment, he was in a daze of surprise. Such a thing can be evoked by a misfortune. Misfortune or good fortune, we see it is a **MOMENT** when one cannot think at all, as the mind is no longer there. That is the next level of concentration of aspiration to evoke a *wider* response from the Divine which brings an inconceivable opportunity such as the 13th person in an all-India institution made the Chairman overlooking the previous 12 people.

The fourth level alongside the fifth and sixth level of devotion is yogic. To put it in our terms, the fourth level makes one world famous. It is one of reputation burdened with responsibility. The fifth level elevates one into causeless joy and its ever-fresh cheerfulness which has no material equivalent in human life. The sixth level is where one not only attains the Immutable, ineffable Brahman inside, but witnesses its flowering in human life.

33. Evoking a Serious Response from the Divine

There are serious occasions in life. When a man's debts rise to double the level of his worth, or a poor girl at the age of 36 wishes for marriage, or many other such things coming under that category happen, normally we dwell on the misfortune. **The problem has a refractory character. When you *think* of it, it draws your energy through that attention – maybe we can call it negative attention – and starts growing in strength.** Man is not made to forget his misfortune. But when the exam is impending, the boy *does* push away all his cares and concentrates on the exam. **To evoke a serious response from Mother, or to pay a debt twice his value, such a serious response and a call from there is enough.**

Someone had such a response. He has written it in a story entitled "\$100,000", which has gone to print in English and Tamil. He describes there all the tricks, suspicions, and doubts of the MIND. As it was his true

experience put into a fictional context, I decided to publish it. As one reads the story, one feels a parallel to one of his own situations, when he sees how the atmosphere is cranky, life is refractory and enforces his past experience. There one can see HOW this *Force* works. Many experience that their calls are answered. Many other people say there is no response for their call. **It only means the call, the strength of the call, does not match or overcome the strength of the problem.** The moment they match, the atmosphere changes, people are different, and life responds positively. That is to evoke a serious response from the Divine.

Such problems are common in life. They need no enumeration. They should not afflict a man. Should such problems come, one goes to the astrologer. He mostly gives a polite answer, "You have to be patient." Rarely does he say it will be over in a particular period, which often comes true. An unjust loss of a government job, a brother or partner cheating because there is no written record for a huge sum, a child lost and not found for weeks, a man separated from his wife for years, etc. are problems of that type. Those who are so suffering **MUST** be capable of the serious concentration of a student on the eve of the exam, instead of dwelling on the misfortune and strengthening it. **Should one do so, the problem will be instantaneously solved.**

34. Significant Response — Opportunity

Life was negative with a vengeance until 1900, maybe until the end of World War II. It made survival difficult. Most people struggled to hold on to what they had. The question of opportunity was unheard of. *When Benjamin Disraeli became the Prime Minister of England, he described his rise as, "At last I have reached the top of the greasy pole."*

In an expressive proverb it is said here that if we rise six inches, there is a slide down of 12 inches awaiting us around the corner. It was so because Mind was not sufficiently organised in those days. Life is a lower force, which was stronger than Mind. Those were days when survival at any level was difficult. The goal was to save what one had, if he had anything.

Nowadays, we hear the opposite. **Those who were nobodies rise to the top by what we call a stroke of luck.** In America over a period of two or three hundred years, Man rose like that. All kinds of day labourers became millionaires. They achieved it not by a stroke of luck, but by hard work, the likes of which no man

would want to work for even one full day. America entered luck, but the hard way.

Ours is a spiritual country. The very soil is spiritual. So, our opportunities are different. Someone, in an advantageous position, easily achieves the same result that others work hard for. For a third level of concentration, we get a response from life. It is not a solution of the problem. The character changes to the opposite. Such a change is known as transformation. **Moving to a third level of depth or concentration, these *problems* are transformed into opportunities.**

Two young people who were unconsciously moving to such depths were introduced to another person who spoke five languages and worked in several countries. He was impressed by their general ability and invited them to prepare a Project Report for 1 billion dollars and take charge of a few important activities related to them. He offered a commission to them of which they were not capable of dreaming.

When life turns from its false, dark, negative character to true, bright, positive character, inconceivable things like this open and seek you. It is to evoke a significant response from the Divine. Its basis is ever-increasing cheerfulness. Its strategy is GOOD WILL. So far I have spoken about life. The further responses are essentially yogic, but I hope to stretch them to touch life at least at one point.

35. A Wider Response from the Divine

Man, with his developed faculties of Mind, is hopelessly groping in spite of his spectacular achievements. This is very well seen if you review the efforts of great Minds a hundred or two hundred years ago. Man was not less intelligent than today. But it is now clear that he was barking up the wrong tree. When a steam engine was fitted to a sailing ship and was brought for demonstration, the British Admiralty laughed at the idea and refused to look at it. It took 1600 years for man to realise that reading the Bible in English was as sacred as reading it in Latin. Of course, the original Bible was written not in Latin but in Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic. *The truth is knowledge is above and is descending in cascades of Light, while man is searching for it in Matter and life.* Naturally all kinds of superstitions arise and soon become sacred.

Concentration means dwelling on itself. What disturbs concentration is lack of mental discipline which is unable to control running thoughts. Imagine a house of five children running helter-skelter while serious business is discussed. That house has no discipline and can achieve

nothing. **As the concentration increases, mind becomes silent and understands without thinking.** Scientists who have spent a lifetime and succeeded in finally discovering it, know the phenomenon of SILENCE at the time of revelation. But they disregard it. Had they known the significance of SILENCE and cultivated it from the beginning, the years of cerebral labour would have been abridged into a hundred hours of silent contemplation.

All men of genius know the value of Silence, vision, intuition and revelation, but in the modern context, they are shy of speaking their experience. Srinivasa Ramanujam never thought, but simply went into *silence*. Shakespeare never wrote by exercising his mental faculty. His was inspired writing. On reading *The Life Divine*, Mother said She saw the intuition pouring down into the writing.

These are not ideas that can be placed before Western scientists. It is more difficult to propose it to an Indian scientist *whose Mind is Westernised, meaning intellectually organised*. I feel like parodying Marx, as Russell once said of Indian mantras and African drum beating, "Intellectuals of the world unite, you have nothing to lose but your blind groping."

Silence, vision, insight, intuition, subtlety, etc. are there in the Indian soil, but they are not accessible simply to be picked up. Once they were all well developed, but now they lie dormant in potential. One has to become receptive, value them and cultivate them, until they are acquired as a settled faculty.

36. Deep Response from the Divine

The Divine wishes to give us the Deepest Response. Only that we ask of Him trivial things. **To rely on the Divine in the worst of circumstances is the only condition for deserving such a response.** Human love is celebrated over the ages. One cannot see a famous film or read a popular novel without the theme of love. Man longs for that. The heart yearns for it. If only that is granted, it gives the pride of life, says a great poet. Mother says human love is full of selfishness. Friendship, trust, confidence, good will, goodness, and affection are rare. If found, they are there over a bottle or across the table of playing cards. Nehru and Patel gave such confidence to Gandhiji full of love and submission. But they do not survive the test of life.

One who enjoyed such affection from several quarters felt a fulfilment that is rare and sought no further advancement in any sector of life. **In one of those rare individuals, he found a rich fulfilment that was rare.** Life came with its test. This was so sacred a relationship that it was untouched by mercenary selfishness. It only

enhanced the sweetness of the intimacy. One may rise above human smallness, but it is not easy to rise to the divine greatness. The divine test arrived. The human rose to the fore. It had not put up the usual smallness of a petty heart, but now gave in to one such claim. The sacred sweetness was unconsciously sacrificed. The recipient had staked his all on that proximity. Because he was a devotee, he did not collapse. He survived, but was lifeless without that source of emotional enrichment. He could maintain the cheerfulness outside, but inside he was empty.

Mother says such a moment is the best for calling Her. The devotee had no strength even to call Her. **He did lose faith in life, not in Mother, but Mother did not rise as the same old enjoyable enrichment.** Still, the devotee was resolute in his faith, not as austerity or frustration. But he could not raise his human heart to that of its old wholesomeness. There was a sudden development, unexpected. Along with the sacred friendship was lost all sustenance emanating from managing 100 acres. The sudden development was so sudden that in five minutes, twice that sustenance with a greater ownership was readily GIVEN to him. Mother is great. That evening, **She gave the deepest response.** The person who offered the magnificent response came to the devotee seeking him and pleading with him to accept five times more than what was offered that morning. **Mother gave him spiritual magnificence, but the foolish human heart longed for the sweetness of the lost human love.**

37. Yogic Response from the Divine

There are people whose souls are ripe below the surface. They live an ordinary life on the surface, as the soul is not expressing itself. When they come to Mother, they are filled with a SILENCE one gets after twenty years of tapas, they hear *venuganam*, and find the hot road at 1 pm chill with birds singing celestial music, etc. Some of them come here to Mother and feel an exultation in Spirit, experiencing seven hours as a half an hour. One couple came to have darshan of Mother and Sri Aurobindo and did not find them in their seats. Instead, they saw an ocean of Light. The vision of Sri Aurobindo in the jail when he saw the convicts as Narayana is one such yogic response.

One sceptical devotee who was unwilling to make pranams to Mother saw Her feet golden and was moved. Another man asked Mother if it was true that She was Kali, Eswari, Lakshmi etc. She revealed to him Her four aspects in succession in the original divine form. A young

lady saw Mother in the terrace Darshan changing into Sri Aurobindo. A crazy man who had a subtle vision saw Mother at her 90th age as a young girl of 25. When he saw Her photograph showing Her age, he abused everyone saying that there was something wrong about the place. Until he saw Her young age photos, no one could convince him that Mother was 90.

Mother gives the yogic Response to those who are yogically ripe. Sri Ramana Maharshi saw a dead body and tried to imitate its poise. He went directly into Samadhi, as he was already Jivan Mukta. Yogic response comes as subtle vision, inner voice, spiritual smell, etc. When people make pranams to Mother's picture, they see Her emerge out of it with real life.

India is a spiritual land. It is right spiritually endowed persons develop their spiritual potential. As they are in life, they follow the social or religious path. The time has come to discard the routine life of the material world or retreat into the forest shunning life. The greatest spiritual seekers of India have for years called down Peace, Truth and Light. When they descend, the race will reach the heights of its destiny which will take it to unparalleled heights. The call is to go forth from the soil of India so that the entire humanity might respond.

38. Uniqueness is a Type

In the history of the world, we have witnessed power struggle of all descriptions. **One who has all the power in his own hands giving it away to others is not heard of in the history of the world.** Mahatma Gandhiji did so. Therefore, he was unique. What is unique joins the list of wonders of the world. It is true some men are unique, and many things are unique. Its opposite also is true. Nothing can ever be unique. If you buy a rare camera in your town and it is not available anywhere in your town or any other town, **it does not mean some company produced only that camera.** Just because it is not seen anywhere, it does not become unique. Some company has produced somewhere many such cameras and one by some chance has reached our town and our hands.

Unless the whole society unconsciously prepares for something, no single pioneer can rise anywhere. Historically, what was unique at one time has become

commonplace later. There is a Gandhiji in each of us. But we have seen only one Gandhiji. It is easy for man to consider himself unique. Those who have studied human personality often hear from others or everyone, **“I am not one of those many. I have not met a man like me. In all modesty, I can say I am the only one who has this capacity – I am unique.”** In the writings of great playwrights or novelists, we rarely meet a character repeated. It gives us the impression that that character is unique. **The truth is uniqueness belongs to a type.**

Democracy is an institution that illustrates it well. The monarch who ruled the country is now found in each individual who has the power to vote. For a long time I have been vainly explaining this **FACT** to a foreigner whenever he is struck by the Indian wisdom. It does not belong to that one man from whom he hears it. It is there in the entire population. We may wonder at an Englishman fluently speaking English, but we forget that everyone in England speaks so. Recently I came to know an idealist, an efficient, good man who gave up a lucrative job to serve the cause he believes in. This is the first time I have met such a one. **To me it means there are a great many idealists in this country.** When such people come to rule the country, India will raise her head in her original spiritual splendour.

39. The Newspaper

The purpose of a newspaper is to give news objectively. Presently news means news of politics. Some newspapers resort to sensationalism. Others, wishing to set standards of factual news, develop **OPINIONS**, which in time become sacred to them. **Those who have done subtle psychological research into opinions know the process of their formation. It is easy to get into it, not so easy to get out of it.** I wonder how many of us recollect occasions or persons who have really changed their opinion **OBJECTIVELY**, not for a certain gain. Those who run the newspapers are more prone to it. To report the news factually is a great service. To know what that news represents or will lead to is another affair. It is not given to the editor to know it by virtue of being the editor of a newspaper.

Newspaper is an institution, as our religion or education or our customs and usage. Ideally, if a newspaper can feel the pulse of the nation and reflect

it, readers won't wait till the paper is delivered to them. Then the paper becomes vibrant. Inside the organisation of a newspaper, there are all the departments of a company. **The one thing that will be conspicuous by its absence is the coordination between those departments.** The editorial is an ivory tower. No one will be allowed to touch it. A survey in USA found that the best performing newspapers had the highest level of coordination, especially with the editorial department. Recently people who wanted to start a newspaper surveyed 100,000 homes and brought out a dummy. It had a higher reception than expected. It is one thing to cater to people's desires and another to their needs.

Today, every section of the population is full of aspiration for a better life. If a newspaper takes only the positive side of it and copiously reports it *factually*, it will integrate with the population, especially if it reaches all over the country. To know that, one should know the pulse of the population. It is no easy job, as Demming said, to put this idea across to the editors of a newspaper, especially its owner. Reader surveys often disclose that several news items are only read by 1% of the readers and there are other items that no one reads. The beauty of it is, the editorial often values those columns. Cynical writers, partisan thinkers can become popular, but that is not the way to build an ideal newspaper.

40. Value of a Promise

A promise is given to another. A vow is taken for oneself. A good part of the population has financial difficulties of all descriptions, at all levels. I can offer one suggestion to them for immediate temporary relief. Such suggestions are as old as *Thirukural* or *Ramayana*. Suppose someone has debts from forty people totalling Rs 87 lakhs and he is now faced with an emergency of a serious type for three lakhs of rupees, his getting that amount is not possible. When someone offers him that money on an understanding that the next collection will pay it off, the temptation is not to repay it but to meet earlier emergencies. What is involved is not money only. **It is the personality.** *Should the person pay off whatever little amount he gets towards the promised payment, all his 87 lakhs will soon be paid off.*

We look at MONEY as money. Money is what the man makes. It is his personality that attracts money or repels it. Someone relieves you in an emergency. If you vow to return the money as you promised to yourself,

your personality gets strengthened and attracts more money. In no time, all the Rs 87 lakhs of debt dissolves.

Generally, those who have perennial money difficulties will have the following attitudes: 1) As soon as some cash comes in, they will spend it on some new want of theirs, 2) they will pay off more pressing debts than the one for which it is earmarked, 3) any clever person around will take off the money. **A small percentage of people will borrow with a definite intention of NOT returning it.** They cannot be commented upon. A rare few have a way of challenging the lender, finding some flimsy complaint, “Can you get your money back?”

The finest type in all these cases is one who lays a trap for someone to walk into so that he can have a permanent gain. People do not so much do it in money, but readily do it in a situation that resembles a bargain. In my experience, they are the meanest of human beings. With a few of them, I made an experiment – spiritual. I willingly and consciously entered the trap and they had the joy of having caught me, but not my soul that had done the experiment. I emerged unscathed each time. More than that, life offered a greater reward. In most cases, I do not know what happened to those who laid the trap. In a few cases, I did know what happened to them. I shudder to record what they went through, sometimes before my very eyes.

41. Organisation and Opportunities

The word ORGANISATION is generally used to denote a company or institution. It is rarely understood in its original meaning, of which there are several. **In short, it means making the most out of the least.** An ICS officer wrote a famous book on how partition could have been avoided. As a Revenue Minister of a state with a Muslim ruler, by organising, he could reduce the killing of 100,000 lives to 4000.

At least since 1980, for anyone who has the development vision, **India is a land of infinite opportunities.** It has been so since 1947. People avail of opportunities only when it becomes a fashion, like the dog that can only drink of the river in spite of lapping. How often have we heard of IT companies reaching Rs.400 crores turnover in less than five years? How many enterprising farmers earn a lakh or two from an acre of land?

If there is an awakening in India, it is for education of QUALITY. I have seen Mother's devotees surrounded by immense opportunities of infinite proportions. There

is enough knowledge in the world to make it a psychological heaven. Money is in a glut. Even in USA, a Director of agriculture said only 50% of the findings of the laboratory reach the fields. In India, it is only 5%. *Unemployment haunts the lives of young men where literally thousands of posts, maybe hundreds of thousands of posts remain vacant for want of talented personnel.* Man follows the crowd, takes the line of least resistance.

To avail of opportunities, one must know them. Go to a hospital, school, court or anywhere and meet the senior-most personnel there. **You will be surprised to see they have risen to the top of the profession on the strength of their own personality practising what they have learnt 25 years ago in the college.** People do not take efforts to know the latest opportunities and when they do, they refuse to practise. Rajiv complained that in a world where fifteen year old technology is outmoded, India clings to 150 year old machineries. New opportunities constantly appear in technology, products, methods, openings, etc. People are unconscious and blind. There is no question of their knowing ORGANISATION. Mother often said, "Everyday how many complaints I receive about the waste of money. Are any of you aware of the enormous amount of higher consciousness I am pouring on you? *It is all totally wasted.* Have any of you brought it to my notice?" We have a hundred times greater opportunities than we can use. ***We are not organised.***

42. The Value of Choice

We are not aware that we are exercising our choice every minute. We take it as a way of life. There are literally thousands of occasions where one can witness two families – or individuals – of comparable circumstances at the end of thirty years of career separated by a vast social distance – one living cosily in a rural town enjoying the local social status and the other in Delhi or Washington riding the waves of social prestige in several fields. **It is made possible by the conscious exercise of choice at every minute.** The short term gain vs. long term benefit; the occasion to exert vs. the least line of resistance; the courage to embrace the new vs. the cosy comfort of tradition; the readiness to risk vs. the sense of security, etc., etc.

Those who prosper will look at the world from their highest responsibilities. Those who refuse to prosper will always attribute their failure to external circumstances. A man resigned his government job of Rs. 250 to accept a temporary post of three months on Rs. 750 in a tea

estate. The estate owner's sound advice was of no avail. Now with an MA he was eking out his living running a grinder shop. That is the lure of temporary gain called myopic vision.

Man is not aware that at every moment he is making a choice. **Buried in infinite opportunities of excellent success to raise one's school to be the very best in the world, one makes prudent choices of doing better than other schools.** This is so because one expresses her active violent nerves, instead of using her highly educated mind. No example is of any service here.

Before your very eyes, you see people rising in a few years from Rs. 350 income to Rs. 35,000 income because of good nature. The capacity to *complain* against everyone and everything and blaming the horoscope keeps the other where he was forty years ago. **Choose the RIGHT, the GOOD, the PLEASANT, the VALUABLE and that is the ladder for progress.** If you complain, whine, bark, are lazy, compete or ascribe your failure to others, you constantly slide down. "It is my rasi," is a common comment we hear. I would say it is your temperament, your choice. Evil, meanness, deceit, violence, cruelty, tyranny, falsehood, MONEY VALUE, mercenary attitude, short temper, greed, demand, desire, craving, suspicious nature, doubt, sloth, etc. have never paid social dividends.

43. The Value of Attention

Attention to people has never failed; rather it matures into affection. Suppose a company is making meagre profits, if the owner goes round the company and pays FULL attention to everyone and everything, **before he finishes the full round, the profits will boom.** Meteoric rise in companies occurs when new markets open, or a new fashion catches the eye of the public. Suppose the proprietor takes care to teach, instruct, train, inspire his men to pay attention to time, details, work, rules, order, perfection, procedure, custom, usage, etc., the sky is the limit to their growth.

Everyone does not have a company, but everyone has a family. Families are run on traditional lines of discipline, obedience, custom, etc. Mostly it is male domination. Now female domination is emerging openly or at least subtly. **Replace domination by humility, discipline by self-discipline, obedience by affection, custom by rational requirement of the hour, and one**

can witness that the family is a spring of JOY and life will initiate itself on the route of rise.

The opposite also is true. Above average personalities respond to attention. Below average personalities are spoiled by attention or recognition. Learn to neglect them, neglect their best accomplishment, and they will move heaven and earth to catch your attention. We go by one rule, attention or neglect. It does not yield the best results. No one can put a pinch of salt on the tongue or take a bite of chilli. But it is salt that gives the flavour to food. Chilli makes many food items a delicacy. The Andhras have made it an art.

Life, its flavour, its blossoming fragrance, lies in knowing the proper mix of the opposite qualities. Very rarely do we see a man marrying a woman of cantankerous behaviour and **creating domestic felicity.** Women do it more, making a pleasant life marrying a loafer husband. At the office, especially in political parties, people learn to make the best out of the worst. Especially when alliances are forged, self-respect, ideal, goodness, etc. are sacrificed in favour of victory. Instead of doing it for mercenary reasons, it can be done for idealistic reasons. Man has learnt the art of making a purely selfless service an instrument of his selfish importance. The other way about is the secret of bringing heaven on earth.

44. Conceptualisation is Mental Consciousness

We are unconscious in many ways. When we travel a short distance in the train, it never occurs to us how the train arrived and departed in time. There is an organisation – a vast huge organisation – behind a train running between two stations or destinations. We do not normally conceive of it. When explained it will be an obvious, simple, inescapable fact. Paul Johnson says the Jews have the gift for thus giving formulation to new conceptions. **Mother would say, it is to be ‘mentally conscious’.** The result is a mental organisation.

Some 20 years ago a world famous economist doubted whether India could rise out of poverty. Today he is a Planning Commission Member. He sees the abundant possibilities in the country, but very little could be done. It is a frustrating experience for him. **In 1994 the International Commission on Peace and Food gave a call for guaranteed employment in India** and converted

it into a feasible programme to produce 100 million jobs in 10 years. In spite of the Government’s enthusiasm about the report, it became a non-starter. Today the Planning Commission’s Vision 2020 report repeats that call. The Election Manifesto of the Congress has picked it up. Another party too has done so. A CONCEPT forms in the mind when the MIND is conscious. Translated into fact India will have no unemployment. Once the scheme is detailed, it looks obvious and simple. But to conceive of it, Johnson says, one needs a special genius.

Man’s miseries are many. He starts from poverty, disease, ignorance, violence, loneliness, terrorism, recession etc., because the human MIND is unconscious. Once the mind becomes conscious, the answers to all his needs and problems are readily available. They also appear obvious. **Invoking Mother makes one spiritually conscious, opening up the infinite possibilities of life’s spiritual opportunities.**

Out of the 500 Nobel Prizes awarded since 1901, more than a hundred have been given to Jews. This is mental clarity. One can practise it in his own domestic life, official life, or even in the national life. It is high time every Indian realises that he possesses that capacity, of course, as a potential which can be developed.

45. Human Conception of God

Man knows God is all powerful and therefore expects HIM to fulfil all his wishes. He never thinks there is another side to it. Midas asked of God a boon that whatever he touches should turn into gold. It resulted in his daughter becoming a golden statue. **Rights involves duties.** To insist on asking for the 'right' unmindful of the consequences is man's *swabhava*. God granted a miser's prayer on condition that his neighbour will get double of it.

Mother's devotees have seen that whatever they ask for, She grants. SHE once said that "Man" can ask Her for anything. When we have 23 prayers, we see that 22 are answered. We don't mind about the one missing prayer. Sometime later we notice that that particular prayer is never answered. It is baffling.

As long as our needs are genuine, sincere, what we need, what we have aspired for long, they all get sanctioned. **There are occasions when we assert our ego, or are**

self-opinionated, or ask for something Mother has not approved of. That prayer never is answered, unless we shed our ego, remove the inner obstacles or realise our prayer is directly against Mother's expressed wishes.

A simple question, after the above explanation, constantly arises in the Mind. "I am a devotee of Mother. My prayers are answered, but not this one. I melt before HER in asking for this. Nothing moves. Is it that Mother's Power is limited? Sri Aurobindo has answered this question. In His little book *The Mother*, He lists 14 ways in which Man practises self-deception. The very first condition HE says is that the Grace acts on its own conditions, conditions of truth, not according to the demands of the human Mind which is false. To us our falsehood appears as Truth. We take our desires as our wants. Duties go before rights, we simply ignore them. It never strikes us. Only that we know our prayer is not answered. **Surely it will be answered when you cease to be irrational and do not assert your ego.**

I know boys who have not at all prepared well for the exam disappointed when they fail. It is understandable to some extent. How about boys who have not appeared for the examination disappointed at failure? That is a common mental trait.

46. Person Beyond Personality

The word 'personality' is used in many senses sanctioned by the language. It is most commonly used in a sense language does not grant it. A tall, handsome, well-built person is often described as a good personality. Any of us or, at least, most of us have two sets of behaviour. One is what we put up outside. The other is what we are inside. I refer to the first as outer personality and the other as inner personality. The PERSON lies beyond both of them. The outer personality rises or falls with the outer circumstances. The inner personality too does it, but it does so privately. We call people of more outer personality shallow or even silly. People of inner personality are described as serious people. They give deep consideration to any thing, plan with foresight and execute it with capacity.

Sometimes such serious personalities are gripped with a problem – e.g. depression – and the more they dwell on it, the more it grows. We do not realise that our attention

to a problem is energy. It energises the problem. It never strikes us that if we stop worrying, the problem will vanish. Someone running a new school was not able to get electric connection for 2 years, despite intensive effort. All the local efforts were in vain. Suddenly a friend of the management rose to be a member of the Electricity Board in another state. He took interest in the school and things began to move. The management was fully relieved to see the poles, wire and work, etc. They were told that in two months they will get the connection. The person in charge was so relieved and felt even two months is the shortest possible time. He had to leave the country that week on a Tuesday. On the same day he received news that all the work was nearing completion and the connection would be given on Monday.

If you are one who often meets with luck, please recall some events which were pleasant surprises. Also recall, if possible, the state of mind you were in. Invariably they would have been MOMENTS when you have gone beyond the outer and inner Personalities. In life, such a moment brings luck. **In Spirit such moments bring GRACE. The grace that comes to the person beyond the inner and outer personalities, brings happiness and success in life.** It is the human person. Beyond that lies the spiritual Person. What he receives is Spiritual realisation.

47. Inner Joy

Success makes for happiness; failure gives us sorrow. Sri Aurobindo says success and happiness are sought after by lower human emotions. Pious people do their duty regardless of success or failure. **They are invariably happy, rather filled with a sense of contentment.** There are other people who are always found filled with JOY. They spread joy around. Such people are found at all levels of life. **Inner Joy, permanently established, is one symptom of a realised Soul.** We do not hear of pensive Saints or other religious people who are depressed. Invariably they are happy. Some of them have a characteristic sweet smile.

Man does cherish money, popularity, status, power etc. It is equally true that man values inner joy more than all these attributes. When they are presented as alternatives – whether you need joy or wealth – how many will want joy is a question. This is our religious teaching or cultural tradition.

But there is one more dimension to the inner joy. **To all attributes of life and creation – Time, tapas, money, knowledge etc – we know of, Sri Aurobindo has added a new dimension.** Such a dimension is also here for the inner Joy. That inner joy includes all the higher attributes of life, e.g. power, health, money, status, wealth, etc. When I say we can invoke the spirit, without our knowing it we invoke the higher dimension of human traits. We know of goodness that is the opposite of evil. What Sri Aurobindo says is Self-Existent GOODNESS. It has no opposite. It exists in the plane where there is no evil.

South Indian rivers are seasonal. They flow during the monsoon season only. In North India several rivers are perennial, which means they flow all the time. The JOY that I speak of is spiritual JOY. I said it is inclusive of all human needs, comforts and affluence. Invoking the spirit, one attains to INNER JOY. If he is not entirely successful, at the next level he attains material Prosperity. Hence I called my column “Spirituality & Prosperity”.

There is one more dimension to this. I rarely speak of it. It is called Spiritual Prosperity, generally difficult to attain. It is attained by a Spiritual discipline. The only such discipline here is NOT to take egoistic initiative. No initiative of ours is free from ego.

48. Mother Never Punishes

We often hear that, if we are not right, God will punish us. The truth there is very little. Gods belong to the Overmind. They too have *guna* and *swabhava* like us, but they may be in traces. They are not free from ego. **What is true is when we propitiate them and they are pleased, they are so powerful to grant us anything they choose.** Punishment is not in their scheme. But, if anyone wishes to offend any God, woe unto him. He will certainly be cursed or punished as *Siva* did to the poet *Nakeeran*. What is true in our life, our human life, is we don't get the results aimed at for want of skill, interest, capacity, means. When we fail like that we have a way of saying 'God has punished me'. This is a vastly prevalent psychological superstition.

Mother never punishes people. SHE does not have the capacity to punish. But there is "punishment" invisible.

HER Grace comes down in floods. We are unconscious of it. Even on the day Supermind descended, NONE of us felt its Presence. To illustrate this point, I cannot resort to spiritual explanations, because they are nebulous. Only example from life can explain it. One truth about MAN is that when a man rises in life very fast, he takes it for granted. After some time he even forgets it. So also when a man loses a great opportunity – especially when it is invisible – he is not likely to know what he has lost. A rich man, when he foolishly spends or invests or lends, is not hurt by the loss. But the loss is true, only that it is within his financial capacity to withstand that loss without suffering.

There is no punishment with Mother, but there can be immense loss of which man is not aware – loss of opportunity brought by Grace. People of humble origin, in spite of great talents, are unable to conceive the heights they can rise to. When they come to Mother, SHE readily offers those opportunities. They are often unaware of it or make a remark like, "I am not so greedy as that." That remark is enough to cancel the opportunity in the subtle plane. It took more than 10 years for me to understand this phenomenon. Now, I see other people missing it. I am unable to explain it to them in their idiom.

49. Chandrasekaran

For several decades I have been dreaming of writing a story or making a film to convey the message that India **is potentially richer than any rich nation on earth.** My contacts with writers held in repute by my people led me nowhere. Some wrote after a fashion which I published. At last I myself wrote a “story” which is really an essay in the shape of a dialogue. It was quite disappointing. Serialising it in my journal, I was surprised at the welcome it received. Then Bob wrote *Legend of Brahman*. I was thrilled by it. It is philosophical.

Chandrasekaran is a devotee who had been to New Zealand for some time. He writes to me every month. Except that his handwriting is a fascinating beauty, I do not know anything about him. Recently he wrote a story “\$100,000” in English. I liked it very much and I wished several others to read it. He has created a plot that **touches every man in distress.**

Many people reach the frontiers of human misery and stay there forever. Some manage to emerge out of it. The territory of human oppressiveness is known to many, maybe all. **Reaching its borders MAN is utterly helpless, loses faith in God, loses faith in himself,**

which is the end of his existence. Mother says it is the most splendid moment to call Her, since at this point one is psychologically unencumbered. She can, at that virgin moment, respond fully and richly to fill his being with the Touch the Divine alone can give.

Chandrasekaran’s story touched me deeply. I am no reader of stories, though I have read many for other purposes. I wanted him to translate it into Tamil, if possible. He has done it and it penetrated the psychological fabric. Not able to sleep at 3 a.m., I tried to read it hoping it would put me to sleep. It woke me up. I understand the plot of the story is a true one.

William Golding, the Nobel Prize Winner, said that story remains a powerful medium. A story **directly communicates the complex logic of higher life in simple words, stirring up one’s emotions that is existence.** I feel I should drop a copy of this story at 6 a.m. before the door of every house in India, so that Mother will reach the human hearts to light up the golden flame of the Supramental light. It is, I know well, the superstition of a shallow heart that prides in its silly ambition. Mother does not reach the population like that. **She waits outside your doors for a loving yearning of the inner flame.** I wish to send this book at cost price to those who seek it, in the sterling hope that the GOLDEN gate in their own hearts will open to the spiritual splendour of what the Rishis have given us and what Sri Aurobindo has raised it to as the HOUR OF GOD. The books are published in English and Tamil under the pen names William Learner and Samarpanan.

50. Eternal Romance

God has created the world for eternal delight. It is sought through eternal Romance. Sri Aurobindo speaks of four major events in the history of earth, in which he includes Krishna's life in Brindavan. In His view it is the most glorious Hour in the life of earth, Romance, however intense or long, ends with marriage is the human experience. Spirituality all over the world has demanded celibacy. Spirituality is considered as the antithesis of Romance. The truth is that spirituality is the opposite of social, family life, not of Romance, which is a play of one soul with another soul. For those who seek domestic joy, a peaceful life of happiness, not Romance of life, I have written an article of about 100 points and put it on the MSS site on the internet.

If domestic joy can be called a Ph.D., Romance can be compared to that of a genius. It is the general belief that Romance cannot be retained permanently. But, it is a truth of human life that the human heart longs for Romance eternally. Is it an unattainable idealism or is

there a truth there? Man seeks a woman for her physical charms. Naturally it is transcient, as physicality has a short-lived truth. A pleasant vital holds endless charms at a distance, but close proximity undoes it in time. Minds do not meet as they always take opposite views. Marriages last because of social compulsion, particularly because of children. **Romance vanishes into thin air.** The physical eyes see the beauty, the vital sensations enjoy the pleasant temperament, both of which can be lost in time. **The Spirit sees no defects, as it has no defects of its own.** Any defect you see in the other is ONLY a reflection of your own defects of which you are unaware.

A young girl fell in love with a Buddha Bikshu who, of course, refused her advances. She took to prostitution and her health broke down. She was on the point of death. She again met the Bikshu. He took pity on her, laid her on his lap and stroked her hair in deep compassion. She said, "Had you done this earlier, I would not have come to this pass." Mother says there is no crime unpardonable. But to us there are crimes of which we cannot think or hear. **But, we forget the spiritual truth that without that crime in us in some small subconscious measure, it won't come to us.** Couples separated for long often rejoin and lead a happy life, occasionally a happier life than before. For the spiritually awakened eye, there is no defect either outside or inside. **Then life can be an eternal Romance.**

51. Effective Micro-organisms

The small is significant. We realise it only when things go wrong. **The value of things is seen only in their absence.** We have heard of micronutrients in agriculture. When the value of vitamins was first discovered, medical science found that permanent ailments could be cured by small doses of the missing vitamins. A Japanese scientist working in agriculture accidentally noticed the inherent value of MICRO-ORGANISMS. He found them effective, developed his theory, practised it and published books on it 10 or 15 years ago. He called it EM, effective micro-organism. His theory is interesting.

To him the life of the soil is infinitely greater than what we are using. We use, according to him, only 5% of the effectivity of the soil. He calls that part positive. Opposed to it, following the natural law of opposite dualities, there is 5% of negative effectivity in the soil. The rest of the 90% of the soil is neutral. Suppose, for some reason the positive 5% is increased to 10%, the

neutral 90% shows a tendency to turn positive and that makes the soil rich. **He says it is true even if the 5% is increased to 6%.** His practice was successful. He wrote books on it. They were welcomed by an eager market. Now he says farmers from several countries including India have started using it. He does not give the name of the place. His continued experiments and their increasing success led him to think that earth's pollution can thus be neutralised. He extended his experiments to human health and even there met with striking success.

Micronutrients are physical. Micro-organisms are of life – vital – and we can extend it to the MIND. Their representative in the mind is opinion. Change one opinion of yours, a miserable life becomes a happy life. There lies the value of HUMAN CHOICE. Business in the West is booming. One of the reasons is they have changed their opinion about the customer. Earlier the idea was that the customer should buy what is sold or produced. Now they find out what the customer wants and produce it. Sales have boomed.

Let us take a family where the atmosphere is quarrelsome. Let them teach themselves to look at the ISSUE from another man's point of view. Suddenly all quarrels will vanish. When the spirit is awake, it is capable of seeing the other man's point of view easily.

52. The Small Significant Thing

To us big things are important, small things are not. VIPs are attended, others are formally received. Karna's earrings were his protective cover. Hanuman giving the news of Sita to Rama said, "Saw, Sita," instead of "I found Sita." He is an incarnation of wisdom. This incident is oft quoted for his thoughtfulness. Engineers know the efficiency of a machine is vastly affected by the extent to which the parts are perfectly fitted. In the lives of great men, there are turning points of great initial success. Apparently all of them are small events. A rising star in public life falls down suddenly. What caused it is mostly a slip of the tongue. Someone wanted a coffee estate at 3000 feet high altitude. He loved coffee. Now he hoped to get the very best. The plants did give him the best, but it was not drinkable. He could not know why. At that altitude, water boils not at 100°F but at 97°F. That small difference matters.

Someone was using an exercise machine. As the floor was uneven, there was a small tilt, maybe of one millimetre. The machine broke down regularly once a month,

occasionally twice. It made him think about the uneven surface. He inserted a little cardboard underneath the machine. There was no more tilt. It did not break down for 2 months.

A man was known for perfection. Whatever he does, whatever article he produces, will be perfect. But his company remains small for a long time. He attends to all small things himself. Wherever his attention is not there, imperfection arises. So, he subconsciously believes that to maintain the perfection, he needs to be a small company. We see efficient companies lose their efficiency when they grow big. **We also see the public have a greater confidence in bigger companies as the quality will be reliable.** The secret of growing in size with the accompanying increase in efficiency lies in what is called ORGANISATION of details.

If you are a highly qualified efficient person stagnating at the bottom of your organisation, look into yourself. You may have the capacity for efficiency but may, out of frustration, not express it in your work. Take the greatest possible interest in the smallest possible details as a person newly promoted to be the head of the department does, no longer you will be there. **The outer life is a reflection of the inner life.** Capacity to pay attention to small details requires Himalayan Patience of a perfectionist. If the rewards are not immediate, one neglects the details. Paying attention to them brings reward.

53. The Snob & The Spirit

“I have worked hard and sincerely all my life but am still at the bottom.” “I am always successful, but the results go to another.” “Everyone cheats me, who am totally honest.” These are statements we often hear. There are many more such descriptions. Most of them are negative, as life in general is negative. Occasionally we hear a positive statement: “I have not done anything special wherever I have worked, but unseen help from all quarters used to come. Now, as a result, I am presiding over this organisation.” There are several such positive statements, but there are not many examples in our experience. **The truth is that the outer reflects the inner.** People consult their horoscope and console themselves. Those who look down upon their inferiors and those who are servile to their superiors are called snobs. The latter are called yes men, tale bearers, sycophants.

There was one such man attached to a well-to-do family. This man is honest, sincere, hard working, but

a personification of a snob. He will be in his elements when he is by the side of his rich friend. He resigned his government job, ran a small establishment for his superior, and earned a huge amount in one year. The rich friend was quick, anxious to remove this snob on some pretext, lest he should claim part of the profits later. He successfully pushed out the snob. The man was on the street. **Life rewards not for your work, but for what you are inside.** The snob went to another man who generously helped him unconditionally. The snob cheated his benefactor not of his capital, but his profits. He moved to a third man with the enormous profits earned in the second venture. Very soon both were utterly ruined to their own amazement.

It never occurred to the snob that the latent dishonesty in him was the cause of the betrayal by his first partner. His second partner used to tell him often, “After all, one day you will return to your old friend who betrayed you.” The snob used to be annoyed. All that took place in less than five or six years. Now that life has taught the snob its lesson, though he has not learnt it, he shamelessly returned to the man who grossly betrayed him. **Not only that, while in the presence of the rich man, the snob feels an exultation as of old.** The Spirit responds to a well-formed personality of self-respect.

54. Resistance to New Invention

Orthodoxy, conservation, tradition are the old ways of life summarised by the modern term 'Establishment'. **That the old strongly resists the new is the order of the day.** The old ways of life are so strong, that they can come back sooner or later, even if removed effectively. After the French Revolution, Napoleon made himself the Emperor. Later the royalty was restored. The same thing happened in England earlier. Even in democratic countries, the President of the nation behaves like a Monarch and people at all levels treat him as a King. The old is strongly entrenched, not easy to remove. As late as 1930, the US public opinion was not in favour of Darwin's theory of evolution being taught in the schools. There was a famous case at that time against a teacher who taught the principle of evolution.

Those who stick to the old methods won't permit a little change of any description. About 170 years ago

the Railways came into existence. Christians who believed in the sanctity of the Sunday Sabbath would not allow the Railways to operate on Sundays. For several decades that rule prevailed. In Scotland it was there for a longer time than in England. Every innovation – the steamship, the telegraph, the phone, the radio, etc. – met with the same type of resistance. Science called it superstition, but later science developed its own orthodoxy. As recently as 1960 when Eisenhower was President of USA, he disliked the use of phones, though his position compelled him to use them frequently. Industrialists introduce new technologies, but try to operate them in the old way, thereby getting the minimal benefit.

Mother calls Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy NEW Spirituality. Those who take to Mother happily follow the new spirituality in the ways of the old spirituality. Sooner or later, it stops working. But the old spirituality as well as the new spirituality are based on Truth. **There never was a compromise on that score.** There can be no two opinions about it. We are, in any situation, capable of distinguishing the truth from falsehood, whether it is technology or tradition. Let us not resist the truth in the name of anything, not even the sacred tradition. Tradition becomes sacred by its being true, not just by being tradition. It is an important distinction.

55. The Value of The Mother Tongue

The 1950s and 60s were the heydays of Tamil. In 1956 when a college celebrated its centenary, the Education Minister was the chief guest. The Principal spoke in English welcoming the Minister. The Minister stood up and uttered his first word in Tamil and it was greeted by a thunderous applause. Now-a-days we hear that Tamil is dying a slow death. Many children are in English medium schools where the mother tongue is neglected. Those students are not able to write Tamil. Some of them cannot even read Tamil. It is a sad situation but can only be a passing phenomenon. The age of great literature and expansive life do not go together. When life expands, prose, especially commercial prose, expands. For great literature to be born, the society must be stable for centuries. It happens only when the society stagnates.

The mother tongue is buried in the subconscious. The subconscious is saturated with the mother tongue. One hears it all the time. **Great literature usually emerges**

in poetry. It does so even in prose to a lesser extent. Such literature represents the fullness of the writer's personality. It does not issue from the surface mind. What is true of literature is true of music also. Children can speak many languages. It will be useful. But it all emanates from the surface mind, which is shallow. There is no evidence of great literature in prose or poetry written in a language which is not the writer's mother tongue. Sri Aurobindo has done it, as an exception, but we cannot compare ourselves to Him, though as a possibility it stands before us.

Teaching the mother tongue is a serious requirement for any school that wants the child to develop a balanced personality. The mother tongue gives a depth which no foreign language can give. At times of crisis the first word is in the mother tongue. A story illustrates it. Some one who was fluent in many languages took lodgings in a house. The young boys were anxious to know what his mother tongue was. One boy poured hot water on him while he was sleeping and the man shouted his abuse in Tamil, disclosing that he is Tamil. The mother tongue cannot die, except when language dies. Those who are devoted to language know that the beauty one's own tongue reveals is not perceptible to him in another language, in spite of his proficiency.

56. Guaranteed Employment

When there is a food shortage in the country, there are no two opinions. **Buy, import, grow – food must be made available to all.** There is no point in saying, “Well, we have to learn to live with the famine.” At least NOW no government can afford to say that and still hope to be in power. When food is available and the man has no money, that FOOD is meaningless. **Abolition of famine means abolition of unemployment.** So far, no country apart from USSR achieved full employment. Governments offer sympathies and plead helplessness. The bureaucrat can plead helplessness, as he is under the political leadership. **The leadership has no right to say it is helpless.** The International Commission for Peace and Food gave a call in 1994 for guaranteed employment.

A leadership qualifies to govern the nation only when it guarantees employment. Planning Commission’s *Vision 2020* report calls for guaranteed employment. It is great

that it did so. There are more than a dozen reports submitted to the Government about additional avenues for employment. In fact, it has been the experience of every development pocket, whether it is in Punjab or Coimbatore or in our tiny isolated rural project in Ramapuram, that labour is in short supply the moment development of any type is introduced. Even at the time of the 1929-32 economic crises when there was unemployment all over the world, historians now say USA was in a boom just prior to it. The crisis was generated by manipulation in the money market.

Bharathi shouted from the house top that no single man ought to go without food. I would go further, not merely asking for reduced unemployment or even guaranteeing employment as a government programme. There has to be a legal guarantee for every adult. **It is the fundamental duty of every civilised government to grant the fundamental right to employment, amending the constitution for that purpose.** It is not charity, a help, or a service. It is Man’s birthright to have employment. The right is his own because he is an individual. No one needs to grant it to him as an extension of courtesy. The society is wider and greater than the government. The society should ensure it to each individual by virtue of his being a citizen. To recognise the right to employment is to recognise the spiritual individual.

57. Eradication of Poverty

Speaking in Rio de Janeiro at an international conference on pollution, **Indira Gandhi said the conference should recognise that the greatest pollution comes from poverty.** It is neither wise nor rational for us in India to feel poverty is a problem, when half the world became prosperous 100 years ago. How different is Malayasia from us? When did she become free? Her income today is 30 times greater than ours. Poverty is eradicable and it must be eradicated. Resources are not wanting. The government can certainly do it. The population can achieve it. The individual is capable of it. Every individual who on his own effort emerges out of poverty is doing a patriotic service.

It is in the eighties that the Tamil population came to know of the Mother. Precisely it is from 1987. I have witnessed the Prosperity in the lives of those who have taken to Mother all these years. Anyone of them stands out from their relatives and friends who have not come

to Mother. The Government is more a hindrance in this than a help. In certain areas Government openly blocks progress. Some years ago the Telephone department would not restore a repaired phone for weeks. And it has a hidden cost too. Even officers of the department were not spared from that “same” procedure. A retired soldier in Maharashtra took initiative to build a check dam with the local help. The water table rose up. Pump sets appeared. The village prospered.

Lenin saw that the feudal Russia could be made prosperous by electricity in 1917. His slogan was Socialism = Electricity + Soviets. On this death bed while he was raving in delirium he was speaking of electricity. Every new innovation like electricity has banished poverty and ushered prosperity into life. Computer is a 1000 times more powerful now than electricity in 1917. Any manual work that takes weeks can be done by the computer in as many minutes. **Time saved is money saved.** To try to argue in 2004 that poverty is eradicable is like trying to prove that a graduate can write a letter. If the government is ineffective, if the society is indifferent, the individual can banish poverty from his own life. There are dozens of methods that we are witnessing. I wish to add a spiritual dimension to such an effort. That dimension quickens the process.

58. Political Leadership

After the world war, the world has not thrown up a leader of world stature. After the procession of intellectuals who wanted to shape the world according to their ideas – Marx, Voltaire, Rousseau, Russell, Sartre – in the last 25 years no single intellectual has attained their stature. Leadership in war and thought has passed away from the collective.

This is a phase of social evolution where the INDIVIDUAL emerges. There was a time when local chieftains gave place to a national monarch. It was he who decided on wider national issues as well as local issues. Later the king's power moved away from him to the local municipalities. Further it moved to the INDIVIDUAL in matters of religion, education etc.

Presently we have a leaderless world. It only means the individual is coming into his own. Over the past few decades the exam system in schools and colleges

has lost its original purity and standard. Malpractices crept in and are dominating the field in their own way. **Unconsciously the system, by growing corruption, has prepared itself for abolition.** Politics has taken a similar turn and we see more and more the initiative of thinking is moving to the public, which means the individual is becoming more responsible to the nation. It is high time that the citizen, at least mentally, must take greater responsibility for the future of the country. **We do see the phenomenon of public opinion being taken into greater account.**

It is a fact of life that systems held in veneration lose this aura and their use. They do not disappear all at once. They grow putrid till they destroy themselves. USA, which declared its Independence in 1776, signed the final treaty with Britain in 1814, after an interval of 38 years.

The saga of great leaders has gone and the era of the individual is being born. Mind cannot offer that leadership, as even intellectuals of that calibre are vanishing. It is for each individual to become a thinker of the nation's political future. It is better that that individual is the **Spiritual Individual who invokes the spirit and lives by that Spirit.**

59. The Age Old Wisdom of Man

‘United we stand, divided we fall’; ‘Truth alone is important’; ‘Without values the world cannot sustain itself for a moment’; ‘Honesty is the best policy’; and innumerable other such truths are obvious to all of us. We also know that it is an inescapable fact. But the world needs a Buddha or a Jesus to show the way of Love, a Harichandra to demonstrate the significance of Truth before the entire population could accept it as a way of life. Historians, British judges, educationists, travellers have testified to the utter truthfulness of the Indians a couple of hundred years ago. The process by which the leader arrives at such a simple thing as Truth as the all-important value of life is called Conceptualisation.

We know that when the customer is pleased, one’s business grows. But only in the last 50 years, the West has discovered its value. In India, still, it is not yet a dominant value. An intellectual analyses the obvious

facts how the pleased customer buys more and returns more often to the same shop. He discovers 10 or 20 parts of the fact and proves to himself that it is necessary to please the customer. Such an analysis will be valuable only for him. **He further extracts the essence of all those facts to arrive at the idea behind.** All those ideas together become a CONCEPT. The world is able to appreciate such a concept, but not willing to follow one man’s experience. The market accepts the idea of customer satisfaction and begins to grow.

The Force I speak of can change the finite life of Man into one of infinite higher consciousness. It is the experience of many who have come into contact with that Force. The question is whether it can be formulated into a concept and presented to the wide world so that humanity can be ushered into not only material abundance, but also inner spiritual well-being, thus solving the problems of both the East and the West. Before such a conceptualisation is presented to the world – **a simple formula of eternal well-being** – its numberless components are to be individually explained. When it is thus arrived at, it will be an obvious Truth, an inescapable fact, i.e. **Utter Truthfulness is the basis of material as well as Spiritual Prosperity.**

60. The Invisible Resources

The visible resources of coal, oil, etc. are shrinking. **The invisible resources are infinite.** Agriculture, industry, trade, education, commerce, politics, spirituality, etc. are the many sectors of the society. **One historical Truth is that if any ONE of these sectors are fully developed, it can make the nation rise to the top of the world.** Oil has made many a nation rich. It is trade that led Britain to a pre-eminent position for two centuries. Japan is devoted to its Emperor and has been known for its code of honour, which is expressed in the quality of products she makes. With over 100 million population, Japan, through that one value, could rise to become the second biggest economy in the world. The Netherlands is, perhaps, the 7th richest country in the world. Its trump is agriculture, especially floriculture.

These are not nations that were developed by their governments. Rather, they became eminent due to the

culture of their people – trade culture, culture of honour, etc. In India there is an awakening in the field of education. It is not yet visible in agriculture or trade or athletics.

While all these are very true, we have one greater field, the field of Spirituality. It is a field that embraces all the other fields. Export developed in one city of China equals the whole of Indian exports in volume. Singapore is an island of 24 square miles. She took advantage from being an essential port. Her per capita income is 50 times that of India. **Resources are infinite, though invisible.**

It need not take centuries for India to become Prosperous. It can be done in a much shorter period. Instead of submitting valuable reports to the government on which it is incapable of acting, the INDIVIDUAL can take up this theme in his own life and make it a reality. A reader who was contended suddenly found his brothers are making lakhs and lakhs of rupees. It made him think and write to me. **The experience of his brothers only shows the resources are endless. One who is determined to achieve the goal he sets for himself can do so.** The progress of the individual is the progress of the nation.

61. Eternal Romance

The heart longs for love. **Few of us are endowed with a heart that can go on with its love without receptivity from the other side.** The passionate youthful sensation man has come to call love is incapable of seeing anything other than the charm in the other person. When knowledgeable people point out the veritable defects of the other one, the longing refuses to see it. Or it imagines it has the capacity to overlook such defects in the other. In such a mental context, Romance is sustained, even grows in intensity. The longing is for an emotional fulfilment that implies purity in the other. **That is true Romance in spirit, rather in the idealism of Spirit, not in the domestic realities of daily life.**

Spiritually, he is true, his heart is true, his longing is true. He assumes perfection in the other from a distance, not knowing the other is a true spiritual reflection of what he is inside. Or, the other is the true spiritual

complement of what is there in his depths. Closeness discloses flashes of reality. In the intensity of his love that cannot wait for a moment for its consummation, he does not think. He is unable to think. He acts impulsively, ready to give up his all, whatever that all is.

Occasionally we come across people who after several years of marriage feel the original intensity of romantic attraction for the other. This is so because he who was unable to see the other side of the other person at a distance, now decides NOT to see the other side. Capacity to see the defects of the other as a reflection of one's own inner defects gives this strength NOT to see the defects of the other. Therefore **Romance survives.**

One who has the spiritual ability NOT to see the other's defects or sees them as a reflection of one's own inner status can eternally retain that view. In that case eternal Romance is born. In cases where that view exists eternally, it is seen as excellent good manners of gentlemanly GOODWILL. That yields domestic joy untinged by the grudging inner complaint or reservation. Should there be purity of inner sincerity and this view of inner–outer correspondence, the result is eternal felicity issuing from the inner spiritual knowledge that the other, the other alone, is one's true spiritual complement.

62. Spiritual Intelligence

In World War II Hitler had more than a thousand bombers, while Britain had only a few hundred. The British won the war not on the strength of their army or armaments, **but on the strength of their courage, will and determination, all of which are Spiritual expressions in the mind and nerves.** Intelligence information reached them about the production factories of Hitler. One piece of information was that Hitler produced all the ball bearings for various equipments in a concentrated industrial area. It struck a resourceful engineer that if that area could be destroyed, all Hitler's future military production for the war would come to a standstill. How to embark on an expedition with so little against so formidable an enemy? The prospects inspired one commander of the Air Force. The dangerous mission was undertaken with twenty bombers in daylight and the target was destroyed with a loss of only one plane. It was a crucial turning point in the course of the war.

We know the story of Ganapathi winning the race against his brother by going round his parents, while his brother travelled all the way around the world. **To know that the WORLD exists in his own parents is Spiritual Wisdom.** The prize Ganapathi got was a mango fruit. The Mother calls the mango *divine wisdom*. To know the enemy's one vulnerable spot that can totally destroy him is spiritual intelligence which gives protection. This is a negative asset. There is also a positive side to it that reveals one subtle spot of our life that can raise a man to Himalayan heights.

The biography of any successful man dwells on this aspect of his character. I offer no example, as it is common knowledge. How to know that subtle secret in oneself? Invocation of spirit makes the impossible possible. He who makes the invocation as a rule of life will be slowly but steadily ushered into the atmosphere of the Spirit. **As a university of intellectual climate releases one's mental intelligence, a spiritual atmosphere will enable us to acquire Spiritual intelligence.** It is spiritual intelligence that leads us to know and use the subtle spot of opportunity and luck in our life.

63. Perfect Form

Beauty in one generates love in another, as beauty expresses the form of perfection. Those who have described creation as lila saw it as an expression of ananda. Sri Aurobindo explains that God seeks to create the perfect FORM in the world so that the objectless ananda will express in objects. He further explains that when ananda descends into our mortal human world, it does so as a flash. It is fleeting. It has no permanence. **It is Matter that gives that flash of ananda permanence.** When Matter acquires perfection in FORM, it is capable of retaining the descending Ananda forever. In our language, heaven comes down on earth abolishing suffering, rather transforming suffering into Joy. Hence the importance of FORM.

In our religious traditions the founders of temples were realised Souls. The statues were carved by visionary

rishis in the guise of craftsmen. God would not come into the statue if it had a flaw, however small. There are a good many stories of metal statues not acquiring a perfect shape and how God came to their rescue. Pictures of Gods, if they are not perfect, will give rise to difficulties at home is our tradition. People used to bring pictures of Sri Aurobindo or busts to Mother. Mother used to disapprove of most of them. Mother did not readily approve of one such bust brought to her, but the importunities of the sculptor made Her accept it. In one case where She reluctantly accepted such a bust, she ordered it to be put in His Room, but She ordered a light put at a certain place so that light would fall on the bust and cast a shadow on the wall. **The imperfect looking bust cast a PERFECT shadow on the wall.**

Even though for our untrained eyes the bust does not look perfect, Mother was able to see the hidden subtle perfection of FORM the sculptor had seen. She brought it out by fixing a light. It is a common experience of devotees that the same picture of the Mother in one house looks bright and in another house looks dull or even dark. That is a reflection of the intensity of devotion of the devotee.

64. Work that Energises

Work needs energy. When a work is completed, we feel tired. **Mother says that at the end of a work, one should not feel tired if we have the right attitude to work.** As usual Mother is different here also. Concentration means dwelling on oneself. When a work comes to us, we do not identify ourselves with it. We see it as coming from outside. That way we concentrate on ourselves and the work becomes a burden. The more we concentrate on ourselves – our self-interest – the more frustrating the work is. Instead, when we concentrate on the work, work moves on smoothly, time flies and we do not feel tired at the end of it.

Successful people not only concentrate on the work, but identify themselves with the work. Churchill's secretaries used to fall asleep when he went on dictating after midnight. Nehru used to work late, sometimes going up to 3 a.m. **This is true not only of great men, but of all of us when we take a great attitude to work.** The man who is selfish takes selfish interest in the work. He too is energised. Iago in Othello was an evil man,

known for his motiveless malignity. He was scheming late at night and actively. Suddenly he saw it was dawn. Even evil people when they LOSE themselves in work find the work not tiring. Sometime it is energising too. It will be a great boon if one can feel NOT tired at the end of the day and a greater one if he is overflowing with energy after a day's work.

In the US elections, the Presidential candidates work almost all night. They have the energy derived from selfish or party interest. Once the campaign is over, especially unsuccessfully, they collapse. Normally in the work we do routinely, there is a great scope to improve the skill. Our skill levels generally are at 60 percent or 70 percent. Once you acquire a shade more of skill in one aspect of the work, you will see the work is not tiring. It has no end. To move from 70 percent of skill to 95 percent of efficiency is possible for all of us. At that level there will be job satisfaction and unflagging energy. To go beyond the 95 percent, each one percent of improvement will appear to require a Himalayan effort. **That effort itself is energising.** Suppose you reach 99 percent perfection and you are determined to reach 100 percent. You will discover that to cover that last one percent, you need as much energy as you spent in reaching 99 percent. **It is so because he who touches 100 percent perfection moves from the human effort to spiritual energy, which is endless.**

65. Value of Good Manners

Anything good is of value. Some people are uniformly charming and others are not. When a new chief takes over, his manners will be decided upon mostly in the first few days. Manners are of the surface and matter little when issues of importance arise. Still, real good manners have great value for one's career. Speaking about the stale customs of the society, someone said, "On birthdays everyone wishes 'Happy birthday' to you. It is insipid and stale, but on my own birthday I have found it valuable and inspiring, knowing full well it is just a custom. When someone does not so wish, it constitutes a grievance." India, particularly Indian commerce, will take strides if only it acquires good manners in trade. To fill an order in time, to acknowledge an order with thanks, not to send what is not ordered, to keep the customer informed of the despatch, to despatch the documents in time, and taking care that all the documents are provided are all SMALL matters, but foreign buyers know how deficient the Indian traders are in these matters.

Such deficiencies lead to the loss of customers. One learns manners at home, at school and college. An American diplomatic official, having met an economic expert of his country, arranged for a seminar on development Issues at an old university. The professors who were invited had not the courtesy to listen to the speaker, but started talking among themselves so loudly that the speaker could not be heard. Almost everyone in the audience took pleasure in telling the chief guest how India had been exploited by the British – a subject not related to the topic – and how a foreigner had no right to speak of the development of India, which was their country, and of which they knew more than anyone. The speaker was speechless, and the organiser was in despair. The seminar was over without the chief guest ever delivering his address. The diplomat confided to his guest speaker, "I will not put you to this embarrassment again. I am sorry. I shall not repeat this mistake of inviting a display of the manners of university professors."

Having invited an Aurovillian, a similar exhibition of manners was displayed by a lawyer member of a Lions club. The speaker was interrupted at each sentence, provoking him to say, "I can speak for 17 hours in spite of such interruptions." **Manners are valuable. Ordinary men with no special abilities have risen to world fame solely on the strength of their exceedingly good manners.**

66. True Values are Truly Valuable

Man may err in his observation and understanding, but life does not. Some people are successful everywhere; others are unsuccessful everywhere. There are some who are successful in work but not in family affairs. We see cases of the opposite description. Of such people we hear comments, “The man is responsible, sincere, and hard-working, and he meets with success in his office work uniformly, but in the affairs of his family he is a dismal failure. He is unable to find a good match for his children, though money is not a problem.” **People are baffled. He too shares their view.** Any of us know of some cases like this. It requires a perceptive eye, which subtle life knowledge gives, to reach the truth behind. For some reason known or unknown to him early in his married life, he would have accepted every appearance of responsibility and decided NOT to be truly responsible.

The richest landlord in that part of the district, who had been MLA, had not married his daughter with an M.A. until she was 35. Early in his married

life he was sour with his brother-in-law and had not allowed his wife to visit her people until that brother-in-law died. This incident developed a bitterness in him which extended to his daughter through his wife. Those who know the family circumstances may have had a glimpse of this truth.

A man who has never stolen is not called honest. **One is honest when he is incapable of stealing.** Honesty, loyalty, sincerity, responsibility, reliability, etc. cannot be easily pretended. But those with excellent good manners, especially inherited from the family, are often capable of irresponsibility, while giving the appearance to everyone in every aspect of responsibility.

Life never errs. Its results show what you really are inside. Life does not reward your appearance, but it truly reflects what you are inwardly. One can deceive others. Maybe one is clever enough to deceive oneself. But life cannot be deceived. What a man accomplishes in life is a true expression of his sincerity. But these irresponsible people will be certainly responsible in other areas. Selfish men, though irresponsible everywhere, will surely succeed whenever they do something for themselves. For a selfish man, whether it is himself, his work, his friends or his family, wherever he feels responsible, he will have a magnificent response from life. Mother too follows each person’s own *swabhava* in responding to him.

67. The Power of Chastity

Mother once saw a film about Anusuya in which she turned the Tirumurthis into children. She said it was lovely to watch the power of Anusuya invoking the Supreme Being – Brahman – to render the petulance of the gods null and void. In that sense, the Rishis are sometimes more powerful than Gods. **The Power of Anusuya was the power of Chastity.** Nalayini conquered Time, while Savitri restored the life of Satyavan, but Anusuya could overcome the Tirumurthis. The components of chastity are many. The two that stand out are *will* and its goodness – *good will*.

Man crosses over from the human domain to that of the divine domain when he attains perfection in any of his capacities. The historian Will Durant says that chastity had its origins in property. No man would like to give the property he earned to another man's child. To secure that property, the woman had the necessity of proving to the Man that it was his own child. According to Durant, that is the origin of chastity. He adds there is no word

for male chastity in any language. That is the social part of it. Psychologically, chastity is loyalty to the spouse, a reliable behaviour towards the other. An unreliable man or woman cannot go far in life. Spiritually, chastity is not only for the woman. It is also for the Man. A man who is not chaste cannot come near the divine. Actually it is not only that chastity is demanded of him, but he is expected to practice celibacy, *brahmacharya*. I would like to consider its significance to the householder, both men and women.

Man or woman in life loves to rise. Chastity in this restricted domestic sense is a powerful instrument for career development. The main strand of this is pure original GOODWILL to the spouse. Absence of ill-will is not what I call good will. Selfish good will is greed, and will not have that power. To generate GOOD WILL for another is not in human power, except for good souls born with it. It will not get generated easily. But it is not enough. It must be pure, pure of mercenary motives. Further, it must reach an intensity that is capable of crossing the human limit and passing into the divine arena. Should a couple develop such original, pure, intense Goodwill for each other, whatever they attempt will be easily accomplished. In families that rapidly rise, we see this type of goodwill present, after a fashion, during the period of that growth.

68. Standard Operating Procedures — SOPs

A good number of small scale units fail and never recover. The reasons are various. **One important reason is the owner gives the manager instructions where he should give training.** When you give instructions, it is all clear in your head. The instruction often has five parts, at other times fifteen parts. When you ask a man to do two things, he does the first and forgets the second. Or he does the second and overlooks the first. **Workers, managers are capable of doing one thing at a time while any work requires five or ten or even twenty things to be done for the result to issue.** Observe yourself from this point of view, you will often discover you are like them. The truth is two-fold. First, wherever we have experience, we never miss even one out of 12 or 15 items needed to complete the work. Second, in any new work, we always do one or at best two and forget the rest.

Out of long experience, one learns to do all the parts of a work without fail. Training removes this deficiency. SOPs were developed in the West a hundred or more years ago to avoid this difficulty. In our country, SOPs are unknown. A man came out of the swimming pool in a Marriot Hotel and asked the pool lifeguard about a film in the nearest theatre. The guard readily answered. The customer was glad. The customer took it to be a lucky coincidence that the guard knew of the film. What he didn't know was that in the SOPs for the lifeguard, one point was he should know all the films in the local theatres.

Take any simple work and write an SOP. *You will be surprised that any single work breaks down to 15 or even 20 parts.* To be able to write down the parts of any work is an essential knowledge on which a flawless training can be given. In a company, there will be 150 to 200 functions. Should an SOP be written for each of them, the rise in efficiency will be more than 100%. A closed unit can easily reopen on that score. Of course, the SOPs need to be implemented. **No company that makes its workers and officers write SOPs and trains them on them can ever fail.** A below average family can become an above average family if it is willing to accept this discipline forever.

69. The Importance of Memory

Those who have poor memory are surprised at those who have good memory. An employer went to Madras and wanted to call an officer from another company who had visited him 15 days earlier. He called his office in his home town and asked his secretary there to look for the officer's card and tell him the phone number. **She told him the phone number from memory.** The proprietor was surprised because the girl had taken the card and put it into the drawer when the visitor called. How could she do this feat?

"Give me thirty minutes and I shall make you an expert in memory," says an article by an expert.* This expert met an American whose memory was poor. The expert showed him a list of more than fifteen names of disparate articles and asked the American to memorise the list in order. The American took some time to memorise the list. He tried to reproduce it. He could only remember half the list and could not repeat them in the correct

order. The expert asked him whether he could recall the list in reverse order. Only one item came to his mind. "What is the name next to pen? What name precedes clock?" There was no answer. **Then the expert took 30 minutes to explain his method of visual images and asked the American to practice the method himself.** At the end, the American could recall the list backwards and forwards exactly without error.

The expert has several methods. By one of those methods, he made his seven-year-old daughter memorise a 200 digit number in one hour. By another method, he could memorise a whole law book. **Memory is no problem for many. For those who have poor memory, it can make them a failure in life.** The method is simple. There are hundreds of such methods the world knows. These were developed, he says, by the Indian sages, Egyptian priests, Greek thinkers, etc. The superhuman memory of Vedic scholars is based on one of these methods. *Man's endowments are enormous, the help he can get is endless. Only that he does not know his own potential.* To know one's own potential is self-awareness. Spirit invoked increases one's self-awareness and lays bare all the potentials in him.

* (The article on Memory Power can be found on the website: www.motherservice.org/spirituality_in_life.htm)

70. The Spiritual Atmosphere

“Aspiration awakes in me, achieve in me all that I flame for,” wrote a sadhak 70 years ago. In that piece of writing he says, “You have given me more than what I ignorantly asked for.” **I have always been saying the Divine never gives what we ask for, but always gives more.** This excess is the stamp of the Force that I talk of. Not only that, this Force gives what we do not ask for. It goes further. It gives what we do not know exists as a possibility in our lives or in life. Someone was employed well and came into this atmosphere, took to it seriously, and saw that surprises in life are ever present. She had her share of problems when she faltered, but recovered swiftly. Then she made up her mind NOT to move out of the atmosphere whose novelty and creativity was a standing wonder to her.

Her office offered voluntary retirement scheme with its known features of attraction. **There was one more**

dimension. All those above fifty were entitled to avail of it and would be paid the full salary they would earn during the rest of their service. When you are in the atmosphere of the Spirit, things happen like this. To us, it is a surprise, a convenience, an extra benefit and we accept it as such with pleasure and gratitude. To the Force, it is the only way it knows how to act in our lives. It can never give you only what you ask for or know to be usual. We understand it as the Power of this Force. If you are philosophically minded, you would know it is the characteristic of Infinity.

The Gita says, *“It moves NOT, but It is always ahead of you.”* The Upanishads say, *“When the complete is taken out of the complete, what remains is the complete.”* That is how Infinity is defined. In mathematics, this is basic knowledge. Sri Aurobindo says Infinity is there not only as a concept of mathematics, but it is there in Mind, Life and Matter. To understand that when the Voluntary Retirement Scheme offers all the salary one would earn during the remainder of service **it is an expression of the practical concept of Infinity** is to understand this Force in life. If one is determined to avail of this Force and USE it only positively, every aspect of life outside and inside will take on this aspect of getting more than what one has ignorantly asked for.

71. Inflow of Money

In the 58 stories of Sherlock Holmes, *not* one client pays him AFTER his work is successfully completed. Holmes asks for fees from the king who sought his services and two other people. It is not in human nature to voluntarily pay for services rendered. **European culture prevents people from getting paid for services, especially of a higher type.** It is an American principle to pay for any service rendered. In India, culture is based on spirituality. An age-old custom compels us to offer free service. Payment for services rendered offends the cultural sensitivities of the common man. It has all become theory now in practice. But we often hear people saying, especially when they offer a service, that they are not working for money.

Many people pay lip service to a forgotten ideal. *Some truly live the ideal in Spirit.* Those who are sincere do

not often give expression to their belief. A talented young man took to national service outside politics, as his father prepared him all his life for idealistic, patriotic service. Wherever he went, people in great number listened to him for hours. He was dedicated to creating leadership, preparing young men for an entrepreneurial life. In pursuing this ideal, he was to work with big companies promoting their products. **He found himself earning enormous amounts of money in this process.** His sensitivity was offended. He gave up projects that earned a lot.

Greater projects came his way. He was determined not to receive money in return of service. *He discovered far greater amounts of money flowed in.* There was another silent person who, like this gentleman, believed in service. He worked on his own and made very good money. When his talents attracted greater income, he preferred to offer them free. There are at best ten or twenty ways of abolishing Indian poverty. But the truth in the above two cases speaks of the truth of MONEY for a spiritual person. **One who venerates the age-old wisdom and spiritual culture of offering services FREE sincerely will be flooded with money.** That may be the spiritual organisation to generate infinite cash for which one has no real use.

72. Higher Consciousness

The successful animal has a lower consciousness than an ordinary man, as his is human consciousness. Divine consciousness is higher consciousness. Human consciousness is lower consciousness as against the divine consciousness. Evil consciousness is lower than good consciousness. Variations in human existence are without an end. When people take to this Force, they suddenly discover that prayers so far unanswered are answered. The usual experience is all but one out of 10 or 25 prayers will be answered. That one will have a block in one's temperament or character. **A few discover that ALL their prayers are answered**, as they try to understand their problems from Mother's point of view.

Around them a group of people gathers, as anyone coming to them with a problem finds it solved. They become popular, happy, expansive and their lives blossom.

Such people can either be selfish or selfless. Even selfless people, beyond a certain limit, tend to become selfish. The success continues but will turn into selfish success. **Their selfishness or selflessness can also be conscious or unconscious.** Once they lose their selfless attitude and cross into selfishness, their highly successful life becomes one of low consciousness as it is centred in selfishness. They cannot discover it, as they are unconscious. In that case, the problems they solve in others' lives will slowly begin to appear in their own lives and will defy solution.

Such a low consciousness will enter into us through one of the selfish values. Some of them are secrecy, inability to give in, pride in being a devotee of Mother, pride in accomplishment. The process of human development is subtle, imperceptible and complex. No amount of prayer or offering or service will solve problems thus generated. **Sincerity will remove the problem instantaneously.** To know one is selfish and acknowledge it fully requires a sincerity that is rare. A keen inner observation will show at what point we have moved away from Mother to our own Ego.

73. Inner Richness that is Spiritual Fullness

Those who have worked at the Matrimandir in Auroville know that when they go out for more than two or three days, an inner longing develops to return to it. Having experienced the touch of the Spirit in their own inner Spirit, they cannot stay away longer than a few days from their centre of inspiration. Asians, Indians who set foot in a Western country, especially America, feel they have gone to a paradise on earth. Someone toured the world preaching his religion. He was impressed beyond expression by the prosperity of the West. He said, "The prosperity of the West is phenomenal, but in America there is a great vibration which I am unable to explain." The USA in many ways is trying several experiments in social evolution. So she is in the evolutionary vanguard. The secret of the great vibration the missionary felt lies there.

An American lady who had stayed here for years in Pondicherry in Mother's atmosphere had to return to

the USA, as her visa had expired. *She had to remain in the USA for several years before she could return. While here she had not conducted herself as a devotee strictly following Mother's rules. She lived in her own personality, but in Mother's atmosphere. Out there in USA, life is materially rich, abundant, with clean and quiet cities, but she longed to return to the old atmosphere in India. When she returned she heaved a sigh of relief, but resumed her own old personality, taking no effort to follow Mother in any particular way, except to read all of Mother's writings with interest in the original French. After five years there was a call from her family to visit them.*

She undertook the trip for three weeks. Though her personality had remained the same in the last five years, she was working for Mother, i.e. she moved from Her atmosphere to Her work, but the personality remained the same. There was no effort to change her own personality as Mother desires. To her great surprise, she found her native USA even richer than before, the shops were bigger, towns quiet and clean, money flowed more freely than ever. **But this time, the inner emptiness felt in that earthly material Paradise was so choking that after a week, she almost decided to return.** She did stay for the three weeks, but every passing day increased the yearning for return.

74. There is No Evil

All the philosophies of the world have failed to explain the existence of Evil. The Vedas and Upanishads too failed there. The Upanishads said *All is Brahman*. Having said so, it amounts to saying that Evil too is Brahman. **Sri Aurobindo devotes a full chapter of about forty pages to explain the origin of Error, Falsehood and Evil.** Brahman has not created in the world anything but Ananda. But evil, cruelty, tyranny, etc. are realities of life. He says evil is real to the ego and has no inherent reality in itself. For one who has come out of ego, there is no evil to be seen. Wars are horrendous for us where millions of lives are destroyed. Once you come out of ego, you see war is Nature's method to hasten the process of evolution and the souls of those who die, die in bliss.

We know of the positive and negative. We accept the positive and denounce the negative. *Sri Aurobindo says that there is nothing negative. Positive and negative*

are two parts of a single whole. Experience of the negative gives the keener and fuller intensity to the positive to enjoy the whole. Experienced people in business say unless you have lost money, your experience is incomplete. To us, the convict is a person to be avoided, because he is negative. During the 19th century, England and other countries sent their convicts to Australia. Today Australia is one of the richest nations in the world. It is the convicts who built up a prosperous civilisation. Singapore is rich. Originally, it was Indian convicts who built up Singapore. If convicts are evil, we must accept that good comes out of evil.

If you are past forty, try to recollect in your childhood children unanimously branded as evil. **Today you will find most of them, maybe all of them, better placed in life than the children described as Good.** Indian wisdom enjoins on us NOT to inquire into the origin of a Rishi or a river. Valmiki was a dacoit. Robert Clive was an evil youth. He founded the world's largest empire. Sri Aurobindo's yoga is a yoga of transformation. He calls Evil the greater good. He wants man to surrender to God so that God can transform the 'Evil' of the world into *Good*. **He who can see the Truth here and live up to it can rise to the great heights of life, as he will recognise the deepest evil in himself.**

75. Wisdom After the Event

When a puzzling problem harasses one, everyone tries to help him with an idea, but in vain. At last when somehow the problem is solved, its solution looks simple and obvious. **To know what is obvious after the event beforehand is wisdom.** It is said anyone can suggest meaningful alterations to a house after it is built, as it requires no intelligence. To do so before the construction, one needs forethought.

The success of the Congress has taken the nation by surprise, but before the elections that was not evident. Maybe before the elections it was true that Congress faced a debacle. A week before the elections, Congress declared that employment should be guaranteed. They went one step further to announce that after the elections, at the very first Cabinet meeting, a decision will be taken to guarantee employment. I do not know how the Congress arrived at this decision. A senior economics advisor to

the Congress proposed that a commission should be set up to eradicate poverty and unemployment. He too did not expect Congress to win the elections. **The movement of social evolution all over the world is towards full employment.** Congress leadership has recognised this trend and thrown their lot along that line. So, the evolutionary energy has changed a negative election atmosphere into one of positive atmosphere. Anyone can be wise after the event. But very few can be so before the event. If you want to acquire that wisdom, recognise the direction in which the nation and society are moving and take your decisions accordingly.

The Future is for freedom, not superstition; it is for the emancipation of all the downtrodden, not for the oppressor; is for modern technology, not for hundred year old technology; it is for youth and children, not for the old; it is for knowledge, not for degrees; it is for honesty and integrity, not for corruption and nepotism; it is for self-giving, not for selfishness; it is for democracy, not for dictatorship; it is for the pioneering individual, not for the superstitious tradition; it is for MAN, not for MONEY; it is for thinking, not for memorisation; it is for an original ideal, not for the powerful organisation built around it. The Future is for Spirituality, not for religion and religious rituals.

76. How the Mind Understands

Understanding means to know more about something or to know what you have not known. Mind understands by reading; the body understands by doing; a child understands by growing. **It is by experience one understands. I am talking here about the strange experience of Mind when it seeks for its greater understanding by courting the opposite.** That leads to a greater understanding. We can call it the understanding of the mental emotion. For this purpose, Mind consciously seeks the very opposite. To the world, such a man appears stupid, but neither the world nor he knows that he is after a wider understanding of the Mind. When he thus learns, he does not waver from that course. Then we say he has acquired a value.

In the late fifties, there was a man with small means in a small job, with a narrow understanding. He wanted to get rich quickly. He saw around him in a few rare cases people suddenly acquiring great wealth. Though

it was in a very few cases, their accomplishment caught his imagination. *They were all hard working people, men of talents, with forethought and presence of mind.* This man was lazy, had no talents, was short-sighted and was after short term profits by hook or crook. He used to consult his friend. The friend always gave him valuable advice. The man gave serious consideration to 52 possible industries. On all of them, the friend's advice was that of an experienced man. The entrepreneur was always amazed by how much his friend knew about so many things.

The friend always concluded, saying, "Getting rich quickly is no good. It is not a good policy. You must have a product. People must value it, and then the market expands, not otherwise." The entrepreneur never liked this part of the advice. He started several ventures, failed and committed suicide. What he told his children I do not know. His children developed a useful novel product, but found it difficult to market. At last they succeeded. All his children are greater successes than the father was. One excelled by building his business to several hundred crores. When this man wanted to learn the truth of the market, he straight away reached the opposite of it and learnt the hard way. **That is mind's way of learning. This principle is at the basis of marriage.**

77. “Why Do I Suffer?”

Tradition is very powerful. *Traditional beliefs that have no truth in them are still more powerful.* We appreciate goodness; we frown upon bad people. Therefore, the creative MIND assumes – not out of its own experience, but out of its own expectations – that good people should prosper and bad people should suffer. Sometimes we see events in our lives that become a punishment and we understand that it is due to a recent wrong we have committed. The sense of mental justice is satisfied. At other times, a sudden punishment descends on us. We are baffled. Then we exclaim, “What wrong have I done? Whom did I hurt? Then why this catastrophe in my life?” This has nothing to do with the life realities.

Out of negligence, you get an electric shock. It is not a punishment God gives you for your sins. It is simply ignorance. You give a big sum to a pleasant cheat and

lose the money. Again you are ignorant. You earn far more than your relatives and foolishly disclose all your assets, thinking you are being honest. Your relatives join together and compel you to part with the best part of your cash assets. Suddenly they turn around and declare that none of them is going to return it. *Also, they humiliate you saying what a simpleton you are.* He who earns money must also have the capacity to protect it. Otherwise, he becomes weak. *The strength of a weak man attracts unusual suffering from other strong people* is a simple truth of life.

Life punishes ignorance and incapacity. That is how life educates. You learn that way. He who cannot swim enters the water and drowns. The water does not warn you. It is dumb. If one man dies, the other men learn. For life, all men are one. We certainly do not commit such simple follies. But life is in layers of increasing strength. For anyone there is the next higher level. There he is bound to err, or suffer serious consequences. One who starts invoking the Spirit, however low or high he is, will find the Spirit acts through life and prevents such losses. He is guided to a good lawyer, capable doctor; he is given an excellent wife, endearing children. *They are the ways of Grace. The action of the Spirit is Grace. It is for us to keep the contact constant.*

78. Flawless Scholarship

Whatever is flawless is adorable. At that point, it becomes Perfect. Indian scholarship enjoyed that eminence. Western scholarship always aimed at it. While scholarship in the West is out of physical labour, Indian scholarship was, in those heydays of the Spirit, based on Intuition that is spiritual. The thinker excels the scholar. The poet exceeds the thinking philosopher. In English, the word poet stands for one who writes inspired poetry. In Sanskrit, the poet is denoted by the word *kavi*, which means one who sees, a seer. Only the yogi goes beyond the *kavi*. Even by 1910, Shakespearean scholars had produced about 11,000 volumes. The amount of research done in the field of literary criticism is phenomenal. Sometimes we hear a certain incident or phrase described as the flaw of Shakespeare. **Mostly when that point is seen against the whole personality of the poet, it would be the point where the poet excels himself, where his genius emerges in perfect form.** A well-known creative poet wrote to Sri Aurobindo about amending a line in the first Canto of his epic poem, *Savitri*. Sri Aurobindo

replied that He thought it was His best line. Knowledge of Sri Aurobindo enables a great scholar to scale new heights and become a thinker.

Objectivity in research is very difficult. We see now old authenticated facts thrown out by new facts. Flawlessness in any work, whether it is a music performance or writing a letter, is no easy job. A South Indian company, very small in size representing one third of one percent of the national market, had the temerity to apply to a British multinational for its franchise. The tiny company was speechless when their application was granted. After a year when the British and Indian partners became close, it came to light that the British company had granted the franchise because they were impressed by the company's first letter.

The Indian company, in order to write that simple short letter, had entrusted the job to a perfectionist. **Though it was a simple work (we can even call it a silly job), perfection in all its aspects made the multinational grant the franchise.** Such perfectionists are found in many offices, in ordinary homes and in ordinary vocations. *They are the spiritual resources of India, as their perfection comes from our spiritual foundation.* If such housewives, clerks, and simple artisans invoke the Spirit, they will become national celebrities. The one condition is utter Truthfulness. India is great, as she has a vast reservoir of Spiritual wealth buried in her life.

79. Maximum Becomes the Minimum

In the field of spirituality, the phrase ‘the Infinite emerges out of the finite’ occurs constantly. In human life, such a phenomenon is understood as a miracle. Sri Aurobindo says miracles can become commonplace. This is achieved in a variety of ways. **One such method is to reach perfection and make it flawless at all points of work.** Such a method will apply to a losing concern, a booming company, a household, an office, in agriculture or any work anywhere. *This is a well-known method widely practised, but rarely elevated to perfection, especially flawless perfection. If it is achieved, it may not be achieved at all points.* Raised to that level, what is the maximum possible for any person becomes the minimum for us.

Whether it is writing a letter or commissioning a machine into action or cooking a meal and serving it, it can be broken down into 10, 20 or 50 smaller functions. They are called Standard Operating Procedures, SOPs. When the list is shown to another, he must not be able to add even one missing step. *When **no** small step has been overlooked or taken for granted, the SOP for that*

item of work becomes perfect. If someone who is new can take that SOP and from that can run the machine or do the work well, the SOP becomes FLAWLESS. Flawless perfection has the capacity to transform our consciousness from the human to the Spiritual. At home or in the office or in a company, there are a hundred or two hundred such functions — letter writing, Xeroxing, despatching, answering phone calls, running a machine, etc. etc. **SOP writing must cover all the functions without missing even one, however small it is.**

For doing this much, a losing concern will become an earning proposition. A company that earns good profits will double them. Family income will rise 100%. Add the Spirit to it, which means in doing each single act or before writing each single item of the SOP, call the Spirit – think of the Spirit or the Mother. *By qualifying on all these three scores: 1. writing down the SOP to flawless perfection; 2. writing an SOP for every function without missing any, and 3. thinking of Mother at each point, a locally successful company will spread all over the state or India.* That is the Infinite emerging out of the finite, the Maximum becoming our minimum. To accomplish this, one must *exhaust* all his energies. Any obscure family that comes forward to do so in their family life will soon be raised to national status. **The Infinite lies buried in the Finite. This method brings it out.** Of course, one cannot think the writing by itself will yield the result, though it is partly true. One must implement what is written down.

80. The Westernised Mind

In Western life when a Man is confronted with a life or death situation, he tries his best to overcome it by his own ingenuity. When he fails, he gives up. He rarely, if ever, turns to God for relief through a prayer. It is that Mind and its individuality that has achieved what we know as the splendours of human accomplishment. Most Indians settled in the West do not want their children to grow up there. If possible, they send them to India for education, so that they might miss the evils of Western society during their formative years. **We Indians are rightly enamoured of the Western life, seeing its vast accomplishment.**

There was an army chief who constantly talked to his family about his high school teacher in Madras whose influence on his life was incalculable. But he would not meet that teacher during his visits to Madras. Once when he was in Madras his wife insisted on the phone that he should visit his teacher. The Army officer had his teacher brought to the airport so that he might meet him. **Loyalty is there, but its expressions vary.**

There was a Central Minister of State who was devoted to his college professor. When he visited Tamil Nadu, he went to the house of his erstwhile professor to see him. His devotion had the full favour of our tradition. This professor retired, but wished for reemployment. The Minister–student was dedicated to the professor and willing to secure a job for him. In the whole of India at that time there were two centres – one at Trichy and another in North India – that could employ him. But the professor was unwilling to move away from his family. All the efforts of the Minister were in vain. This professor was a devotee of the Mother, but when issues arose, his faith would shift to other things. A devotee suggested to him to do some service by collecting ten subscriptions for one of Mother’s journals. The professor frowned and declined, saying, “It is wrong for you to ask me to collect subscriptions.”

The devotee renewed his appeal for service when the posts were filled up in the two centres. The professor reluctantly accepted to try. No subscription ever came out of his efforts, but one day a letter came to the devotee from the professor, saying, “A new centre has been created in my town and I am awarded the post. *This job comes to me not in recognition of my services or by the devotion of my student in the Ministry. It is purely Mother’s Grace.*” Man is an adept in turning away from Grace. If we look upon the past events of our lives, we will see NOW how many times we have actively declined Grace. After the Force has descended, I am fond of repeating, it is God who is after MAN.

81. The Neo-Rich

The *neo-rich*, the *filthy rich* are current phrases in India. They are usually obese people who squander money, waste scarce resources, corrupt the officials and are described as a curse on the society. **This is more than true.** Many of them are erstwhile shop assistants, orphans, or street children. **Tons of money has come into their possession, often by efficient, resourceful hard work, and often by dubious methods.** Their families constantly go on tour or pilgrimage to all kinds of places in India and abroad. When they return home after a long tour, they find in their houses that lights are on and fans are running. They are a source of unpardonable waste. At least in a few such families all kinds of vices have come to stay. They do not honour traffic rules. They know the traffic police will victimise the sufferer and they can go scot free. With the government, they can accomplish anything by the strength of their money, bypassing rules and procedures. Files from offices in North India come to their houses for them to scrutinise. No department,

including the venerable judiciary, is immune to their influence.

People from earlier generations of austerity and high idealistic values cannot afford to countenance these practices. **If this is the seamy side of modern life, we do not now see hungry faces clad in rags.** Indira commented that she saw people better fed and better dressed, but the statistics did not reflect those developments. As these improvements, at least most of them, come through government expenditure, the change is not reflected in the individual income. Education, medical facilities, road transport and such other things are done by the government.

Those who were young at the advent of Freedom and saw the hungry, famished faces in rags and rickety frames are happy to see that the rags have vanished and stomachs are full. Any new positive development will have its own negative symptoms, very ugly ones. They are eyesores. When we know all countries have passed through these stages and this is only a temporary phenomenon, it is still a poor consolation. *This may be the general truth. For those who invoke the Spirit, especially middle class people, life opens avenues through which all these ugly expressions can be totally escaped.* The Spirit's protection is total to those who are utterly truthful.

82. Filial Piety and the Rigour of Life

Our ideas of affection sometimes touch the Ideal. A young woman who was deserted by her womanising husband drifted to political patronage which assigned her to their woman's wing. That asylum saw her through her old age. In her old age, after a long interval, the truant husband sought refuge in her. She was delighted that at least at that late hour she had the opportunity to serve her abandoned husband. Shortly he died of incurable sickness, a result of his dissipation. His funeral procession was attended by hundreds of women whom the wife faithfully served. There was a time when this was adored as feminine loyalty. Often with parents and children, there arises a situation when one is undeserving and the other is idealistic.

Filial piety is psychological, confined to the human domain. Life is wider than psychology, spread all over the universe. The rules of life are rigorous and inexorable. Beyond a certain limit, life does not honour human

sentiments, however laudable they are, especially when one runs counter to the other. The virtues of joint family are great but when some people start using them to exploit others, the virtues turn into vices. **Virtue or vice, the child's emotional heart longs to serve the parents, however undeserving they are.** The mother cannot see any blemish in her children, nor is the father capable of denying the most unpardonable request of his daughter or son. Life puts an end to such 'generosities' and keeps one on the track of progress. We all know several examples of this.

There is a truth of life beyond these sentiments. Spirit goes beyond and opens ways for the parent or the child to rise to his own expectations. Shankara's returning to his mother's funeral is an example of high souls not applicable to ordinary mortals like us. When the Force of Supermind is invoked, it opens up legitimate spiritual satisfaction to both – parent and children – as it has *the power to go beyond the rules of life which we call karma*. Should one of them – preferably both – accept the higher Force, the limitations of society, individual psychology and even life's rigours can be bypassed. It did happen in the lives of more than one devotee. Space does not permit the details of examples, but **the Spirit will permit the longing of the human heart to serve undeserving offspring or elders.**

83. Moment of Truth

In the eighties, the phrase *Moment of Truth* became popular when someone turned around a losing airline company in North Europe. When he wrote a book on it, he gave the book this title. Truth is powerful. In anyone's life, a Moment arrives when his own innate goodness surfaces and offers all the circumstances he needs to flower into a full-blown Personality. Generally, in the professions, particularly in the legal profession, there is a belief that the profession does not let anyone down fully. In any lawyer's career, there comes a period of some consecutive years which gives him all the income he can earn. That is the Truth of the profession which brings the right Moment to every member some time or other.

The International Commission on Peace and Food created a project entitled **Prosperity 2000**, a scheme to generate 100 million jobs in India within ten years. Its

strategy was simple. **It was to raise the level of consumption of food, cloth, sugar, etc. to the average level of the world.** It was submitted to the government when P.V. Narasimha Rao was the Prime Minister and Manmohan Singh was the Finance Minister. The project was accepted by the government and a machinery was created. Rs. 100 crores was allotted to implement the scheme in the budget of that year. That was twelve years ago. It could go no further. *Now that Congress is in power again and the then Finance Minister has become the Prime Minister, can we say such a Moment has arrived, especially when Congress has espoused Guaranteed Employment?*

Not only in the legal profession, but in anyone's life such a moment is brought to them by life at least once. Those who invoke the Spirit have witnessed that such moments often occur in their lives. When the lucky circumstances overwhelm them, they exclaim, "Well, in all these cases, there must be an element of luck." There are others on whose behalf, for a variety of reasons, others invoke the Spirit. They are pleasantly surprised all the time, not knowing what is happening. **The Truth is powerful, and a Moment of Truth is all-powerful.** To adhere to Truth, one needs to be a hero, who converts all his life into an adventure of consciousness.

84. The Sparkling Crystal of Individuality

The Vedantic Rishis discovered the Self and tried to understand the world through Self. For us, the ego is the self. For the Rishi, the inner Divine, the Brahman is the Self. **Tapas or yoga shifts Man from the egoistic self or desire soul of the surface mind to the inner Self, the witness Purusha.** The Rishi can know the world through his Self because the entire world is in the Self. The yogi reaches the Self by concentrating on his mind and detaching the Spirit from the mind. The pure mind leads to the pure Spirit. Men who develop character, develop it in life through values. One is to come from above into life and the other is to rise from life to Spirit above.

A novel with an architect as a hero was published in 1947 in Britain, written by a Russian immigrant who became an American citizen. It became a success and ran through twenty impressions and still remains a

worldwide best seller. Howard Roark is an architect who is devoted to architecture. It is his entire life. He sees a building as a whole gaining an integrity of its own. The society hounds him out of existence. **The society does not exist for Roark.** He passes through hell, works in a quarry as a day labourer but awaits for Life to Respond. The long awaited Response comes late in life, but when it comes, it comes in all its splendour and richness.

How the fraternity of architects treats him, how the unthinking social mass disowns him, how much he suffers are all in character – what every pioneer or sage has undergone without exception. **What is exceptional is Roark does not react, does not even respond to defend himself.** He hardly notices what is being done to him. It was not as if reaction arose in him and he suppressed it. No reaction issues from inside. Even Yudhishtira says that though he does not express his anger, anger does issue from inside. Roark does not react, does not seek any reward for his work and is utterly truthful. *All of these are spiritual qualities.* The Rishis are known for their curses. How many Rishis can rise to the level of Roark's equality is a question. He who does not react is one who rises above the Mind, as reaction is a characteristic of Mind. **Individuality is precious. Non-reacting equality is its hallmark.**

85. Pettiness of the Small Mind

The average citizen who has earned the title of a 'good man' universally is one who attends to his affairs assiduously. **He is not one who interferes in others' affairs. He does not interest himself in anyone other than himself.** Normally such people will be selfish and not endowed with any particular capacity. There are others who take a lively interest in others and their affairs. They will be popular. Such people know the sensitivity of others and do not cross that border. Their personalities lie on the surface, their manners are excellent, their judgement of others superlative. They become the adored symbol of an admiring local community.

Man often comes to the brink of affairs, financial, psychological or social. The issues involved will always be life or death propositions. **These are occasions when no one can easily help another because they are weighty occasions involving heavy commitment.** At such moments, no 'good man' or popular idol will come to the help of the victim. As it is a dangerous situation, anyone trying to help will be risking his wealth or reputation. Worldly wisdom knows that these are occasions

to be avoided. It also knows by experience that the beneficiary on such occasions will offend the benefactor without fail. Shiva gave a boon to Basmasura and was a victim to his 'generosity'. Great souls help the sufferer at those moments and pay the penalty of betrayal without fail. **Greater souls help and often escape unscathed, but not unhurt.** Small minds are incapable of receiving help and refraining from offending the benefactor.

In all great literature, this trait of human nature is recognised. In the sixties, a 'resourceful' court amin had acquired some substantial property and retired. He had a certain property for sale, but he was unable to sell it for ten years, as he expected 2½ times the market price. He was pressing a neighbour, a devotee, to help. The devotee arranged for the sale to an auditor in Madras. After the auditor had come to the devotee's home town, the seller disclosed that his son had to sign, as it was in his son's name. The son asked for 4½ times higher price, higher than the 2½ times, and wished to consult his brother-in-law who was at a theatre. The brother-in-law refused to come. The deal fell through. The brother-in-law was a hardware merchant. Crisis developed at the seller's end and the hardware merchant sent for the devotee! On the refusal of the devotee to go to the merchant, the merchant cycled to the devotee's old house and was disappointed. It was a task for him to find the devotee's new house. Sheepishly he came searching for the devotee to ask for help. **The petulance of a petty mind is incapable of receiving a generous help offered.**

86. Spiritual Dimension of Food

Every act has its spiritual dimension. Each act has a physical aspect, vital expression, mental component and spiritual dimension. What we cook at home is food. It is physical. What is given to us at the temple is *prasad*. Physically it is the same food, but as it is offered to the Divine, it is called *prasad*. Tobacco chewing had given an officer an uncertain intestine. It did not bother him all the time. But after each meal the weakness of the intestine expressed itself as mild discomfort. He visited a devotee, a very ordinary person in every respect. After eating lunch in his house, the stomach did not exhibit any discomfort. **He said he felt a comfortable sensation.** Suddenly he remembered that the lunch was delicious. It is Mother's atmosphere that turns food into *prasad*.

In the South Indian meal, *rasam* is the crown. *Rasam* expresses the *rasa*, the essential divine sweetness of any food. One should be a Rishi to enjoy the *rasa* behind *annam*. What about the householder, living a domestic

life. What tapas gives the Rishi, Sri Aurobindo's Force gives all of us. Modern technology has given the common man what only the elite could enjoy in the past. Democracy has given the adult, by virtue of his being a citizen, literate or illiterate, rich or poor, the power to rule his country, if only he has the ability. The Force that descended in 1956 can be called *Spiritual Organisation* or spiritual technology. It gives us, ordinary people, what was the close preserve of the Rishis, yogis, munis, tapasvis. In that sense, Sri Aravindam is Spiritual Democracy.

One can feel very humble and feel he is a simple, ordinary person. Is there anything for him from this Great Force? Yes, there is. Food offers the basic sustenance to life and existence. It gives physical, vital energies. Even to the Mind, it is energising. One can eat a great quantity of food and be a glutton, which most of us refrain from. We can eat for taste, not for quantity. We can eat for health and only for health, which is mental, while the physical person seeks quantity. Even if we are not able to enjoy the *rasa*, our food prepared ordinarily will become delicious if we do not indulge eating but enjoy its taste. As a rule, food in any devotee's house will be tastier and more delicious than in other places. **That is the spiritual dimension of Food.** In such houses, there will be no dearth of food in future.

87. Subtle Knowledge of Professionals

Knowledge is mental. Knowledge of work, such as running a machine, is physical knowledge. Knowledge of how to handle people is vital knowledge. All this has its subtle dimensions. A knowledge devoid of this subtle component is incapable of producing the result. A hardworking, sincere lawyer often loses his cases. A doctor who is well qualified and painstaking finds most of his patients are not cured. A public speaker who has a wealth of details finds his speech invariably flat. But, there are lawyers who win most of their cases, doctors who invariably cure and speakers who elicit applause. **Any work has a subtle part. It produces the results, not the physical labour.** We call it *rasi*. Add the subtle touch to the work, and it will be a success without exception. Without the subtle touch, there is labour but no results. Add Mother to subtlety, the result rises in quantity and quality. We get infinite results.

What I call Mother can be called Spirit in a general sense. Those who do not have this subtle sense are the plodders in any profession. They rarely receive their promotion. If they invoke the Spirit, even if they do not get the infinite result the Spirit can give, they will acquire the subtle touch and get the result which has evaded them until now. They need not stop there, if they are willing to evoke the Spirit continuously. Markers in the playground, vakil's clerks in the Court, caddies on the golf course, and pharmacists in hospitals are often found to be more capable and popular than those under whom they serve. There was one such vakil's clerk. When his lawyer died, he did not go to another lawyer. He set up his own practice. He engaged lawyers who had no cases, instructed them and invariably won the cases. He conducted his appeals in the High Court in a similar fashion.

Those who have the subtle knowledge will rise sky high if they invoke the Spirit. One who joined a company as a manager took to the Spirit and his work boomed. The company offered him twice the bonus they originally promised. He was content with what had been promised. **The Spirit emerged through his absence of greed.** Three years later, he owned the company. Subtle knowledge gives guaranteed results. When the Spirit is added to that, that result becomes an infinite result. This is a rule without exception.

88. Effective Communication

Communication is complex. Speakers, teachers, writers, employers who give instructions, and lawyers who plead their cases try to communicate their viewpoints. When they fail in their endeavour, they blame it on the lack of understanding on the part of the hearer. A lawyer was faced with a dull judge. As his arguments were not appreciated, he repeated them. Even then, the judge desired one more repetition. The lawyer complied with the suggestion of the judge. No communication was achieved. It is said that the lawyer in frustration exclaimed, “Your Lord, I can only offer an argument. I am incapable of offering an understanding to your Lordship.” Einstein says if one understands his theory fully, he must be capable of explaining it even to a child. The complex theories of one century are taught in the schools in the next century. It means it is possible to make the difficult propositions simple, if not now, then sometime later.

It is true that as and when one understands his own ideas more and more, his explanations of them

become simpler and simpler. Explanations remaining complex is an indication of lack of fuller understanding on the part of the exponent. Sri Aurobindo’s philosophy has earned the reputation of being incomprehensible. For over forty years I have been at pains to render it simpler and have not succeed beyond the first level, when all of Tamilnadu has readily accepted Mother and Sri Aurobindo with gratitude. That is for the prayers so far unanswered. I was unable to put across my view that change of our opinion is the next level of receptivity which can bring in far greater opportunities. My articles have not succeeded in communicating that idea – an idea that can usher one into luck.

Chandrasekaran’s story \$100,000 – in Tamil 50 lakhs – succeeded where I failed. As soon as the printed book was released, it received a welcome which none of the previous fifty publications received. Story is a form of effective communication. Writers who can tell any idea through a story are Masters of Communication. *The Mahabharata* is still popular not because it is a story, but because it conveys Indian philosophy through stories. When a devotee appeared on the TV and spoke about *The Life Divine* the bookstall here sold as many copies of the book as they would normally sell in three months.

89. Four Feathers

Someone asked J. Krishnamurthy, the world teacher, what he could do to get rid of his stupidity. Krishnamurthy answered him saying he could remain stupid. Life has its stamp on many fundamental traits and they are not to be changed so easily. The world honours its heroes with titles, insignia, medals, etc. The coward is disgraced by being offered a white feather. A young British commissioned officer engaged to a pretty lady faced the orders of his regiment to travel to Sudan to fight. The orders were prefaced by the news that the previous battalion sent there had been slaughtered to a man. Fright possessed this officer, Harry, prompting him to resign his commission. **He little knew how his world would react to his resignation.** His father disowned his disgraced son. His fiancée was ashamed of him and broke their engagement. His friends too deserted him at once. None of these exhibitions of social response stung him that much until he received four white feathers from his friends signifying his cowardice. His fate was sealed.

He was a coward who was born with a timid temperament. He was determined to die a coward. But

the iron had passed into his soul by the action of his friends. A decision was born in him and became a determination. He wanted to outgrow his cowardice. The one desire that now possessed him was to show his friends who had sent the white feathers that he was no longer a coward. He joined the same regiment as a baggage porter, faced untold indignities and with heroic manliness overcame them. He was taken prisoner by the enemy in Sudan where a black porter came forward to rescue him. He told Harry that he was saving him because “God has put you in my path.” In the meantime, Harry was able to save two of his friends. After the war, one of them went back to England and became engaged to Harry’s former fiancée. At last, Harry came back to his girl, vindicated in his own emotions that he was no longer a coward.

His fiancée took back the last white feather and restored him to human dignity, to which he was now qualified. A born coward usually dies a coward. When in rare cases he is to transform his cowardice, he undergoes physical torture and inner intolerable suffocation. **If only man realises his defect, feels ashamed and is able to offer it to Mother, the external trials are shifted to the inner and the metamorphosis takes place.** Poverty is thus changed into Prosperity, when MAN is able to detach himself from the poverty consciousness and attitudes that express it. It is done inwardly and in a short time. Mother calls it *transformation*.

90. Missed Opportunities

Missed opportunities are missed forever. Moopanar was not one meant to be a Prime Minister. It came his way and was lost. It was lost forever. Wherever the Spirit operates, **the invariable rule is, if the small is missed, the great awaits him.** Nehru would not give Indira a position in the Cabinet. She was never an MP. After Nehru, she was offered the Prime Ministership. She was one of the two Prime Ministers who ruled for a long time, the other being her father. The British Cabinet was bitterly sour over Churchill and denied him a post in the Cabinet for over ten years. The public offered him the Prime Ministership for two terms. Those who invoke the Spirit can consistently see that if one opportunity is missed, a greater one knocks at his door. The local Land Mortgage Bank was grudging a devotee a loan of Rs. 25,000 and indulged in dilatory tactics. The Indian Bank offered him a Rs. 1.5 lakhs loan.

There is a spiritual principle behind this phenomenon. The small opportunity is in the plane of life. Man knows

only that. He seeks it with vigour and intensity. It may be a promotion or transfer or one increment. When the Spirit is behind him, it is incapable of the small. All its opportunities are great. When the small is denied by life, the Spirit grants him the big, the great. **It is not in human nature NOT to seek the small, especially if it is his due.** The Spirit gives him an equality NOT to take initiative to secure the small, even when it is his own right. When he does so – refuses the small – the great at once presents itself to him. The human plane of life is full of limited entities. The Spiritual plane is one of endless possibilities and knows nothing that is small.

To those who have become devotees of The Mother or who have ardently taken to invoking the Spirit, one of the disciplines is NOT to take initiative to secure what is due to them. When the human desists from human initiative, the Divine takes its INITIATIVE. How big the next opportunity is and how soon it will arrive depends on other aspects of his personality. In most cases, it happened at once; in some cases in a week or a month. In rare cases, it was put off for years. **But when it does come, we see the principle in action that the longer it has been delayed, the greater it is.** There is no loss in the spiritual life. Sri Aurobindo says the world forces have always fulfilled His ideas, however delayed they were. It is His will that acts through us and therefore, it fulfils invariably.

91. The Inner Voice

It is in obedience to His inner voice that Sri Aurobindo had arrived at Pondicherry. Not all are endowed with that faculty. It is called *vani, asariri*. There was a university teacher who had that voice speaking from inside. For some inexplicable reason, he lost it. Once he visited a relative who was on his way to Sri Aurobindo's Samadhi. He also accompanied him without any discernible thought. At the Samadhi, the university teacher also sat, as his relative did. He had not come for samadhi darsan and the visit had no meaning for him. Months later, the lecturer started coming to Samadhi regularly and accompanied his relative. Now that the lecturer too had become a devotee, the relative ventured to ask him what his experience had been during his first unintended visit.

“I had an inner voice which was lost. At my first visit, it came back,” said the lecturer. The inner voice is a rare faculty. *Venuganam* is another spiritual endowment

rarely found amongst us. There was a devotee who ardently took interest in the people who came to him for any reason. Once a visitor came back several times and the devotee was anxious to be of use to him. “Is there anything you have in mind?” asked the devotee. The visitor replied, ‘Each time I come to you, you speak exactly what I came to ask you before I express it. Even today you did so.’ New faculties that are spiritual faculties form when one takes to this Force. Call it Mother, the Spirit, the Force, the Divine or whatever you will.

The Spirit is invisible to our naked eyes. It rarely acts in the lives of ordinary men. When it acts, people see the results, not the Spirit, as we do not see the electricity that operates each piece of equipment we have. We see the fan running, the bulb burning, etc., but *we do not see the electricity that operates them*. This Force I speak of can awaken the Spirit in us, bring it to the surface of our lives, even make us see the Spirit in action. It is felt as sandal fragrance, a sweet tune of music, a sudden sense of sweetness in the mouth, a live figure emerging from the picture of a God, etc. Inner voice is one such manifestation. Man recognises the Spirit easily as luck, a fulfilment of his own unspoken desires deeply buried in him.

92. A Culture of Honour

The Kshatriya lives for honour and dies for it. One such kshatriya maistry worked under a manager in an estate owned by a rich man. The manager and the owner differed. Contrary to previous agreement, the owner wanted to take over the management himself. Without insisting on his own right, the manager agreed to transfer the management. **The maistry was a towering personality in the context.** The owner felt that the maistry would work under him, thus making things easy. He proposed to the maistry to switch over to him. **“Wherever the manager is, there I am,” declared the maistry.** The loyalty of the kshatriya maistry made the owner change his mind towards the manager and he allowed the previous arrangement to continue.

Japan is a country of honour. The warrior caste of Samurai is known for upholding the sacred tradition of honour. A samurai soldier was killed on the battlefield by an enemy. The soldier’s brother-in-law was the Captain of the regiment. The widow of the dead soldier found herself in charge of nursing the murderer of her husband

by a strange irony of life. She longed for revenge and her whole nervous system was hot with vengeance. Her brother, the Captain, had no consolation to offer his widowed sister, nor any argument for her doing it. He was a Samurai. He lived by honour and for honour. Honour was his life breath. “We are here to do our duty. Your duty is to serve those put in your charge by nursing. *That is the code of honour of a Samurai,*” was all that he could bring himself to utter. By a heroic inner struggle, the widow rose to the occasion and upheld the sacred tradition of the warrior caste.

Japan is known for its beautiful surroundings and the loyalty citizens offer the Emperor. Till recently, a Japanese worker entering a company never considered changing the company, as his primary duty was to be loyal to the company. Even now, the tradition is largely upheld. A ship developed a leak and the passengers were hastily evacuated from the ship to safety. The crowd of passengers did not panic, but moved in an orderly fashion in spite of the imminent danger. In the crowd was a blind man. He groped about. It was a sight to see the entire crowd exhibiting infinite patience to let the blind passenger go first at his own pace. For the Japanese, stampede is unknown. To them, their honour is more valuable than life. **Honour is a spiritual value and values are spiritual skills.** No wonder recently they rose from being a war-ravaged nation to become the second largest economy in the world.

93. Purity of Science

Knowledge is pure, as light issues from knowledge. Science means knowledge. Therefore, science can only be pure. We know science is powerful and has given us comforts in myriad ways. We also know the side effects of scientific technology, viz. pollution. It has given us dangerous military weapons. **The philosophy of science being pure, knowledge at its origin must account for the presence of Evil in life.** The layman confuses technology, rather scientific technology, with science. We know science, being the personification of purity, cannot generate evil, while scientific technology can produce evil consequences. If the leading scientists of the world give a theoretical consideration to the existence of Evil, the field of science will touch greater or nobler heights. The community of scientists cannot have a nobler pursuit than defining Evil as it exists today.

Surely one immediate step is within their reach. Presently technology is a neutral tool. It can be used by man for good or bad purposes. *Technology is neutral,*

MAN assigns a character to it by his use or choice of use. An enormous quantity of resources are invested in research by the military. After the war, most of their findings have been made available for the public. The latest gift is the Internet. The scientist makes the discovery. The political leadership decides how to use this discovery. Now that the two world wars are over, the Cold War too has ended and MAN is emerging into his own more than before when the military exigency was there, it is time the leadership is wrested from the politician by the thinking MAN, the intellectual, the scientists who are wedded to pure science. The international scientific community is well organised. **It is possible for them to resolve NOT to engage in research that will have harmful consequences.**

In the 19th and 20th centuries, intellectuals aimed at changing the course of history by powerfully influencing it. In the 21st century, the scientist can aspire for the role of leading the world and humanity, if he sets his face against pursuits of evil. For the individual scientist, it will be a laudable aim when he develops a keen conscience that will prevent him from employments that will lead to findings with dangerous consequences. In India, the Rishis were the repositories of wisdom and often consulted by the kings. *The scientist will be the Rishi of this century if he can effectively prevent the spread of Evil. For that, he must pronounce on The Theory of Creation.*

94. Reversal of Consciousness

It was an axiom among cultured people that when someone comes by wealth or power, they give him a certain humility which he is not otherwise endowed with. Nowadays, we often see the exhibition of the opposite. The cultural expressions vary very much. *In the evolution of consciousness from the physical to mental, we certainly see quite a reversal.* The physical man is a brute. To him, might is right. His dharma is to crush the other person, as he is taken as a rival or enemy. The mental man certainly does not resort to liquidating the other, though he too may view him as a rival. He seeks the cooperation of the rival, tries to be rational, works towards a compromise. That way, humanity becomes civilised. That is the path to enjoy greater comforts. **Moving from the physical to the mental, man becomes vastly more productive and consequently affluent.**

Yesterday's rulers become today's ruled is one phenomenon of history. In early times the priests ruled. Then the monarchy ruled. At different times different classes are privileged. **Whoever is privileged will rule**

or enjoy the most is a rule of life. In practice, they do not simply rule, they EXPLOIT as fully as circumstances permit. Society moves ahead at all points. One of them is a state where the scope for exploitation by one section will become less and less and finally be eliminated. Is it possible for us as individuals to practise that ideal in our own families? If so, those families will prosper out of all proportion. The principle behind this fact is *harmony is productive and disharmony is destructive.* Harmony is desirable on any showing. Harmony is a principle of higher consciousness where all is in each and each is in all.

We see in life the oppressors of one period are the oppressed in another period. A young man joined the army. After retirement, he joined a university as Physical Education Director. There he was to meet his elder brother who was the head of their family working as a peon. Socially, status can vary or reverse, not spiritually. In one's own personal life, if he does NOT allow the MIND to dominate the body, Mother says, there will be no disease. Poverty arises because a small mind dominates our life – the vital. **Absence of exploitation of one part by another is Prosperity.** Man who is willing to express his capacities in utter disregard of social opinions – not allowing the vital to rule the Mind – prospers in a great measure. That consciousness needs a reversal. The American prosperity today rests on the principle of a Man doing any work in which he has talents.

95. Opening of the Being to its Depths

A devotee visited Balcony Darshan of The Mother at 6:15 am. At 8 am, he again had Her darshan, coming in a queue before Her with the sadhaks and visitors. At 5:30 pm the same day She was at the playground where again, sitting in the audience, he saw Her. He returned to his town. Work made him pass through Pondicherry the next day. He availed of this to be at the Balcony Darshan. On his return from work, he had to pass through Pondicherry again. For a third day he had the Darshan of The Divine Mother at the Balcony. His first visit was August 15th, a darshan day. It was a Sunday. People around him commented that there was a change in him since he had visited the Ashram. They noticed he spoke less than usual. He was quiet. There was a calm about him which was mistaken for dullness. *On Friday, he too noticed the change in himself.*

Standing before The Mother, his being was split open down to the body consciousness. He unconsciously received the Force She was pouring into him. His mind had gone blank during those days. It was unable to think, except

for responding to questions. He was not aware of the response his being gave Her to Her *touch*. Nor was he conscious that at that moment, unconsciously, his being committed itself to Her fully. There was no question of any description in his mind or being. There was nothing to choose. There were no two options before him. His being went to Her without his knowledge or consent. **The consent was automatic.** In one sense, such a thing happens to all who come to Her sooner or later. Most of us are unaware of how our being leaps to the Divine at Her Touch. This was an impersonal response, though full.

To a personal call, the devotee responds with a speechless wonder. When the call strikes the ear, the faculty of hearing is robbed. The mind itself disappears. The touch goes down to the body consciousness evoking a sensation of sweetness that is the result of human gratitude from the substance of the body. Someone's business jumped fifteen-fold in seven months as a result of service and he lost it in the next one year because of insistent human behaviour. He decided to go within. There he saw seven blocks. He worked on them to remove them. In a matter of days, all that was lost came back and from there opened a **further potential of ten-fold expansion**. At such moments, the being of the devotee experiences an opening as the devotee at the Balcony Darshan felt. **It is a moment of Spiritual Truth, an occasion when the ONE touches one of the Many.** Opening, receptivity, sincerity, consecration, surrender, transformation, Being of the Becoming are key ideas in the yoga of Sri Aurobindo.

96. Importance of Infinity

The mathematics teacher asked his students what would be the result of 7 divided by 7. The class shouted, 'One.' He went on asking them, 'What is 1000/1000, 100,000/100,000?' The class answered, 'One.' Next, his question was, "What is zero divided by zero?" Now the teacher would not accept 'one' as the answer. Srinivasa Ramanujam was in that class. He rose and answered, "Infinity." To mathematics teachers, 0/0 is a non-problem. **To Ramanujam, zero is God and Infinity is Manifestation, the world.** Bhaskaracharya proved that 0/0 is infinity. The concept of Infinity takes the subject mathematics to spirituality. It is its forte. One should not shy away from it. Of course, we cannot discuss mathematics in this column.

In my view, if Indian mathematicians who have inherited a hoary tradition continue the spirit of it, India can excel in mathematics. **To Sri Aurobindo, Infinity is a practical concept.** We know of *Kamadhenu*, *karpaga viritcham*, and *akshayapatram*, which issued out of themselves an infinite number of articles. Out of a basket of fish, Jesus

went on distributing fish to everyone, as if the basket was an infinite source of fish. *The truth is a spiritual reality.* Anyone who can constantly invoke the Spirit can see this truth as a reality in practical life. Infinity in daily life is overwhelming abundance. My explanations and experiments can come up to that for one who is willing to undertake a token experiment on its own conditions. Devotees of Mother have seen endless instances of such an expression, but they miss the significance of it, though they accept the material result.

Two examples from history can be cited to prove this idea. At best they wear the appearance of an analogy, and will not serve as a true exact example. From 1929 to 1932, the USA was brought to a zero position by the Depression. Man too felt himself a zero. It was at that point the USA turned around and rose to become the richest nation. In 1940, Britain was militarily reduced to zero and the Englishman found himself a zero. At that point, UK, under the leadership of Churchill, turned around to play the role of a giant and WIN the Second World War for the world, an achievement on an infinite scale.

When Man, who becomes a bankrupt does not lose his Spirit, he rises to become a rich man, richer than others. **Man is the Infinite with the appearance of the Finite. The Force helps him discover his own infinity. In life, it is material abundance.** We can call it "Spiritual Opulence".

97. Discovering God

As you are inside, so you are outside. This is a truism of life. God is Infinite and Eternal, perhaps a ZERO. We are the finite. What we discover as God is not God, but what appears as God to us. The Gita says that one can become anything if only he can aspire for it. **Put differently, we are today what we had aspired for earlier, subconsciously.** It is very difficult for most of us to accept this. A beggar may ask if he aspired to become a beggar. One who has become bankrupt can ask if he aspired for bankruptcy. Spiritually, it is true. One who wants to understand the true meaning and value of wealth knows subconsciously that he will get that knowledge only when he tastes bankruptcy. That is why he ‘courts’ bankruptcy. **This is confirmed by the fact that invariably the subsequent generations of a bankrupt person are ushered into wealth.**

God is different to different people. For the miser, GOLD is God. The Westerner has cherished his personality, privacy, and the value of being an individual – individuality.

As a result, we can now say God for the Westerner is his *individuality*. Science has usurped the position of God in the West. Chandrasekar, who won the Nobel Prize for Physics, said Man has created the conception of God as a mental occupation, a pastime. He was an Indian born in an orthodox family. **He too was infected to that extent by the atmosphere of the West where God is replaced by the knowledge one has arrived at on his own.**

The Buddha analysed the Mind and found Mind dissolved and left him in Nirvana. Ego is a product of Mind. So, Mind can dissolve Ego by analysis. The Self was not created by the Mind. Mind was created by the Self. Mind cannot analyse and dissolve the Self. The Self is Self-existent. But Man has the capacity to discover various things as his God.

Sri Aurobindo says that **the universe comes to us as values.** Whatever values we seek is our universe. Our conception of the universe can be widened. Our experience of our universe too can constantly increase. Man who resorts to this *Force* can widen his universe to overcome the limits of the present society in the world. To the householder, this holds out an opportunity to expand his accomplishment until it is equal to the accomplishment of the world. *Accomplishing in this world is discovering God.*

98. The Meaningfulness of the Medium

What happens on its own is an act of God – Grace choosing to act in our lives. It is an ideal of the tradition. For the human nature that is dynamic and full of urges, to wait for events to overcome its course is simply not possible. **Whether it is difficult or impossible, it has remained a truth of life.** Any great man or small man can still find it to be a better truth of his own life. That being the general status of the generality of population, there are those who take upon the discipline to wait for things to happen. In their lives, the impossible becomes a literal truth, before their very eyes. Human nature persists. He who patiently waited all these days and made a certain miraculous event come to pass now finds himself going against his own discipline. His patience was rewarded in the beginning. After some time, say a few months or years, life responds to his impatience. One who relies on the Spirit has a remedy.

In one case when such a patience was exhibited, he was rewarded with a property double the size of the property he was about to lose. **The patience he exhibited in attracting the vaster property was lost as soon as**

the new property came. He took it as an act of God. He forgot Grace had come to him through a human medium. For over ten years he resorted to various partial disciplines and was rewarded with partial results. At last, God through life removed all the encumbrances encrusted over the property and made a complete present of it to him. He heaved a sigh of relief, not knowing that there is no end to such disciplines, as there is no end to breathing or heartbeat. He discovered very late that the property that fell plump into his life was not earning at all. Half the project was a success – property came. The other half – income – was elusive. It took more than a decade, almost two decades for him to realise that the MEDIUM through which God acted *is also God.*

To consider the instrument too as God, the origin of grace, is to invite divine luck. Man's normal tendency is to avoid the medium as soon as he receives the result. Hence the proverb about the teacher as a ladder which elevates everyone who climbs it, but remains stay-put. Human life is unconscious. **The resourcefulness of human nature lies in being conscious in its unconsciousness.** He who is unconscious of Grace takes conscious steps to eliminate the instrument that delivers the boon. A belief in psychology is if you disclose your defects to anyone, however close he is to you now, you will soon be estranged from him. It is so because he reminds you of what you have told him. In your mind, he is identified with your own defect. Hence you do not wish for his company anymore. Life fulfils your subconscious aspiration removing him from your purview.

99. The Ideal Teacher

Having completed two years of Ph.D. in one of the most famous American universities, a young man returned to Calcutta where he had been brought up from birth. He is a Tamilian whose parents are sophisticated and idealistic. On seeing an advertisement for teachers from a primary school and on learning how the school plans its syllabus, **he was inspired by the idea of teaching there.** And his parents endorsed his aspiration. He visited the school and found the educational environment exceeded his expectations. He stayed there for one year teaching. He entered the spirit of the founders more than others, perhaps better than the management and founders. At once, he became popular with the kids. His popularity was unparalleled. At the end of the year, he sought to continue his education back in the US. He was admitted into Ph.D. in the 3rd year in his parent institution.

The school had only three standards. It had no formal exams. It did not believe in giving homework. Nor did they punish the children. This freedom opened up the educational potential of the children and was severally expressed, positively and negatively. No child in the class would sit properly. They would take any lounging

position that suited them. Nor would they listen to the teacher if he was not sufficiently interesting. Several types of behaviour which would be impermissible in any disciplined atmosphere were exhibited. But the sense of competition was largely absent. Young children could open the Junior Encyclopedia and read fluently. They developed the capacity to think and understand on their own. The habit of memorisation was given the go-by. As soon as they were promoted to the 4th standard, and the parents bought the text books, the best boy in the class read his entire English textbooks in the week before school opened.

The ideal teacher gave an affectionate nickname to most of the students. At the year end birthday party held in his honour, he gave each child in 2nd and 3rd standard a personal gift and message. Even while he was here, his children were in correspondence with him through email. After he left, one girl started sending him email daily. **He not only replies to the students without fail, but enters into email correspondence with any child who writes to him.** Their birthdays are special occasions for him. He sends the birthday child a gift by courier and plans to do so to all the 50 children this year, even after joining his Ph.D. course. He wishes to find for this school as many teachers as possible who are of his type. He believes that anyone who comes to know of this school would prefer to work here in preference to his professional pursuit. Here he is known as Chari. **Chari has discovered the Spirit of education in teaching.**

100. Discovery of Blood Circulation

Harvey's discovery that blood circulates is a landmark in the history of medical knowledge. Harvey explained that the idea occurred to him because he considered the human body as a micro-unit of the universe. He saw the planets in the universe were in motion. Therefore, he assumed that the blood in the body too should be in motion. Sri Aurobindo says that during the Vedic period man lived in harmony with Nature. To him, the Spirit and Nature were one. Buddhism preached the renunciation of life and conquered the whole of India and later a greater part of Asia. India gave up Buddhism but its basic tenet of renunciation was from that time accepted by almost all schools of Indian yoga. *Sri Aurobindo further says that Man must regain that unity between Spirit and Nature, but at the level of Supermind.* Harvey's view of life was a view of the whole. It led him to one significant discovery. We have now lost that view.

Schumacher, a British economist, published a book in the 1970's pronouncing the idea of 'Economics as if people mattered.' Economics, considered on its own as economics for economics' sake, will lead one astray,

away from the truth. The centre of economics is Money for the monetarists. *It is Man who created money. Money is there to serve man. Man should be the centre of economics, not money.* Science is a mental tool Man has created so that it may serve him. Science is not the centre of life; nor can it ever become one. Man is the centre of life. It is by a psychological superstition that Man becomes a slave of money or science, both of which are his own creations. Science pursued for its own sake has led to several wonderful technologies. **They have generated pollution, assuring that our future generations have no place to live in.** The UN took initiative to constitute an International Commission to study pollution. As a result, now we realise that science is a part and society is a whole.

To pursue the part for its own sake is not the highest wisdom we have inherited either from Aristotle or from the Vedic seers. Harvey lived in the 17th century. He was a physician to James I and Charles I. Though he lived three hundred years ago, his sense of science was a sense of the whole. It is not only money and science that must serve man. Yoga seeks *moksha*, release of the Spirit. Sri Aurobindo calls it the last act of selfishness of the soul. Yoga is for the Man, or better still, for the Spirit. That Spirit should flower in life. So, He said 'All life is yoga'. His Integral yoga says the Spirit should evolve in Life and make earth heaven. It is an approach which considers Man as a whole, an integrated whole, a whole of which the Divine is the centre.

Appendix 1

How to Invoke the Spirit?

Indians trying to adopt punctuality find it extremely powerful and useful. Some miserably fail to institute punctuality as a value in their company. They ask how to be punctual? It does not mean they do not know it. It only means they are unable to do so as the general atmosphere in the company is not conducive to punctuality. What then is the remedy? The usual answer is to go about it with a greater determination in which again many fail.

Does it mean punctuality is impossible? **It only means our effort is not comprehensive, but summary.** Punctuality is preceded by general orderliness, that is again preceded by greater productivity. Productivity needs energy in copious measure, which is released by aspiration.

So, begin at the beginning. Everyone in the company must have aspiration for the company's progress. One may ask, 'What shall I do if it is not there?' **The aspiration of workers is the aspiration of the employer.** Examine inside if you aspire for the company's progress. Begin there, go step by step and when you finally arrive at orderliness and find no punctuality, your attempts to install punctuality will succeed.

Many will succeed in invoking the Spirit. For them the question is how to build it up. For those who are unable to do so, there is a method available. When a man often loses his temper, others advise him to retire to a solitary place and think. Much of the temper vanishes and he is able to think somewhat. Mind is the next higher level to temper. Spirit is the next higher level to mind. As one invokes the Spirit, his thoughts interfere and frustrate him. Thoughts interfere because man is identified with his thoughts. Realising this fact and trying **NOT** to think separates him from his thoughts and invocation of the Spirit will then become possible. Again, one may say this is not possible.

Let these people take some time every day and call 'Mother' into them. As time passes, thoughts will subside

and a calm will emerge. Mother is more powerful than the Spirit. After a few days of calling Mother into oneself for sometime daily, he should do so for one full day of 12 hours. **Next, that one day should be extended to a three-day sitting of 12 hours per day of calling MOTHER into oneself.**

Though this effort is taken to let the Spirit or The Mother emerge from out of his surface being, after the three days calling he will suddenly witness —

1. Most of his minor problems suddenly vanishing.
2. The atmosphere at home will be **POSITIVE** in the very best sense of the word.
3. If he had major problems unsolved, some solutions will appear on the horizon.
4. **All his difficulties in invoking the Spirit will vanish and he will feel the Spirit or The Mother is his constant companion in some substantial measure.**

He should resort to this everyday, either in the morning or evening for about a half hour. That will usher his life into a higher level of consciousness. Then he should,

1. Endeavour to speak **ONLY** truth.
2. Keep his house as clean as the cleanest place he ever knew.
3. Talk almost in a whisper, giving up shouting.
4. Take the other man's point of view in all transactions.
5. Cultivate patience in a large measure.
6. Before commencing any work, think of **THE MOTHER**.
7. Know his past errors and scrupulously avoid them in future.
8. Practise self-giving.

Once he sees the Spirit responds to his call, he must cultivate it and build up his life — **ORGANISE IT** — so that it progresses.

Appendix 2

Invocation of the Spirit

- ☆ Invocation of Spirit is powerful. Better still, if you call, “*Mother*”, it is all-inclusive.
- ☆ There are several methods to do so, though in essence all are the same.
 1. In our personality, there is a surface and a depth. As long as we are thinking of a problem, we are on the surface. **To go away from the surface we must agree to forget the problem or NOT to actively think of it.** Now the problem moves to the depth where it causes a worry that does not explain itself. One can call Mother or the Spirit if he moves away from the depth. If you cannot move away from the depth, start calling Mother and you will move away from the depth. Problems are solved by calling for an hour,

for a few days. Three-day prayer is the maximum which solves any problem.

2. Where man ends, Mother (Spirit) begins. Exhaust all that one can do. The Spirit will begin to act at once. The last possible act must be so exhausted.
3. To do better than we now do amounts to calling Mother. E.g. to take interest in a dull work; to organise an unorganised work; to give thought to a work which we are doing unthinkingly.
4. To think of Mother once an hour for a few days.
5. To think of Mother on the stroke of the hour for a day or two.
6. To keep the house extra clean, to talk in a very low voice, to avoid all quarrels at home or at the office, to write precise accounts, etc.
7. To shift from the outside to inside which means what we do by hand can be done by thought.
8. To think of Mother before starting any work — consecration.
9. Prayer