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The Descent

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(This issue ‘**The Integral (lower) Mental Education**’ is offered at the Lotus Feet of *The Mother and Sri Aurobindo* on occasion of Her 95th Anniversary of final arrival to Pondicherry, 24.04.2015.)

Integral (lower) Mental Education:

“Afar from all that makes the measured world,
Plunging to hidden eternities it withdrew
Back from **mind's foaming surface** to the Vasts
Voiceless within us in omniscient sleep.”

Savitri-320

“For knowledge shall pour down in radiant streams
And even **darkened mind** quiver with new life
And kindle and burn with the Ideal’s fire
And turn to escape from mortal ignorance.”

Savitri-710

“A **mind impotent** to reconcile heaven and earth
And tied to Matter with a thousand bonds,”

Savitri-338

“This too she saw that **all in outer mind**
Is made, not born, a product perishable,
Forged in the body’s factory by earth-force.
This mind is a dynamic small machine
Producing ceaselessly, till it wears out,
With raw material drawn from the outside world,
The patterns sketched out by an artist God.”

Savitri-541

The lower mental faculty of Physical (*tamasic*) mind, Vital (*rajasic*) mind and Intellect (*sattwic mind*) are entirely absorbed, limited, obsessed and concentrated in the illusion and disintegration of body, death of life and falling

back of mind into inconscience respectively and they are identified as three dwarf and separatists who miserably restrict and long prevent our growing relation with the Supreme. There is a period of prolonged internal effort in which individual has to reject mental energies, heart's emotion, vital desires and physical rigidity of lower nature and put themselves resolutely on the side of Divine truth and compel them to answer to the right influence. If we can educate, train, purify, transform and perfect these three faculties by surrender of lower to the higher Nature, then the capacity of our vessel can increase indefinitely to open, receive and hold the Divine Will, the Divine Love and the Divine Knowledge and their self-development is translated physically as imperishability of Matter, vitally as instinct of self-preservation and mentally as sense of immortality.

Education of dwarf and pigmy Physical Mind:

“At its low extremity held difficult sway
A mind that hardly saw and slowly found;
Its nature to our earthly nature close
And kin to our precarious mortal thought
That looks from soil to sky and sky to soil
But knows not the below nor the beyond, [**Physical mind
is not aware of the truth of the existence.**]
It only sensed itself and outward things.”

Savitri-239

“The slow process of a **material mind**
Which serves the body it should rule and use
And needs to lean upon an erring sense,
Was born in that luminous obscurity.”

Savitri-240

The normal waking state is dominated by physical mind, which is the assured base, close to earthly nature, first status of slow ascent and lowest sub-plane of intellect, the starting point of the educational movement of that

apparent material world. It contradicts and opposes the vital mind by inertia, indolence and dullness and intellect by narrowness, precarious thought, ignorance and obscurity. The modern man strives to establish an equilibrium between fully active intellect, vital and body. The task of Integral Education is to link these three lower mental planes fully with the Psychic, Spiritual and Supramental planes, which throw on the physical mind a transforming light that breaks conservative inertia, replaces its narrow thought-power and doubts by Knowledge and pours luminosity and Divine Consciousness into the very cells of the body. So those who want to escape from the domination of physical mind and its repetition of old familiar action, for them the centre of living must shift above the head, so that they can separate and disentangle lower habitual action of physical mind from the action of a clearer and more potent self-knowledge and pure Divine will. If they can think no longer from brain but above and outside the head in the subtle body then it is a clear indication that they have escaped from the limitation of physical mind. Through trance, *Samadhi*, they can also enter dream and sleep Selves or consciousness corresponding to subtle life-plane and Supramental plane free from the subjection of physical mind. The trained physical mind is a passive field and instrument of greater force and light; it responds to every demand and need of the Spirit's force and holds and assimilates every kind, variety and diversity of Spiritual experience.

Physical mind lives content with the common, known, old memories and loves to live with past. It accepts the empiric fact of physical laws like gravity, disease and decay as settled law and does not see the occult, universal law behind them. It believes in no Divinity other than the narrow earth-bound gods, abhors transformation of Nature, distrustful of discovery of new worlds, fears the Unknowable as deadly abyss, shrinks from the adventure of Consciousness, loses its conviction of objective certitude and enters into an agnosticism which questions all its own standards of life and knowledge, doubts whether all this is real or else whether all, even if real, is not futile. It creates in him a habit of

believing entirely the physical facts as the sole truth and of doubting or challenging all that does not come into accord with his own experience or his own scope of understanding or square with his own standard or sum of established knowledge. It affirms that an objective Reality is the only entire self-evident truth beyond question and an objective knowledge as the sole entirely reliable knowledge and constructs always its frail house of thought; it looks at only one side of existence, even only one province or district of existence, and leaves all the rest unexplained, without inherent reality, without significance and without integrality and whatever is not actual, not physical, not objective it regards as unreal or unrealised, and it can accept a thing as entirely real when it has succeeded in becoming actual, becoming a physical fact and becoming objective.

The crude physical mind is a slave of fixed mass of absolute rule and trades its gain to meet the moment's call, moves from moment to brief moment, shuts into succession of moments, labours for an hour, so is the creator of impatience because it cannot tolerate and wait the Divine Mother's eternal labour, for whom the present existing world which She has built is an interim report and half found truth in things, who works out the distorting *Maya* through wisdom which went forth since the beginning of creation. A breaking of our imprisonment in moment and a transcendence of limitation of sensation and subjection of physical mind is possible by evolving another state of consciousness and of vision and knowledge of triple time consciousness.

The normal sleep is completely different from trance state and in the former physical mind is active in the dream which is an incoherent jumble of vague touches from the surface world, wandering phantasy of the reason, disordered associations from brain memory, widely distorted and mixed up confusedly with other dream elements and fantastic responses to any sensory touch of the surface vital world. Where trance is a subtle action of higher consciousness of dream self, free from immixture of physical and vital

mentality, liberated from the bounds of surface consciousness and is open towards perennial source of pure inner sense.

Physical mind rejects the thought process of logically discriminative and imaginative reason, its disturbances and its tensions and does not like any upliftment of Consciousness, Spiritual deliverance, descent of Divine force and barks at all unfamiliar Superconscient light. It treasures the changeless doctrine of negation, earthward look, disease, decay and death and obedient to the tyranny of gross matter. All inner and outer revolutions sink into physical mind's inertia and in a new dress, the old habit resumes its guardian role. Fear, doubt and impatience are the original character and habit of the physical mind and bind one to the bodily consciousness. It always aspires for greater comfort, constructed order, short-lived enjoyments, easily secured life and is oblivious of whole truth of existence.

The education of physical mind must break all its heavy smallness and asks giving up of its instincts, needs, blind conservative attachment, settled grooves of nature, doubt, disbeliefs in all that is beyond itself, its faith of inevitability of fixed functioning of mind, life and body. These are replaced by new power which establishes its own greater law and functioning in the form and force of Matter. By the pressure of the higher light even the subconscious and inconscient below the physical mind have to become conscient, susceptible to higher light, no longer obstructive to fulfilling the creative action of the Consciousness force, but more and more a mould and basis of the Spiritual Force. The admission of such a radical change and the remolding of the whole nature are possible by the full emergence and dominance of the Psychic and Spiritual fire and long working of their light and power on the parts of the nature.

Education of muddy and deceptive Vital Mind:

“Thence sprang the burning **vision of Desire**.
A thousand shapes it wore, took numberless names:
A need of multitude and uncertainty
Pricks it for ever to pursue the One
On countless roads across the vasts of Time
Through circuits of unending difference.
It burns all breasts with an ambiguous fire.”

Savitri-247

The man's vital mind is an instrument of desire, the troubled seed of things, which hunts after unrealised possibilities, burns all hearts with ambiguous fire, enlarges always passion and craving, creates dissatisfaction, an unrest, a seeking for something more than what life seems able to give it, a constant demand for more and always more, a quest for new worlds to conquer, an incessant drive towards an exceeding of the bounds of circumstance and a self-exceeding. It is not satisfied with physical and objective enjoyment only but seeks to a subjective, imaginative, a purely emotive satisfaction, enjoyment and pleasure, which are dependent on external things, external sense contacts and concerned with the practical, the immediately realizable and possible events, the habitual, the common and average.

Desire is the outcome of incompleteness, of insufficiency and that of not yet sufficiently possessed or enjoyed which the being seeks for possession. It creates confusion, throws discord and brings impurity which is the whole evil of our psychological existence. If the vital mind is deprived of its natural urge of enjoyment, which is the whole object of desire then it recoils into subjection of physical mind and man would live like the animal, accepting his first actual physical life and its limits as his whole possibility, moving the material Nature's established order and asking for nothing beyond it.

The human emotions are governed by egoistic passion, self-satisfied perversions, blind instinctive affections, cruelty and beast wrath of violence, a heart besieged and given over to lust, treachery and rapacity, little and narrow greed, mean pettiness of an obscure and fallen life-force, bottomless ingratitude and debased by slavery to any and every lower impulse. So it is the mixture of the emotive heart and the sense bound hungering vital that creates a false desire Soul which the reason and intellect in man rightly distrust and disbelieve. So a great sincerity is asked of a *Sadhaka* while searching the true Soul through entry into the subliminal vital nature which is an incurable pretender and actor. As the calm equality of the Soul increases and deepens, he is able and far advanced in entire elimination of falsity and dangerous crudity of life and becomes aware of the true inmost being, manifests true life in the power of Godhead and joy of Infinite. His vigilant eye must keep constant watch on deceits of ego and ambushes of misleading powers of Darkness and they often take the appearance of the divine form in order to capture the soul of a *Sadhaka*. The vital being must be trained to right enjoyment of life in obedience to the working of the Divine Will and get rid of all human craving and attachment. Similarly heart must be trained to the right joy and laughter of the Soul in obedience to the working of the Divine Love and get rid of all wrong emotions of fear, wrath, hatred and lust.

The vital mind is baffled by life and frustrated or else dissatisfied with all its satisfactions, overtaken by a deep disgust and disappointment, finds that all is vanity and vexation of Spirit and is ready to reject life and existence as an unreality, all that it hunted after as an illusion, *Maya*. It flames violently towards the heaven but sinks engulfed into mire of hell; climbs above to drag down high truth into the subconscious abyss but does not succeed; its brilliant forces rushes towards muddy ends.

The education of the vital mind asks giving up of its cherished desires, falsity of senses, emotions, feelings, impulses, forceful mechanism of action

and reaction and they will be replaced by a luminous, desireless, free and yet automatically self-determining pure sense, limitless passion and yearning for the Infinite force. Life must be an instrument of universal and impersonal knowledge, power, delight, love and beauty and fulfilled through its greater joy and strength. And finally vital mind must be elevated to Supermind which is the native seat of all educational perfection.

Education of purposeful and laborious Intellect:

“The **mind learns** and knows not, turning its back to truth;
It studies surface laws by surface thought,”

Savitri-160

“Our **mind lives** far off from the authentic Light
Catching at little fragments of the Truth”

Savitri-161

“The mind develops into **the mind of the sage**, at first the high mental thinker, then **the spiritual sage** who has gone beyond **the abstractions of thought** to the beginnings of a direct experience.”

The Life Divine- 935

Sri Aurobindo

Supermind, mind, life and body are the four instruments which the Spirit uses for its manifestation in the workings of Nature. Supermind is Spiritual Consciousness acting as self-luminous Knowledge, Will and Delight. Mind is essentially the faculty of Supermind, which measures and limits and fixes a particular centre for cosmic movement and action and only very indirectly and partially illumined and it can look upward and receive the Supramental communication and passes it on to the other lower members. And since man is a mental being, so thought is at least his most constant, normal and effective means for enlightening his Ignorance.

The normal thought action of the mind is divided into a triple movement; (1) first and the lowest is the habitual thought mind whose ideas are based on the available data given by the senses and by surface experiences of

nervous and emotional being and on the customary notions formed by the education and outward life and environment; it can think nothing as entirely true and all its formulations break down under the test of new suggestions from the infinite; (2) the second grade of thinking activity of the creative pragmatic mind which can link the truth of life and the truth of idea not yet manifested in life; the thinking mind finds its most clear, precise, effective principle of organisation and characteristic satisfaction in the reasoning and logical intelligence; a more precise and assured action of the intelligence will get rid of the superficiality of this ordinary method of the mind, test every step, scrutinize severely every conclusion, efficiently guard against error and reduce the mind's action to a well-founded system, synthesis and order; (3) the last gradation of thinking opens in us the pure, subtle, flexible ideative mind which lives disinterestedly in the truth of idea for Divine action and Spiritual experience and lives far from the ordinary mental habit which turns truth into purveyors of error.

All action of mind is a derivation of secret Supermind and such a truth is diminished in scope, degraded into lower movement and even when it is widest and most complete, mental knowing is still an indirect knowledge; it is a habituated divider of the Indivisible and its whole nature is to dwell on one thing at a time to the exclusion of others or to stress it to the subordination of others. To train the mind as a pure, clear and passive reflector of the Divine is identified as an important exercise in Integral Education. So the preliminary need is a right thought which can be effective and established by liberating oneself from the negative habit of sense-error, desire, old association, intellectual prejudgment, exclusiveness, systematizing and attachment to its own constructions and followed by positive opening towards vision, spiritual experience and realization. The last difficulty of the mind is identified as its inability to hold at once the unity and multiplicity of the existence and realization of all this as *Sachchidananda* is its great difficulty and its supreme difficulty is to unify without losing and integralise without rejecting.

The advantage of progressive mind is that firstly, it aims at perfecting itself as well as the house in which it dwells and the means of life that it uses, and is capable of awaking by a progressive self-realisation to its own true nature as a form of the Spirit; secondly, the characteristic energy of pure Mind is change through self-enlargement and self-improvement and moves continually from a smaller and simpler to a larger and more complex perfection; thirdly, the fullness of mental life, the suppleness, plasticity, flexibility and wide capacity of intellect to open itself towards its Source, receive the light from above, the ordered richness of emotion and sensibility, largeness and harmonized action of the will are passages towards the development of more powerful faculties and higher life; the reason can become an intermediary between the subconscious power of the Spirit organizing the life of the animal and the superconscious power of the Spirit which becoming conscient can organize the existence and life of a spiritual Supermanhood; fourthly, mind can stand on the top as the leader of the journey towards the innermost door of consciousness through its functioning of gathering and reflection, meditation, fixed contemplation, the absorbed dwelling of the mind on its object; fifthly, it is not a seer of occult imperatives that necessitate the movement of creation but a half light thrown from the Infinite, a half view taken for the whole, a pale refracted light idealized as the burning body of the Sun and its splendour; its idealized vision does not arrive at the essence of Being but it is only an inferior mode of Nature; sixthly, from ordinary point of view its knowledge is an intellectual appreciation of the facts of life, mind and matter and the laws that govern them and it is undertaken partly for the pure satisfaction of the intellect, partly for practical efficiency and is used in helping, saving and liberating or hurting, oppressing and destroying others; seventhly, in proportion as we become more mental, we attain to a subtler action of our whole nature which becomes more apt to reflect and receive higher thoughts, a purer will, more inward influences, striving to enlarge itself and pressing against the concealed body of true gnosis; initially mind is

satisfied with first Spiritual enlightenment, then afterwards it finds that to rest satisfied here would be to rest in partial knowledge and realizes subsequently that it has to go on heightening and enlarging the consciousness indefinitely; eighthly, if its passage is through crooked ways of error, ignorance and falsehood still its impulse is truth seeking, truth finding and truth creation and finally its goal is always Integral Knowledge; ninthly, mind has to learn to awaken to the true seeking of the Soul veiled within itself, to the Reality from which all things hold their truth, to the Consciousness of which all consciousness are multiple entities, to the Power from which all get what force of being they have within them, to Delight to which all delight are partial figures.

The limitation of mind is that firstly, fear, desire and sorrow are recognized as diseases of the mind, born of its sense of division and limitation; it is an inveterate divider of the Indivisible and its observation and understanding is always incomplete, uncertain, relative, partial and inconclusive, and it's out going action and creation is still more confused, narrow, inferior and imperfect; the error of practical reason is an excessive subjection to apparent facts of existence and makes life artificial and rationally mechanical, deprives it of its spontaneity and vitality, prevents the freedom and expansion of the Spirit and not courageous enough to carry the profounder facts of potentiality to their logical conclusion; secondly, mental activity is restricted to this life, limited in time, space, scope and form, life that is death, hunger and incapacity attempting to become life that is immortality, satisfied delight and omnipotence; so long as there is a mixed action and the mental constructions and imaginations are allowed to operate, this passivity of intuitive mind to the higher light, the truth light, cannot be complete or securely dominate and there cannot therefore be a firm organization of the triple time knowledge; thirdly, mental consciousness is rescued from a sleep of inconstancy, subjected to the means it uses, limited by body and ego; it finds its relation negatively with others by various means of hostile contact and

antipathy and positively by various means of uniting contact and sympathy; fourthly, mind seeks for the delight and the self-luminous Divine Consciousness and finds only the apparent negations of pleasure, pain, grief, indifference and the dualities which is again merely a certain trick of false reception of our divided mental being; it is not our true state at all but only a fragmentary formulation or discoloured spray of conscious-force tossed up by the infinite sea of our self-existence; fifthly, the veil or lid created by mind prevents the attainment and realization of the Divine; mind with its exclusive concentration cannot bridge the gulf between the passive and active *Brahman* and it builds a wall of non-communication between the two and puts itself away from the dynamic aspect of Consciousness; sixthly, mind is a power of ignorance and acts always partially and by limitation, it may even forget itself in a complete inconstance, or nescience, awaken from it to the ignorance of a partial knowledge and move from the ignorance towards a complete knowledge; and even if it arrived at integral knowledge, it would still be by a sort of putting together, a mental and intellectual arrangement, an artificial unity, a surface manipulation of things and not an essential and real oneness and not the spiritual change of consciousness; seventhly, mental truth is always an intellectual, emotional and sensational representation and not the direct truth, not the truth itself in its body and essence; eighthly, the mental man thinks and sees on the level of present life and is oblivious of past and future lives or all life; his main basis of knowledge is the present moment with a ill grasped glimpse into the past and blind look towards the future, he bases himself on actual appearance of outward things and oblivious of the vast domain of inner living; and ninthly, when the intellectual reason is applied to the disciplining of infrarational life, it constantly forces on life a control, a measure, an artificial procrustean rule that succeeds either by hardening life or killing it or constrains it into rigid forms and conventions that ends by a revolt of life, a decay or disruption of systems and imprisons its capacity; or our nature is shaped rigidly by the practice of the ideals constructed by human mind and to limit ourselves by it is to restrict the growth of our larger Self; it is

still more difficult for the reason to understand and handle with the suprarational life and the reason is lost in the largeness, subtlety, profundity and complexity of intuitive movement and guidance. And falsity of thought with all its mental constructions can be eliminated by intervention of greater felicity of Knowledge, Truth, Self and Nature.

Mind indeed can never be a perfect instrument of the Spirit; a supreme self-expression is not possible in its movements because to separate, divide, limit is its very character and its nature is reflected, diluted and diffused or a narrowly intensive light and sets up willed barriers against higher faculties; it cannot give free admission to the vast and comprehensive self-existent luminosity and joy of the Spirit and all Truth's infinities because by that it would lose itself in an un-reconciled variety, an undetermined immensity and would be unable to act and proceed to practical consequences and an effective creation. At first when the Supramental pressure falls on the unpurified mind a contrary phenomenon may for a time appear. That is due to several causes. First, there may be a disturbance, even a derangement created by impact of the greater hardly measurable power on an inferior consciousness which is not capable of responding to it organically or even perhaps of bearing the pressure; secondly, the very fact of the simultaneous and yet uncoordinated activity of two quite different forces, especially if the mind insists on its own way, if it tries obstinately or violently to profit by the Supermind instead of giving itself up to it and its purpose and acting as a transmitting channel, if it is not sufficiently passive and obedient to the higher guidance, may lead to a great excitation of power but also an increased disorder and obstructor of power and light that comes from above; there is a disparateness between the Supramental consciousness in which the Purusha now stands, thinks and wills and the mental, vital and physical consciousness through which he has to effectuate its light and knowledge; he lives and sees with an ideal consciousness, but he has yet in his lower self to make it entirely practical and effective; otherwise he can only act with a greater or less Spiritual effectiveness through an internal

communication with others on the Spiritual level and on the higher mental level that is most easily affected by it, but the effect is diminished and is retarded by the inferiority or lack of the integral play of the being; this can only be remedied by the Supramental taking hold of and Supramentalising the mental, the vital and the physical consciousness, --transforming them, that is to say, into moulds of the Supramental nature; thirdly, mind can be qualified for the transmission of Supramental force much more easily if there is a previous Yogic preparation and long purification of lower nature, a passivity of the mind calmly and strongly open to the Spirit and reason's plasticity towards all sides and all aspects of self-development; otherwise there will be much difficulty in getting rid of the discord or disparateness between the ideal Supramentality and the mental transmitting instruments, the mind channel, the heart, the sense, the nervous and the physical being.

Recapitulation:

All human problems would move harmoniously to their right solution if physical mind, vital mind and intellect could act free from all impurity, perversion and intrusions of Subconscient and surrounding life energy and if that energy could be made to obey their right command, *adesh*, from subliminal and superconscient plane. The task of integral Yoga is to link these three lower mental planes fully with the Supra-physical, Supra-vital and Supra-mental and to transform the physical sense organ of sight, sound, smell, taste and touch dominated by physical and vital mind into the nature of something subtler, freer, greater truth, more spiritually concrete substance and more plastic Subliminal, Psychic, Spiritual and Supramental sense which seem to be the most difficult task and if the last and lowest physical mind is transformed then it will be the greatest instrument for holding the Supramental in the Physical consciousness.

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