

On the Nature of Integral Consciousness

Part 3 of ?¹

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. . . no self; there's no supreme Self . . .² How are you going to reconcile these two? Quite a nasty problem, in many ways. Well, I happened to run across a sentence which somehow or other made things click, and a tremendous idea began to unfold. Now, that was inside there. It seemed while unfolding that it was something that would fit into verbal concepts rather readily and the working out was perfectly clear. Then when I came to the problem of trying to cast it down into verbal concepts, it was again a labor of enormous difficulty. I had to use every resource I could draw upon including quite an elaborate development of some mathematical symbolism for the image, and then with the feeling that it never came through adequately. And yet on the inner level of the thought itself, it was very clear and definite.

Now, here is an example of the operating of what is known as the “higher mind.” It is the first—it is the last stage in the descent of the knowledge before there is the separation and segregation within the “ignorance.” Below the higher mind we enter the ignorance where we have a combination of knowledge and ignorance at the best; but on the level of the higher mind it was in the field of the authentic knowledge. But while the higher mind may have power enough to effect a transformation of the intellectual mind, and perhaps of the heart, it does not have the power to effectively influence and transform the lower nature. It moves on a level of a dispassionate, detached, otherworldly thought. It moves in a great peace; not here do you have the *anandas* that fill the body. There is another, a subtler delight that goes with it in which the body does not seem to participate at all. It doesn't reach below up here. This whole sphere doesn't reach below the upper portion of the head, and yet you have a sphere here that seems to have enormous power, enormous sweep going off into infinity; but leaves untouched all the lower nature. When the task of transforming the lower nature is faced, a still higher power is required.

We come then to a second step in the series of spiritual mind. This is what is called the “illuminative mind,” which is not a mind that thinks on its own level, but is a mind of Vision—it *sees* truth; it doesn't *think* truth. What it brings comes with the force of Light, tends far more to stir the quality of enthusiasm than the higher mind, and for that reason can pierce into the lower nature further to arouse more of a response within it. The higher mind, when developed, gives us the spiritual *sage*. When the center of gravity of the being is on the level of the illuminative mind, we have the *seer*. Very commonly the experience of the illuminative mind will be an inner sense of Light, though that is not necessarily the case. The sense of Light may become a sense of luminousness rather than

¹ This may be the third lecture in the series by Dr. Waltmann and Franklin Merrell-Wolff. Unfortunately, we do not know how many lectures were given in this series.

² Part of this discourse is missing at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of this audio recording.

of a light seen. This is true if the intellectual mind has been especially prepared for the reception of it. If there is a reasonably complete assimilation of the Light of the illuminative mind, there probably would be little or no sense of a light seen, but an indeterminate sense of luminousness. But here we have a power that is inadequate to more than partly reach down into the lower nature to effect its transformation, and the result is that a still higher power—still mental—is drawn into action.

This is called by Sri Aurobindo the level of “intuition.” Now, intuition has its manifestations down in the mind, and in the vital, and even in the physical. We have the ordinary manifestations in instinct, and so on. There’s vital intuition and there is mental intuition, but the illuminative level, on its own level . . .

. . . perverted descends from it. In its lower manifestations, it often produces results that are not correct, and that is the reason why rational man so often is unimpressed by intuition. The difficulty grows out of the fact that in its descent into the ignorance, it comes into a clouding and distorting field so that you do not get its true and pure effect. On its own level, as far as it goes, it is veridical; it is correct. But its limitation is this: that it comes like lightning streaks, like a cutting knife, and illuminates a specific zone so that it’s very sharply and clearly seen; but all around you have the connections with other zones, other stages of the total problem of consciousness and life which have not been illuminated by that one lightning streak.

Now, at this point, one of two things may be done. One may supplement the intuition with the reason, use it as a suggestion, and fill in the linkages that are lacking. But there’s another possibility which belongs to the yoga, and that is to call upon the intuition for a further intuition to correct the one that is—or to complete the one that is inadequate. There may be a question of how to apply it in action. You draw upon another intuition to show how it may be applied in action; and if this process is continued far enough, if the individual becomes sufficiently adept, then his consciousness may become a massed lighting field of intuitions—to use a figure drawn from the Sanskrit. You might see something like this in the case of a dark open field on a dark night and there’s an electric storm. Sometimes you only get single lightning flash that illumines a limited area in there; you get a glimpse of it, then it’s gone. It’s very sharp while it lasts, but it’s enveloped by a lot of darkness, a vaster darkness all around it. Well, your lightning may come faster and faster; the darkness becomes weaker. And then in these extreme storms when there’s a stroke somewhere all the time, you get a luminous that spreads over the whole field. Nonetheless, it is a field of strokes, of cuts; and while it is a power that can go on still further into the transformation of the nature, it is not sufficient for the final steps. And this will lead us on to the highest phase of mind as such, which at the same time is the highest phase of the lower hemisphere of being, beyond which we enter the authentic transcendent. This “overmind” may be contrasted with the intuition in that it is like a vast massive consciousness cosmic in its sweep and extent, and when it acts we do not have the gaps that appear in even the most continuous and massed lightning zone.

Now, I want to illustrate a difference here that’s rather subtle. Let me take you into mathematics for an illustration. It’s a fairly advanced zone, but first of all we’ll start with our numbers—our ordinary numbers. We have the integers, 1, 2, 3, 4, to which we add the negative integers of -1, -2, -3, and so on; and we have the fractions between the integers with which you’re familiar, both positive and negative; and then we can fill in

what we call irrational numbers like the square root of 2, and so on; and all of these numbers we can place upon a line corresponding to the points of the line starting with one central point which we call zero—positive numbers going one way and negative numbers going the other way: +1 here and -1 here. We should have a blackboard, by the way. Then we have another number that becomes introduced known as the imaginary or the square root of -1, the technical symbol being the small letter *i*. These numbers are represented on a line that's vertical to our first line passing through the zero point. We can have the imaginary numbers appearing as multiples with any of the real numbers as one of the multiples. In other words, we can have $1i$, $2i$, $3i$, and so on, or the square root of $2i$, or $\frac{1}{2}i$. So we have all of the same numbers in the vertical line that we have in the horizontal. Then we can get combinations of these two—the imaginaries and the real numbers—such as $ai + b$, and to represent all of these complex numbers, we have to use a plane surface.

Now, it would seem that if we wrote down all of the numbers there were and made them correspond to the points in that plane, we'd have that plane completely filled. As a matter of fact, we don't. There's an infinity of numbers there, but the plane is not completely filled, although it would look like it to the eye if you had all of the points—one point for every number down in that plane—all of these complex numbers. Actually that plane would be something like the field of the sky with a thick mass of stars in it but spaces between the stars far vaster than the stars themselves. Those points would have relatively infinite distances between them, although to the eye it would seem as though the field were thickly filled.

Now then, let this body of numbers I've outlined to you represent the effect of intuition at the level of massed lightnings. The various points represented by these numbers in our total complex number system representing the strikings of those massed lightnings. Now, in this zone where only these points are, there lie another kind of number known as transcendental numbers which are difficult to find and yet we know that they are infinitely more numerous than all of the numbers I have named. You'll have to take this on faith. When we have introduced the transcendental numbers then we have a true massed field. Now we take that whole totality and let it represent overmind.

Now, I don't know whether the figure has illuminated it at all or not. It would help a little better if I had a blackboard perhaps, and also it would help a little better if you had your mathematics. But I'm in a field where if I'm going to give a suggestion of what we're talking about I can't draw upon ordinary elements of our experience. Up in this zone the only place where I can find figures that are at all effective are in mathematics, and everything else is strained; and physics helps a little. Modern physical theory helps to some extent—mathematical physics. But practically nothing else except as crude figures.

Now, at last we've got a power that can go an enormous way in transforming the nature, but at this point, when the yogin has become awake at this point, he has cosmic consciousness. His consciousness moves in terms of an infinity. It moves in terms of eternals, in terms of vast masses, not only at great heights but enormous spreads.

Now, all this, all that I've given you in the four stages of spiritual mind is but an overture to "Supermind," to that which is the future possibility of man. The supramental

transformation is the thing we're leading to; and all of these steps, all of these four steps are within the field of yoga; and many stop at different levels in those four steps have known Realization. So you have a yoga or a Realization built upon Realization, built upon Realization. But the fact is that once one has broken through the first Realization, there is a pressure that tends to pull him on just as far as he can possibly go. And though he may have spent a lifetime or a group of lifetimes to get that first Realization, then in days you can have these things tumbling down into the consciousness, descending into the consciousness, and a drive pulling the consciousness up to the very limit of all you can take, so that it is as though there were a galloping through ranges that are in their total differential vast as compared to the total development from the rock up to the highest reach of the intellect—over which took eons.

Now, that isn't too strange. Compare the powers of mechanics, on one hand, with the power . . .