

# The Sunlit Path



**Sri Aurobindo Chair of Integral Studies**

**Sardar Patel University**

**Vallabh Vidyanagar**

**India**

**15 February, 2025**






**Volume 18 Issue 216**



## Contents

Page No.

### Living Words:

 The Illumined Mind	Sri Aurobindo	3
 The Proper Function of The Intellect	The Mother	6
 The Central Thought	The Mother	8
 Types of Meditation	Nolini Kanta Gupta	10
 Acknowledgements		15



## The Illumined Mind

Sri Aurobindo

**The Illumined Mind does not work primarily by thought, but by vision; thought is here only a subordinate movement expressive of sight.** The human mind, which relies mainly on thought, conceives that to be the highest or the main process of knowledge, but in the spiritual order thought is a secondary and a not indispensable process. In its form of verbal thought, it can almost be described as a concession made by Knowledge to the Ignorance, because that Ignorance is incapable of making truth wholly lucid and intelligible to itself in all its extent and manifold implications except through the clarifying precision of significant sounds; it cannot do without this device to give to ideas an exact outline and an expressive body. But it is evident that this is a device, a machinery; thought in itself, in its origin on the higher levels of consciousness, is a perception, a cognitive seizing of the object or of some truth of things which is a powerful but still a minor and secondary result of spiritual vision, a comparatively external and superficial regard of the self upon the self, the subject upon itself or something of itself as object: for all there is a diversity and multiplicity of the self.

In mind there is a surface response of perception to the contact of an observed or discovered object, fact or truth and a consequent conceptual formulation of it; but in the spiritual light there is a deeper perceptive

response from the very substance of consciousness and a comprehending formulation in that substance, an exact figure or revelatory ideograph in the stuff of the being,—nothing more, no verbal representation is needed for the precision and completeness of this thought knowledge.

Thought creates a representative image of Truth; it offers that to the mind as a means of holding Truth and making it an object of knowledge; but the body itself of Truth is caught and exactly held in the sunlight of a deeper spiritual sight to which the representative figure created by thought is secondary and derivative, powerful for communication of knowledge, but not indispensable for reception or possession of knowledge.

**A consciousness that proceeds by sight, the consciousness of the seer, is a greater power for knowledge than the consciousness of the thinker.** The perceptual power of the inner sight is greater and more direct than the perceptual power of thought: it is a spiritual sense that seizes something of the substance of Truth and not only her figure; but it outlines the figure also and at the same time catches the significance of the figure, and it can embody her with a finer and bolder revealing outline and a larger comprehension and power of totality than thought-conception can manage.

**As the Higher Mind brings a greater consciousness into the being through the spiritual idea and its power of truth, so the Illumined Mind brings in a still greater consciousness through a Truth Sight and Truth Light and its seeing and seizing power.** It can effect a more powerful and dynamic integration; it illumines the thought-mind with a direct inner vision and



inspiration, brings a spiritual sight into the heart and a spiritual light and energy into its feeling and emotion, imparts to the life-force a spiritual urge, a truth inspiration that dynamises the action and exalts the life movements; it infuses into the sense direct and total power of spiritual sensation so that our vital and physical being can contact and meet concretely, quite as intensely as the mind and emotion can conceive and perceive and feel, the Divine in all things; it throws on the physical mind a transforming light that breaks its limitations, its conservative inertia, replaces its narrow thought-power and its doubts by sight and pours luminosity and consciousness into the very cells of the body. **In the transformation by the Higher Mind the spiritual sage and thinker would find his total and dynamic fulfilment; in the transformation by the Illumined Mind there would be a similar fulfilment for the seer, the illumined mystic, those in whom the soul lives in vision and in a direct sense and experience: for it is from these higher sources that they receive their light and to rise into that light and live there would be their ascension to their native empire.** (1)



**Illumined Mind**  
**The activity of correct perception.**  
**The Mother**

## The Proper Function of The Intellect

### The Mother

***What is the proper function of the intellect? Is it a help or a hindrance to Sadhana?***

*Whether the intellect is a help or a hindrance depends upon the person and upon the way in which it is used. There is a true movement of the intellect and there is a wrong movement; one helps, the other hinders. The intellect that believes too much in its own importance and wants satisfaction for its own sake, is an obstacle to the higher realisation.*

*But this is true not in any special sense or for the intellect alone, but generally and of other faculties as well. For example, people do not regard an all-engrossing satisfaction of the vital desires or the animal appetites as a virtue; the moral sense is accepted as a mentor to tell one the bounds that one may not transgress. It is only in his intellectual activities that man thinks he can do without any such mentor or censor!*

*Any part of the being that keeps to its proper place and plays its appointed role is helpful; but directly it steps beyond its sphere, it becomes twisted and perverted and therefore false.*

*A power has the right movement when it is set into activity for the divine's purpose; it has the wrong movement when it is set into activity for its own*

satisfaction.

*The intellect, in its true nature, is an instrument of expression and action. It is something like an intermediary between the true knowledge, whose seat is in the higher regions above the mind, and realisation here below.*

*The intellect or, generally speaking, the mind gives the form; the vital puts in the dynamism and life-power; the material comes in last and embodies.*

(2)



### **Devotion**

**Modest and fragrant, it gives itself without asking anything in return.**

**The Mother**

## The Central Thought The Mother

**WE ARE meeting for the last time this year—at least** physically, for I hope we shall always remain united in thought, at all events in the same desire for progress, for perfection.

This desire should always be the centre of our action, animating our will, for, whatever the goal we set ourselves, whatever the duty which devolves to us, whatever the work we have to achieve, in order to attain this goal, to fulfil this duty, to accomplish this work to the best of our ability, we must progress at each moment, we must use yesterday as the stepping-stone to tomorrow.

Life is in perpetual movement, in perpetual transformation. However great or learned or wise one may be, he who does not follow the great current of universal life in an ever ascending march, inevitably moves towards downfall, towards the dissolution of his conscious being.

This has been expressed very forcefully by Pythagoras, in the eloquent words recently pronounced here by Mr. Han Byner.

And these words led me to decide against summarising in this last meeting what has been the object of our study course.



We have attempted to give you some advice on how to develop, sharpen, widen, liberate and deepen your thought, for on the value of our thought depends the value of our being and our action.

This advice has often been repeated through the ages, at all times, in all countries, by the great Instructors.

Those who have seriously studied the methods of evolution laid down in all the great centres of initiation, in Chaldea, in Tibet, in China, in Egypt, in India, in Cappadocia, will find them everywhere identical in substance behind their varied forms.

For all these methods of development can be epitomised in one sublime teaching, the very teaching that Pythagoras gave to his disciples and which Mr. Han Byner has told us about.

**The Self of each individual and the great universal Self are one; we bear God within ourselves.**

*19 April 1912*

*(3)*



## Types of Meditation

**Nolini Kanta Gupta**

THE first is to think on one subject in a continuous logical order. When, for example, you have to find the solution of a problem, you go step by step from one operation to another in a chain till you finally arrive at the conclusion. The thought is withdrawn from all other objects and is canalised along a single line. This is a kind of meditation, although it may not be usually known by that name. It marks a progress in the make-up of the human consciousness.

For normally the mind moves at random, thoughts run about on many subjects, various, contrary and contradictory, from moment to moment. There is neither direction, consistency nor organisation: it is a confused mass of incomplete, inchoate thoughts.

The control and organisation of this mass, to start with, in a limited sphere and in a definite direction, the rejection of the unnecessary and the irrelevant and the marshalling and ordering of the required elements form the first exercise towards mental growth.

All high intelligence, all effective wielding of thought power needs this discipline. Under the present circumstances of the world the school-life gives the best opportunity for this development. This is a meditation that should be obligatory and universal.

The next type we may call concentration, instead of meditation. Here we do not pursue a thought-line, but fix the thought upon one object unmoved. It means a further process of withdrawing the consciousness from its habitual outgoing and dispersive movement.

The thought is held at a point and attention is focussed upon it: it is continuous and unbroken attention, for example, upon an idea, a phrase (mantra) or an image.

One can concentrate also upon a physical point, say, fixing the gaze upon the tip of one's nose, or on a luminous point outside etc. In this discipline the whole mind is gathered together and focussed: or, everything else is shut out leaving only one thing upon which all the light of the consciousness is directed. It is a standstill consciousness, like a flame erect and immobile in a windless place.

There is a third grade when the mind becomes a void, all thoughts being driven out, all vibrations tranquillised. It is a wide silence suffused with a still luminosity. The operation is difficult.

For it means a kind of continuous and methodical drainage or rarefaction which takes more or less a very long time.

First you throw' out well-formed ideas and notions, processes and products of reasoning and judgment – the bigger waves, as it were; as soon as these

subside you find there are smaller waves below or behind – half-formed thoughts, budding ideas, fugitive notions and so on; when these too are quieted down, you come across still another layer of smaller ripples of thought, close to sensations, nervous reactions, vibrations of the brain-mind, rudimentary precepts, etc., etc.

One may go on like that if not *ad infinitum*, at least, to a considerable length. One arrives in the end at what is practically a vacuum, to all intents and purposes a silent mind.

Even then it is a difficult and arduous process and may not be as absolute as one may expect. There are other surer and even perhaps easier processes to attain the same end.

Thus instead of striving and struggling and forcing your will upon the restless waves, you simply relax yourself, bypass them as it were, await and aspire and open yourself towards the Silence that is above: call for the silence with trust and reliance and it comes not unoften as a massive inundation, a glacial sweep and automatically overwhelms you, drowning and filling you from top to toe.

There is also another way: to contact, to enter into the Mother's Presence. Mother's Presence means all the realisations to which we aspire concretised, brought down, near to us, within our human reach.

We have not to travel far and wide, mount to inaccessible heights, labour



and strain – with blood and sweat and tears – to get what we want: all the gettings are ready-made there in our atmosphere, we have only to know and perceive, open something in us for them to flow in.

That is perhaps the action of Grace: silence, absolute silence, not only in the mind, but in the whole being, can come this way too.

The last process gives us the clue to the fourth type of meditation – the type, in fact, which is recommended for us, both because it is the easiest – following as it does the line of least resistance, also because it gives the fullness of the result demanded. Instead of trying to manipulate the mental force with one's personal will and effort, instead of seeking to control and command the consciousness, the best thing to do would be to remain quiet as far as it is normally possible for one without struggle and then turn the gaze to the other side, deep inward or high upward, become more conscious of the light, the Will that brought you to this Path, to be alive with the secret delight, the flaming aspiration that is there within you behind all the turbid turmoil of the surface life and consciousness.

This Presence and Guidance will of itself place before you the elements and movements that are to be rejected and those that are to be accepted and given your sincere assent those that help you in doing the necessary gesture. Indeed, if you do not resist too much, it will throw out what is to be thrown out and bring in what is to be brought in.

That is how the instrument will be cleansed and refined. Silence will be put

in, for that is the basis; but not silence alone, for it will be unified with a new dynamism expressing the Divine's Will-personal choice there will be none, neither for absolute quietude nor for mere activity. (4)



## **Purity**

**True purity has a lovely fragrance.**

**The Mother**

## Acknowledgements

All passages from the writings of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother are copyright of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, India and taken with kind permission of Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust. Their titles and captions are chosen by the editor. The sources of the short passages in the present issue are:

1. Sri Aurobindo, CWSA, 22, 979-81
2. The Mother, CWM, 3,33
3. The Mother, CWM, 2, 97-98
4. Nolini Kanta Gupta, **Collected Works of Nolini Kanta Gupta - Vol. 3, pp.220-222**

**The Sunlit Path** is an e magazine of **Sri Aurobindo Chair of Integral Studies, Sardar Patel University**. It can be viewed at the University webpage: [http://www.spuvvn.edu/academics/academic\\_chairs/aurobindo/](http://www.spuvvn.edu/academics/academic_chairs/aurobindo/)

Editor: Dr. Bhalendu S. Vaishnav, Chairperson, **Sri Aurobindo Chair of Integral Studies, Sardar Patel University, Vallabh Vidyanagar, 388120, Gujarat, India**. Contact: Department of Medicine, Pramukhswami Medical College, Bhaikaka University, Karamsad 388325, Gujarat, India.

e mail: [Sriaurobindochair@gmail.com](mailto:Sriaurobindochair@gmail.com)