

A NEW WAY OF LIVING

Essays on Human Evolution & Transformation



Roy Posner

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INTRODUCTION

GrowthOnline.org founder Roy Posner presents ~400 short essays on human evolution and transformation. Influenced by the Indian sage and seer Sri Aurobindo, Roy offers startlingly new insights into the human condition, and the emergence of a new consciousness and way of living for individuals and society. Among the topics covered are the process of creation and accomplishment, the keys to attracting sudden good fortune, how to experience the spiritual dimension of life, insights into the character of life, the meaning of world events in light of our evolutionary potential, and many others. Note: several entries appear more than once as they relate to several topics.

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PERSONAL GROWTH

What We Can Become

You Become What You Believe You Can Become

"You are what you believe in. You become that which you believe you can become." (The Bhagavad-Gita)

"We are infinite in nature, and we can manifest that in our lives as infinite accomplishment, success, and happiness."

There was a poor farmer in India who dreamed of being a happy poor farmer. He toiled and toiled as a young man. Then he broke out of a mold and changed. Within a decade, he became a happy multimillionaire industrialist and government leader.

There was an automobile company, Chrysler, that was almost out of business. A consultant sent the leader a note telling him that not only could the company avoid bankruptcy but that it could become the most profitable company in the industry. Within ten years, that is exactly what happened.

These are but a few examples of individuals and institutions who believed in the unbelievable. An individual, a business, a government is limited only by its beliefs. A highly successful, out-of-control individual can become a model of organization and stability, while a stolid, conservative individual can become a dynamic, energized, creative human being.

Could it be that how we see ourselves is only a mental belief? That if we were to change the belief, the reality would also change? If this is true, and we think it is, then any individual can alter the course of his or her life, enabling vast, unimagined success and joy.

Human Choice: The Ultimate Determinant

Though these many forces come into play in life, there is a fundamental force that directs our lives. It is our own will and desires in life that to a great extent determine the outcomes in life. If a man wants financial security, then his action, whether he is conscious of it or not, will lead him to become more secure in life. Therefore, we can say that the ultimate determinate in our lives is human choice, what we really desire and will in the first place. Whatever we desire, be it financial security, love, high position, fame, creative outlet, high achievement, etc. or any combination of these will ultimately affect the outcome of achievement and happiness in life. This is not to say that our capacities

and character, the social atmosphere and conditions, and the other hidden patterns of life that we have outlined above won't come into play. It is just to point out that the starting point for most outcomes in our lives is our inner wants, and desires, which we are given the freedom to seek out in our lives. We may not get to our deepest desires in the manner expected, but ultimately we are moving in that direction.

A man wondered why no matter how hard he tried that he never really became prosperous. He then thought back on his life to his early 20's and remembered how idealistic he was; how he really wanted to write about the new changes in the world, and otherwise educate others to new developments and possibilities. He later became an instructor who taught others, and he edited a web site where he explained new age ideas for personal and social growth. (Up to that time, he never became prosperous because gaining wealth was never critical to his life. He could, of course, change course and could make prosperity a central driving force in his life if he truly wished to do so. It's his choice.)

Accomplishment and the Sanction of One's Emotions

Here is another way of putting it. An individual may *think* about ways to improve himself, but that is not enough to accomplish a thing in life. He can even try (i.e.) to accomplish something at a greater level, but that might not bring in the desired results. When the mind decides to accomplish, it needs the *sanction of the vital, the emotions*. When there is a desire, a deep emotion to accomplish a thing, it gains force and will of purpose. Thought to accomplish a thing without the emotional desire and need, will ultimately leave things as they are. When the sanction of the emotions is obtained, accomplishment of the thing gathers force, and attracts positive circumstance from life.

For example, an individual might want to obtain more money in his life. However, at an emotional level this individual might feel secure and self-satisfied in his current state (he may or not be conscious that he feels this way!). Perhaps he seeks freedom more than material gain as money. He will not accomplish what his mind thinks is necessary. Money will not come to such an individual, even if he thinks he needs more money. On the other hand, a deep-felt want, hunger, ambition for money will unleash positive responses from life, and money will be attracted to such an individual. Furthermore, if he takes a physical action, i.e. he acts on this emotion, he completes the process that will attract money to him in his life. He has gathered the full force to accomplish.

The filmmaker Ken Burns was working on a film on baseball. In the middle of it, he conceived of a film on the history of jazz. He thought it a great idea, and felt it would be an extension of his work on the baseball film. After a number of years, no action was taken on the jazz film even though he conceived of it earlier on, and could have begun some initial preparation of the film even as he was working on the baseball film. Only years later did he feel an *emotional stirring* to work on the jazz project. From that point, it came about very quickly, and with great intensity and organization.

(PS. The physical creation of the film was relatively easy, even a joyous occasion, because the emotional sense was always behind.)

The Determinants of Who We Are and What We Can Become

There are several factors that shape who we are, ranging from outermost influences to the innermost.

One popular notion, which has a degree of truth, is that we are shaped by our environment -- i.e. we are the product of the society we are born into. E.g. if we are born poor with little opportunity to rise, our character is shaped along these lines. Thus, with this influence, we may have little desire to rise up since all seems hopeless. This is perhaps the most outer determinant in shaping who we are and what we can become.

At the next level "in", it is said that we are shaped by our parents. As they raise us, so we are. It is true that the parental influence is substantial, though I suspect it is more than we believe -- especially from the biased parent's perspective.

At a deeper level still, we are a product of our genetic disposition. This is undoubtedly the case, as when we are born, our lives are already shaped by our inherited character, which shows itself through such aspects of our nature as our psychological strength vs. weakness, intelligence vs. stupidity, aspiration and will vs. dullness, capacity vs. lack of it, and so forth. Of course, that genetic inheritance comes from our ancestors, often our grandparents or other relatives, and not necessarily our parents.

Deeper still we can say that we have come into this life for a purpose, and *that* is shaping who we are. In other words, we have taken a birth to rise to a higher level. We feel compelled to do certain things in life that almost seem destiny-like. That inner will of our being to move in a certain direction is an even greater determinant of who we are and what we can become. Of course, the more conscious we are, the more we will sense and then fulfill that subtle, driving determinant that wishes to fulfill life's purpose.

This in turn leads us to an even deeper determinant, our *Soul's* purpose. The True Self, the Psychic/Soul Being within has given birth in our self so that it can absorb the essence of the growth we make as individuals in life. That would suggest that an element of the Soul too is evolving. It is through our personal growth and successes, it absorbs new aspects that it sought when it entered our body at birth, and thus it evolves. It then withdraws and rests or enters a new individual for further progress. Thus, the Psychic Being is an ultimate inner determinant of what we are and who we can become which is inextricably connected with the subtle, driving life's purpose. (Beyond the inner Psychic/Soul Being as determinant, there is the universal and transcendent spiritual purpose we serve in the cosmic scheme of things; both as an individual and as a member of the human race. I will leave that issue for another time.)

And yet, the *ultimate* determinant of our lives are the *choices* we make. It is what we choose to become that has the greatest influence. The more conscious we are, the more we will sense our ultimate purposes; including the evolving soul's purpose and our life purpose. If we are in touch with our deeper self within, down to that evolving Psychic/Soul element, and if we are connected to the greater truths of knowledge above through the spiritualized mind of intuition and revelation, we come in touch with the highest possibilities of what we can become. We can then choose to become those things, fulfilling all purposes -- personal, soul, and cosmic. Thus, human choice made through our highest consciousness an awareness become the ultimate determinant of what we are and who we can become.

Making an Impact on the World

Blink and Tipping Point author Malcolm Gladwell indicates in his new book *Outliers* that those who have reached the pinnacles of success have done so because they were born at a particular time when vast opportunities presented themselves. He point out how Bill Gates and Steve Jobs, who are of the same generation, rose to the heights as new, emerging technologies began to appear in the computer and electronics fields. They were thus a product of their times. Gladwell also points out that it is those who actually *seized* emerging opportunities were the ones who climbed the pinnacles of success. For after all, millions are part of any given generation, yet it is only those who catch the emerging wave who are able to ride it to the top. Gladwell also suggests that local influences also helped forge their place in the history of their times. E.g., Bill Gates had access to a computer system as a young teen, something others were not fortunate to have had. Thus, the confluence of generational and local opportunity, plus the ability to seize the moment propelled these individuals to greatness in their fields.

At the Human Science project, a collaborative undertaking of members of Mother's Service Society (Pondicherry, India), Growth Online, and others, we address a multitude of emerging issues in the world, including the Character of Life, the Evolution of Society, the Nature of Money, and others. One other division of the site focuses on an understanding of the factors that enable individuals to change the world. We call this area 'Change Makers', and there I have begun to document the factors that have enabled noted individuals throughout history -- such as Elizabeth I, Martin Luther, Winston Churchill, Michael Gorbachev, Bill Gates, and Steve Jobs -- to rise to the pinnacles of success, vastly influencing society. There are the to-be-expected determinants of such great accomplishment, such as energy, intention, focus, drive, will, personal values, organization, determination, psychological strength, skills and knowledge, and right attitude. Also included are several factors addressed by Gladwell's *Outliers*, including generational possibilities, the current social support system for the individual, and most noteworthy, the ability to latch on to a great opportunity, enabling one to catch the emerging wave of society.

At the Change Makers section of Human Science, we also address other, less understood, more *subtle* forces that propel individuals to the top of their field and affecting society around them. These inner behaviors express through instances of "life response," i.e. sudden good fortune. For example, one individual in a given situation is able to control his emotions when his integrity is falsely attacked, which causes sudden positive developments to move in his direction. Another person reverses a cherished (false) belief, which again sets in motion positive events that conspire to take him to the top of his field. These subtle inner behavioral changes attract just those circumstances that give that person the opportunity and energy to rise to the society-influencing heights. Thus, it is not merely the obvious conditions that catapult one to the stars, but subtle changes of consciousness within.

How then can you practically benefit from these ideas? Are you interested in moving to the top of your field or having a major impact on the world around you. If so, then why not examine the variety of factors that enable it to happen. Look for several key determinants that you are deficient in, and then make a concerted effort to upgrade in those areas. As a result, life's circumstance will suddenly turn positive in ways you would never have imagined. Then you too can become a true Change Maker in your field and make a great impact on the world.

Four Levels of Human Progress

An individual is fortunate if he makes even a modicum of psychological progress in his life. E.g., it is rare indeed for a dull, dim-witted individual develops a new level of mental vibrancy, or a weak individual takes to a modestly higher degree of psychological strength. The same holds true for our own limitations and propensities.

To help us measure our true progress, we can develop a scale that ranges from *growth to development to evolution to transformation*.

Most of us are fully capable of *growing*, in the sense that we are obtain to obtain *more of what we already have*. E.g. an individual, who has a house, builds an add-on facility in the back yard; or a sales person who had 20 individual boutiques as accounts, eventually acquires 40. That type of progress is *horizontal*, as it is more of the same thing. More knowledge, more money, more relations, more of what we already are capable of.

Development on the other hand is of a higher order. It is more of a vertical progress, where we are able to attain some quality of being, capacity, or level of achievement that we did not have before. E.g., the sales person who had 20 boutique accounts has developed a new ability that has enabled him to attract a *chain* of stores as clients,

which is a new type of account. Perhaps he has acquired greater psychological toughness, or developed a new level of interpersonal skills that made this higher order achievement possible.

Most of us have made some progress along these lines, though not very often. Our attainments are mostly of more of what we already had, i.e. horizontal *growth*, instead of the movement to another plane as in vertical *development*.

There are also a few who don't even have the aspiration for minimal progress at the same level. Such an attitude will often lead to *regression* in life.

Above development is an even greater form of progress. It is human *evolution*. When a weak person becomes a strong person, that is evolution. When an uneducated dolt becomes a well-read expert in a field, there is certainly evolution there. It is in essence a movement and progress to *an entirely new plane of being*.

When a wildly emotional person becomes a psychologically stable and reasonable individual, they move from the lower vital plane to a higher, mental one. It is an evolutionary movement. If that same person goes further and is able to maintain a constant level of calm and peace within, then that individual has even attained a modicum of *spiritual* evolution.

Finally, the greatest form of progress, even beyond evolution, is human *transformation*. It normally entails a radical change in our nature. It is not only an evolutionary movement from one plane to a higher plane of being, but the *permanent settling* there so that the radical change becomes second nature to us. It is virtually unheard of, yet remains a measure of ultimate progress in life. E.g., the once emotional, non-stable person has now progressed to become calm and serene in all aspects of his being, while serving as a beacon of inner peace for others in the world.

Whatever the level of change we seek -- progress, development, evolution, transformation -- the key will be the level of *aspiration* we bring to bear. If the change we seek is sincere and intense, we will rise up rapidly -- in terms of accomplishment, conscious awareness, and joy in being alive.

Overcoming Our Limitations

Take Inventory of Yourself as the First Step to Endless Progress

We are an amalgam of capacities and virtues. Each of us has exemplary, average, and weak parts of our nature and character. Over the course of our lives, we succeed because of our strengths, but are held back because of our weaknesses. We could argue metaphysically that our soul has taken birth in our bodies so that it can advance itself through our growth and development. From the "negative side," we progress by turning our negative propensities into positive ones. Those truly on the path of personal growth dedicate their lives to this process.

Though there are dozens if not hundred major and minor endowments, and capacities of our being, we can identify several constellations of traits that will indicate the general state of our strengths and weaknesses in life. If we identify say one or two of the weaker ones, make the concerted effort to overcome them, not only will we progress, develop, and evolve as individuals, but we will tend to accomplish at far greater levels in life, which will lead to experiences of constant joy and delight in being alive.

Consider the following list, determine which ones are false for you, i.e. where your weaknesses lie, pick out one or two where you can improve yourself, and come up with a plan to overcome them. By doing so, your life will never be the same, as you will quickly be propelled towards the pinnacles of success, and feel a constant joy and happiness through that process.

- I am psychologically strong.
- I am organized in all facets of my being.
- I have the necessary knowledge and skills to be successful in my work.
- I am continually self-giving, instead of being selfish.
- I really love the work I am doing. I have a passion for it.
- I have eminently positive attitudes toward everyone, and everything in life.
- I am willing to give up old repeating habits.
- I think for myself, and avoid the herd mentality.
- I am rational, taking in all points of view.
- I am filled with energy all of the time.
- I have a deep aspiration to improve myself in life.
- I work hard, and continually make a persevering effort.

One individual determined that he could be more self-giving, less selfish, and work harder. Another, that she was psychologically weak; that she found it difficult to give up old habits; and that it was difficult to have an aspiration for something more than what she currently was. When each examined the reasons these were the case, and made the concerted effort to overcome these limiting traits, their lives improved dramatically, even overwhelmingly, in short order. I.e. life constantly responded to their efforts with instances of sudden good fortune (i.e. "life response"). They were able to quickly move to the heights of success, becoming leaders in their fields, and all the while becoming infinitely creative, bordering on genius. Their lives were not only then filled with abundant material success, but was accompanied by a deep contentment and joy within.

It is the power of taking inventory of yourself, and acting on it to attract the infinite potentials of life.

Overcoming our Blind Spots

After the independence of India and its partition from Pakistan in 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru led the country through its transition to democracy and a new modernity. He was a man deeply committed to his country, with a strong mind and a driving idealism. There has been no greater leader of that emerging Asian nation since.

And yet he was tripped up by one view that he seemed so sure of. He proclaimed that China was the very embodiment of his own high idealism. Unfortunately, he would be disillusioned not long after when in 1962 China invaded and run roughshod over his own beloved country. It was a blind spot of belief for sure.

In the 1920s and 30s Western idealists railed at the corruption of capitalism, and signs of emerging nationalism and fascism both in their own countries and abroad. They were highly perceptive in their analysis, sounding warnings that the people of the world would fail to heed. Many of these same writers, thinkers, and advocates saw the Soviet Union under Stalin as a real alternative, a potential Paradise on Earth, in opposition to the corruption and greed of a money-driven West. It took Solzhenitsyn's 'The Gulag Archipelago' to fire the first salvos against this view. Since then it has been discovered that Stalin was responsible for the deaths of nearly 30 million people of his fellow

citizens. He had that many shot and killed in a reign of terror unknown in the history of the world.

In America, it has been faddish amongst the conservative elite to proclaim that unfettered, laissez-faire capitalism was the salve of the masses. That wealth and profits of the rich would trickle down to the masses below. That theory proved to be a disaster, as we saw from the recent financial crisis that threatened to ruin the economies of the world.

Like nations, peoples, leaders, philosophies, we too as individuals also have blind spots that we are ignorant of and oblivious to. We dearly hold onto one or more critical opinions or beliefs that are in direct contradiction to the truth -- affecting not only our own selves, but the people around us.

Perhaps those closest to us see that blind spot. Or maybe it is someone at a distance who perceives it, yet cannot express it in deference to our feelings. Then who amongst us are willing to confront such "certainties," challenging their truth worthiness? I am not sure if there is one in a thousand. If there such a person, then that brave soul is intellectually honest and sincere. For after all, who has the gumption to lay out one's attitudes and values, and deconstruct them to determine their accuracy and truth-value? E.g., who would make the effort to go to that goldmine and fount of information -- the Internet -- and discover the relative or absolute merit of one's most cherished beliefs? Whether we are a scientist, a leader, an advocate, or a parent, we are likely blind to something significant in our lives. And yet we are also capable of determining its veracity by gathering evidence from the world around us.

There is another approach to overcoming such ruinous blind spots. We can subscribe to an inner, psychological approach I call "taking another man's point of view." I.e. the next time you have a conversation or otherwise communicate with someone, make the effort to embrace the other person's point of view, no matter how far-fetched. See a glimmering of truth in it, while releasing your attachment to your own entrenched position. Doing so indicates an open mind that seeks knowledge and truth in life; that is open to a wider domain of possibilities. In that way, it is a spiritual-like approach to one's existence.

One interesting result of taking this approach is that it attracts sudden good fortune. For example, let's say we have been invited to a party by a friend or spouse, but are not inclined to go. Though others have recommended it in the past, we feel certain that it will be a waste of time. However, when we shift from our entrenched opinion and embrace their suggestion, then when you arrive at the reception, several startling conditions present themselves. Not only do you find yourself enjoying yourself, but a long lost friend appears on the scene, energizing you to no end. Best of all, you meet someone who offers you a great opportunity in a field closely related to your own. When you embrace another's point of view, life opens up and you are catapulted forward.

There is one other way to ascertain a blind spot. In the course of your day, watch for any significant negative conditions that appears in your life. It is a sure sign of something amiss in your being, for everything that appears on the outside is a reflection of your inner condition. For example, if an important project is suddenly cancelled, find the corresponding negative attitude or belief. It is a blind spot that has been there for a while, affecting present and past conditions.

Deconstructing our beliefs, taking the other person's point of view, and relating negative outcomes to inner perceptions, are three powerful methods to reveal and overcome our blind spots, which in turn will help us avoid a lot of pain and suffering in life. Will you then be brave and ask a confident, relative, or friend if there is something key that you are blind to? Or will you try to deconstruct several key beliefs to see their truth-value? Or will you fully embrace another's perspective today? Or will you take the time to

consider how negative outcomes are direct reflections of wanting attitudes, opinions, and beliefs? If you make that effort, your entire life will be turned around, for nothing has a greater effect than identifying a blind spot and turning it into the light of truth.

Bridging the Psychological and Spiritual Gap

In one sense, we look on our lives as a constant "becoming." We move from moment to moment, focused on those things coming up, whether it involves dressing for the morning, our next duty at work, an important meeting with a client, a trip across country, a holiday get-together, and so forth. There is a differential in time between the present and the events or activities we perceive coming in the near or distant future. We know it is just a matter of time for that gap to be bridged. It is simply the unfolding of life taking its course.

There is also a differential between what we are now and what we can become in terms of our own inner psychological framework and status. Here, we are not so eager to bridge this gap, as it requires us to change our nature. Actually, we are hardly even aware of the gap in the first place.

Yet, from one point of view, to fill the gap can be said to be the single reason we are here on earth. We each serve a purpose, which requires us to move from what we are to what we need to become. Not merely in terms of more success and achievement, but in terms of a greater consciousness and higher perspective. In addition, there is the perspective from the soul's point of view. It waits on us as well, and hopes we make the necessary effort to fill that gap. When we do, i.e. when we move higher in psychological and spiritual status, our soul -- i.e. our evolving soul -- becomes more satisfied in its appetite to acquire new knowledge in its journey of fulfillment through time. Or, to put it simply, when we grow by overcoming the differential between who we are and what we can become, our evolving soul within is nourished and grows as well. What can be more important in life than the fulfillment of our Truest Nature and Highest Self?

How then do we bridge the gap? We can be practical and note a series of key deficiencies that will help us overcome that psychological and spiritual differential. Very often the single key is a wanting attitude or two -- perhaps toward work, or others, or towards life itself. For example, one person persistently has problems with certain types of people, while maintaining an attitude of slovenliness and disorganization. Another person is egotistical, and does not readily take to be selfless and self-giving behavior. A third is reluctant to take up new opportunities, is persistently late, and is intolerant of new ideas. Each person in this way has a psychological differential between what he is now and what he can become. When that person overcomes the gap, that individual not only progresses rapidly, but so does his evolving soul within, thus serving an ultimate individual purpose.

There is another way to look at the results that come when we overcome the gap between who we are now and what we can become. Life suddenly and abundantly responds with good fortune. At that point where we overcome that wanting attitude, habit, belief, opinion, motive, etc., life immediately moves towards us with better conditions. E.g., when we overcome our disdain for several individuals, we are suddenly offered a better paying job; or a six-month back pain suddenly disappears; or a love longed for now shows interest from their side; a long-term conflict suddenly resolves itself; and so forth. It is a subtle phenomenon of life that occurs just beyond the normal bounds of our awareness. When we make the effort to overcome the gap between who we are and what we should become, life responds with such "instantaneous miraculousness" -- as the impossible suddenly becomes possible, overcoming traditional views of what is possible, and how space and time function. By bridging the gap, the

infinite potentials of life replace the current finite that we are experiencing; and a potential future we could have attained over time moves into the present.

The first step then is to recognize that this differential exists. The second step is to list out the deficiencies between what we are what we can become. The third step is to make the attempt to overcome at least one or two of them. The fourth step is to be sincere in our efforts. The fifth step will be to experience the sudden good fortune that comes our way as a result of making this concerted psychological effort.

In addition to crossing the psychological chasm, we can also bridge the gap between our *human* selves and our *spiritual* selves. This is not for everyone, but for those who feel they are inwardly called to do so. One individual feels deeply that he must change from the ordinary propensity towards selfishness, and become selfless and more self-giving. That is a spiritual change. Another person feels compelled to create a deep sense of calm and stillness within so that he can far better meet the exigencies of life in the future. That can mature into the spiritual poise of "equality" -- where one is immune from the negative and positive intensities of life, which is a spiritual change as well. A third person wishes to move his center of consciousness inward from which he can look out on the world as "witness," and thereby be more in tune with the environment. It is the spiritual experience of Oneness with the world and life.

Each individual can formulate his own custom "spiritual portfolio," and aspire to bridge the gap between his current human functioning and that spiritual functioning. When he makes the effort to do so, not only will he be set firmly on the road to a radically different spirit-oriented existence, but life will respond with good fortune all around him, presenting the world as a Marvel, that he takes deep delight in. For example, one person aspired to bring the spiritual Force into his life. He then opened himself to that Power before engaging in activities, and found that nearly every time life would respond with sudden good fortune. In that way, he has begun to bridge not only the psychological between his current and his future nature, but the spiritual gap as well.

Mr. Darcy's 180 Degree Change

Those who are dedicated to *personal growth* develop an aspiration to bring about significant change in their lives. That is one level of progress. There is an even greater one. Those who commit themselves to *personal evolution and transformation* have accepted the possibility of reversing their nature 180 degrees from its current status. It is such a stupendous undertaking -- it may even seem impossible to the uninitiated -- that it can only occur by connecting with and making use of the spiritual powers of life. In fact, developing a spirit-based super-Nature is that individual's ultimate purpose and goal in life.

As a result of this staggering commitment, that person may change a dozen plus major character flaws; uplift and perfect all aspect of his physical, vital, psychological, and mental being; overcome a number of fixed habits that drag on him; shed wanting attitudes that demean him, and give up false opinions that limit him -- infusing all parts of his being, and every activity he engages with the Spirit. In the end, that individual comes to surrender his very life and purpose to the Divine Will and Intent. It is a stupendous effort for which he will be rewarded with ultimate pleasure, bliss, and delight (i.e. "Ananda" in the East); an astonishing power over every aspect of life; and the peace and serenity of Eternity.

Against this experiment in transformative living is the life of the normal modern-day individual. If we examine his life, we will see that if he changes but one *single* fixed habit or one virulent attitude, it is considered a significant achievement. In one sense, it is quite significant. And yet, it still isn't 1/100th, or even 1/1000th of what the

transformed individual will come to realize in the course of his life. Such are the low expectations we have for people to change.

And yet, on occasion there are individuals who make a *significant* inner change that *far* surpass the norm. For example, when we examine the literature and films of the world, we often see how the plot turns at the point where a person overcomes a critical limiting personal quality -- such as a wanting attitude, or a falsely held belief. As a result, life not only changes for the better for that person, but others are deeply affected as well. That transition and change in that individual's life invariably attract instances of sudden good fortune, bringing the story to a happy and satisfying resolution. It is a mini-episode, instance of human progress.

Perhaps one reason such works kindle our interest is that we subconsciously perceive the need to make related changes in our own lives. Unfortunately, we are not prone to take up that challenge, mainly because (1) we are not conscious of our defects, and (2) we are in the habit of enjoying who we are.

In Jane Austin's *Pride and Prejudice*, we see a dramatic exception to this rule in the person of Mr. Darcy. At first arrogant and filled with pride, by the end of the story he overcomes his limitations of character in full. It is an astonishing and rare change for any individual! As a result, life responds with overwhelming good fortune, as he wins over the woman he loves -- Miss Eliza Bennet. We see how life's circumstances dovetail with his efforts. Through a conscious decision to change an egregious part of his nature, he attracts the right circumstances that afford him an opportunity to save Eliza's family from scandal. As a result, he is able to show her his true, noble character, which in the end wins her over, culminating in their happy marriage. Actually, it leads to much more, as their marriage forges a powerful new alliance between the aristocracy and the gentleman-farmer classes of rural England; where earlier they were in an indifferent, if not contentious relationship. In other words, Darcy's inner-psychological adjustment is so substantial that life not only responds and uplifts his own personal fortunes, but also those of the wider society around him.

Darcy's formidable change is a distant echo of the ultimate transformative changes made by those who take to *conscious* evolution -- i.e. yoga. In one sense, both reverse themselves 180 degrees. The difference is that those who take to personal transformation will attempt to change every part of their nature -- physical, vital, mental, and spiritual, whereas Darcy only seeks to overcome but one or two major character flaws. And yet, what Darcy has achieved is still formidable, especially for one who is essentially a non-seeker.

His overpowering internal change is also something that we can try to emulate in our own lives. If Darcy can make such a great internal adjustment and attract stupendous rewards from life, then we can at least try to overcome one or two limitations in our own character. *It is the minimum that life asks of us.* Anything less and we could say that we are merely taking up space.

As a result of making that relatively modest effort, life will respond out of all proportion, and we will attract our hearts desire -- whether through the sudden blossoming of our career, or through a kindled romance (as was in the case with Darcy), or through some other area of our life that Nature deems worth uplifting.

The question then is whether we are sincerely interested in such change, and if so, what part of being needs changing. If we take up that effort to change, life will certainly respond. Darcy took to overcoming wanting aspects of his character and attracted the woman of his dreams, and influenced the course of that society's development. The modern, integral yogi seeks to change every part of his nature so he can attain a super-nature -- becoming a harbinger of a new, spirit-oriented way of living. What wanting

qualities do we seek to change in ourselves, and what level of effort will we undertake to make that happen?

Overcoming Our Illusions and Superstitions that Replaces the Finite with the Infinite

Each of us carry around our own illusions and superstitions. Quietly, we even *revel* in them. While we are oblivious to our limitations, other individuals see them quite clearly. They shake their head in disbelief as we go on believing and behaving this way. Of course, we are quite aware of their deficiencies as well.

How then can we move beyond our blind view of things -- whether it takes shape as a wanting attitude; a very limited understanding of a matter; or a prejudiced viewpoint?

First, it requires a willingness on our part to be objective, and look at our limited perceptions straight on. It requires a sincere evaluation of our strengths and weaknesses as a person, and identify those qualities of perception that are limiting.

Second, it requires us the will to shed those wanting attitudes and beliefs, especially those that are most virulent. This demands some inner urge and compulsion to live our lives differently; some recognition that our current way of living is just not right and we therefore need to overcome those qualities if we are to live a happy, productive, good, and energizing life.

Finally, it demands that we make the concerted inner and outer effort to overcome that which we have identified as limiting in our outlook. If e.g. I notice that I don't give others a chance to speak their mind; that I tend to jump to conclusions before they have their say; that I am constantly insisting on my opinion on a particular matter, and then make the sincere, persevering effort to overcome them, I will begin the great journey out of personal ignorance.

Naturally, such an undertaking will be quite challenging, for it takes a certain psychological strength, a certain development of character, a certain level of sincerity to persevere in shedding one's own particular illusion and superstitions. But for those who do identify our flawed attitudes, opinions, and beliefs, and make the sincere effort to overcome them, the results will be infinitely rewarding.

Among them: We will have better relationships with others; we will become far more successful in our work; and we feel a greater sense of calm and inner fulfillment. We will also become better people, garnering the admiration of our friends, family members, and associates. Perhaps most interesting that inner and outer effort to change our mental framework will tend to evoke sudden good fortune from the world around us.

Ultimately, by shedding our illusions and superstitions, we turn our current finite existence into an increasingly infinite-like reality. All that seemed limited and constrained is swept away, and replaced by a vast field of Possibility. Through our higher awareness and knowledge, we see life in its varied aspects, instead of the part, limited, or downright false perceptions of the past. As a result, we increasingly become aware of more of life's truths, of its subtle messages, of its hidden movements and principles. As we perceive life in its myriad of truths and facets, our lives become infinitely more fulfilled. At that point, we have left our essential Ignorance far behind, and arrived at the shores of knowledge and truth of our infinite potential.

Factors, Strategies that Enable Accomplishment

Overview

Accomplishment in Life: Levels

Before we discuss the factors that come into play that account for great accomplishment in life, let's discuss different level of accomplishment that an individual can accomplish at. From our experience, we have observed that there are four fundamental levels at which an individual can accomplish -- *survival, growth, development, and evolution.*

Survival

Living at the survival level one has a conscious or unconscious desire to *remain at the current level* of achievement in life. There is no attempt to rise above one's current achievement, nor is there an effort to raise one's own personal capacities. There is neither a quantitative expansion at one's current level of life, let alone a qualitative movement to a potential higher level.

A real world example of accomplishment at the level of survival is an instructor who has achieved a degree of success that keeps him comfortable, has a defined set of skills, and has no desire, or makes no effort, to acquire more work or perhaps even update his skills to be current to the present needs of his students.

Growth

Growth, on the other hand, is an *expansion of one's current level* of achievement. For example improving on a skill, expanding knowledge in a field or another field at the same level, and earning more through greater effort are each expressions of growth. You are accomplishing more, but it is more at the *same level*. It is a *horizontal* expansion at the same level of capacity and achievement; i.e. an *expansion of one's current level* of achievement.

To accomplish at the level of growth, the instructor would learn the latest versions of the current programs he is teaching, and seek out work with other companies to teach the same things he has been teaching in the past. He would be aspiring for more of the same work.

Development

Development is an *expansion to a higher level* of achievement. One may acquire a new or *higher* level skill, accept and implement a *higher* personal value, change a negative personal attitude into a positive attitude, acquire a higher order of knowledge, develops a new faith in life, or in general respond from a higher center than one's current level of development and consciousness. These are all expressions of personal development. In all these instances, you are accomplishing at a *higher level*, not merely more at the same level. Thus, we say that it is a *vertical* expansion to a new level of capacity and achievement.

In our real world example at the level of development our instructor could have an aspiration to teach whole new subjects that are outside of his normal curricula, make contact with new types of clients so he can teach these courses, write a book on the topic of this new area, change a few personal attitudes in his life (such as attitudes towards his superiors), or decide to more fully implement in his work a value that he already cherishes, such as the value that students should come away with real knowledge in his classroom, rather than mere satisfaction of the experience.

Evolution

Evolution is an elevation of one's being to a *whole new higher plane of consciousness and status of being*. For example, an emotional individual could shift from the state where his desires and attachments predominate to becoming a person of more refined or higher emotions; or move from being a predominantly emotional person to becoming a more mental and thoughtful person whose life shifts from one of emotional intensity to thoughtfulness. Perhaps the individual rises to acquiring spiritual capacities, such as the ability to experience knowledge as illuminations of light or intuition, or to find his personal evolving soul.

In these instances, you are accomplishing from a *higher plane of consciousness* than you were from before. It is a *vertical leap* to a new plane of capacity and achievement; an elevation of one's being to a *whole new higher plane of consciousness*.

In our real world example of accomplishment at the level of evolution, our instructor could change from being a person who competently performs his courses in an orderly and efficient manner to an individual who is passionate about teaching and emotionally involved with his students. He may also develop whole new theories of instruction based on his new level of consciousness, rather than merely being a teacher of existing ideas. His overall attitudes toward his work has completely changed to the positive. He might move from emotional interaction with students to a true knowledge; even utilizing spiritual methods as a foundation for his work.

Transformation

At the frontiers of the development of the being is the transformation of the individual to a whole other functioning in life. One can embody a permanent inner change that connects one to the inner, soul being; one can enable a spiritual transformation into the spiritual planes of life above mind; and one can make the ultimate supramental transformation into a whole new type of being, beyond even the human functioning we now witness. As we embody these three transformational frontiers, we open to the infinite potentials of life, where we can thus accomplish infinitely in life.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT:

-Based on this discussion consider which level of accomplishment you are currently at -- survival, growth, development, evolution, or transformation. (Most people are at the first level.) Then consider how you could move to the next highest type (e.g. survival to growth, growth to development, development to evolution).

-Think of some other people who have moved among the levels. Do you know of a person who abruptly changed course, say from the level of growth (more of the same) to that of development (to a whole new qualitative level of accomplishment). If so, discover the history and aspects of that person's life that enabled that leap to take place. Consider how you would do something similar in your life. Do you also know of someone who has made a radical change of character, making what one would call an evolutionary leap?

Keys to Infinite Success in Life

Often when people reach the pinnacles of success it is because of a special gift or talent -- such as the ability to lead and inspire, or the capacity to develop a breakthrough product, or because they are driven to succeed. Other times, people reach the top simply because they make a steady, plodding effort in the course of their careers.

In research on what enables achievement in life, I have identified three levels of determining factors. The first contains the foundation -- i.e. the essentials for success.

The second contains the more subtle, psychological factors that bring it about. And the third are the inner spiritual-like determinants of achievement. Let's examine each of these more closely.

The first level contains the foundation and essential determining factors for success in life. They include our ability to target specific goals we aim to accomplish; our intense desire and will that they come about; our level of personal organization; the talent and skill we bring to bear; and the psychological strength we demonstrate in the face of life's challenges. *Aspiration, focus, will, organization, skill, and strength are thus the basic building blocks of success.* Together they release enormous physical, vital, and mental energy that tends to attract vast success for that individual. Let's examine several theoretical examples.

Consider the case of Eliza Gonzales, who currently demonstrates these capacities in spades. She has a keen interest in becoming a project portfolio manager; has the intense drive to make it happen; is fully organized in all aspects of her life; has all the necessary skills to accomplish; and has an innate ability to persevere in the face of life's challenges. As a result, she has reached the very top of her field.

On the other hand, her colleague David Montaigne has not risen very far. Though he has had the aspiration and drive, he never developed the skills required of his position. Likewise, Sandra Lee, a co-worker of his, had the skills, but lacked the will and drive for achievement. Sanjay Aziz, a fourth member of the group, had the will and determination, but lacked focus in his life, as he was unable to formulate what he really wanted out of his career. Thus, where Eliza succeeded beyond measure, David, Sandra, and Sanjay plateaued at only modest levels of success.

The second group of factors that engender success are even more subjective and psychological. They take shape as our *attitudes and personal values*. In fact, if we examine Eliza's great success, we see that she excelled in both areas. E.g., colleagues often described how positive her attitudes were -- in particular, how she always looked on the bright side of things; how full of self-confidence she was; how she always took responsibility for problems rather than blaming others; and how she always happily accepted what life had put before her. In this way, her attitudes -- about herself, about others, and about life -- will exemplify.

That cannot be said of the others in the group, each of whom had one or more significant wanting attitudes. One colleague had problems getting along with several staffers; another was consistently unhappy with the work assigned to her; and a third had a cynical, constricted view of what he could accomplish. As a result, each were burdened by psychological constraints that prevented them from reaching their full potential.

In addition to her very positive attitudes, there was something else Eliza had in abundance -- highly developed personal values. Everyone noticed how tolerant she was; how she encouraged others to express their opinions and make contributions; how committed she was to bridging the gap between the company and the surrounding community; and how dedicated she was for social change and improvement. Eliza's values and beliefs sharpened her aspirations in life, gave her focus and energy, and enriched every activity she engaged in. On the other hand, her colleagues had trouble formulating their guiding principles and values, which created an intensity and energy vacuum in their careers. This conspicuous absence of clearly defined and applied personal values kept these members of the group from ever moving beyond the mediocre.

Finally, the third group of factors that determine our success level consists of *spiritual-like behaviors and values* that tend to attract *ultimate* achievement. Among them are-

- Our capacity to consciously seek out and embrace all sides of an issue, rather than just the one we are attached to.
- Our ability to respond calmly and with equal poise to the difficulties and challenges that come our way.
- Our ability to see negatives as positives in disguise, and adjust our behavior accordingly.
- Our capacity to be selfless and self-giving towards others, instead of acting out of ego and selfishness.
- Our ability to express our gratitude to others and towards life for all they have given us.
- Our faith that all will turn out well; that in fact a Higher Power is working on our behalf.
- Our ability to open to the spiritual Force before engaging in any act, which has the effect of bringing life under our control.
- Our ability to think for ourselves, instead of being influenced by the herd.
- Our capacity for self-scrutiny; i.e. our aspiration for personal growth and improvement.
- Our desire to seek out life in full, and live a life of adventure and challenge.

All of the factors described above have one thing in common: they lead to ever-greater success in life. Taken *together* however, they generate an *overwhelming* power that brings about ultimate, infinite-like achievement. In fact, if we examine how such success comes to us, we will see that it arrives in two distinct fashions -- through the "to-be-expected way" and through the "life response way." The former means that as we embrace these achievement factors, we move ahead in a logical and practical way. E.g., people will take notice of our new behaviors, skills, actions, etc., and we are rewarded through the to-be-expected channels and unfoldings of life.

The *life response* method on the other hand operates much differently. In this reality, when we embrace one or more of the success factors -- particularly ones we are deficient in -- life *instantly* responds in kind, I.e. the very moment we change our inner orientation, life suddenly moves on our behalf, bringing us overwhelming good fortune. For example, if I shift away from my hostile attitude towards a co-worker, my boss suddenly appears in my office with word that I have been promoted to a much higher paying and satisfying job. This indicates the subtle, miraculous-like relationship between our inner selves and the world around us. When we change the inner, the outer instantly responds in kind.

If we can attract such powerful results by making these changes, then it only makes sense to take up the challenge. Therefore, why not review the success factors listed above, and come up with several areas where you are deficient. Then make the concerted effort to implement that change in your life. If you do, life will immediately start working on your behalf. That's precisely what happened to Eliza when she made the decision to both improve her level of cleanliness and orderliness, as well as reverse her negative attitude toward her boss. From that day on, her career began to really take off. You can do the same thing in your life, and you too will be taken to the stars!

Individual's Capacities and Character

Accomplishment is largely determined by the individual's *capacities*, which in total are demonstrated in life as the person's *character*. Our individual capacities in life are made up a combination of a number of factors including our *skills and knowledge* in the world,

our *attitudes* about ourselves, others, and things, our miscellaneous *attributes* (such as our level of clarity of goals, organization, psychological strength, energy, ambition, perseverance, and general health, amongst others); our *endowments* (such as the role our parents played in motivating us and what they provided us, and the influence of the society we live in), and our personal values (such as a belief in being practical or being results-oriented).

Together these skills, knowledge, attitudes, attributes, and values constitute our capacities to function in the world. The degree to which we have them determines our abilities to accomplish in life. Any effort to improve ourselves in any of these areas will surely go a long way to improving our ability to accomplish in life.

Results, accomplishment, success in life are determined by the right intensities of these aspects of our being.

Bringing About Success in Life in Short Order

There are a number of ways to bring about positive results in very short order instead of waiting a long period of time. Here are some recent examples I noticed in looking around or thought of where individuals consciously removed inner obstacles that enabled a very positive result to suddenly or very quickly come about:

FOCUS -- An individual focused on what was really important instead of being spread out, quickly attracting results in that area in abundance.

BOLD ACTION -- An individual was tired of seeing his organization continue to drift downward in comparison with the opposition, took a bold, new step, and thereby attracted enormous success in very short order, far exceeding his original intentions in scope and speed.

INDIVIDUALITY -- An individual went beyond the disapproval of his conventional-thinking family and peer group, made an effort in the area he was interested in, and achieved greatly in relatively short order.

OVERCAME RELUCTANCE -- A general manager decided to give up his reluctance and give in to the demands of the fans which attracted stunning results for the team, taking them from near the bottom of barrel to world champions in a single year!

OVERCAME RELUCTANCE; HARD WORK -- An individual gave up his reluctance to work extra time and attracted the sale of his life in the first five minutes of implementing his action!

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY -- A man became contrite that he was not giving enough attention to his children, and in a day or so attracted the end of a great scandal and shortly thereafter the marriage of his daughters into great wealth.

INTENTION -- A woman intensely wanted to see her daughters married off, and it came to pass in exceedingly short period of time to men of stupendous wealth.

OVERCOMING FOOLISH BEHAVIOR -- A man who had been demoted gave up his foolish habits that unexpectedly attracted the restoration of his rank in short order.

TAKING TO NON-COMPLAINING -- A man stopped complaining about his spouse's disorganization when it comes to money and paperwork, and suddenly attracted a service that took over all of her financial/organizational needs.

OVERCAME FEAR OF EXPRESSING EMOTIONS -- A man overcame his fear of expressing his true feelings, and suddenly and most unexpectedly won over the woman of his dreams.

OVERCAME OVER-ASSERTIVENESS, EGO -- A man gave up his virulent assertive attitude that was at odds with needs and desires of his subordinates that suddenly attracted a condition that enabled him to successfully complete his mission when all seemed to have lost hope.

PATIENCE, SELF-GIVINGNESS -- A captain was patient and self-giving with a difficult staffer, which enabled the latter to blossom in ways the captain would never have imagined, and in very little time.

INNOVATION, INDEPENDENCE -- A man gave up the stifling methods of his parents and took to bold new actions that enabled the team they owned to suddenly rocket ahead to the top from the depths it had been floundering in for a decade.

INNOVATION, IN TOUCH WITH SOCIAL WAVES -- A man turned around his floundering company and took it to the stars by practicing fiercely independent strategies and being in tune with the changing needs of society.

KINDNESS, SELF-GIVINGNESS -- In the midst of great, decades-long turmoil, strife, and ill-will in the family, one woman engaged in a single act of great kindness that suddenly attracted the complete dissolution of family strife in one or two days.

Achievement Concerns, Limiting Attitudes, and Higher Consciousness Strategies

In our efforts to accomplish in life, we may recognize a number of legitimate concerns, as well as wanting attitudes on our part. They can be overcome when we apply right understanding and right consciousness, which is in essence to view things from the perspective of the Spirit. Below are several of those perceived obstacles to accomplishment, each matched by one or more corresponding strategies of higher consciousness:

Fear of Failure -- Embrace the Unknown. Have faith in the Divine, the spiritual Force.

Self Doubt -- The Infinite and soul are inside us. If we go deeper, we will find our true self. Doubt will cease. Constant opening and surrendering to the Divine will give us confidence as well.

Thinking only about Our Deficiencies -- Develop a happy, cheerful, positive attitude. Deepen the self by finding the Self.

Money Concerns to Achieve -- The inner consciousness and its beliefs achieves, not money. Money is the result.

Risk Involved in Such Investments -- Be open constantly to infinite possibilities. Develop the inner strength to follow the flow and embrace change. Also, if you follow the Process of Accomplishment (From vision to organization to action), risk will be minimized, as you will know all the variables.

Quantity of Work is Increased, but Quality is Missing -- Being aware and executing higher values in the details will maximize quality, and thereby increase quantity!

Inability to Break Conventional Thinking -- We must evolve from the Social being to the True Individual who takes his cues from within, which we discover in the depths. From there we discover the deepest truths that enable us to apply the highest and widest personal and societal values. Be aware of and catch the wave of change in the environment and society.

Lack of Innovation -- Organizations can become stagnant and ossified just like we through our fixed habits and routines. Being open to doing things differently is to embrace the Unknown, which is a spiritual value.

Fear of Losing Work-Life Balance -- If we expand our energies, our perspective, we can make the pie vastly larger. Then there is room to balance a number of factors.

Fear of Relocating, Travelling Abroad Frequently (leaving the family alone) -- We must be open to everything – in time and space and place.

Fear of Fame -- It is lack of psychological strength in the substance of the nerves. We can build it up.

Fear of Competition -- The great achievers are inner directed, and care little about the competition.

Easy Going Attitude (e.g. being too soft) -- Psychological strength is the key to success and accomplishment in life.

Age Limitations (each believes that particular age is the right age to begin, else it is impossible) -- We can live from a deeper poise, in timelessness, where age is irrelevant. At any moment, at any age we have the power evoke the Infinite from the Finite.

Lack of Wisdom about Higher Ways to Success -- We can move from Ignorance to Integral Knowledge. Karmayogi has given every detail of how to make this happen.

Organizing the Lower into the Higher for Accomplishment

Karmayogi says: "Accomplishment is the equilibrium between urge and restraint. Compulsion of the lower is the achievement of the higher. Man accomplishes in spite of himself." What does he mean?

Originally or initially there is Man's urge, desire, compulsion to gain, garner, and survive in life. It is pure ego, selfishness, and greed, despite their apparent necessity at that stage of development. It even expresses as the need to dominate and conquer. It is "physicality" of the worst sort.

Yet it provides the Energy for Man to exist; as well as move forward and thrive.

For the latter to occur, Man is compelled to channel his energies for productive use, which he does through mental and vital organization. Through mental organization, the modern individual establishes goals and gives direction to his life. Vital organization occurs when his plan to move forward is supported by a corresponding Will and Urge for its execution, which releases even more energy for its accomplishment.

That organizational process brings dynamism and harmony to that which was formerly diffused, as his energies are directed and concentrated, enabling him to accomplish. (Thus, greater accomplishment is facilitated by higher organization.)

Also, to the degree Man's right Energies are brought to bear, i.e. the taking to a higher level of consciousness for that individual, life responds with sudden good fortune. Accomplishment thereby accelerates; even exponentially if the Spirit, the spiritual Force is also brought to bear.

Thus, Man succeeds despite himself; despite his physicality, ego, which are mixed up with his initial unorganized energies that are then channeled for a higher purpose, which emerge as his level of accomplishment.

This dynamic occurs not just in the past, but in the present and future as well. The equilibrium is the ongoing and ever-changing balance between the primal, physical urge to move up and the channeling of those energies for productive gain, which manifests as our level of accomplishment in life.

Two Inner Approaches that Will Catapult You to a Whole New Level of Success

Man complains that he is not as successful as he would like, yet does not understand that his inner condition is what directly blocks further accomplishment in life. There are at least two major approaches to resolving this problem. One is to look at negative circumstances occurring outside one's self, and make the necessary corresponding inner adjustment; the other is to do an evaluation of one's inner condition in life, find what is wanting, and make the necessary change. Either will attract rapid good fortune from the world.

In the first approach, I identify negative circumstance occurring in my life, and I relate it to a wanting attitude or behavior on my part. I then change that negative, and as a result, life suddenly responds in my favor, as new sources of money, work, opportunity, etc. appear out of nowhere.

This is the principle of "inner-outer correspondence" in action; that if you change the inner wanting condition, life on the outside will suddenly respond in our favor. For example, one woman who saw that her ill-will towards another had precipitated negative circumstances in a completely different area of her life, decided to change her feelings towards this individual. At one point, she even came up and congratulated her on winning a big company prize. As a result, not only did she create goodwill with this person, but the organization where they worked suddenly bestowed a highly prized, expensive gift to every employee in the firm, including the woman who changed her attitude!

This is one approach to accomplishing vastly, beyond one's current limitations. The other approach is to "take inventory" of one's self, identify several wanting qualities, and make the persevering effort to overcome them. For example, I evaluate myself in such areas as my level of cleanliness and orderliness, my skill levels, my attitude towards work, life, and myself, whether I am psychologically strong, whether the work I am doing is really what I want, whether I am fully accepting what life demands of me, whether I have a clear direction in life, and so forth. I then conclude that my living and workspace are completely disorganized, that I have no focus in my life (i.e. I am scattered in my intentions), that I procrastinate, and that I am not punctual in keeping appointments. I then develop a comprehensive plan to overcome them, and carry it by making a sincere, determined effort. In the days and weeks that follow, life *responds with miraculous-like* results. The outer has mirrored my inner condition with positive new developments. It is the phenomenon of "Life Response" in action.

Accomplishment in Life: What Creates Unfailing Success

Is it possible to insure that any activity we undertake in our lives ends in a perfect and unending success? We believe it can, so long as you understand the key factors that can create this condition. Regardless of your field of work, level at which you do your work, or the circumstances involved in your work, our research has shown that there are three essential conditions that need to be met for unfailing success to occur in any activity, goal, or pursuit.

1. Total commitment: Your decision, determination and desire to accomplish the activity, goal, or pursuit should be total and complete, to the point that it releases the full energies of your personality and generates an overflowing enthusiasm to convert that determination into action.

Energy is the basis for all accomplishment. Human energy is released when your mind, emotions and vital personality fully endorse and eagerly pursue the same goal. Where there is inner conflict or hesitation or where you act out of an understanding or accepted ideal that the emotions do not fully endorse, the release of energy will be limited and therefore the results will be limited too. Total commitment is based on total knowledge

and understanding of the requirements of the act and the role of both helpful and opposing forces.

2. Positive opinions and attitudes: All your thoughts, opinions, attitudes and motives concerning the activity should be fully positive. By "positive," we mean free of all negative elements, such as falsehood, dishonesty, exaggeration, selfishness, jealousy, anger, irritation, impatience, greed, fear, laziness, etc. All your thoughts, opinions, attitudes and motives concerning the activity should be fully positive. By "positive," we mean free of all negative elements, such as falsehood, dishonesty, exaggeration, selfishness, jealousy, anger, irritation, impatience, greed, fear, laziness, etc. All your thoughts, opinions, attitudes and motives concerning the activity should be fully positive. By "positive", we mean free of all negative elements, such as falsehood, dishonesty, exaggeration, selfishness, jealousy, anger, irritation, impatience, greed, fear, laziness, etc.

We are not saying that you must be transformed into a saint or a yogi, or even an ideal human being, but with respect to the specific activity you should elevate your thoughts, feelings and attitudes to the *highest* level of which you are capable. You may be acting for your own personal benefit, which we may term selfish, but you are always capable of considering and carrying out that action in such a way that it does not harm and may also fully benefit other people associated with the act, such as the person with whom you are negotiating a sale or purchase.

To be positive means that your energies are fully released and flow out in constructive expressions at the level of thought, words, feelings and acts, rather than getting caught up in inner or external conflicts and confrontations, which waste the energy unproductively. In essence, this means to act out of the highest personal values of which you are capable with respect to every aspect of this activity.

3. Perfect execution: Make an exhaustive and complete physical effort. Achievement in any field requires an enormous investment of energy and painstaking physical execution. Unfailing success requires that the energy be full and the execution perfect. You cannot achieve unfailing success if your actions fall short in terms of the skill or effort or perseverance required for achievement in this field. Make an exhaustive and complete physical effort. Achievement in any field requires an enormous investment of energy and painstaking physical execution. Unfailing success requires that the energy be full and the execution perfect. You cannot achieve unfailing success if your actions fall short in terms of the skill or effort or perseverance required for achievement in this field. Make an exhaustive and complete physical effort. Achievement in any field requires an enormous investment of energy and painstaking physical execution. Unfailing success requires that the energy be full and the execution perfect. You cannot achieve unfailing success if your actions fall short in terms of the skill or effort or perseverance required for achievement in this field.

Knowledge and Will Fused Enabling Ultimate Accomplishment

Accomplishment is determined by the Knowledge we have and the Will to accomplish it. E.g., in my life I see that I can rise from project manager to project leader (Knowledge), and I intensely want to make it happen (Will). When I make the effort for it to occur, life cooperates, quickly bringing the object of my desire.

On the other hand, if we have the knowledge of something without the will, or the will without the knowledge, accomplishment will be difficult if not impossible. E.g., I know how to rise from project manager to leader, but not the will to do it; or I have the will to rise to that level, but not the knowledge of how to do it. Until the two combine into a whole, real accomplishment will be a distant dream. If we have both together, and then make the persevering effort to bring it about, matched by high attitudes, then life will

cooperate from all quarters. Karmayogi calls this a Complete Act, from which life response will invariably issue.

When we rise in consciousness, our knowledge of things and our will to accomplish it begin to fuse. I.e. our rational mind and our vital/emotional energies begin to operate in tandem. From that status, we are in harmony and life tends to cooperate with our efforts. I.e. life responds.

Sri Aurobindo calls this status "Truth Consciousness," aka "Supermind." It is the fusion of Knowledge and Will. I.e. there is a complete, many-sided integral knowledge of a thing that is matched by a compulsion for its manifestation, accomplishment. This dual power is in fact how the universe came to be from a Divine source, and is something we access in our own lives.

When we open to the spiritual Force, we connect with that Truth Consciousness as Truth Power. From there, we garner -- through insight, intuition, and supramental perception - - not only the knowledge of a thing in toto, but the power for it to become real. Life responds, as time and space are overcome, and the given finite moves to the infinite. It is a way of living (and creating) that awaits humanity's future.

Lessons We Can Learn from Erin Brockovich

The film 'Erin Brockovich' is the true story of one woman's successful initiative to investigate the deaths and illnesses of dozens of individuals through the leakage of poisons into the water supply by the Pacific Gas and Electrical utility company of California. At the end of the story, Erin, working for a legal firm, wins a \$333 million settlement for the families of victims, which also includes a very substantial sum for her law firm as well as for herself. It is also a story that each of us can learn from -- especially if we hope to take our lives to the next level of success. The film not only shows her personal struggles that allowed this vast achievement, but also the social obstacles she was forced to overcome.

Although Erin demonstrated several unflattering traits -- including her provocative dress and her too-often vulgar speech -- one trait makes up for all of the others: her great *tenacity of purpose*. In this instance, Erin not only knew precisely what she wanted -- to uncover the injustice that has befallen the victims -- but pursues that goal with almost super-human effort and determination

In studying the ways individuals accomplish in life, several traits seem to stand out. First, it is imperative to have a clear vision of what one wants to accomplish. Then one is able to develop a plan to make it happen. And finally, one makes an exhaustive effort to see it through. Erin was able to embrace all three in this great period of her life. She not only had a clear vision of what she wanted to occur, not only developed right strategies to bring it about, but then implemented them through an unrelenting, persevering effort. As a result, life cooperated from all quarters -- leading not only to a vast settlement for the suffering families, but to a monumental breakthrough for victim's rights.

In addition to vision, strategies and determined implementation, there is one other factor that played an important role in Erin's stunning achievement -- the adoptions and adherence to deep personal values. At each point, Erin personally identified with the plight of the victims and felt a moral duty to bring them justice. Such deep beliefs and values guided her efforts and in the end drove her to succeed.

If she can bring about such vast results, then each of us can do the same in the areas we are predisposed toward. For example, think about your own situation for a moment, and then consider what it is that you really want to achieve in life. Now ask yourself the following questions: Do you have a very clear vision of what you want to achieve? Do

you really want to make it happen -- i.e. do you have a deep abiding passion for this to come about? If so, then do have clear strategies to make it happen? Also, are you willing to make an unrelenting, persevering effort to bring it about? If so, and if you follow through at all these levels, then life will surely cooperate with your efforts from all quarters. E.g. life will begin to present you with sudden instances of good fortune; a miraculous-like phenomenon that I call a "life response."

Now let's move on and consider the *social* dimension of Erin's extraordinary story. When any person ventures to achieve at a higher level in life, one is forced deal with the social milieu. I.e. in these situations, we will see that there are environmental forces that are trying to help us, and there as those conspire or otherwise gather to defeat us. Often that opposition can originate from most unlikely of sources. For example, one thing we notice in Erin's case is that though she is working for the great benefit of the law office, the clients, even society itself, at many points she is directly opposed by these very entities!

When a pioneer individual takes on a work that is not part of the normal routines of that society, it often opposes that individual's efforts -- even if it will, in the end, bring it great benefit! We see this phenomenon at work in various points in Erin's story -- when the lawyers continually show their misgivings about her initiative; when the people in the office are put off by her behavior missing the greater benefit she is creating for them and the victims; when her boyfriend deserts her for a time; and, most dramatically, when the eventual beneficiaries of her initiative -- the victims in the village -- gather at one point and decide to *oppose* her efforts! This shows how the groundbreaking work of a pioneer will often be opposed by various collectives, including those who stand to gain the most. It is more than an irony; it reflects a fundamental Ignorance and unconsciousness of the society in the face of a great boon. To be aware of these forces is to know the influences of life, which one can overcome through the right capacities -- of strength, attitude, right strategies, and so forth.

Fortunately for all involved, Erin's tenacity of purpose and her great psychological strength overcome the unconscious opposition of the ignorant social forces around her. She is courageous, and never despairs when the social milieu opposes. She is consistently *positive* in her attitude, believing in the rightness of her cause, and its eventual success. She also has great social skills, demonstrated by her great empathy and communication skills when interviewing the sick victims and their kin. She is not bothered by the social obstacles because in one sense she cares little about conforming to the social order. She is her own person, despite her sometimes boisterous and crude behavior. Fortunately, that offensive behavior is minor compared to the social strength she brings to bear.

By the way, we should also point out that the falsehood of the society is born out even at the end when Erin wins the case. She receives but \$2 million out of the \$333 million settlement, when she has, for all intents and purposes, single-handedly enabled this great outcome! The law firm, being a social institution, accepts the *social custom* of only giving Erin money equal to her social status and position, instead of what she really deserved. In addition, the law firm itself collects 40% of the reward. It is another indicator of the negative and false quality of institutions in society that reward the *socially-accepted* custom instead of that which is *right* and *just*.

So we can ask ourselves again: do we have the drive and will to succeed in our endeavors? Are we clear about what we want to achieve, and have the right strategies to make it come about? Do we have the strength and determination to bring our aspirations to fruition? Also, are we directed by our own beliefs, rather than being overly influenced by the social norms; and do we have the strength of purpose to persevere beyond the opposition of the social milieu around us. If we meet these conditions, then

we too can bring about successes that rival those of Erin; we too can rise to the highest pinnacles of success.

Energy and Accomplishment

Energy Accomplishes

Energy is the fuel of life. The more fuel we have, the more that we can accomplish. Children have a nearly endless supply of energy. However, as we grow older we lose a lot of the enthusiasm of our youth, and hence energy. That is not an inevitable course, however.

There are so many ways we can bring back our old energy, or increase our energy from where we are now, so that we can accomplish greatly and find real fulfillment in life. For example, we can develop a real aspiration for something to come about in our lives. Or, we can learn something challenging and new that will inspire. Or we can shift our focus away from our own selves to the needs and concerns of others. Taking to these and other practical strategies, will not only generate enthusiasm, drive, and will in our lives, but unleash a vast reservoir of raw energy.

Energy at Four Planes

It turns out that we generate energy at different levels of our being. Not only does our physical body produce energy, but so do our emotions, as well as our minds. For example, taking care of yourself and living a healthy life will generate physical energy. Similarly, something that deeply inspires us will generate emotional energy. Likewise, learning something new or challenging, or embracing a new belief or personal value will produce physical energy.

But where does all of our energy come from; i.e. where does it originate? In my view, energy's source is spiritual in nature. It originated from an Infinite consciousness that began as a Force and has now formulated itself into an ocean of energy that surrounds all things. From that universal energy has emerged a myriad of forms, including we humans, who express it at various levels -- from physical/material to vital/emotional to mental to spiritual.

Moreover, the spiritual source of energy is the expression of the *Will* of the Divine to throw out its force and formulate itself into an infinite myriad of forms in creation, including us. Likewise, we too express our own will in life, and it too is the source of energy that emerges from our being.

For example, the physical body has the will to move and act. As a result of this urge and intention of the body to be animated, energy is released. In other words, our physical will generates physical energy.

By the same token, our vital/emotional will generates vital energy. For example, when a salesperson has the desire and yearning to make a sale, he expends vital/emotional energy into the atmosphere. Vital energy is also released when we interact with others. Who has not witnessed the will, drive, and passion of a great leader, who is not only energized by the will of his or her own being, but energizes others.

Likewise, energy is also generated by the will in our minds. For example, when we perceive a goal we want to accomplish, and then make the decision to carry it out, the mind is expressing its will as well, which in turn releases large quantities of mental

energy. (In fact, just making a decision can attract positive conditions from life, as our energies attract corresponding conditions from the field of life.)

Finally, humans are capable of generating spiritual will, and thus spiritual energy, which can have an enormous influence and power over life. For example, if we center ourselves and remain calm in the face of difficulties, we are utilizing our inner, spiritual will. As a result, we release powerful spiritual energies that align with the very best conditions of life. Likewise, when we express the will of our heart in the form of deep empathy, compassion, and love towards others, we release spiritual energies that seek out the very best conditions of life. In fact, these energies have the power to change the course of our life in an instant, as life responds in overwhelming fashion to our spiritual intent.

Finally, we generate spiritual energy when we open to the spiritual Force that is in the atmosphere. When we "consecrate" an activity we are about to engage in, or offer a serious problem to that Higher Power, we evoke staggering positive conditions from life. It is in an invocation of the Will of the Divine, which produces infinite-like spiritual energies that attract overwhelming good fortune for the initiator. It is perhaps the one great secret and power of life.

Energy-Increasing Strategies

Here are several strategies to raise your level of energy:

Increase Your Aspiration

As we have indicated, energy is a product of one's will. One of the most powerful ways to generate will is by having an aspiration for something substantial or important to come about. Therefore, if you lack energy, consider some important goal you want to accomplish. If you are serious about it coming about, you will be energized to no end. If it also accomplished, then that surge of energy will sustain itself for a very long time.

Make the Full, Persevering Effort

Normally, we believe that our energy is finite. If we have to do a work, our energies will be reduced commensurate to the effort. And yet there is another perspective. If you make a *full, all-out effort* in that endeavor, you will tap into a wellspring of energy you never thought you had. For example, instead of concerning himself about a lack of energy, a trainer decided to give his all in a training session he was leading. At the end of the class, he was just bursting with energy. As we see, when you shake off any can't-do thoughts and give yourself fully to the work at hand, you tap into a fountain of energy just below the surface. Try it some time, and you will see what I mean!

Prioritize; Focus on What's Important

Sometimes we try to do too many things in life. That lack of focus in turn saps our will, which depletes our energies. However, if we focus on several things that are truly important, casting the extraneous or secondary items aside, we not only concentrate our will, producing a surge of energy, but we tend to accomplish so much more. In addition, just by taking that tact, we can attract sudden good fortune. Therefore, take inventory of the things you do, and cut back on those that are extraneous and secondary. Not only will you be more productive, but energy will continually surge from within.

Maintain Positive Attitudes; Overcome Negative Ones

It is always best to have a positive attitude in life. It not only helps you maintain a high energy level, but it invariably attracts positive conditions. On the other hand, a negative attitude will have the opposite effect. Worry, anxiety, fear, anger, depression,

restlessness, rebelliousness, impatience, unwillingness, etc. not only deplete one's energies, but attract negative circumstance from the world around us. Therefore, it is best to periodically "scan" your psychological state to see what you are thinking and feeling. If it is positive, then keep it up! However, if your attitudes are negative, stop it in its tracks. Not only will fresh energies well up inside you, but positive conditions will quickly present themselves from out of nowhere.

Hold Back an Opinion

What applies to a negative attitude also applies to an opinion. It also is an energy depleter. What is an opinion? It is a view of things that we tend to assert -- whether it is true or not. It is simply a thought and feeling that we are overly attached to, and are therefore more than happy to express in conversation. Though it is emotionally stimulating and satisfying to verbalize such opinions, our energy level tends to quickly fall off as a result.

As an experiment, the next time you are about to express an opinion, catch yourself and refrain from giving it expression. Not only will your energy level increase, but the other person is likely to soon express the very opinion you just held back! It is an example of "Silent Will" in action.

Speak Less, Speak Softly

Related to opinions, one of the most powerful ways to generate more energy is to simply speak less. Instead of verbalizing everything that is on your mind, hold back those thoughts, and energy will surge within you. Likewise, if instead of speaking loudly and boisterously, you express yourself in a low, soft voice, it will have a similar effect. This is the case because speech originates in our life center. When we speak too much or too loudly, we deplete the vital energies that originate there. Doing the opposite will not only restore or heighten our energy, but will attract positive conditions from life.

Shift Your Focus to Others

One of the most powerful ways to increase your energy is to shift your focus from your own interests and concerns to those of others. Not only will movements of selflessness, self-givingness, goodness, goodwill, and generosity generate a sense of peace within, and balance and amplifying your energies, but positive conditions will suddenly present themselves. There is no faster way to refresh your energies than by shifting from self-absorption in one's own self-interest to self-givingness towards others.

Change a Habit

Changing a common habit or routine can also increase your energy. Take any simple physical habit such as brushing your teeth, eating, writing a letter, taking a walk, cooking a meal, opening your email, etc. Instead of doing it in the old way, try to become conscious of the thoughts, feelings, sensations, and movements involved in it. Now change the way you do it. Break the habit and routine. Energy will surge through your nerves, and positive conditions will suddenly present themselves. E.g., one individual decided to walk a different route from his old routine. Not only did he come upon spectacular scenery he had never seen before, but he discovered a tucked away bookstore that contained a volume that would alter the course of his life. Needless to say, those circumstance energized him to no end.

Energy Wasting Activities

There are a number of activities in life that deplete one's energies. Many of us accept them as a normal. However, many things we commonly accept can wear us out, drain our emotions, or cloud our mind. Think about some of the items you are doing that are

depleting you of your physical, emotional, or mental energy (e.g. drinking, drugs, food indulgence, too much talking, intense sexual activity, etc.). Then try to cut back in these areas wherever possible. Your short-term energy level will rise, and you will become more enthusiastic about life, which will boost your long-term energy as well.

Our Ability to Respond to, Negotiating Obstacles

The Greater the Opposition, the Greater the Opportunity, Progress

Life has a character, just like we humans. It expresses through any number of laws -- whether overt or subtle. One particular principle is that progress in life occurs through our contradiction and conflict with others and circumstance. It is only through these adversarial relationships that each party can make a breakthrough in consciousness and thereby progress. In particular, when we find the higher harmony beyond the contradiction, then each side moves forward. Otherwise life remains in standstill or even goes backwards. If we look closely, we will see this dynamic everywhere -- in our own lives and in the world around us. It is Nature's secret method.

A closely related principles is that the greater the opposition we encounter in life, the greater the opportunity for us to rise and progress. We can observe this law in real life or in the world of literature and film.

For example, in Jane Austin's *Pride and Prejudice* there is a great scandal midway through the story when one of the Bennet sisters elopes with a scoundrel, threatening to ruin the family, both socially and financially. And yet the final outcome of that particular episode was that three of the five Bennet daughters find love, are married to attractive husbands, and come into enormous sums of money. Thus, a family once teetering on the edge of financial ruin comes into staggering good fortune. In essence, the intensity of the opposition that life brought through the elopement set in motion conditions that enabled the three marriages to occur. Because circumstance was so intensely negative, individuals reacted in such a way that caused them to come together in ways that would not have otherwise occurred.

A more recent and non-fictional version involves the case of Apple CEO Steve Jobs. In the 1980's he was tossed out of the company he founded by the board of directors for going in a direction that the company foolishly thought was reckless. Though he went through dark moments in the years that followed, he rose to the challenge, took up a number of creative initiatives, including the founding of the companies Next and Pixar, and was eventually rehired back at Apple along with the many assets he had developed while in exile. As a result, Apple, which was on the verge of bankruptcy when Jobs returned, increased its revenues by an astounding 10 times in the decade and a half that followed (on its way to many times more), making it the most powerful corporate turnaround in US history, and catapulting Apple to become a four-time in a row Fortune magazine the most admired company in the world.

In other words, intense opposition and difficulty provided Jobs with the "initiative" to strike back and take things to a new level. Adversarial conditions gave him the strength, fortitude, and determination to push his way forward and create conditions for his former company that no one would ever have imagined. Not only that, but it resulted in products that had a profound impact on the nature of society -- including the iPod, iPhone, and iPad, etc., whose sales have boomed around the world.

If you examine your own life, you will likely see this same dynamic at work; that the greatest difficulty you encountered -- whether an outer opposition or an inner demon, was the force that enabled your greatest success. Or to put it another way, the greater

the outer resistance, conflict, contradiction to our aspirations and goals, the greater the possibility for achievement and growth; i.e. the higher we can rise.

We can actually go a step further and philosophically say that the negatives we encounter are actually positives in disguise. Or better still that those negatives are simply more intense forms of the positive; providing the energy, force, and push that compels us to rise much higher.

Having said this, there is an alternate approach to progress. We can rise in consciousness and act in ways that tend to attract the positive and avoid opposition. In that way, we rise from peak to ever-higher peak of the positive. In order to do that, we will need to overcome our limitations, utilize the spiritual Force that is there to set right life's conditions, and live a life of increasingly conscious behavior. In that way, there is an intensity -- a positive intensity -- that compels us to move forward. It is not opposition, but energy and joy that drives us to the next level. This is no longer Nature's Way, but that of Spirit and Soul.

Opposition When A New Positive Force Rises

We see a fascinating phenomenon of life that reveals another aspect of its Character. It is this: When a new positive Force arises, an opposition force rises in parallel. Consider these examples:

---In the 1970s British series *Poldark* about an heroic individual who aspires to and acts to lift up the people around him through his good deeds, the opposition Warleggan clan conspire to destroy him every step of the way. Fortunately, he succeeds, despite the opposition.

---In the American Film *Unbreakable*, a man (David) acquires fantastic powers of perception and action that attracts an equal and opposite negative force (Elijah) who tries to destroy him and the world around him. Like Poldark, he rises to the occasion and is able to succeed despite the evil that opposes him.

---When Sri Aurobindo and The Mother brought a new dimension to spiritual evolution in their time, the opposition in the form of a dark force rose in Europe instigating WWII. However through a great effort of Inner consciousness and power they prevailed, ushering in a New Age where Spirit could now emerge in the course of human evolution.

---When a devotee of Theirs made the great effort to interpret Their profound wisdom in practical terms across many fields of life, a force opposed him that nearly ruined his works; and yet he too prevailed.

It is interesting to note that long-term the opposition force actually has the effect of *strengthening* the people who are positive, as they are forced to grow and evolve their character and consciousness; to utilize powers and capacities that might have ordinarily remained dormant, or not fully utilized.

Karmayogi indicates that every accomplishment in life is thus vulnerable to interference or destruction by negative influences. He indicates that the higher the accomplishment is with respect to previous levels of achievement, the greater the vulnerability.

Ultimately, the outcome of this dynamic depends on the strength of the positive side. That is, individuals as well as society achieve in this environment only when their strength is organized to contain the threat and mischief of the negative side.

There was a man who was meant for higher accomplishment, but as the opportunity emerged, his own dark past rose and confronted him. His ability to handle it successfully became the essential that enabled his further progress.

Finally, we see powerful examples of this Character of Life principle in one famous story -- Jane Austin's *Pride and Prejudice*:

In the tale, the Bennet family aspires for the marriage of their daughters to young, prosperous, available men, which would have the effect of overcoming the threat of their cousin to inherit their middle class estate. Lydia is one of the daughters. She is energetic and good-natured, but is wild, crude, and unconstrained. Darcy and Bingley are the well-to-do suitors for the Bennet daughters. However, the potential great fortune that could come to the Bennet family through these very prosperous young men is undermined by Lydia's ill behavior. She is the weak link in the family through which disaster strikes and almost cancels the great emerging positive good. Lydia's is a response of the lower consciousness of the family to the higher opportunity that has opened for them. In essence, the weakest link breaks when the strongest contemplates an upward initiative at times of great opportunity. Fortunately, in the end, the family overcomes that limitation and prevails.

Then there is Eliza, the heroine of the story, who is the eldest Bennet daughter. She is bright, independent, aware, and individualistic. In the story, there is the possibility of her romantic involvement with the very prosperous Mr. Darcy; the other hero of the novel. However, along the way she gets mixed up with Wickham, a handsome, yet treacherous man, whose deceitfulness and duplicity she is completely blind to because of her physical attraction to him. Her involvement with this individual at a time when there is a vast potential to move to a higher level of accomplishment almost ruins that opportunity. Ultimately, however her strength of character pulls her through, as she sees the light, overcomes the setback, which opens the door to her marriage to Darcy, enabling the family to rise dramatically in terms of wealth and social position.

It is interesting to note that at many if not all points the negative was curtailed, life responded with *sudden good fortune*. E.g. when Eliza finally perceived the treachery of Wickham, Darcy soon after appears with his proposal of marriage. At that stage, she had given up all hope that he was still interested in her. However, by shedding the negative influence that opposed when she was in the process of rising, she was stunned to discover that he was still in love with her, leading to his proposal, her acceptance, and their marriage, thereby changing her life and the condition of her family forever.

Accomplishment in Life: Social Environment

Beyond the individual's aspiration, capacities and character there are the actual social forces at play that lie beyond the individual's capacities or perceptions of the social environment. These include a) the real world situations, circumstance, and atmosphere that the individual finds himself in; including the social institutions he is interacting with; b) the social level he is at vs. the social level of the people he is interacting with at the social institution; c) the character of the social institution itself, including its tendencies, movement, and growth path; and d) the movements and tendencies of the society in general in which he, and the social institutions he partakes in are part of. All of these come into play as he takes his own capacities and social perceptions into this field of life. Together they determine the outcome of his ability to accomplish in life.

Let's put aside factor a and b for now, and focus on factor c for a moment; the character of the social institution itself, including its tendencies, movement, and growth path. Consider the impact of the character of a social institution, such as the employer that the individual works for, on the individual. If an individual works for a company where the collective will of the company is very strong, but where the role and the opinions of individuals are stifled, he could be severely limited in his ability to accomplish within that company to the degree he expresses his individuality. Likewise, if the company puts its resources (knowledge, power, privilege, and wealth) only in the hands of an elite few,

and if he is not in the elite, he will again be limited in his ability to accomplish. The same is true if he is part of a forgotten, ignored, or weaker part of the company, his possibilities may be limited.

Thus we can see that the character of the social institution has a dramatic effect on his ability to accomplish. The social institution can help or harm the individual through its level of organization, knowledge and skills of its people, attitudes, perceptions, values, etc.; factors that are in fact similar to the factors that determine an individual's capacities and character.

Furthermore, we can also witness the fact that there is a hierarchy of affects. The social institution itself is effected by the mores, attitudes, values, rules, procedures, and possibilities of the community and society in which it resides.

Accomplishment is influenced then by the individual's aspirations and capacities, as well as the hierarchy of capacities and character of the institutions and super institutions (i.e. the community or greater society itself) in which he tries to accomplish.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT:

-Are you availing yourself of the opportunities your social institutions (e.g. employer, community, nation, etc.) are currently presenting to you

-Are the social institutions you partake in (e.g. employer, community, nation, etc.) supportive of your initiatives for accomplishment, or they a hindrance? What are the limitations of the social institution? What action should you take as a result?

Non-Initiating ; Life's Initiatives

Initiatives of Life Succeed

Karmayogi indicates that more often than not human initiative fails. And yet if we take up the initiative of Life, we invariably succeed. The initiative of Life is that which comes to us on its own, e.g. as an opportunity or a suggestion or something directly implored. When we take up that Calling, the result is overwhelmingly likely to succeed.

A man was working at a desktop publishing center headquarters, where he was the head of the dozens of franchisee operations worldwide. One day his boss asked him to engage in some training for a franchisee at the headquarters. He thought it a pretty trivial use of his time, yet he did it nonetheless. A week or so later, two well-dressed women entered the headquarters location and asked the man if they could talk in private. They then asked him if he was interested in doing software training classes for their training company. He agreed, did several classes for the firm, which launched his 25-year training career. The women coming in was the initiative of Life, which he acceded to, opening the door to overwhelming career change and significant success.

Another example:

The same individual above was asked by devotees of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, on the behalf of Sri Karmayogi, if he would be interested in meeting at their home in Napa, California to discuss profound principles of life. Rather than balk at the opportunity, he took it up in full. For the next six weekends he was enlightened by the two devotees who shared their knowledge of the deepest insights of life as expounded by Sri Karmayogi, including the miraculous phenomenon of Life Response. Out of that discussion would come his founding of the Growth Online website that draws up to nearly 10,000 visitors per day, plus his writing of several books on the Life Response phenomenon. As we see in this case, an initiative of Life presented itself to this individual, which he took up,

which led to enormous intellectual and practical success, and his own personal and spiritual growth.

One final example; this one in the opposite direction:

That same individual was trying to raise his income in the wake of the financial crisis of 2008, and decided to create an online sales company, selling tapestries from India. Though he had some initial success, ultimately the venture failed. The reason? It was an initiative HE undertook; not which Life initiated or sanctioned, reducing the chance of success greatly, which is precisely what occurred.

There is one further level of this phenomenon to be addressed. While the initiative of Life is far more likely to create success than one's own, there is a form of it that succeeds unfailingly. It occurs when we are open to the Spirit, consecrating activities in life, out of which come the profoundest of all directions and indicators from the field of Life.

Instances where Life has been activated by the Spirit create initiatives for us that are sure to succeed when we embrace them, and do so out of all logical proportion. In these cases, the Life initiative is filled with Grace. Sometimes the Grace is disguised through non-spiritual like occasions and individuals; still it is the Spirit working nonetheless. To the degree we accept the spiritualized initiative of Life, we are catapulted to the pinnacles of accomplishment and spiritual success.

Life Coming To You Succeeds

Sri Karmayogi indicates that success is far more likely to occur when you take up an opportunity that comes your way, as opposed to when you initiate your own action.

After thinking about this issue, it occurred to me that the most important event in my training career occurred because life came to me rather than my going after it.

I was the national franchise manager of Krishna Copy, a copy and desktop publishing franchise of the 1980s and 90s. In addition to my other chores at the main, downtown San Francisco location, I had been teaching a few of the potential franchisees computer graphics software, which was rather novel at the time. A short while later, perhaps weeks, two beautifully dressed women came into the store, and spoke with my boss. They then came over to me and introduced themselves. They said they ran a new training company in the East Bay and wondered if I would be interested in doing training classes. I agreed, did several software training classes for their organization, and the rest is history. From that point on I performed well over 1000 classes over 20 years for company employees throughout California.

The fact was that life came to me. I did not seek out being an instructor. I am not sure I even wanted to be one. But that was what Life brought, and I followed the thread. When I did, I was given a successful career path that lasted well over twenty years.

In doing a study of the novel *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austin we documented how individuals initiated important actions in their lives, and in most instances either failed outright or what succeeded was fraught with limitations. However, in the instance where Life came to them, as when Mr. Darcy is forced by life to reconcile the elopement scandal, it ended in tremendous success, including the winning over of the woman of his dreams.

When we then looked around and examined other's experiences, this seemed to also be the case. Taking up an opportunity usually ends in success, while initiating one one's own succeeds far less often. The lesson being that if a real opportunity presents itself seriously consider it, rather than reject it outright or ignore it. It is very often Life summoning you to your higher calling.

When IBM approached Bill Gates at Microsoft to ask if they could use the DOS operating system, the history of personal computers was jump started. What luck had come into Gates' life from an opportunity that had come to him from the world! His company's destiny and fortune was now set.

In my case, opportunity came on its own, likely in response to something inside me, to some deeper intention, to my potential personal growth, even to the limited instruction I had given others earlier.

In the end, I did not initiate. Instead Life did via an opportunity, which as Sri Karmayogi indicates is far more likely to end in success when enjoined than when initiated from one's own side.

Postscript: If it is the case that the opportunity propelled me forward rather than an initiative, then it is worth asking what attracted it in the first place. I believe one reason is that while at the main location, I swallowed my pride when my boss asked me to do some one-on-one training, instead of my normal franchise functions, which carried more prestige. When I accepted in full the task before me of training some of the new franchisees on graphics programs, I attracted the two women who would change the course of my career. It is an indication that when we accept the givens of life before us, instead of complaining that we would rather be doing something else, life steps in and sends you to the stars!

Life's Initiative Succeed Much More Often than Your Own

We know that taking up Life's initiatives succeed much more often than when we initiate. When we act on Life's initiative, we open to a wider field of existence than when we initiate on our own. Through life's initiative, things are effortless, indicating a higher consciousness at work, where initiating on own requires greater effort, and in one sense has an ego element in it. (The only ego involved in Life coming to us initiatives is if we reject the opportunity!)

Life's initiatives seem to have "Knowledge" of the nature of our life and what would be good for our personal development and our success. It is as if it is a cosmic urging -- in our case Mother -- for us to grow. It is as if it is aligned with our soul's purpose.

We should also keep in mind that life's initiatives is often (always?) a life response to our own shift in consciousness to a higher level sometime before. Opportunity coming this way is a response to something we did earlier in consciousness, such as overcoming a negative attitude, or firming up an intention, or making an extraordinary effort, etc.

A study can be made on this principle alone, collecting all manner of incidents and then examining the causes. These will subtly indicate why there is a higher, wider consciousness at work in Life-based initiatives coming to us.

It turns out that the phenomenon has become much clearer in my mind the past several years as I have thought back of the events of my life, examining which were life's initiative and which were my own. I have increasingly documented these at the various websites I am associated with.

READER: It is difficult to give examples from one's own personal life to support yr view point. However fiction readily comes to the rescue. We see in *Pride & Prejudice* enough incidents to support yr view. For example all self-chosen initiatives fail here. Collins's proposal to Lissy fails, so does Darcy's proposal to her. Mrs. Bennet's attempts to make

Bingley propose to Jane only end up in driving him away. Catherine De Berg's attempts to scold Lissy fail also.

However we see Life's initiatives bear good fruit. When Lissy confides in Darcy that Lydia has run away and that she needs to be rescued, Darcy takes that as an invitation from Life to intervene and do something for Lydia's good. It works and benefits him personally also. Lissy gives him the feeling that she would welcome a 2nd proposal and taking that clue he makes the 2nd proposal and it is well received.

One may ask why self-chosen initiatives fail when life-chosen initiatives succeed. It could be probably due to the fact that most self-chosen initiatives are taken impulsively and thereby become foolish initiatives. Collins proposes to Lissy not understanding at all that she thinks that he is a clown. Darcy proposes to Lissy not knowing at all that she is furious with him for interfering in her sister's efforts to get married to Bingley.

When however life takes the initiative, such impulsiveness is missing and therefore the attempt succeeds. By confiding in Darcy about Lydia's elopement, Lissy almost begs him to intervene and when he does it succeeds. When she tells De Berg why she should say no to Darcy's marriage proposal, he understands that she does not mind another wedding proposal and therefore when he makes it, it works.

Self-chosen initiatives are partial while life-chosen initiatives are more rounded and it is perhaps the more rounded nature of life's initiatives that help it to succeed.

RESPONSE: "One may ask why self-chosen initiatives fail when life-chosen initiatives succeed. It could be probably due to the fact that most self-chosen initiatives are taken impulsively and thereby become foolish initiatives. ... When however life takes the initiative, such impulsiveness is missing and therefore the attempt succeeds. "

I think you are on to something here.

There was e.g. one initiative where I started a new enterprise, which seemed to have a lot of possibility. I received encouragement from various sides, though in the back of several minds was the idea that it would be difficult for me to succeed as the product was past its time. In the end it failed, in part because of resistance of the past, in part because I did not follow through as I might of, etc.

In this case there is/was a kind of wanting personality in that thing/opportunity that made it difficult to succeed. I knew of this limitation, but still tried. In any case, it did not come to me, it was not offered to me, it was not an initiative from life. I was a little desperate to succeed, since normal work was low (recession). We know Mother overcomes forces like recession and could have made the current work blossom even during hard times.

From this example, we can devise why initiative driven projects fail. And this is only this one case. Each case will have its own flavor, revealing the wanting personal attitude and relationship to the object (the project), as well as the nature of the object and atmosphere itself. Inner and cosmic purposes are additional factors that are steps beyond.

How Forces of Life Affect Accomplishment

Human Initiative that Leads to Success or Failure

(Thanks to MSS for the principles involved in this entry)

When we try to accomplish something in life through our initiative it may or may not succeed. Here are some of the subtle workings that affect the success of failure of any initiative.

When the social atmosphere is positive with regard to an initiative, the atmosphere fosters success for the individual. When the atmosphere is negative, the individual's initiative will fail, unless he is able overcome the resistance of the atmosphere.

(Example) In a community, there is a very positive feeling towards improving the education in the community. An individual begins an initiative to improve the quality of the courseware. On the surface she initially fails; yet the initiative is taken up by *another* person and succeeds with it. That is because there is a positive atmosphere in the community as it relates to education. (If there were a negative atmosphere toward education, the initiative would have failed all around.)

(Example) (As indicated in the book *The Three Musketeers*) "Whatever the liberality of the day, the story takes place in an age when the belief in good is quite pervasive and religious issues dominate society. In fact, if one law seems to express throughout the story, it is the *resistance* to illicit love at higher levels of society. Buckingham's advances to Anne lead to his death. Constance's two attempts to unite with D'Artagnan are frustrated, the first by her arrest, the second by her death. Even Milady's passion for de Wardes is frustrated by D'Artagnan. Aramis returns to religion, not to his aristocratic lover. Only Porthos who seeks money, not love, and stoops to the level of the proprietress succeeds, and that too by marriage. There is no instance of illicit love prospering in the story." (MSS)

Initiatives fail when taken outside one's field of influence, authority or control.

(Example) A man tries to create a higher sense of moral authority in the community. The community has actually *transcended* his morality with an openness to new ideas that the individual cannot fathom. His initiative to bring about moral authority fails.

Initiatives from lower levels of life do not have power for accomplishment at higher levels of life.

(Example) A consultant was asked by his superiors to investigate the development of tool to allow for online student training evaluations. He worked on it for months without ever clarifying with his superior the pay he would receive as well as the timeframe on the project. He was too intimidated to make these clarifications. Ultimately the project failed completely, and the consultant wasted months of his time.

(Example) X tries to influence Y's opinion about Z. X's efforts to influence Y's opinion of Z fail because X is stationed at a lower level of the social hierarchy than Y. It is the higher station that sets the standards for what is or is not acceptable or fashionable.

On the other hand, initiatives by those in a higher plane of life (i.e. with greater wealth, status or power) toward those in a lower plane tend to be readily and richly fulfilled, provided the lower is a willing recipient and does not raise obstacles or resistance to receiving. This principle acts in the same manner as water flowing downhill.

(Example) A manager of a training company wanted to have her instructors do training on a new software program. Many happily agreed to it, and received basic knowledge on the program from the training company. After a number of months the training by the instructors went very well for the training company's clients, and even led to additional profitable training on related new products.

Initiatives may receive unexpected support from life when they are aligned with new movements in life that are gaining momentum. On the other hand, initiatives may meet with unexpected resistance when they are aligned with movements that are passing out of existence.

(Example) X's efforts to marry her daughter Y to Z for social purposes meet with resistance and ultimately fail. X seeks to capitalize on the mutual pledge of her sister and herself that their children should marry, a practice whose value is passing out of existence. The light in Y's eyes that X feels is enough to overcome the best-laid plans of the older generation to perpetuate itself in the old style.

(Example) A man tries to create a higher sense of moral authority in the community. The community has actually *transcended* his morality with an openness to new ideas that the individual cannot fathom. His initiative to bring about moral authority fails.

Initiatives succeed when taken with sufficient energy and capacity to reverse previous actions that failed as the result of an inappropriate attitude or behavior.

(Example) A man tries to break up the marriage of his child, and succeeds for a time. After a change of heart, he decides that his decision was very foolish and he tries to patch things up. The success of his initiative to change will only occur if he has sufficient vigor to do so, and if he gains the agreement of the parties who were initially involved.

These are some of the major forces at play that affect the success or failure of any initiative that a person takes in life. There are movements of life that are normally hidden from us, but are at play in the field of life.

Applying the Subtle Principles of Life to Attract Infinite Success

When the American settlers gazed out on the virgin land, they knew that a clean slate was before them -- i.e. there was a land of infinite possibilities that they could make into their own image. We too have a life of infinite potential before us that we can shape into our own living reality.

And yet the American settlers created ultimate success because they already had the knowledge of how to create a civilization, i.e. having lived there for generations they knew how to recreate Europe in the New Land. Thus, they knew the world they wanted to create, and had the skills and knowledge to do so. In our lives, we too have a certain knowledge passed down through the education system, which give us the capacities to succeed. In addition, we have our own native abilities inherited through our genes and acquired through social interaction. Yet there is one other power that stands above all for shaping our success -- knowing the true Workings of Life. There are a series of previously-unknown, hidden laws and principles that describe the subtle manner through which life unfolds. These are startling unfoldings that hardly anyone knows. And yet if we learn what they are and apply them, we harness a vast power that enables us to instantly bring the infinite potentials of life to the here and now.

One of the principles of the subtle workings of life the power of Intention: that what we intent releases energy that moves out into the field of life and brings us in return that which we aspired for. It is a miracle to behold. Another miraculous-like principle is Inner-Outer correspondence: that what is happening on the outside is a direct reflection of our inner condition, and thus if we change the inner to the positive, the outer instantaneously responds in kind. This miraculous-like result I call a "Life Response."

When we know the dozen or so hidden principles of life then the infinite potentials of life instantly turn into a living reality. Not one in a thousand knows these laws. When the world realizes them, we will see the beginning of a new reality, a new life on earth. We will be able to truly make the world into our own image in no time at all, just as the settlers did after they first viewed the infinite virgin land before them.

The Power of Intention

Overview

Intention that Attracts Instantaneous Luck

As soon as you focus on a matter that was not earlier garnering your interest and attention, life instantly responds with good news concerning that matter. It is the miracle of "life response" in action. In particular, it is the power of Intention to attract sudden good fortune.

For example, an individual decided to study a program he has been avoiding for weeks if not months, and within five minutes of taking up that effort, from out of nowhere he receives word of a big opportunity related to that specific matter. In the previous weeks, where he did not focus on that issue at all, life did not respond.

When we focus our intention on a matter, we send out a pulse of energy that moves out into the field of life and aligns with favorable circumstance that we then experience as an instance of sudden good fortune. In other words, by focusing our attention on a matter, we attract instantaneous miraculousness. The fact is that luck is not arbitrary, but is something we can attract to us instantly when we make use of the inner levers that bring it about. Intensely focusing our intention is one such lever that instantaneously attracts abundance.

The Response that Changed My Life

Life Response is the phenomenon that occurs when an individual alters his consciousness in some way, and as a result, sudden good fortune descends on that person. E.g., as a result of overcoming a negative attitude, an ongoing problem suddenly disappears, or a golden opportunity suddenly and most unexpectedly presents itself. It occurs quite often in people's lives, though we are normally unaware of its occurrence. The key however is to invoke it *consciously* so that we are able to elicit these miraculous-like results *on demand*. We can evoke life response in this way by first developing an understanding of its subtle workings, and then by applying the right inner and outer behaviors that tend to attract these miraculous-like results. Sometimes the response that comes alters the very course of our lives, as I believe the following incident will attest to.

By December 1974, I had graduated Syracuse University and was living with my parents in New York City. After working as part of a group of four housepainters, who also happened to be close friends, I headed west to California by van. When I settled into the San Francisco Bay area, I was free, but as yet unable to sustain myself due to lack of work. The truth is I made little effort to secure that work, since I was enjoying my freedom too much!

Soon thereafter, I met a woman there with whom I got involved. I drove back to New York, and from there flew to Brussels, Belgium where I met up with her. Together we then went on a wild bus excursion across the continent, from Amsterdam to Athens. After enjoying Athens and having a mystical experience at the Acropolis, my friend informed me that she planned to continue on to the Middle East in order to visit Egypt and Israel. However, realizing that I had strayed too far off the path, I informed her that I could go no further. And so in a dramatic scene worthy of a romantic film, we said our tearful goodbyes and separated at the Athens airport. From there I flew on to Geneva, Switzerland and then across the Atlantic to New York.

A year earlier, I had intended to go to the Graduate School of Journalism in Berkeley when I first ventured to California months earlier, but on arrival there, I decided not to attend. Nor, did I take to *working* in order support myself, as mentioned before. Therefore, I floundered on my visit stay in California. This time, however, as I mulled over my future from my parents' home in New York, I was determined that if I returned to California, I would make a serious go of it -- i.e. I would *seriously seek out and secure work to sustain myself*.

As it turned out, a friend of my family had moved to California years before, and now was a very wealthy businessman in Southern California. From New York, I called this gentleman by phone, and he offered me a job at one of his giant Lumber City retail outlets in the San Fernando Valley in Los Angeles. And so once again, I headed across country, this time by Greyhound bus, and arrived once more in California. (I accumulated a lot of road mileage during these years!)

Before I headed south to Los Angeles, I met up with old friends in San Francisco, and stayed at their home for several months. During that time, I painted the large house we all lived in, and then I used the money I earned to purchase a used car. With a means of transportation, I then drove down to Los Angeles with a friend to work at one of the Lumber City outlets run by the (previously alluded to) wealthy friend of my parents. After several months, I settled in and worked every day -- driving from my Santa Monica beach home to the inland valley suburb where my outdoor retail job was located.

One day I decided to drive to an area not far from downtown LA, and visit the "East West Center", a sort of mini ashram dedicated to a blending of eastern and western spirituality and culture. That day I met a woman there who told me of people living in the nearby San Fernando Valley who were importing gift items from the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry India. I had a keen interest in the sage and seer's teachings for several years and was looking to find an outlet to pursue them in the LA area. I hoped that the East-West Center would serve that purpose, which was the reason I visited that place that day. However, I was also looking to blend my spiritual interests with real *work* experience. I.e. I wanted my work to be an application of -- an extension of -- the spiritual knowledge I had begun to embrace. Thus, when I learned of the potential opportunity of working with the devotees who lived in the Valley, I was eager to meet them.

Shortly thereafter, I set up an appointment and visited their home. It did not take but a few moments to see that there was a powerful connection between us. Realizing our great mutual interest, we quickly arranged that I would begin selling their products by going door to door at appropriate retail outlets in the LA region. It was not only fun and invigorating being outdoors in the warm, golden sunshine during the winter months, but financially and spiritually rewarding as well. Most importantly, I had now established an *entirely new direction in my life*.

As it turned out, I would continue selling and working with these same individuals in a variety of capacities for the next 30 years. In fact, Growth Online itself began as a collaborative effort that was a direct outgrowth of that relationship.

And so it was on that day so long ago in Los Angeles that I made the connection with the people at the Mother's Service Society that changed the course of my life. That relationship not only aided me in my spiritual pursuits, but also provided me with a practical outlet by which I could apply these inner principles. In that way, I had finally melded together two cornerstones of my life -- spirit and work -- creating a new unity of purpose.

However, none of this would have happened if I hadn't made one critical decision. It was when I decided to *seriously work*. When in New York and later in San Francisco I *committed to working* at my parents friend's Lumber City outlet in Los Angeles, I set in

motion events that changed the course of my life. It created the vast opening that allowed me to come in contact with the Aurobindo followers in the San Fernando Valley. That inner and outer commitment to hard work attracted the fulfillment of my heart's desire. Or to put it another way, overcoming my poor attitude toward work brought me my very life's purpose.

In fact, everything that has happened to me over the next 30 years -- the sales company I built in the San Francisco Bay Area, the computer training and consulting company I founded there (GuruSoftware), the birth and development of Growth Online, the books I have written on Life Response and other subjects -- all emerged from that fateful time in December 1975 when I gave direction to my existence by deciding to seriously work, which attracted the individuals who would shape my life.

The Power of Intention that is Great; that Backfires

One of the more powerful insights into the nature of human existence is the notion that what you *really want* tends to be accomplished. If you have an intense desire to achieve something, and focus your energies on it, excluding all other matters, life ends to cooperate and bring the object of your desire. It may happen sooner or later, depending on the intensity of energy you bring to bear, the surrounding atmosphere, and other subtle influences of life.

When life *suddenly* brings you your heart's desire from seemingly out of nowhere, then you have experienced an instance of "life response," which appears to us as a miracle. E.g., a man aspires to rise to a higher position in his profession, and focuses all of his energies on its achievement. From *out of nowhere*, he suddenly receives a call and offer for employment from an officer of a company who had no idea that he was looking for a better-paying, more satisfying job! It has thus come as a miraculous-like response to the energies the seeker has released -- somehow aligning him with the intentions of corresponding individuals and circumstances.

On the other hand, there are also instances where you really want something to occur, but the *opposite* takes place! That usually happens because the thing wanted was not helpful, or the energies you released stemmed from a wanting aspiration, attitude, decision, or action.

There is a well-known example of this in Jane Austin's *Pride and Prejudice*. Near the end of the story, Eliza and Darcy are working out their romantic relationship. At one point Darcy's aunt, the very wealthy and powerful Lady Catherine gets word that her also-wealthy nephew Mr. Darcy might marry Eliza, who is from a lower class. With her entourage in tow, Lady Catherine rushes over to confront Eliza to determine if she intends to marry Darcy. Eliza, strong-willed and independent, refuses to be bullied into an answer, though she does not deny that she would marry him if she so chose. Unsatisfied with her answer, Lady Catherine rushes off in a huff. The next day, Darcy appears before Eliza, and they agree to marry. Darcy indicates to Eliza that he had come to see her because he had heard from his aunt Lady Catherine that she (Eliza) would not necessarily turn down his marriage proposal! As a result, now the two are engaged and marry -- the exact opposite of the intention of Lady Catherine. We could call this a "negative life response." Though her intention was great and focused, it worked in the opposite direction. There are several reasons, though one stands out: her anachronistic propensities were working opposite to the positive energies that were emerging in the story. She tried to force her intent through her willfulness and position of wealth and power, when in fact the story was how the middle class was emerging as a new power in rural England.

We see this same process of negative life response at work in world history. In the 18th and 19th century, Britain aspired to build an empire around the world. It succeeded for a

while, until WWII, when it was nearly crushed, and then forced, out of necessity, to give up its empire. Now if one goes to London, there is hardly a Londoner in site, as 75% of its people are non-English, most from countries representing its former empire! It is in essence a negative life response (for the traditional Londoner) to centuries of English chauvinistic intention. The modern world is now in fact moving in an opposite direction.

When we wish for something whose motive originates in lower consciousness relative to the conditions around us, we are likely to receive outcomes the opposite of our intention -- i.e. life quickly responds to us with instances of ill-fortune. In one of Jane Austin's other novels, *Emma*, the author has constructed an entire novel built around this idea. Emma is an individual who is hopelessly meddlesome, trying to match other people up in romantic relationships -- utterly failing with each attempt. Life consistently responds in a negative fashion to Emma's lower vibration.

Fortunately, in the end, Emma sees the error of her ways, and comes to understand that it was the love she was avoiding for herself that she sought to bring about in others. To that change in attitude, life responded with overwhelming *good* fortune, when her life-long companion proposed marriage, which she gladly accepted. It was the happiest moment of her life.

Though we may have generated negative response from life due to our wanting inner and outer behaviors, we can overcome that quality, reverse it in full, and observe thereafter how the deepest object of our desire -- whether a fantastic new job, or the partner of our dreams -- suddenly moves towards us. It is the miracle of life response.

Hurricanes, Tsunamis, and the Power of Intention

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The Power of Intention on the Eve of the iPhone

When we focus our minds on a thing, we are generally unaware that we have set in motion a process in which knowledge and circumstance related to that object will suddenly come back to us, entering our field of awareness from seemingly out of nowhere. These sudden, unexpected echoes or reverberations of what we originally perceived are truly a miracle to behold -- an experience of an instance of the phenomenon of "life response."

Recently one evening, I woke in the middle of the night and thought about possible solutions to a technical problem I had been grappling with. Since my mind was now fully engaged, I thought about other matters as well. One subject that came up was the pending release of the Apple iPhone. The thought I had was that this was indeed a monumental undertaking -- where everything needed to go just right to insure its success in the marketplace. It occurred to me that this was especially true in three areas. First, the device needed to function as advertised for the user. Second, the actual purchasing of the device through phone centers and other outlets, -- where accounts and multi-year contracts were established -- needed to go smoothly. And third, people needed to know how to use the product once they purchased it.

I felt confident that the first two areas would work out reasonably well, but I had questions about the third. Yes, I thought, it was an Apple product, which is generally easier to use than the technology of competitors, but this was still a powerful integrated device with many sophisticated features. Would people know how to use it right out of the box after purchasing it? Apple, as well as their competitors, have rarely included training with their products, but instead require the user to fend for themselves by purchasing a book on the subject, or go to a training class, or use on-line training of sorts if available. How then was Apple going to provide user help with its fledgling, yet sophisticated iPhone product?

The next morning I turned on my computer, and then went to Apple's site. Normally on the startup page, there is information about new products -- such as new models of computers released, an ad about an operating system upgrade, or a presentation about a new technology breakthrough -- such as the iPod, or even the iPhone. Well to my surprise on the start page for the entire site was an invitation to watch a 20-minute video on how to use the iPhone! There in front of me was a huge graphic imploring the audience to watch this video in preparation for purchasing the device so that users would be up and running from day one!

This was an astonishing development because just the night before I had thought of this very issue. In decades of watching Apple and their site, I had never once seen the subject of training presented so prominently -- whether in anticipation of a pending product or even after its release. Training was normally addressed on the back pages of their enormous site. In addition, I had not seen a *single* article in the technology-oriented press on the subject of learning to use the iPhone in the run up to its release. And yet there in front of me, the morning after I had thought about the matter, was an ad imploring the world to watch a 20-minute video on their upcoming, new product! It was a startling experience, which appeared to be a direct response to my previous night's keen interest in the subject.

Wherever we put our focus on something, it tends to quickly come back to us in the form of related information, striking us as nothing less than miraculous. Hence its moniker of "life response." E.g. one thinks about a subject, and ten minutes later, newscasters are discussing that very topic on TV -- when in fact that person has never *once* seen that subject discussed in 40 years of television viewing! What occurred is that life responded to one's focus and interest in a matter with related knowledge, information, and circumstance. Sometimes, the response comes as more *information* on the subject; other times it also brings practical *benefit*, such as it did in the iPhone episode. Let's explore this a little further, by considering three scenarios.

Scenario one: I think about a popular music group, and an hour later I suddenly encounter several people discussing the band on TV -- when in 20 years I had not seen a single mention of them until that very moment. In this case, life responded to my *mental interest* in the matter, which in turn attracted more *information* about that group. I.e. I had a passing mental thought, to which life responded with more data and information related to that subject.

However, if I not only show an interest in a subject, but have a *deep desire to see something come about* in terms of that item, then life responds with *tangible, beneficial results* as well. In the above iPhone incident, I not only thought about the idea of the user being educated on the device, but I aspired for there to be a way for it to happen. I.e. I had the *desire and will* for tangible benefit. As a result, the next morning life responded with a video that in fact brought them such tangible, beneficial results to that collective of individuals. In other words, not only did I have a *mental* interest in the matter, but my *vital* wants and desires were also engaged, which in turn attracted mirror-image utilitarian results from the vital field of life.

There is yet a third scenario involving our intention. It is when we derive *personal* benefit through response from life -- contributing to our own personal success. This type of response comes not from a mere *interest* in a matter, or even a yearning for something beneficial to come about for any and every one, but to a decided, deep aspiration for *personal gain*. For example, I have a deep aspiration and yearning to be directly involved in educating people on the iPhone, and suddenly thereafter, I receive an unexpected call from my broker informing me that I have been offered a contract to train hundreds of high level executives around the world on this new device. That deep, abiding interest in personal gain attracts a powerful personal result, contributing directly to my success in life.

Thus, we can thus say that life responds along a "continuum of intent" -- from a mere interest in a matter, to a general desire for benefit to come about, to an intense aspiration and yearning to directly gain and profit from a situation. Understanding these shadings can help us in our efforts to consciously evoke such powerful response from life, whenever we choose to do so. It not only gives us a great insight into an important secret of life, but puts at our disposal a vast power to quickly attract the infinite potentials of life!

Young Albert Einstein and the Power of Intention

Young Albert

When Albert Einstein was a young boy, he could barely speak or communicate with others. In fact, at times his parents thought he might be retarded. Alienated from life, Albert constantly lost himself in his books -- as well as his daydreams. In other words, he was a *deep thinker*.

Even in adolescence, Albert's thoughts would gravitate to such philosophical issues as the cause of war, the nature of the universe, and the existence of God. In this way, he lived in a never-ending state of dreamy introspection and mental inquiry, and, as a result, often found himself distant and apart from every-day life.

In addition to these esoteric subjects, Albert also developed a natural curiosity and penchant for science. For example, when his father first showed him a compass needle, it kindled an interest in the subject of magnetism. Likewise, when he worked with the dynamos, motors, and other gadgets scattered about his father's electrochemical shop, he became fascinated with the dynamics of electricity.

And yet, despite his nascent interests in philosophy, ethics, and science, Albert was an alienated and unhappy child. At boarding school, he often felt miserable and alone. Not only did his teachers dislike him, but he felt the same way about them. As he moved into his mid-teens, his parents did not know what to do with their introspective, withdrawn son, who had neither a profession nor any practical skills.

Fortunately, Albert -- who was of German descent -- was soon able to enroll at the Zurich Polytechnic Institute in neighboring Switzerland, and it was there that he began to blossom. In the freer atmosphere of the school, he became less alienated and distant, and more gregarious and outgoing. As a result, Albert Einstein had now entered the second phase of his life, as an independent bohemian thinker -- a witty, sarcastic, wisecracking, brilliant observer of the world.

One day Albert had a vision that he was running alongside a beam of light. As a result of that experience, he asked himself what a light beam would actually look like if he *really* were to run beside it. Albert, as we see, had the peculiar ability to imagine a physical phenomenon, and then contemplate the underlying principles that made it possible. This unique approach to knowledge would serve Albert brilliantly throughout his career.

In addition to his own personal inquiries, Albert also kept up on the latest development in physics -- a field that was going through great ferment and change in the late 19th/early 20th century. With all of this knowledge cascading down around him, it is no wonder that Albert was eager to plunge into his studies at the Polytechnic. There he took a particular interest in the subject of light -- which he first contemplated that day he imagined himself racing with the light beam. As he sought to unravel these and other mysteries, Albert had suddenly become a very focused and determined individual, intent on discovering the physical truths of life.

Along about that time, Albert met Mileva Maric, a fellow physics student. Now for the first time in his life, Albert found someone his equal. Not only was she an aspiring physicist herself, but she was also intelligent and attractive woman. In the months that followed, Albert fell deeply in love with Mileva, and put a great deal of time and energy into their romance. Now, just like his love of physics, his romance with Mileva began to consume him.

As their relationship progressed, it was unfortunately overshadowed by a series of difficulties, starting with a lack of money. In fact, at one point, the two were so impoverished, they were afraid of being tossed-out on the street by bill collectors. To make things worse, Albert's own parents disapproved of their relationship because they believed that Mileva was beneath their son in social status. Poisoning the atmosphere further still, Albert discovered that his own teacher at the Polytechnic hated him, and, at one point, blocked him from receiving the financial aid he was seeking -- the *only* person in his class to suffer that fate.

Once independent and self-assured, Albert now found himself distraught and broken. At one point, conditions were so bad that he considered playing the violin on the streets to support himself. Even when he relented and sought the help of his parents, he learned that his father had unexpectedly gone bankrupt!

Albert's downward spiral continued when he found himself literally on the edge of starvation. With these terrible burdens now befalling him, Albert's once budding career as a physicist was now all but over. Then when he and Mileva learned that their baby had suddenly died of unknown causes, Albert reached bottom.

Fortunately, Albert Einstein was slowly able to crawl out of his predicament. Desperate for funds, he explored every possible means to find work -- including applications in Germany, Netherlands, and Italy for assistants posts. Though there was no immediate response, shortly after the light began to come back into his life when he learned that his good friend Marcel Grossman might have a job for him at the Patent Office in Bern, Switzerland. Though this was encouraging news, it was not yet a *real* job, and so Albert had to continue his search for any work he could find. At first, he took a substitute teaching post, and thereafter accepted an instructor position at a private school in Switzerland.

Meanwhile in his spare time, Albert began to take up his scientific inquiries once again -- at one point submitting a doctoral thesis to Zurich University. Just after the submission, Albert was delighted to learn that he had finally been invited to apply for the job at the Patent Office in Bern. Interestingly, though he did not receive word of acceptance, he still took the initiative to relocate to Bern -- hoping that the post would eventually come through. In the interim, Albert took any job he could find to tide himself over. Finally, several months later, he received word that he had been accepted as technical expert 3rd-class at the Bern Patent Office.

The "Miracle Year"

With the security of a job, Albert was now free from the distractions that had weighed on him so heavily, and could once again ponder the deepest questions of science. Not only would it usher in the most fertile and productive period of his life, but within two years, Albert would be producing the most astonishing array of original papers on physics in the history of modern science. Later known as Einstein's "Miracle Year" of 1905, Albert all at once offered the scientific community a dizzying array of insights into the nature of the physical world, including-

- The theory of relativity, which states that the nature of space and time are determined by the relative position of objects.
- The notion that light travels at 186,000 miles per second, and that an object can approach that speed, but never reach or exceed it.
- The formula $E=MC^2$, which indicates the profound relationship that exists between speed and motion, and matter and energy. Out of this formula, it was determined-
 - that matter and energy were interchangeable; that matter could turn into energy, and energy into matter.
 - that the infinite-like universe itself arose out of energy; and that infinite-like quantities of energy can be created out of matter.
 - that a *single* split atom could produce 200 million electron volts of electricity, giving rise to the atomic age.
- The photovoltaic effect -- i.e. how light itself has the capacity to produce electricity.
- The final conclusive proof that the atom really exists.

Though Einstein had suddenly turned the 200-year-old Newtonian world of science upside down, it is possible that none of it would have happened if he had not secured the job at the Patent Office in Bern. That position gave him the security and stability that allowed him to return to his intellectual roots, so that he could not only tinker, probe, and experiment, but also contemplate some of the most profound issues of material existence. Out of these intuitive insights would come a remarkable collection of papers that would electrify the scientific community. Within a decade, Albert Einstein would not only become the greatest scientific mind of his generation, but would become the most famous person on earth.

Energies Lost and Found

And yet if this astonishing sequence of events began when he first got the job at the Patent Office, one wonders how he was able to secure that position in the first place. Answering that question would help us discover that elusive human-centric capacity that enables us to fulfill our dreams, and hopefully do so through instances of sudden good fortune.

To begin that inquiry, let us go back several years, to that point where life began to unravel for young Albert. We know that this period in time corresponds with his intense relationship with Mileva. With so much of his energy going to their relationship, there was little left for Albert's first love -- his work as a budding theoretical physicist. With his passions now divided, the air began to go out of his life. As a result, a series of negative circumstance followed -- including his fall into poverty; his parents' rebuke of Mileva; the malicious machinations of his professor; the sudden and unexpected bankruptcy of his father; and the most crushing blow of all, the death of their newborn baby daughter. In essence, life on the outside was responding negatively to his divided and ever-depleting energies within.

Fortunately, just as Albert hit rock bottom, he was able to gather himself, take stock of his situation, and redirect himself. He did this by focusing on and looking for work. While others might have fallen down the slippery slope of depression, alcohol, drugs, or even suicide, Albert was able to summon the courage and make the determined, persevering effort to find a job -- *any* job -- in order to survive. Most telling, however, was the fact that as he began to focus his thoughts and energies on securing work, the opportunity at the Patent Office began to move towards him. When that psychological and physical effort reached its peak, life aligned with Albert's intentions and he was finally offered the job. The rest, as they say, is history.

In the end, this incident reveals how life responds to our *intention*. When we intensely aspire for something to happen, then it begins to manifest in the world. Until then, life remains in stasis -- or even falls back. If we also follow our intention to its logical conclusion, not only will we achieve the object of our desire, but we will surpass it. In Albert's case, he clearly exceeded his original intention of securing the position at the Patent Office, when that job served as the springboard for changing the course of science, not to mention the history of the world.

Consider the process by which our intention takes shape and manifests a living reality.

1. We *perceive* a goal or opportunity, and then focus on it. (our intention begins to form)
2. We then develop the intense *will* for it to come about. (our intention ripens)
3. We then make the full, persevering physical *effort* to make it happen. Life responds in overwhelming fashion. (our intention is fulfilled, and then some)

When Albert gathered his dispersed energies, and then focused on the idea of finding work, life responded by opening up the possibility of employment at the Patent Office. When his will to achieve the goal further intensified and was matched by a relentless effort to see it come about, he reached a tipping point that attracted the job that stabilized his life, and put him in position to change the world.

If we look around us, we will see that life is *always* responding to our intention. We can observe it in our own life, and in the lives of others. Sometimes it brings small but significant achievements; other times, titanic successes. When Erin Brockovich directed all of her energies to getting out of poverty, not only did she secure the job at the law office that stabilized her life, but it became the springboard to win the \$300 million settlement for her poisoned clientele. Likewise, when Dee Hock shifted from reluctance to a keen desire to sift through barrels of garbage, he attracted the job that enabled him to change the course of credit card history.

In each case, an individual had a clear goal in mind and an indomitable will to achieve it. When that person made the full, persevering effort to bring it about, life responded from all quarters -- not only fulfilling, but *far exceeding* the original intent. It is a demonstration of the infinite-like, life response attracting power of human intention.

Knowledge and Will Together

Knowledge + Will + the Force that Enables Ultimate Accomplishment in Life

The Indian sage and seer Sri Aurobindo described the process by which the universe emerged from a Divine Source. That process is essentially the same process by which we create in life.

Accomplishment then -- whether the creation of this universe of forms from a Divine Source, or the creation of a successful work or project in our lives -- is determined by the *Knowledge* we have and the *Will* to accomplish it. E.g., in my life I see that I can rise from project manager to project leader (Knowledge), and I intensely want to make it happen (Will). When I then make the effort for it to occur, life cooperates from all quarters, quickly bringing the object of my desire.

Together the Knowledge and Will can be further organized into the details that will produce the results I am after. E.g. I examine several strategies that will help me move up, such as acquiring new skills and making a greater effort. I then focus on one or two, come up with a specific plan to make it come about, and then execute it through a determined, persevering effort, which then brings me the results I am after, and then some as life responds in my favor.

The more we follow this process, the more we accomplish. In fact, if we follow the process perfectly, the results can come about extremely rapidly, from seemingly out of nowhere through instances of sudden good fortune.

While the Absolute (also known as Brahman in the East) evolved a universe of forms through the perfect integration of Knowledge and Will -- i.e. It knew what it intended to create, and had the infinite power to do so, -- we do not ordinarily have that unity of intention. We might have the knowledge of how to accomplish a thing, but not the will to see it through. Or we have the will for something to come about, but are lacking the knowledge to make it happen. In both cases, our chance for accomplishment will be severely limited.

When we rise in consciousness our knowledge of things and our will to accomplish it begin to fuse. Our rational mind and our vital/emotional energies begin to operate in tandem. From that status, our efforts are in harmony and life tends to cooperate with our efforts. Sri Aurobindo calls this status "Truth Consciousness," aka "Supermind." It is the fusion of Knowledge and Will that awaits humanity's future.

Knowledge that is Matched by a Will to Accomplish It Produces Ultimate Results in Life

After there is a disaster, there is often a *will*; a will to accomplish that which will prevent the disaster in the future. Before that, there is just a *knowledge*; a knowledge that such and such things should be done to prevent a disaster. The knowledge of what should be done and the will to do it are not there *together*, which invariably leads to public tragedy. This is Nature's slow and difficult Way of progress.

We can see this absence of will in the face of knowledge in every facet of life; from global challenges, to our own individual challenges as we confront the day. Any act becomes *complete* when the knowledge of what needs to be accomplished is matched by an energy, will, and determination to see it come about. Then it gets accomplished -- and then some.

Sometimes, the inverse is the case; i.e. where there is will but knowledge is absent or incomplete. A salesperson running down the street madly to sell his goods without first considering if he is in the right store is an exaggerated example. He intensely wants to sell, but is missing the knowledge of where to do it. When there is unorganized desire, there may be some success, but failure is ultimately guaranteed.

Knowledge and will together is then the formula for success. They should be One Thing, integrally interlocked. When they are, success follows; often through instances of sudden good fortune. When they are not, failure will be just around the corner.

We can view this failing from a cosmic perspective. Though the universe came to be from a Divine Source, it did so through a separation of an essential unity between

Knowledge and Will, culminating in the unconsciousness of material existence at the dawn of creation. That is the foundation of material existence in the universe. It is only through the evolution of life, particularly through the elevation of human consciousness that Knowledge and Will begin to once again be realized and then be integrated. Through our mentality we gain knowledge, and through our intention and desire we garner the will. Together, they give us ultimate power to create our world.

On a practical level when we know something, i.e. something that needs to be done, the *will* to do it is too often absent. How to rectify this problem?

When we obtain a certain knowledge about a subject or matter, the will for its manifestation is not necessarily there. But imagine where every time you learn something, there is an equal urge and will to accomplish it. This is not the ordinary human way, but it is our evolutionary destiny to function this way. Sri Aurobindo calls the power to have knowledge and will simultaneously "Truth Consciousness," aka "Supermind." It is a method of living that far exceeds our current capacities.

Currently, we obtain knowledge through thought, even rational thought. Tomorrow it will be through descents of intuitions of objects of knowledge into the mind from the universal plane that comes without the hard churning of thought. Just a step about that however is supramental knowledge where intuitions of knowledge are accompanied by an enormous power of will to accomplish it.

How can we get in touch with this power? Opening to the spiritual Force tends to put us quickly and directly in touch with the knowledge we are seeking, as well as the energy, intention, and *will* to accomplish it. We then have a total power at our disposal. By opening to the Force, the universe responds and gives us both the knowledge of a thing, and the power to make it real. That is very different from our current functioning, where we have to exercise our mind and go through the hard churning of thought to arrive at a knowledge, and then if we garner it, we may not have the will for it to come about.

Opening to the Force thus enables an ultimate *Efficiency* in life, where we are able to accomplish the most in the shortest period of time with the least effort. It is an indicator of a vast leap in human consciousness; one that seer and sage Sri Aurobindo says is our evolutionary destiny.

Harnessing Will-Power

In discussions about the deteriorating infrastructure of the world -- such as highways, bridges, waterways, etc., -- pundits suggest that there are two factors that bring about change: *calamity*, such as the collapse of an overpass, or the explosion of a gas pipe which compels people to finally act; and *money*, i.e. having the resources in the first place to solve the problem.

It is an unconscious society that waits for disaster to strike before acting. It is a poor one, or a strained one that concerns itself with having the resources -- i.e. the money -- to resolve the problem. Of course, these are both inadequate approaches to progress. What brings about the solutions to such problems is in fact our *will* to do so. Will, or intention, or aspiration to improve things, and the ability to collectively exercise it is the solution to any problem -- infrastructure or otherwise. Marshaling will -- from the individual up to the widest collective, including large companies and national governments -- is the key to solving such problems.

The influence and power of human will to move life, rather than focusing our supposed lack of resources, is largely missing in today's debates regarding improvement in society. Consider the experience of China. For a hundred years or more, she was destitute. Then in the 1970s and 80s she changed direction. It happened not only at the level of the government, but at the level of the community and the individual as well.

The deep aspirations of that society that were blocked for hundreds of years were let loose, releasing a tidal wave of energy at all levels. Several decades later, China was evolving into an economic colossus -- perhaps the greatest material reversal in world history. There were few resources, hardly any money available to begin with -- and yet a vast will for change occurred, driving the society to infinite-like accomplishment. A Himalayan change was underway through the power of human will that in turn produced infinite-like resources in that society. All other factors were secondary.

The question for societies is how to release the will of the people at all levels, from the individual to the collective in order to solve its ills and to expand its capacities -- economic through cultural -- to the next highest level. We know that will comes from *aspiration*. If that is so, then how does one instill an aspiration for a thing to be accomplished. It is different in every case. In China, it began at the top, having a clear perception that the individual was being held back; that life could not go on the way it had. We could also say that the aspiration began amongst the people, who were fed up with the past, forcing the government to move in a new direction.

In every situation, the key will be the dynamic that releases the aspiration of various segments, and how to then link ever-widening segments to release a vast integral will that becomes a torrent of energy that moves the society forward. How governments and community leaders release that aspiration, and how individuals themselves develop their own aspiration, requires an examination of individual and collective *motivation*. We could call it the "psychology of aspiration."

If energy to move forward comes from will, and will comes from aspiration, then aspiration is a product of individual and collective *values*. The values available to society are endless. It can take form as a deep belief in more security, greater prosperity, more freedom, more openness and tolerance, sincerity and honesty in government, a focus on the dispossessed, or on culture, or any of a thousand things. Out of these physical, vital, and mental values, spring forth our individual and collective aspirations.

And yet values in of themselves are just beliefs. They don't have power of effectuation, unless they are spearheaded through a plan of action. For that to happen, there needs to be a mechanism or process to bring it about. That process that enables values and aspirations to become living realities in society is the *process of creation and accomplishment*.

That process begins with a vision we have for something to come about -- whether it is an objective goal like increasing GDP by 2% or doubling our personal income; or a subjective one, like the values of honesty and integrity, or increasing the frankness of government. That in turn releases the will for its creation. This overall aspiration is then organized into practical strategies for their accomplishment, which is then carried out in a timely manner through a persevering effort, our highest skills, and the most positive of attitudes. The end result is that we release a titanic concentration of energy that tends to quickly attract the object of our individual and collective desire. By organizing our motives, values and aspirations this way, we can accomplish in 5 years what it would normally have taken 50 --- just as we see in China.

An individual, collective, or society that is *conscious* is one that perceives its values, makes them instrument for aspirations for change, and follows the process to quickly convert its energies into living realities. By perceiving and utilizing the process, we no longer have to wait for disasters to strike before taking action; nor do we need to wait for resources to be available before springing into action. A conscious society knows that its *will*, and the energy released, is the ultimate determinant of its success. All other factors are secondary.

The ancient Indian texts known as the *Upanishads* declare, "You are what your deepest desire is. As is your desire, so is your intention. As is your intention, so is your will. As is your will, so is your deed. As is your deed, so is your destiny."

Subconscious Intention

Our Subconscious is Conscious

We think of our subconscious as some mysterious aspect of our being, hidden from our view, i.e. from our normal level of awareness. This is true enough. And yet the subconscious realms have a will, intention, and consciousness of its own. Often it has a greater capacity, perception, and insight than our own normal state of awareness.

For example, a man's wife reads lengthy, somewhat superficial, fiction books incessantly. It keeps her busy and entertained. Interestingly, her husband consistently walks over and sits beside her to talk *just* as she is reading the last few pages of the book, at once amazing and bothering her. Why does he appear at just this instance? He does not know the answer, but understanding the intent and desire of his subconscious will explain it. It is subtly indicating that he wants to speak with her more often to have rich discussions, the fact of which seems to be in conflict with her constant reading. What is happening is that his subconscious urge, will, and aspiration have moved him into action on those serendipitous occasions, even as he is consciously unaware why he comes, let alone at precisely this time. It has happened a 100 times before over several decades!

If we examine any great work of literature or work of cinema, and observe the actions of the main characters, we will see how they often act in ways in which their intent is subconscious to them. Yet if we study these actions in hindsight, we would see that the subconscious had an intention it wished fulfilled, even as the conscious mind was unaware of the fact. In this way, we see that the outcomes of events that we only later came to understand were already known to our subconscious!

For example, in the film *Sabrina*, Linus helps his brother by standing in for him, even as he is unaware that he is subconsciously in love with Sabrina, which he later realizes. Likewise, in *Pride and Prejudice*, Darcy mocks Eliza when they first meet, even as he is unaware of the fact that he is subconsciously in love with her. In both cases, the subconscious knew before the conscious mind.

Having said this, there are other parts of the subconscious plane that are not so enlightened and filled with light, but are instead dark, pessimistic, fearful, and fearful. This unevolved part of the inner being contributes to difficult sleep, our darkest daily thoughts, and a general feeling that failure, disease, and death are inevitable. On the other hand, the conscious part of the subconscious, described earlier, is just the opposite. This relatively small, subliminal part is in touch with universal forces; deeper and wider truths that are superconscious to us. Not only does it guide us, but it knows the future ahead of time.

Finally, we have ability to make the subconscious knowledge conscious by asking ourselves at any point in time why we are doing what we are doing, which will help us elicit the hidden motive. Doing so, will make us more aware, which will contribute to greater success and deeper fulfillment in life.

The Great Linkup

The Influence of the subconscious, conscious, and superconscious in serendipitous events

Our conscious self is what we are aware of. What we are unaware of for the most part is our subconscious, as well as the superconscious. One power of the subconscious is that it can cause you to move in a certain direction without our conscious mind perceiving its influence. Sometimes the subconscious influence can compel you to take action, to go to places, that can change your life forever. Here's one example of this phenomenon whose outcome changed the course of my own life.

One day in the fall of 1975 while living on the beach in Santa Monica in Los Angeles, I decided to go to the East West Center near downtown LA. There I hoped to meet other people who were associated with Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, just as I had done in San Francisco, where I had lived before.

When I arrived at the center, I was greeted by a young woman named Trudy. It turns out she was the disciple and helper of Dr. Judith Tyberg, the founder of the East West Center, and perhaps the world's leading scholar and authority on Sanskrit. Now well into her 70s, she was missioned to open a center in California by the Mother herself many years before. The goal was to propagate the integration of eastern and western culture and spirituality in a fresh environment of discovery.

After entering the center that day, Trudy showed me around. Then I discussed my own situation. I had moved down to LA from the SF Bay Area, and was working in a huge lumber yard chain outlet, which was run by friends of my parents. Though I was taken on with the possibility of one day running one of these outlets, or even being involved in top management of the large retail chain, I was not happy there. Nor was I happy merely painting houses, as I had done earlier. Somehow something inside me wanted to connect my association with Sri Aurobindo and the Mother with my life's work and career, in whatever field that entailed.

I am not sure to what degree I revealed my inner secrets, but at one point Trudy mentioned that there were people in the nearby San Fernando Valley who were seeking individuals to help them in their work exporting products from the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Auroville, and elsewhere. When I heard this, I was really taken aback. I had not come to the center to find employment, even work related to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, but there it was. An opportunity presented itself to me that was synchronous to my arrival on that day.

A short while later, I met with the principles of the little company in the valley, -- Mere Cie -- saw the wonderful products they were importing, and agreed to begin as a salesperson. Equally compelling was the fact that the proprietors were fully committed to practicing the spiritual disciplines advocated by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother through the details of their work. I was astonished by this development, and it gladdened my heart to no end.

As it would turn out, I would continue selling for the import company for several years, and then formed my own company in the San Francisco Bay Area to do the same. Perhaps more significantly still, I maintained and expanded by intellectual and spiritual relationship with the founders of the organization till this day. I would then go on to establish Growth Online and write several books based on the teachings of the founder of Mere Cie's spiritual teacher, Sri Karmayogi. In every way, shape, and form I had found a work that had married my deepest beliefs to a practical means of expression through work. My entire life had been changed because I made that short trek to the East West Center that day, and it has remained that way ever since.

But let us stop for a moment and consider why I went to the East West Center on that beautiful Southern California day in the first place. Surely my conscious being was not expecting to find a significant work related to my aspirations of consciousness. And yet my subconscious did. Somehow my subconscious being "knew" what was available at the East West Center at that point in time, compelling me to go there and seek out and discover my fortune. Though my conscious mind was aware of little, my subliminal subconscious being had seen into the future, knew what this opportunity was, percolated the idea into my conscious mind to go there, which I then did on that auspicious and fortuitous day.

Normally we consider such outcomes as serendipitous or just plain luck. However, there are endless examples where people were guided by the intuition of their subconscious, and that turned out to be a great or the single great propitious moment in their lives.

For example, there are a number of scenes in Jane Austin's *Pride and Prejudice* where people show up at just the right time for a great thing to occur. When "the elopement" in the story took place, the fabulously wealthy Mr. Darcy suddenly appears on the scene to save the day, which he does; in effect proving himself and showing that he had changed, which further kindled Eliza's love, leading to their happy marriage, and the removal of financial threat to her family.

Each of us have experienced such moments in our lives, where we did something or arrived on the scene that brought great benefit, even though it was not the intent of our conscious mind. Sri Aurobindo says that there is a subliminal being that sits on the edge of the subconscious, and it receives signals from the superconscient that exists in a state of consciousness beyond space and time. When an idea of the subliminal part of the subconscious rises to our surface awareness, it comes in forms of helpfulness, whether as a message not to do a certain thing that could be harmful to one's self or others, or more positively, an influence and urge to move in a particular direction in order to elicit a beneficial outcome. We may not know the outcome, or even the circumstance we are going to encounter, but the subconscious does. Being in touch with the cosmic consciousness that is beyond time -- that includes past, present, and future in its temporal understanding -- it informs us of that which will be helpful; or as in Mr. Darcy's and my case, monumentally so.

Finally, there is one other aspect of this dynamic. It can be summarized with the expression "it takes two to tango." I.e. I could never had this synchronous opportunity if the other party, in this case my friends from the San Fernando Valley, hadn't been offering the job. Therefore at some level, their intention and my own were linked. They had made the effort to publicize the opportunity, which included mentioning it to people at East West Center, which was synchronous with my deepest aspirations. My subconscious being had created the bridge that aligned two aspirations; theirs for a worker; mine, for the work. From their side, their subconscious being was compelled to advertise the opportunity at the center as it knew of my arrival there one day.

If this is the case, then we must also include the space itself where the two sides aligned and connected. The East West Center was established by Dr. Tyberg as a result of the influence of the Mother to do so. In that sense, the Mother and Her consciousness, working through Dr. Tyberg brought Mere Cie and I together.

Then the real bridge was the Superconscient, which held the truth that both of our subconsciouses would embrace, which was received by and then percolated up from the subconscious to our conscious minds. For myself it came as an inclination to go to that center on that auspicious day; for Mere Cie to advertise a job opening there.

In other words, the outcome was ultimately the result of a Universal and Transcendent Will that expressed as a movement and power that our beings connected with. Which

means that the source of our success was nothing less than an Idea originating in the Mind of God.

Interest in a Thing Attracts Things Related To It

How Life Responds to Focus, Interest, and Aspiration

Every day I have one or more "life response" experiences -- i.e. startling instances of sudden good fortune. Sometimes the miraculous-like result comes because I had earlier opened to the spiritual Force, while other times it comes because I had earlier reversed a wanting attitude or habit. Just as often, it comes as a result of taking an interest in a matter or focusing on a thing, or having an intense desire and aspiration for something to come about. It is the last three -- interest, focus, and intention -- that I would like to concentrate on here.

One day recently while surfing the Internet, I learned about Google's new initiative Google.org that has been established for investing in worthy global and regional causes. One such cause is called 'RechargeIT,' in which Prius and other high-mileage automobiles are modified to collect the sun's energy through solar power modules mounted on its roof, enabling the car to extend its mileage capacity. This unusual technology enables the car to get 100 miles to the gallon, while becoming an energy *giver* to the electric grid, rather than a taker -- reversing the normal relationship between vehicle and society. As it turns out, solar energy is an area I have had a deep interest in for quite some time, beginning decades ago when I first researched the subject at Temple University for an article I was writing for a major youth-oriented magazine. To see a major innovative company like Google getting behind an innovative initiative like RechargeIT is in one sense the fulfillment of a long-time personal dream. I was therefore thrilled when I watched a Google YouTube video on the subject.

Then something interesting happened. When I got up from that energizing experience, I looked outside my office window. Across the way, there is usually a series of cars parked in parallel formation in front of a number of businesses. However, this time I noticed that there was only one solitary car parked there. It was a shiny new red Toyota Prius!

Such miraculous-like experiences happen to me with considerable frequency -- perhaps 3- 10 times a day. And those are just the ones I notice. As I mentioned earlier, these startling life response results normally comes as a result of offering an activity to the Spirit, or shifting from a wanting attitude to a positive one. Yet other times they come as a result of focusing on a subject or taking an interest in a matter. The Prius incident I just described is a case in point. When I focused my interest on Google.org's initiative to retrofit Prius cars with solar collectors that feed rather than take from the energy grid, life conspired to present me another iteration of it in the form of a sole bright red Prius parked in an area normally packed with vehicles.

If that is an example of life response through mental focus and interest, then, then what about a life response that comes as a result of our aspiration and desire for something to come about? It turns out that a close friend of mine had one just the other day; mirroring similar experiences I have had many times along the way.

In this instance, it turns out that my friend was listening to a local radio show. In a particular daily segment, the host plays songs in alphabetical order. That is, the first day he plays songs that begin with A, the next day the B tunes, and so on. On that particular day, he was going through the G selections. In fact, when my friend tuned in, they were playing 'Goodbye Yellow Brick Road,' a song from the 1970s by singer-songwriter Elton John. As a result, she realized that she had missed the Beach Boys song 'Good Vibrations,' also from that era, which disappointed her. Later that day she settled down to watch a movie. About half way into the middle of it, she realized that they were

playing 'Good Vibrations!' Out of the millions of songs in the world, it was this one that had come up! Then later on, she settled in to watch the finale of the 3rd season of the ultra-popular TV series 'Lost.' In the episode, a man sacrifices himself for the welfare of his compatriots on the island. To do that, he taps in a code into a power system. As it turned out the code was based on the notes of the song -- you guessed it -- 'Good Vibrations!'

When we focus on a thing, take an interest in a matter, or desire for something to come about, life tends to conspire with our thoughts and emotions by attracting iterations of it. Very often, what comes is pleasing to us and brings substantial benefit -- material or psychological. That benefit is proportional with our desire for something tangible to come about. The more intensely we want something, the more likely we receive back substantive and beneficial results. When it comes in the form of a life response, we are utterly dazzled.

The other day my friend was attending a three-day workshop where she was required to travel daily over 50 miles round trip in the pouring rain. I wanted to tell her that rather than make the commute back and forth in the downpour, and particularly at night, that she should try to stay overnight somewhere. Unfortunately, at the time, I was ill and could not communicate with her; plus, I did not have the phone where the affair was taking place. Well wouldn't you know it, shortly after I received a call from her informing me that someone had invited her to stay over at their home! I had not even conveyed my intent to my friend and yet she informed me that she was going to do the very thing I had hoped for. That is the power we have to attract the very things we yearn for without the need for any outer action. It is the inherent power we have to move life outside ourselves from within.

In the end, what will make these possibilities real to us is to have these sorts of experience ourselves. Once we begin having them, we will see that they are a real phenomenon of life, and therefore we will look out for them in the future. We will also begin to develop the subtle sense to know how to invoke them on demand.

For nearly a week recently, I wanted to inform a new client that the training session we had planned would require more than the normal 7 hours to complete in order to accommodate all of the items on the agenda. I felt that it needed to be longer, although I could probably make do with the current allotted time if I had to. I did not raise the issue with the client. Suddenly the next day, I received word from her that she felt that the hours need to be extended a bit, and didn't I agree with that idea! I nearly fell over as I saw that she had read my mind; or rather she had picked up my vibration of intention. She had responded to my aspiration, though I had never expressed it to her in any way. It also demonstrates the power that silence generates. That when we withhold a thought from expression, it causes others to speak it out. It is a magic-like power that I call "Silent Will."

And so another 24 hour period had come to an end with a blizzard of life response events, too numerous to enumerate here. Once again, I was reminded of the power we generate from within by focusing and taking an interest in a matter, or aspiring intently for something to come about. It was further demonstration of the subtle power we have within to attract the infinite potential of life to the here and now.

Buddha's Way Out of the Darkness

Perhaps the greatest conception of Reality ever devised by Man began in India thousands of years ago. While religion took root in the Middle East, it was in India that a course was blazed to know the true nature of the infinite Reality/Spirit and the process by which the universe emerged from a divine Source.

In the earliest years, the Indians of the ancient Vedic period worshipped natural forces as a means of communing with the one Infinite consciousness. In essence, they perceived the ultimate Reality through the instrument of material forces and Gods. Sophisticated thinking and refined emotions had not yet developed, and so their relationship with Spirit was predominantly physical. Many years passed, and Mind began to develop, allowing for a profounder conception of the Reality beyond this world. This is the era of the spiritual explorations of the Indian mystics known as the Rishis. Through their higher mental and spiritual power, they were able to conceive of and commune with an ultimate Being and Consciousness, losing themselves in the pleasure of their transcendent experiences. They collectively communed with and realized an Ultimate Existence as no group had done before.

And yet despite these vast spiritual successes, humanity was not yet satisfied with these experiences, for it still had still not grappled with the greatest of human dilemmas: the cause of strife and suffering in the world. And so around 2600 years ago, Buddha's great mission began when he set out to discover and resolve the reason for pain and death. Which brings me to a startling experience I had the other day.

On New Year's, I went for a little drive to relax and air myself out. For some reason, I ended up on the 30-mile long busy thoroughfare known as the "El Camino Real," which traverses two dozen towns on the San Francisco peninsula. It is a street of commerce and business that seems to go on forever.

At one point, as I "floated" down the endless wide boulevard in my car, a rather existential feeling came over me. I thought about the difficulties, stresses, and failures of life, as well as the reality and finality of physical death. I then thought about how important Buddha was in addressing these issues. Then one by one, I thought through the essence of His teachings. I recalled that after being raised in a sheltered existence as a prince, he discovered that there was suffering outside his palace. He then came to understand the impermanence of things; that not only was life itself ephemeral because it comes to an end, but all apparently good things that come to us are easily taken away -- whether wealth, material objects, our mate, our children, family, friends, and so forth. He then realized that it was our attachment to these transitory phenomena that was the cause of our suffering. Our attachment to that which is temporary and ephemeral was the root of all pain and strife in the world.

Continuing these intense thoughts and feelings, I then recalled that Buddha devised a way out of the dilemma. That if we could still our thoughts, feelings, and passions, we would come to a state of serenity, release our attachment, and thereby free ourselves from the pain of impermanence. In fact, we would move to its opposite; to an intense pleasure and bliss that is beyond anything in this world. Gautama Buddha called this state "Nirvana," and realized it full in his being.

As each of these thoughts came to mind, I felt it with great intensity. They reached a crescendo when I realized that Buddha had worked out a way to loosen the knot of the world. Then finally, after five minutes, the experience stopped. I then once more became conscious of life around me, as I continued to drive/float down the long and winding commercial boulevard.

When I then focused my gaze ahead, I immediately noticed a banner hanging down from a light pole that I was just passing under. When I craned my neck to look a little closer, I saw that it was advertisement for an upcoming art event, and in the center of it was a large picture of the head of a great golden Buddha with a beatific smile. I was thunderstruck. I then beamed in amazement that this object had appeared above me at the very instant I commenced my intense inner experience of His way out of suffering.

The response pierced my being, and I cried out in wonder. The intensity of my thoughts and feelings on this subject had attracted an emanation of one individual who dared to

address humanity's most compelling issue. There above me was the visage of the man who discovered a Stillness and Being within, forging a new path out of the Darkness.

Focusing on Something Attracts More of It Instantaneously

Life is subtle, but we miss the profound connections that it is constantly presenting to us in the course of our day. One dimension of that subtlety is that life is always responding to the things we are focused on with additional related information from seemingly out of nowhere.

E.g. in the communication program Skype, the names of ongoing friends who have come online for the program pop-up in a corner of my screen, even when the program is not open. I only have about a dozen Skype contacts, so the pop-up does not occur very often. Moreover, most of these people whose names pop-up I have not been in direct contact with for a long while, and had no plans to contact them for now.

Meanwhile throughout the day I work in various other software programs on the computer. Well it turns out that as soon as I enter some information in these other programs and really focus on that task, a person instantly pops in Skype up who is very closely related to the very specific work I am currently engaged in! They have no idea I am doing this work. It just spontaneously occurs on its own.

E.g. I enter the Excel application for the first time in a long time and out of the blue my friend who I have not spoken to in months suddenly pops up in Skype for the first time in a long time. I then realize that this individual was very much interested in learning Excel from me. Hence I attract them at that very moment.

Or I am focusing on the importance of business values as I develop a PowerPoint presentation, and the person who wrote eloquently on the subject many years ago suddenly appears as a Skype pop-up in the lower right corner of my screen instantaneous to my having the biggest inspiration of the day on that subject. No one else pops up but him during this time.

This extraordinary subtle synchronous dynamic happens with an instantaneous precision, down to the second, and occurs perhaps 10 times a day. (And that includes only the times I am conscious enough to realize it.)

It shows that all is connected in space and time; that we have powerful relationships with certain people, ideas, events that interconnect and are associative in the non-material world. This subtle dimension of life that most of us miss completely is often referred to as "synchronicity" in popular parlance. It is in fact a particular form of synchronicity that we refer to as "parallelism."

Life bringing more information to the things we are currently focused on -- in the form of Skype pop-ups from the exact related person; sudden out of the blue phone calls from such a person; related content in newspapers, magazines and in the news related to the topic focused on; etc. -- are very common experiences of those who have the inner wherewithal and vision to perceive them.

A Startling Experience Up On the Roof

For a month now I have been thinking about writing a book on the Character of Life, which would be a superset of what I have written on the phenomenon of Life Response. I probably wouldn't get to it for a year or more, but I have been going through various arguments and principles in my mind when I have the chance.

Well the other day I pulled into a parking garage in downtown Walnut Creek a shopping mecca in the eastern part of the San Francisco Bay Area. As I parked there on the roof

with its delightful 360 degree view of the surrounding hills and mountains, I heard an old tape of Alan Watts being broadcast by KPFA, the progressive Berkeley radio station.

I was happy to hear his voice again and always enjoyed his presentation when in my 20s and 30s. While expecting something on subjects such as Zen Buddhism, non-dualism, and similar, he instead began by going into a profound discussion on the nature of the Reality (Brahman), our essential Ignorance born of creation, the law of contradiction, how we know only the part rather than the whole, and so forth; a precise echo of Sri Aurobindo's universal principles that I had been grappling with in anticipation of developing my new book.

I sat there astonished as he masterfully gave me a summary of what had very recently been on my mind. It was almost as if he were saying, "Roy I know you have been thinking about these issues recently, so let me succinctly sum them up for you in 20 minutes!"

I sat there dumbstruck; moved with great emotion and gratitude of a very special gift that had come to me.

There is one other part to the story. Today I drove back to the same garage, remembering what had transpired the work before. Again, I turned on the radio, and there was Alan Watts once more! This time in a commercial for the same set of tapes the earlier speech was drawn from, while commenting that we are each looking out on creation through the Divine's eyes through our own small aperture, or words to that effect. In essence, the response had repeated in that very same place; and now with a single point of wisdom that went beyond all others. Moreover, the principle of repeating acts demonstrated here was a key principle of Character of Life that had been on my mind of late.

Today I realized that it is one thing to attract response by focusing and giving attention to an idea or an undertaking like the writing of a book. It is another to attract when those ideas are Divine in nature. The results are then miraculous in the most wonderful sense.

Incident at McDonald's

At the MacDonald's restaurant near my home, they tend to play American music from the 1960s and 70s in the background. As you enjoy your meal, you are reminded of times gone by. One day I was quietly having my dinner reading the inserted entertainment section for the upcoming weekend. At one point, I listened to a song that struck me as slightly insipid, though tuneful. I noticed that the background harmony was being sung by famed American balladeer Johnny Mathis.

I then flashed back to my early youth when I had heard an extraordinarily well produced album of songs sung by Mr. Mathis. I remember the songs having a deep emotional impact on me at the time. Now as I heard this tune recorded somewhat later, I felt slightly incensed that he could have fallen into to merely singing background vocal of a second rate song. How sad it was that people could not hear the extraordinary tunes he had sung on that album. One of the songs was entitled "Wonderful, Wonderful."

After expressing a bit of indignation, I returned to my newspaper. I then proceeded to turn the page of the entertainment section, and there lo and behold right in front of me was a full-page picture of Mr. Mathis! He was staring back at me with a bright smile and piercing eyes, as if to say, yes, indeed life is magical, and here is another instance for you to savor.

After getting over the shock, bemusement, and wonder, I realized that I had simply experienced a "life response." Life had suddenly presented me with an instance of good fortune as a result of some change of consciousness within myself. In this case, it was

taking a decided *interest* in a thing; i.e. this newer song vs. his old great tunes. When you do so, life tends to suddenly bring you results related to the subject from literally out of nowhere. You are experiencing an instance of life response. What happens is that through the intensity, you become connected with objects and individuals outside yourself that are in alignment with your interests and intensions. Hence, the sudden appearance of the full-page advertisement for Mr. Mathis' coming appearance at a major California resort.

I am currently writing a book on this subject of Life Response. There I have identified a plethora of instances of this miraculous-like phenomenon of life. I also indicate its various causes -- such as a decided change in attitude, efforts at higher levels of cleanliness and orderliness, and, of course, as in this case, a decided interest in a thing, or even more powerfully an aspiration and decision to achieve, acquire, or connect with something. There are a number of other ways to produce that effect, including various movements of the Spirit.

To have the experience even once can change one's entire perspective on life forever. One sits there dazed, and after a while can only call out in wonder and amazement

The Process of Creation for the Individual

Overview

Evoking Luck

What humans call "luck" is not the conscious evocation of it; but its unconscious form. I.e. it is fortuitous, but unintended. Instead we want to evoke luck on demand -- shifting from the unpredictable luck of ordinary life to the persistent Luck through the conscious, evolved personality. This is the higher form that we can be masters of, and evoke when we so choose.

How then do we create this Higher Luck? The Higher Luck issues forth as a result of the following: a clear idea of what you want to achieve, a great will and determination to make it come about, the organization of the details through strategies, including the adoption and implementation of appropriate values, a full persevering effort that is matched by skills of execution and a supremely positive attitude. To insure the cooperation of life, you offer the matter to the spiritual force. Then you will produce luck, i.e. Life response, i.e. Instantaneous miraculousness.

Energy in the Process of Creation

Question from a Reader: How does Energy fit into the process by which we create and accomplish in life?

Answer: The entire process of creation from the vision of a thing to its manifestation can be looked at from the perspective of Energy.

For example, I perceive something in life that I find attractive and want to manifest as real in the world. I thereby have a vision of what I want to create. I have in essence created a Force of energy. It is also a *directed* Force since it is a goal I want to achieve. It is further directed, amplified, intensified as it gains the sanction of my emotions. I.e. when I see the real possibility of bringing it about, and the enormous benefit that could ensue, a Will in me is generated for its manifestation. My Will in turn releases more energy, adding to the directed Force I have initiated within me.

Sometimes that is enough for life to manifest my goal. I.e. without having to take further action, life responds to the energies I have released, bringing about the conditions I had hoped for.

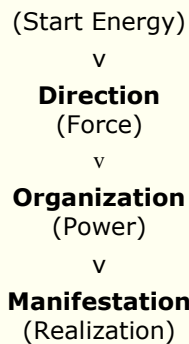
If however our aspiration/intention is something significant, we need to take it to the next level by Organizing our intention, which will convert the directed Force into a Power for manifestation. For example, I consider how I can make my goal real -- including which people to contact, when to do it, what skills I need to acquire gain, what attitudes I need to change, and so forth. As a result of organizing my goal, the directed Force of Energy now becomes a highly concentrated POWER of Energy.

When I then carry put the details with determination and positive attitude, the concentrated Power of highly charged and focused energies call forth to life like magnets, evoking powerful positive results. I.e. the Energy is so highly charged within us, that it sends out a powerful signal that causes us to align with the very best of conditions, enabling us to attract our heart's desire. In essence, the Energy we have built up within us has converted into a Manifest Reality.

The energy conversion process can thus be summarized as: Force of energy through Direction > Power of energy through Organization (of the details) > Action that converts energy into something real in the world, as a living Manifestation of it.

The energy process can also be thought of as the release of mental energy that then adds vital/emotional energy, and then physical energy that manifest the object of our desire as outer, material results.

If we bring the spiritual Force, i.e. consecrated action into the equation, then life moves to the causal plane, spiritual energies are added, and things move at the speed of light, bringing about our heart's desire and much more.



Process of Creation for the Company

We also see a similar process at work in business. When a company willfully decides to improve itself it does so through a strategic plan. The plan consists of the Direction it wishes to move, including the goals it aims to achieve. The heads of the firm then Organize the goals into practical strategies it will take to implement the goals, and insures that it has the right structure, systems, people, et al to carry them out. Finally, the individuals Fulfill the goals by engaging in skilled work in which their attitudes are fully positive. The end result is the accomplishment of the goals and then some. Often life responds and brings about results early on in the process before the goals are fully implemented. Often what is achieved far exceeds the original intent of the company. Life has responded out of all proportion.

Here too the Direction directs the original energy into a Force for accomplishment. When that Force of energy is further organized, it becomes a Power to manifest the intended goals. When people execute it, that power becomes manifest as real through the fulfillment and realization of the intended goals.

Direction
(Force)

v

Organization
(Power)

v

Manifestation
(of Goals)

Process of Creation of the Universe

We also see a similar process at work in the creation of the universe. There is an essential timelessness, spaceless Being which willed to manifest a universe with properties that matched its own. Those properties included Peace, Silence, Harmony, Wisdom, Goodness, Beauty, Delight, Love, Timelessness amongst others.

To do that the Being rendered Supermind out of Itself, which then organized these cosmic attributes in space and time.

In addition to this dynamic of spiritual attributes, there is the issue of how the forms of the universe took shape. To understand that we must harken back to an original Conscious Force that emanated from the Being. When the Being became aware of itself, it released a Force; a Conscious Force.

Again through the action and influence of Supermind that Conscious Force eventually coagulates into the unseen Energy that would then further formulate into the first forms of Matter which initiated the universe.

Thus, the process by which we create in life, as described earlier, parallels in many ways the cosmic process by which the universe emerged from a Divine Source.

Direction
(the Being)

v

Organization
(Supermind)

v

Manifestation
(the Universe)

The Complete Act in the Process of Creation

Every day you are afforded the opportunity to create something perfect. When we follow the process of creation from vision to manifestation, we create such perfection -- and then some. This universal process can be seen in the largest of undertakings, as well as the smallest of acts. An example will illustrate.

You prepare breakfast every day for yourself. One day you have the will to make it, though you are a little fuzzy on the precise entity you want to create. Another day you know exactly what you want to create, yet you are not all that motivated to prepare it. A third day still you know what you want and have the will to create it, but have not thought through and organized the details of its execution. In each of these cases, --and

there are a myriad of combinations -- the process of creation is not being followed, which leads to perfect outcomes; even the cooperation of life.

The process of creation in the act requires a vision of what you want to create, which is the conception of the undertaking. For it to actually take shape, it requires your will, desire, and drive. You then need to organize the details so that it can be created as intended. Then you carry out your organized plan through right skills to get the job done, and determination and positive attitudes to prevent any back sliding.

In the case of the breakfast, you know that you want eggs and toast, but the eggs need to have peppers and mushrooms in them. Your conception is clear. Now you have to have the energy, drive, and will to prepare the food. You also need to consider the details of the undertaking, such as which item to prepare first and other aspects of the organization of the cooking process. Along the way, you must have the necessary physical skills to make it happen. In addition, you need to feel positive at every stage, avoiding any negative attitudes or feelings that might retard the operation.

There is thus focus, intensity, organization, skill, and right consciousness in the process of creation and accomplishment. To start in the middle of the process (e.g. with will, but not goal and vision of what is to be truly achieved), or leave out one aspect, will create wanting results. To follow the process in right order and meet all its conditions will create a perfect outcome. Often it will be accompanied by instances of sudden good fortune, where positive developments from the surroundings suddenly and most unexpectedly move in your direction. It is the miracle that unfolds when we follow the process of creation in a given act -- large or small -- bringing out the infinite potentials of life to the here and now.

Life Responds to Task Breakdown, Sequence, and Focus

The other day I was on my way out of a mega bookstore after reading a few articles and looking at a book I was considering purchasing. However, before leaving the store, I needed to put back a magazine and book to their original locations. Normally, I would just go ahead and do that quite unconsciously, without distinguishing each of the steps involved. This time however, I decided to think about each thing I had to do, and what order to do them in. In other words, I was breaking down the Whole of the act into its constituent parts, meticulously focusing on each, and then carrying them out.

With my mini-plan in mind, I then rode down the escalator with the intention of first returning the book, and then taking care of the magazine. Interestingly, when I came to the plethora of book shelves, I immediately saw a duplicate of the orange book I was holding in my hand. This was startling to me since there were thousands of books in the area, yet this one stood out amongst all as if a light were shining on it, guiding me to the precise place to return my own volume. I then quickly returned my book to its exact location.

A few moments later, I reflected on the event, and soon understand the principle behind the startling outcome. Because I broke down a normally unconscious act into its constituent components, focusing and devising a sequence to accomplish each, I attracted a result that overcame space and time. Through a small effort of mental organization, I instantly found and overcame space, since my wandering to find the right location was reduced to zero; and did so in a matter of seconds, thereby also overcoming time. As a result, my effort for that step was reduced to practically nothing.

When we organize that which we have to do in our minds, carry it out willfully and enthusiastically with skill and right attitude, life immediately responds in our favor. Through conscious organization of Mind, both space and time are overcome. Also, what we thought *limited* in potential reverses and become *limitless* in result. In essence, by

conceiving, organizing, and executing in this way, we have created a 'Complete Act;' one that tends to draw powerful results from life in little or no time at all.

We can follow that same procedure as we go about our day's business by breaking down any task at hand into its constituent parts, strategizing the best approach, sequencing it, and then carrying it out with enthusiasm, skill, and positive attitude. As a result, life will quickly cooperate; often from the most unexpected quarters. It is one of the secrets of great accomplishment in life.

The Power of Personal Organization

Life Response Power of Cleanliness and Orderliness

From hundreds of incidents I have examined over the years, I discovered that there is a powerful correlation between higher levels of organization and the sudden onset of good fortune. For example, one time I got down on my hands and knees and cleaned out my refrigerator, and instantly evoked a response in the form of months' worth of work -- at a time I was desperate for anything.

I cannot tell you how often I have seen this dramatic relationship at play. You clean something that is filthy or neglected, and suddenly a spate of good news arrives. In fact, I would suggest that in decades of observing the phenomenon, there is *no faster way* of evoking life response than raising one's level of cleanliness!

Because cleanliness has this startling capacity to evoke good fortune, it is often the first recommendation I make to my management-consulting clients. Whether I ask them to straighten out a neglected showroom, or tidy up a filthy inventory area, or request the owner to straighten up a cluttered desk, good news follows after they make that effort. E.g., at our next meeting, I learn that there has been a sudden spike in sales, or a big opportunity has arrived, or there has been a sudden infusion of cash. Though the client might not see the causal relationship between their cleaning efforts and the remarkable results that follow, they do somehow sense that taking to higher levels of cleanliness was worth the effort.

I should point out that I am not the only consultant who has had this sort of experience. Several of my colleagues have seen the same effect with their clients. When they take to higher levels of cleanliness, startling developments invariably follow. Here's a case in point:

A management consultant friend of mine was providing his expertise to an Asian company in the business of manufacturing carbon brushes -- a part used in the construction of automobile motors, starters, and other components. As it turned out, this particular client was a subcontractor that catered to a much larger manufacturing concern.

One thing often observed in these relationships is that a smaller company will be at the mercy of the larger one -- especially when it comes to money and price. In fact, in this instance, the larger auto manufacturer would twist the arm of the subcontractor at every turn. For example, though the smaller firm found it necessary to raise the prices of its products to its customers, the larger manufacturer ignored these terms for years, squeezing it in the process. It was at this point that my associate friend entered the picture.

When he arrived at the plant of the subcontractor, he noticed that the entire facility was littered with carbon particles. When he suggested to management that a thorough

cleaning was in order, they looked at him in disbelief. This was after all a place where dirty black carbon was used in the manufacturing process of its products. Why would they clean that? One worker even exclaimed, "Do you expect us to derive gold from a factory using carbon as its raw material?" Despite their derisive remarks, my colleague stood firm, and in the end prevailed.

In order to carry out his recommendations, however, it was necessary for the firm to shut down the facility for several days. To assuage the directors, the consultant guaranteed them that any potential loss coming from the temporary closure would be more than offset by the positive results that would come through the cleaning. Whether or not they understood this subtle principle, in the end they trusted the consultant and took up his advice.

A few days later, the director of the company saw the consultant shopping at a store nearby. He then rushed up to him, tightly held his hand, and proceeded to thank him profusely for the services he had rendered. The director then informed him that people at the larger manufacturing company had unexpectedly brought in high-ranking Japanese officials to visit the unit the subcontractor company just cleaned. Interestingly, the foreigners appreciated the cleanliness of the unit so much so that they recommended that their *entire* brush requirements be produced in the subcontractor's facility! In addition, the larger manufacturing company now agreed to change their position and fully accept the higher prices that the smaller subcontractor firm had requested earlier!

It was another astonishing example of how higher levels of cleanliness evoke the miraculous. In this case, the initiative to clean out a very dirty place -- a request once mocked and ridiculed as absurd -- quickly attracted an astounding series of events that brought great benefit to a once vulnerable small manufacturing firm.

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Though cleanliness is a great organizational power, it reaches its apex and perfection when accompanied by *orderliness*. When we put things in their right location, arrange objects in the proper order, sort items into logical groupings, categorize them for easy access and retrieval, etc., life immediately responds to that effort.

For example, a number of years ago, I was doing some management consulting work for a company in the retail and wholesale carpeting business. To create their custom products and services, they utilized a number of tools and machines that were stored in a large open area in the back of the large facility. Aside from making general recommendations on how to improve their business, I made one suggestion that may have seemed peculiar at the time. I asked top management to straighten out the storage yard containing their tools and machines. That not only meant cleaning up the mess that had accumulated there, but putting each tool back in its proper location.

Time passed and I met with the client for a follow-up meeting. Someone brought it to my attention that they had taken my advice and straightened out the entire tools/staging area. I was gratified to hear this, though I half-consciously expected a follow-up to that news. When I then shifted back to my primary role of evaluating big-picture problems in the company, I was told that there had been a sudden and most unexpected surge in sales. When I probed a little deeper, I also discovered that there had been a sudden upsurge in the firm's financial position.

Though I was quietly thrilled to hear these reports, I did not impress upon them that their effort at cleanliness and orderliness was what precipitated these results. But that is precisely what happened. When we clean up what is filthy, or strewn about haphazardly, or otherwise looks unpleasant, and then add a modicum of orderliness to that effort, we

generate concentrated energies that attract fortuitous circumstance -- whether a sudden spurts in sales, an improvements in cash position, or other dramatic results.

By the way, what holds true for business also works for the *individual*. E.g. if I not only retrieve the papers, folders, and books left scattered about my office desk, but organize, sort, and categorize them in a logical way, life will respond to that effort as well. Recall once again the familiar refrigerator incident. In that episode, I not only scrubbed the appliance down to a shine, but I also returned the edible foodstuffs back to their respective holding areas. In that way, I added a modicum of orderliness to my effort of cleanliness. As mentioned above, when I got up from that strenuous effort, I instantly learned that I had secured months' worth of work, when a minute before there was absolutely nothing in sight!

The Power of Personal Attitudes

Overcoming Wanting, Maintaining Positive Attitudes

The Power of Changing Our Attitudes

Since changes in attitude have a particularly powerful tendency to invoke sudden good fortune, it would be well worth knowing what our own wanting attitudes are, and then make the concerted effort to overcome them.

Generally speaking, we can identify three types of wanting attitudes -- those concerning work and life, those involving others, and those relating to our own selves.

Examples of negative attitude about work and life include an unwillingness to be fully engaged in the work at hand, procrastinating, not caring about the quality of our efforts, being lazy, and being cynical. Examples of negative attitudes towards others is being hostile and harboring ill-will to another, and being jealous. Examples of negative attitudes about ourselves is having low self-esteem and self-confidence.

The good news is that if you can identify two or three negative attitudes in your life, and overcome them, life will suddenly move towards you with overwhelming good fortune.

-One woman who was working as a temporary employee for years overcame her negative attitude toward a co-worker, which suddenly attracted a full time position, her first after ten years of trying.

-Another individual overcame his reluctance to work weekends, which attracted the biggest sale and commission of his life, catapulting him into a lifelong career in that field.

-A third individual overcame his reluctance to do an unflattering but necessary task, which attracted a new position that enabled him to change the course of financial history.

Life does have this extraordinary capacity to respond to our changes in consciousness within -- particularly our wanting attitudes. This magic-like response is what I call a "Life Response."

So why not pick out one or two wanting attitudes that you have been expressing, and make the effort overcome them. Like the individuals above, you will be astounded by the results -- amazed when life suddenly begins to cooperate from all quarters!

The 1000% Solution

Ever since I purchased my new computer with Windows Vista a year ago, I have been very pleased with its performance. There has been one little quirk however. Every time I start up the computer, it creates a new version of the printer driver through a series of dialogue boxes that I have to click my way through. It was not only an annoyance that occurred every time the system loaded, but it would cause me to have to pick the right driver before I printed any document from the computer.

It turns out that I purchased this printer several months before I purchased my new Vista-based computer. Since Vista generally works best with new hardware and software built for it, the fact that I had these quirks with the pre-Vista printer was not surprising. Still I managed to muddle my way through over the past year. Recently however I decided that it was time to eliminate these minor but annoying quirks by purchasing a new printer that would be fully compatible with Vista.

At the same time there was another situation going on. It turns out that I refer potential project management software clients to a local technology company in my area. They are a fine organization with great expertise and goodwill, but are generally lax in making their payments. It is not that they are unwilling to pay, but they seem to be unable to keep their records up to date. Plus, they seem to have problems communicating necessary information to the right person. In any case, it is always up to me to remind them of the money they owe me. This even after we recently had a lunch meeting where they told me about a new system they were implementing to tackle this very problem! Well it turns out that they owed me a relatively small sum of around \$350-\$400.

Now back to the printer situation. Recently I made the decision to purchase the new Vista-compatible printer from Amazon, and unload my older printer. I expected the new printer to arrive in about a week to 10 days, but instead it arrived sooner. In fact, when I came home from some chores last night, I was surprised to see the printer delivered at my doorstep. And so that night, though late, I decided to install the printer. After unpacking the box and setting up the hardware, I had serious trouble installing the software. When I ran it from my CD-player, it made a terrible whirring sound, and then five minutes into the installation, it came up with a fatal error message. I restarted and tried again, and it failed once more. That meant that I had to call technical support late into the evening to resolve the problem.

When I spoke with the woman there, it did not seem very promising, as she seemed to be merely following a script. As I was tired, I thought to myself: "Oh the HP printers just don't work right with Vista, as do many other things." In anguish I even said this to her at one point. Fortunately, she did not react to my cry in the dark, and calmly continued with her work. Skeptical and anguished, I decided at one point to give up all my negative attitudes about the matter, and surrender to her capacity to resolve the problem. She then had me download the software over the Web and install it. Though it took a while, it worked flawlessly. Not too long after, the printer also worked perfectly. Plus, I now had none of those irritating dialogue boxes at startup that plagued me for the past year, nor any of the printing issues related to having multiple drivers. I clearly saw how my reversal from the negative to a right attitude had attracted these positive conditions.

The next morning I got up and then checked my email. It was a message from the company I make referrals to; the one I described above. It was a note from the president, who told me that everyone there had been busy and only now had they gotten around to paying the bill they owed me. That was encouraging. However, when I examined the amount more closely, I saw that it was not for \$350-\$400, but it was for \$3540! I.e. 10 times the original amount! I wondered what was could have caused this,

and then saw that the work I had referred them for one of the largest companies in the US had unexpectedly increased tremendously in the last several months!

Instantly I understood the real cause of this extraordinary response. I saw that the vast increase in the amount was directly related to my change of attitude the night before; when I calmed myself, shed my angst and cynicism, and surrendered to the capacity of the technical support person. By shifting from doubt to faith, life responded not only by easily resolving my printer problem, but by attracting a payment the next morning that was 10 times the amount I expected. Life not only fulfilled my aspiration for payment, but exceeded it by 1000%!

A Captain's Change of Heart

In the movie *Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World*, based on one of a series of novels by Patrick O'Brian, we see a powerful example of how change in attitude can bring an overwhelming response from life.

During the Napoleonic Wars, the British naval frigate HMS Surprise is pursuing the Acheron, a large and powerful French war vessel that is sailing off South American. The Surprise, commanded by Captain Jack Aubrey, is then attacked by the Acheron, and the ship is badly damaged, with many of its crew wounded. Even though the Acheron is a far more powerful ship with many more men aboard, the Captain still decides to try to capture it at all costs.

At various points, the Captain is torn between his own ambition and the views of his close friend, Stephen Maturin, who is the ship's doctor. Martin thinks that the Captain is needlessly endangering the lives of the crew by perusing the Acheron.

At one point, Maturin wishes to stop at the Galapagos islands in order to gather some of the rarest animal and plant specimens on earth. The Captain insists there is no time, and they sail off. Thereafter, the doctor is accidentally wounded, and the ship is forced *back* to the Galapagos so he can heal. With Maturin near death, the Captain senses that he should have listened to his friend in the first place. After a while, the doctor recovers, and the Captain guardedly allows him to go on an outing to gather the specimens he so longed for. At one point, Maturin climbs a hill, looks out to sea, and then sees of all things, the Acheron, the French ship they are after, sailing nearby! The crew then immediately sets sail after the ship, and destroys it!

In other words, because the Captain saw the error of his way, and accepted the fact that he should have listened to his friend request in the first place, his friend suddenly finds the enemy *for* him. It is a wonderful example of how life responds in overwhelming fashion to a change in attitude.

Power of Positive Attitude in City of Joy

Perhaps the most powerful way to evoke sudden good fortune is to shift your attitude from the negative to the positive. If you have a wanting attitude towards others, life, or your own self, and then reverse it, benefit will quickly come your way. Often it comes in an instant.

It turns out there is another way to evoke powerful life response through one's attitude. It is by maintaining a generally positive one. If for example, you are straining to accomplish something in your life, and yet you maintain a positive attitude that things will work out fine; that you will succeed, bringing a solid confidence to your efforts, life will conspire and give you all that you wished for and more.

There is a wonderful example of this life principle and dynamic in the American film *City of Joy*, which is set in India. In the story, Hasari Pal, an Indian farmer, arrives in

Calcutta with his family, desperately seeking work. Lost in the teeming masses as they move about the city streets, Hasari is not only frantically looking for shelter, but is hoping to find any type of work to support his family.

At one point, Hasari is alone with one of his three children, and in a tender and inspiring moment one of them asks if he will ever find work. Hasari responds that he is fully confident he will find employment soon, despite what looks like a desperate situation. Quickly a series of dramatic events transpire, the end result of which is that within 24 hours he finds employment as a cart driver (a "human horse"), which gives him a source of employment for years to come, fulfilling his earlier wish and then some.

It turns out that Hasari's employment not only takes him off the street -- providing a comfortable place to live for his family -- but enable him to save for his daughter's dowry, who will marry into greater fortune for the family. In addition, through his job he is put in position to help overcome the wickedness of the local mafia boss and his cronies who dominate that part of the city, including the cab company he works for.

In other words, Hasari's focused intention in a desperate situation married to an enormously positive attitude attracts a result within a day that changes his life forever, affecting not only himself but the collectives he is part of. That is the power of taking to and maintaining a generally positive attitude towards the conditions one encounters. Life then instantly moves in favor, overcoming obstacles, while fulfilling your fondest dreams.

There are countless examples where a generally positive attitude attracted positive circumstance. Here are several:

- One female business owner when confronted with difficulties or challenging situations, tended to take a positive, optimistic, calm, and forgiving view of things, which continually attracted their quick resolution, as well as unexpected, sudden surges in sales.
- An individual who had deep admiration and positive attitude for the Indian people, and was always happy to speak with them through call centers constantly had positive experiences where the technical issues quickly disappeared.
- A young English girl, who had the tendency to see everything in a positive light, not only charmed the stodgy, grumpy, and cynical around her, but through her positive attitude and influence, caused their lives to quickly turn around for the better.
- A man at a family gathering did not give into others who were mocking a young woman's looks he once dated, attracting her sudden arrival as a now beautiful grown woman, which had the effect of causing another woman the man desperately loved to suddenly fall in love with him, which culminated in their happy marriage.

It is one thing to overcome one's own negative attitudes, and thereby attract sudden good fortune, it is another to maintain a positive attitude and do the same. In fact, each moment is an occasion for us to remain positive, cheerful, and confident, which will evoke the most positive results from the field of life. It is the miracle of "Life Response" in action.

Embracing the Given Conditions of Life

From Reluctance to Acceptance to the Pinnacles of Success

Reluctance is indicative of a wanting attitude, rooted deep in our physical nature which does not want to change. It also has a mental component that does not want to embrace a new idea or possibility, even if it is true. In that way, our reluctance to do,

act, or embrace keeps us in stasis -- often sending us reeling backwards. However, if we catch ourselves and overcome a recalcitrant attitude, embracing in full the matter or possibility at hand, life tends to quickly move in our favor, as the following episode demonstrates.

One day recently, I was preparing to do some work for a client of mine in the Sacramento area. The representative of the firm requested that I perform several functions in the upcoming class that were not part of the normal curriculum. I agreed to do them in principle, but when it came to prepare for the class, I was just a tad hesitant to take those extra preparatory steps. The main issue was that I wasn't sure if in the class itself I would have the time to do those extras and still cover the standards course topics.

Just after waking the next morning, I thought about the issue, and decided on two courses of action. First, I resolved that I wouldn't worry myself sick about the matter since it was not really a big deal. Second, I took a step into the light and concluded that I would simply do what the client asked for, no matter what the demands on my time were, taking it as a kind of "adventure into the unknown." With that more enlightened attitude, I took up the day's activities.

When I got around to the preparatory work for the client, I simply did it, even enjoying it somewhat. Then after a few moments, at an unusual hour in the morning, I received a most unexpected call. It was from a potential new client overseas who was eager to pay for one of our online software applications, but was unable to do so through our standard payment procedures. I then made arrangements for a different method of payment for them. When I then hung up the phone, it dawned on me what really happened.

I realized the first "demanding" client would pay me \$1000 for a day's worth of work, which involved a considerable amount of time and energy in conducting the class, including the extra features requested. The second client, who contacted me by phone out of the blue after doing the preparation for the other, also would pay me \$1000 -- only it required virtually *no effort* of my part, as all they needed was the URL address to our online service.

In other words, because I shifted from reluctance and embraced the details required for a more difficult, time-consuming physical work, I instantly evoked another client for the very same \$1000 amount, but which required hardly any work at all! I was reminded once again that when we give up our truculent attitude and embrace the givens before us, no matter how difficult or challenging, life immediately returns the favor. The result comes from out of nowhere in the form of more money, better paying work, an unexpected large sale, a new opportunity, ease of effort, and so forth. Or, as in this case above, in various combinations of these.

If we were to step back and observe what goes on in the course of our day, we would discover several instances where we were reluctant to embrace the current needs and conditions of life. Sometimes our hesitancy is justified, but too often, it is simply the result of the resistance of our vital/emotional nature that does not want to change or embrace the demands of the Now. The interesting thing, however, is that if we make that extra effort and go beyond our restricted attitude, life will quickly bring us luck. Sometimes what comes can literally change the course of our lives -- such as a sudden boost in our career, a golden opportunity appearing out of nowhere, or even the beginnings of a life-long romance.

When we shift from hesitancy to acceptance, we open the portals of possibility -- quickly aligning with the most positive of conditions. Moreover, each time you make that attitudinal transition, you build up a new level of strength that compels you to practice it

more often. As a result, your existence becomes a never-ending unfolding of the miraculous, as you continually attract the infinite potentials of life to the here and now.

The Road to Hana

In Hawaii there is a place that has captured the imagination of adventurers, tourists, and lovers alike. It is the mysterious island of Maui. While many come to vacation, snorkel, golf, and wander its endless palm-lined beaches, others come to have an experience in nature that will be moving -- perhaps even enlightening.

But where would one find such a place on this allegedly enchanted island? Probably not in the big, luxurious hotels lining the shoreline of Lahaina; nor the exceedingly wealthy gated communities on the gently sloping hills overlooking the spectacular beaches of Wailea. Rather one tends to look up to the two great volcanoes on the west and east sides of the island that soar majestically 10,000 feet above the sea -- often covered by a mysterious fog that lures one to the top where the cones and crags puncture an impossibly blue sky.

In my case, something else had that effect; or rather seemed to have that effect on others. It is an area on the northeast side of the island, hugging the shoreline, and just below the towering volcano of Haleakala. There resides a spectacular tropical forest of unfathomable beauty. It is not however the usual type of rainforest -- hidden in some deep valley; shrouded in mist, moisture, and mystery. Rather it is located *astride* the coastline -- on the hillside and mountains overlooking the stunning Maui shore. What makes it particularly interesting for the first time visitor is that you traverse this tropical wonderland via a one-lane byway known as "The Road to Hana."

As you drive this mountain highway, you pass through 30 miles of what can only be described as the world's largest and most magnificent plant store. An astonishing array of tropical plants, flowers, and trees pass by as you traverse the steep, winding road on the slopes of an impossibly beautiful shoreline. As you make your way through the sun-dappled region, navigating the 50+ hairpin turns, on a road that is often a single lane shared with oncoming traffic (!), you feel as if you have arrived at Eden -- to a real, not a mythical paradise on earth.

And yet despite the 1 to 2000 cars that navigate the difficult-to-travel road on any given day, you are enthralled by the green landscapes, the endless cascading waterfalls -- not to mention a spectacular 1/4-mile arboretum with plants, flowers, and trees so beautiful, strange, and mystical-like that you want to cry.

The Road to Hana is a journey through the physical beauty of life -- a tour de force, magical place dreamed up by some God-like artisan. In addition to the enjoyment of the ride, there is the added promise that you will find something special when you arrive at the mysterious town the road is named after. You imagine a village of artists, poets, and seekers of the New; an ideal world, of happy, contented individuals, expressing themselves through their strange and beautiful art, or musing on the nature of life in the cosmos.

However, when you finally arrive at Hana after a grueling 2-3 hour drive, you see that there is hardly anything to be found. There are a few buildings, a few shops -- even a few places to lodge; but that is all. Sure, the hillsides are dotted with spectacular homes tucked away in coastal forests overlooking the ocean, but what you find in Hana is a little underwhelming, despite the promise of its namesake road. How odd, I thought at the time that after this thrilling but arduous journey, so little was to be found.

And yet, there was no point in dwelling on misgivings, since there was still much to see. In particular, I was eager to drive on beyond Hana, and traverse the eastern side of the island below the great Haleakala volcano. My goal was to work my way all the way

around the eastern side of the island to the southern town of Kihei where I was lodging. Though I began that effort with enthusiasm, after 10 miles I came to a sign indicating that the road ahead was closed. Undeterred by the marker -- which I rationalized as likely being out of date -- I forged ahead. After all, I was certainly not ready to go back and navigate 50 hairpin turns, impossibly difficult one-way roads, potholes filled with rainwater, and gawking, camera-toting tourists looking for beautiful shots of road-hugging waterfalls. And so I plowed ahead, seeking my next adventure.

Unfortunately, after several more miles, I came upon yet another sign indicating the same thing: that the road ahead was blocked. Pursing my lips, and letting out a sigh, I now realized that my vision of driving around the deserted part of the island below the Great Volcano for 20 miles on a dirt road crossing virgin, untrammelled, hardly-navigated and inhabited spectacular scenery would have to wait for another day.

And so now I was forced to contemplate the journey back to Hana and then further on back to civilization. It was not the happiest of thoughts, considering my physical exhaustion and my frayed nerves. However, after grumbling about the situation for a minute, I gathered myself, took a deep breath, and accepted my fate. I then shifted my orientation inward, and psychologically prepared myself for the grueling 3-hour return drive. And so I got into my car and joined the foray of vehicles that were returning to the populated areas of the island.

Then something very unexpected happened. Instead of being in a slow procession of vehicles working their way along a difficult to navigate 1-lane road, I found myself in a small caravan of cars that was moving quite swiftly! "What was this," I thought, as I sped along at the tail end of a 10-car procession that were moving at perhaps 4 or 5 times the speed I arrived at. How was this possible?

As I revisited the same winding road traversing gorgeous rainforests above spectacular seashores, I perceived several things going on. First, I saw that there were hardly any cars coming from the opposite direction. Second -- and this was particularly striking -- I did not have to concentrate intently while I was driving. All I had to do was watch the one car ahead of me, follow behind in tight formation, and I would be swiftly swept along with the pack!

I then realized that I would now make my way across the road in less than an hour, instead of the expected 2-3 hours. As I whizzed by familiar landscapes, I was utterly dumbfounded by this change in circumstance. However, soon after I understood what this was all about. It was simply life responding to my change in attitude. I.e., the moment I accepted in full that I would not be able to drive around the island, and would instead have to turn back, life cooperated from all quarters. When I shifted my attitude from reluctance to acceptance, and embraced the given that life had put before me, everything began to go well for me, as I was whisked across that landscape at the tail end of a swift-moving caravan!

In the end, the Road to Hana really was a profound experience for me -- even if it did not unfold as I expected. In fact, that lovely afternoon turned out to be not only an exhilarating *outer* experience, but an enlightening *inner* one as well. Outwardly, I was captured and enthralled by the physical beauty of a once in a lifetime locale. Inwardly, I was reminded once again of the vast power we have within ourselves to alter the conditions of life around us. In that way, The Road to Hana revealed several of its hidden mysteries to me -- providing another extraordinary moment on an unforgettable, once in a lifetime trip.

A Reluctance Overcome on the El Camino Real

We were driving along one of California's longest streets -- it goes on for many dozens of miles -- in search of an IHOP restaurant. We knew we would have to drive through one or more connected towns before we found one of the eateries. Besides, I had just purchased a new car and we were stretching our wings on this glorious near-70 degree with perfectly-clear-blue-skies January day.

And yet after several minutes we could not find what we were after. An endless procession of retail stores and offices passed us by, and still no IHOP. We went on this way for a good twenty minutes. Surely, there should have been *one* of these outlets along the ten or fifteen miles we traversed on this well-known commercial artery. There was also another problem; I was almost out of gas. On top of that, we were getting very hungry.

And so I thought I would push on for several more miles and see if luck would finally come our way. Meanwhile the gas gauge was moving towards absolute empty. Though we looked and looked, we still could not find an IHOP.

Then I thought to myself that I should focus my thoughts and emotions on getting the gas. And so I made an inner commitment to immediately find a filling station, and not concern myself with our lunch. Within ten *seconds* of making that decision, both my friend and I cried out at the top of our voice. "It's an IHOP!," as we both gestured in the direction of the restaurant that now was right in front of us!

Needless to say, we pulled in and had our dinner. Thereafter, I filled the car with gas. During our lunch, I commented that life had suddenly responded to my decision to purchase the gas. As soon as I overcame my reluctance to do so, the IHOP *instantly* appeared, as if from out of nowhere. It was but one more example that if you give up a wanting attitude -- in this case a reluctance to do what is necessary in the name of what could be pleasurable -- good fortune will suddenly come your way. It is one more principle of the miraculous phenomenon of "Life Response," a powerful and profound subject I have written an entire book on.

As we enjoyed our meal, we recalled how we had both called out "It's an IHOP!" at the very same instance, not unlike children in a Miyazaki cartoon.

All in all it turned out to be a great way to break in my new car on that glorious California afternoon.

Effect of Taking to Truth in Ordinary and Spiritual Life

Whenever you accept the truth about yourself, you move from the ego to the cosmic plane, causing life to suddenly respond in your favor. You see this dynamic in fine literature, film, and, of course, real life.

E.g. one man came to grips with his past, and was immediately catapulted to political victory when all seemed to point to imminent defeat. Likewise, a woman who was ashamed to reveal her current circumstances came forward, which was immediately followed by an unexpected round of good fortune as well. It is life responding to our embracing the truth, which opens us infinite possibilities before our eyes.

In essence, at that cosmic plane, we enjoy a divine Reality where all exists in perfect Truth, Consciousness, and Oneness. (The Divine is in fact nothing but true embodiment of ultimate truth.)

We can see movements to truth and their response at two levels; of ordinary life and of Divine life. Both bring titanic results; the latter fully at the causal plane.

For example, in *Pride and Prejudice*-

--Darcy accepts the truth of his prideful nature, makes an effort to change it, and is suddenly "rewarded" with the elopement, where he demonstrates his noble character to Eliza, opening the door to their marriage, and his greatest happiness.

--Eliza near the end of the story overcomes her limited view and comes to grips with the truth of her family's foolish ways, which quickly attracts Darcy with his second proposal, which she accepts, bringing her great happiness and her family's financial security.

--Mr. Bennet earlier accepted the truth of his irresponsibility in rearing his five daughters, which instantly attracts the end of the elopement saving his family from disgrace and financial ruin.

In each case an individual moved from the local plane of ego to the cosmic one of truth, which evokes powerful response from life.

We can do the same in our own lives, and yet there is much more for some of us. For those who are spiritual devotees, when they take to truth, the divine Force moves into action for our benefit, enabling her unique Causal (i.e. unprecedented, creative) action. Further still, if we offer any such new realization of truth in ourselves to the Divine -- often it is a shift from a wanting attitude to the true truth of our circumstance -- we not only attract immediate benefit, but also a decided change in our nature, which is a yogic movement of personal transformation.

Overcoming Wanting Attitudes Toward Others

Turning a Problem into a Vast Opportunity

Last week I relearned an important lesson of life. If you approach a perceived negative situation in the right spirit, you can unleash a powerful positive opportunity. Here is the story:

After the recent Palestinian-Israeli flare up with Hamas, I was beginning to feel far less sympathy for the latter. Though no supporter of terrorism, I felt that Israel was once more expressing their insincerity by fighting rather than negotiating when they had the opportunity to do so in the quiet period before. Though I have seen the same pattern over the years, this time I was perhaps a little too troubled by the situation.

That day, my company received an inquiry about one of the primary services we offer. The party was interested in seeing a demo of our online training application. In response, we sent her a link so the organization could review it for three working days. Though she was pleased with my response, she asked that the term be extended several days because they do not work on Friday and Saturday in Israel. Understanding the issue, I agreed to the extension. I also now understood something else: the subtle connection between my previous inner emotional outburst about the Palestinian situation and the sudden arrival of an email message from this representative of an Israeli company. It struck me as the type of synchronicity and a confluence of events I had experienced a hundred times before, but this time with a somewhat negative edge to it.

Several days later, she sent another email with her verdict about the demo she went through. She indicated that though she admired its features, especially the depth and breadth of content, she had some serious reservations, especially the fact that the text was riddled with typos, and that many of the graphics were muddled and hard to read. As a result, now I really saw the connection between my earlier emotional outburst and this criticism from a potential customer in Israel! In fact, when I looked at her signature stamp, I realized that she was a *technical writer* for the company's IT department -- not the normal person who contacts us about purchasing our training. In essence, her

comments were not only a direct punch in the gut, but came from someone who ordinarily spends her time examining such issues. In other words, I had attracted the perfect person to criticize our product!

The question then was what would be my reaction to this direct assault. Being human, my first inclination was to lash out at the criticism. I thought, well if she didn't like the product, she should have just rejected it, and avoided criticism. Fortunately, I gained control of my egotistic, self-justifying line of reasoning, and began to take a more rational approach. I then reasoned that since I had already seen the connection between the locale of this company and my earlier inner emotional outburst, I needed to reverse my attitude and open myself up to the truth of her words. Besides there was still an opportunity to sell her the product if we made the changes she suggested.

So I took a deep breath, pushed aside my earlier combative approach, and seriously considered the validity of her recommendations. After perusing our site in search of problems, and seeing the awful truth in her criticism, I immediately began to take up her suggestions. And so over the course of the next several days, I made considerable changes to the text of the site -- correcting grammar, punctuation, and typos, while inquiring into ways to deliver better on-screen graphics. In fact, I threw myself into the work, and after a short while, realized that I was enjoying the effort!

Before delivering the punch line, let me give you one more piece of information. The product I have been referring to is an online software training application that we have developed for Microsoft's project management system. For the last five years, my company has been focusing on it exclusively. Well, after I completed the above three-day effort, I received a solitary email in my Inbox. It was from an individual at a company offering its own online project management software. They were interested in having our firm do training and consulting on their online product throughout our region. At first, I balked at the idea, because the product appeared somewhat flimsy compared to the robust Microsoft offering. But then when I saw a demo, I was stunned how powerful, full-featured, integrated, and easy to use it was. It was using breakthrough technology that in many ways now surpassed Microsoft's offering!

Now suddenly my business was presented with the largest opportunity for new services in a decade. I clearly saw the potential now to double or triple my earnings. And it all came about because rather than react to a negative situation (her detailed analysis of all that was wrong with our current product), I held my feelings in check, and did all that she suggested. The result is that I attracted perhaps our best long-term opportunity in years.

When we shift our attitude in a negative situation to the positive, we harness an awesome power. In essence, we use the energy of the negative, reverse its polarity, and then align with and attract the very best of conditions. Or, as in this case, evoke the biggest business opening in years. Of course, you too can do the same in similar situations in your own life.

Moving Beyond Our Contradictions with Others

At each point that you are upset with or vehemently disagree with or otherwise are in conflict with someone, you create a contradiction with that other individual that blocks positive energy, and thus prevents positive circumstance from taking shape. That contradiction and gap may even be accompanied by fatigue, headache, poor sleep, and serious illness. Conversely, at each point that you try to bridge the gap and contradiction -- e.g. by giving up hostility or dislike, overcome assertion and righteousness, and embrace the other person's position -- you move to a higher plane, which opens the doors to sudden good fortune.

For example, one man was having trouble with his computer printer, and therefore contacted technical support. He had been passed around on the call and now was in the hands of someone who he thought was too slow and deliberate, and ill informed. Though he was initially disturbed by the situation, he gave in and put his faith in the woman. As a result, she not only quickly resolved his problem, but several hours later the man was shocked to discover that a \$400 referral fee he had earned had suddenly ballooned to an unexpected \$4000! Because he bridged the gap by rising to a higher consciousness, the contradiction between he and the support person was resolved, and sudden good fortune quickly followed.

Then there was the case of a woman who had harsh feelings towards several of her co-workers. It turns out that she had been working at the company as a temp and was desperately looking for a full time job. At the very peak of the effort to improve her relationship with her co-workers, she received a most unexpected call from her manager informing her that due to her exemplary work, she had now been promoted from a temporary to a full-time employee, her first such position in ten years!

In life we often come in conflict with others -- whether a fellow worker, a boss, a spouse, or a friend. Nature has placed us in that position so that we can grow thorough the experience; so we can progress as individuals by overcoming the contradiction. We resolve it by raising our consciousness relative to that relationship and condition. At each point we move from assertion and irritation to openness, compliance, and calm, we generate positive energies that align with positive conditions that we experience as sudden good fortune. In essence, we move from the ego plane, which is a realm of limited possibilities, to the universal plane, where all our aspirations in life are fulfilled.

Overcoming Jealousy in Our Lives

People are often jealous of others; reacting to the good fortune and success of friends or acquaintances with ill-favor. It is the recoil of the human Ego.

Ego is the view of reality in which each of us feels separate from everyone and everything else. It's the view in which each of us stands at the center of the universe and we look out on the whole world and everything in it from our own point of view. Its view is false; an illusion.

The opposite of ego's separateness is harmony, oneness. Whatever engenders such feelings overcomes ego. The opposite of jealousy is appreciativeness and supportive goodwill. E.g. if my friend receives a promotion I should feel happy for them, not jealous.

One interesting phenomenon of life is that movements of jealousy can attract ill-fortune. If I am abhorred by a positive development in a friend's life, such as a great promotion, corresponding negatives can happen suddenly in my own life, such as sudden reduction in pay. On the other hand, shifting from jealousy to its opposite -- whether appreciativeness, supporting goodwill, or other -- can attract positive conditions back to you.

E.g. man had a slightly competitive relationship with a long-term friend of his concerning their musical capabilities. One day the man was listening to the music player on his iPhone, which contained nearly 1000 songs. Surprisingly one of his friend's songs came on through random play, and rather than be jealous of his friend's skill, he fully embraced it and enjoyed its quality. When it ended, one of the man's OWN songs suddenly came on next, a very improbable occurrence given that there were 1000 other tunes. It both stunned him and made him smile because he knew he had evoked that response from life. He understood that because he embraced his friend's music rather

than think of it competitively, Life instantly returned the favor and brought forth his own.

The key with any form of ego is to cast it aside when it occurs. And that includes jealousy. However, longer term one can develop strong harmonic feelings with others we come in contact with by discovering our deeper center, culminating in the soul, the psychic being, where appreciativeness, goodwill, oneness and harmony with others are its natural state.

Cause of and Solution to (Negative) Assertion

We live on the surface of life. We are too outer, reacting to everything around us, instead of being rooted in calm and silence and peace. One form of that is constant Assertion and Insistence: of our own view, position, need, want, influence, authority, power, etc.

When we live on the surface, our bodily ego constantly asserts itself. That sense of I, of me is out front, creating a separateness that disengages us from the totality and wholeness of what is happening around us.

Through surface living, we see things through a haze of our own needs, our own wants, our own prejudices and inclinations; not the full, moment-to-moment emerging, multi-sided true truths around us. From that poise, assertion arises spontaneously from within us.

Sri Karmayogi indicates Self-assertion is due to excessive self-energy. Asserting is therefore not so much due to our perspective that the other person is wrong, but to the spilling over of self-oriented energies that we seem incapable of controlling.

Sri Karmayogi also describes the EFFECT of assertion. Mainly that Self-assertion annihilates all else; whether in the discussion, interaction, the seeking of understanding, the truth of things, etc. All other agendas are marginalized through the uncontrolled energies of the physical. Moreover, such negative asserting has the effect of cancelling anything good. It has the power to attract negative life response.

How then can assertion be overcome? First we need to see that surface living is the culprit. Whenever we can we need to move to a deeper center.

One particularly powerful method to overcome such wanting expressions as asserting is to monitor one's ego from moment to moment: or at least on an hourly or daily basis. It can mature to the point that the consciousness becomes self-monitoring.

Another powerful tactic is to Take the Other Man's Point of View, which tends to break down and cancel assertion, as our view becomes theirs -- at least for the time being. It too can be build up as a habit.

Ultimately, to get to the root and overcome asserting one need take to yogic effort, to integral yoga, where Surrender to the Divine becomes paramount, and therefore where Ego is annihilated, and negative assertion has no place.

Overcoming the Vitriol of Fans

Can a negative attitude precipitate and elongate a problem -- i.e. attract persistently negative circumstance?

For 50 years, the Giants have played baseball in San Francisco after moving from Manhattan in the late 1950s. They have not won a single championship, having an almost unmatched record of futility. One of the mantras of the team is "Beat LA," meaning Los Angeles. Actually, it is expressed in terms harsher than that. Interestingly,

in LA they rarely say anything so scurrilous as the fans in San Francisco. Could this negative attitude on the part of fans in SF attract persistent negative results that have deprived them of a single championship in 50+ years?

Consider the results. There have been many instances where the Giants were in the pennant run, only to be knocked out at the end by the LA Dodgers. When the Giants finally made it to the World Series several years back, they were poised to win, only to be deprived of the prize by the Los Angeles Angels at the last moment! This dynamic has occurred repeatedly over the years. The fans' vitriol always seems to rise before they are about to play an important series with their Southland rivals; and invariably the futile results follow -- often in the most "creative" of ways.

And yet there is a solution. If the fans and media can learn to control their LA contempt, shed their inferiority complex, and take to playing solid ball, conditions will quickly arise that will put them in contention; even in a position to win a championship. Sounds far-fetched? It is precisely how life works. The very same dynamic holds true for each of us in our own lives. If you discover and overcome a wanting attitude, areas of failure you have experienced will quickly turn successful, as positive circumstance will appear out of nowhere. Why not test out the theory?

Overcoming Wanting Attitudes Toward Self, Life

Acceding To the Truth Attracts Overwhelming Good Fortune in Downton Abbey

One powerful principle of life response is that when you accept, embrace, and communicate the truth instead of holding onto it out of fear or other negative emotion, life will suddenly open up and present you with overwhelming good fortune. Here's an example from film:

Downton Abbey is a British TV series set in the fictional Yorkshire country estate depicting the lives of the aristocratic Crawley family and their servants in the post-Edwardian era. As we pass through the 5th season, there are two daughters of Lord and Lady Grantham Crawley -- Mary and Edith. Edith has had a romantic relationship with a distinguished newspaper editor which produced a child Marigold, though the editor never got to see his daughter as he disappeared and was then reportedly killed in Germany. Though the child was put up for adoption in order to avoid scandal for the Crawley family, Edith eventually gained custody of the child, brought her to Downton Abbey to live, though several members of the Crawley family did not know the child was Edith's.

It turns out that Lord Grantham eventually discovered that the little girl was Edith's, though he did not mention that fact to her. It also turns out that about the same time Lord Grantham was having health problems and therefore checked with a doctor to investigate about the issue. Several days later Lord Grantham confessed to his concerned wife with that he likely had Angina, and therefore was at risk of having a heart attack.

Now fearful for the end of his life, Lord Grantham decided to talk to his daughter Edith about her daughter Marigold. And so that evening Lord Grantham came into his daughter's room and confessed to her that he knew that Marigold was her daughter, and, more importantly, that he fully accepted the little girl into the Crawley family. As a result of his gesture, Edith was ecstatically happy.

Most interestingly, a day or so later, Lord Grantham reported to his family that he had gone to the doctor again for further tests, and discovered that he did not have Angina at

all, but merely had an ulcer. Now all he had to do was eat modestly and he would be fine. It was a tremendous relief for himself and his wife.

Can we not say that as a result of being fully truthful with his daughter about his knowledge of the situation while fully accepting his granddaughter into the family, life responded and altered the conditions of his health?

When we give up our fears, and face the truth, admitting it as necessary, not only will we feel an inner relief, but life response with good or great fortune in the same or an entirely different area. When Lord Grantham gave up his fears and confided with his daughter about his true feelings, life responded and literally gave him a new lease on life. We can do the same in our lives by not holding on to our fears and admit to ourselves and to others that which is truly true.

Negative Attitudes Attract Negatively

Dishonesty Attracts the Negative in Film *Win Win*

"Dishonesty attracts an ever-widening circle of problems."

We see this dynamic of negative life response to dishonesty very clearly in the recent acclaimed American farce film *Win Win*.

In the story, a small-town New Providence, New Jersey attorney Mike Flaherty moonlights as a wrestling coach and struggles to keep his practice solvent, while shielding his wife Jackie and their two young girls from the extent of the problem. When his court-appointed client Leo Poplar, who is suffering from early dementia, turns out to have no locatable relatives, Mike persuades a judge to appoint him as guardian, for which he will receive a stipend of \$1500/month. It is pure dishonesty because Leo should have been left in his own home, and the attorney Mike has seen a way to take advantage of the situation to garner the \$1500 a month in order to keep his practice and his family financially afloat.

However, soon after a series of problems arise.

When the elderly Leo's troubled teenage grandson Kyle shows up looking to live with him, Mike and Jackie let Kyle stay with them, as Mike has moved Leo to a senior care facility. They discover that Kyle is a talented wrestler, and enroll him at Mike's high school, where he can resume his education and wrestle on Mike's awful, losing team, helping to make them viable contenders in their league.

This "everyone benefits" setup (in the mind of Mike; hence the ironic title of the film "Win Win") is disrupted when Kyle's mother Cindy shows up, fresh out of rehab. Cindy attempts to gain custody of her father and her son, and with them her father's substantial estate.

When Kyle learns that Mike had originally promised to keep Leo in his home but has instead moved him to a nursing home, the boy rightfully rejects Mike as a money-seeking opportunist no better than his mother.

Realizing the mistake of his earlier actions, and seeking instead to do what's best for both Leo and Kyle, Mike offers Kyle's mother Cindy the monthly \$1500 he had desperately and dishonestly secured for in a stipend in exchange for leaving them in his care. Mike and Jackie take Kyle into their home permanently and return Leo to his, with Mike instead taking a bartending job to address his financial problems.

Here we see how dishonesty attracts an ever-widening circle of problems. When the truth comes out, the individual who was dishonest is forced to change his actions, but not before creating much unintended suffering for others.

Interestingly, Mike had been almost angel-like in his career, helping those who were underprivileged and otherwise having problems in society. Yet even he lied to keep his own financial position secure, which shows that the best of us can take to dishonesty to placate our Ego, instead of taking right actions that could have attracted the positive and elevated our position in life.

A Reader Comments: Don't we all face with the choice at every moment to take either path! It takes constant consciousness to take the right path as to the perceived or justified "right" path!

Response: Very true. However, if we truly perceive that Honesty attracts the positive, and the reverse for dishonesty, it makes the choice much easier, for who does not want to attract very positive outcomes, and avoid attracting painful ones.

Developing Psychological Strength

Eowyn's Strength Attracts in 'Lord of the Rings'

Life responds to any reversal from weakness or neutrality to psychological strength. One instance of it not only can bring good fortune, such as the sudden elimination of a six-month back pain or a beloved partner finally confessing her love to you, but in the right situation can alter the very course of one's life. The response can go further still and affect the outcome of challenging events for a collective of individuals, such as a family, a community, or a nation. We see a powerful instance of this in the 'The Two Towers,' the second installment of the epic film 'The Lord of the Rings' based on the book by J. R. R. Tolkien.

In the story, a band of individuals from a variety of strange and exotic kingdoms have banded together to return to the fires of evil Mordor the one Ring that rules them all to bring stability and peace to Middle Earth. At one point, the dozen or so members of the fellowship are forced to divide into three companies after their mystical leader Gandalf apparently dies in the Mines of Moria.

Meanwhile, the soldiers of the evil kingdom of Mordor are moving swiftly across Middle Earth, pillaging the lands to gain control of the entire world. And yet one great kingdom stands in the way of their victory. It is the land of Rohan. Unfortunately, a dark force has taken over King Theoden's spirit, leaving him listless; looking and acting like a corpse overseeing his sullen, desperate people. Meanwhile, at court he is controlled and mentally and physically abused by the poisonous suggestions of his steward, Grima Wormtongue, secretly in the service of the Dark Lord.

To make matters worse, the King's only son Thodred has fallen victim to the Orcs, left mortally wounded in an ambush. Now the king's gentle and beautiful niece Eowyn walks the halls of the Great Hall as events continue to deteriorate for the peace loving peoples of Middle Earth. Then at one point, the devious Wormtongue makes a romantic advance on her. Though she is taken in for a moment, Eowyn recovers, remembers what he is, and casts him aside in outrage and disgust. Though he had all the power of the kingdom, and lurked as a threat to her life if she did not give in to his advances, she demonstrates great psychological strength to do what was right, and casts him aside.

Walking out the front door of the Great Hall and observing the spectacular valley around her, she realizes that she and her people are indeed in a dire predicament. A few seconds later, three men appear in the distance. It turns out to be one of the three

parties of the Fellowship, followed by the great wizard Gandalf the White. They enter the hall, greet the moribund King Theoden, and Gandalf draws out the dark spirit that has overtaken him. In a matter of moments, the king is returned to his old vigorous and brave self. As a result, he decides to have his army join the battle against the evil forces. In a short period, his forces and others prevail over the dark lord that threatened Middle Earth.

From the perspective of Eowyn, one small gesture of psychological strength against the romantic advances of the awful Wormtongue not only instantly attracts great help in the form of the three fellowship members, but they resuscitate the king, who now had the wherewithal to raise an army against the dark forces. As a result, he and other kingdoms are victorious over the armies of evil, thereby ensuring the future good future of Middle Earth.

This may be a fable, but it is very true to life. One small gesture of inner strength at the right moment in a critical situation can attract circumstance that not only changes the course of one's own life, but that of the collective one is part of -- whether one's family, the community, the nation, or even the world itself. Moreover, if there is both psychological strength and an adherence to truth in the act, as there was the case here with Eowyn, then great inner power is generated that attracts extraordinarily positive circumstance for one's self and the world around us.

Decision of Strength Attracts Love in 'The Apartment'

Normally, we believe that if we make an effort in a particular area, we will elicit results that will lead to success in that domain. For example, if I seek a mate, practically speaking I need to make an effort to find her and woo her, which will hopefully secure her love. Never does it occur to us that if we make the right crossroad-decision change in a related area, that we will attract the object of our desire; in this case, the one we adore.

In the 1960s film 'The Apartment,' C. C. Baxter is a lonely office drone working for an insurance company in New York City. As it turns, four different company managers take turns commandeering his apartment for the purpose of engaging in extramarital liaisons. Unhappy with the situation, but unwilling to challenge them directly, Baxter juggles their conflicting demands while hoping to catch the eye of fetching elevator operator Miss Fran Kubelik. Meanwhile the neighbors, a medical doctor and his wife, assume Baxter is a "good time Charlie" who gets a different woman drunk every night. Baxter accepts their criticism rather than reveal the truth.

One day, he meets with personnel director Mr. Sheldrake, who has gotten wind of this situation. However, rather than denounce it, he asks Baxter for the key so he can be the fifth user of his apartment! As a result, Baxter gets a promotion with his own office. Sometime later, Baxter realizes that Sheldrake is carrying on with Fran, the woman he loves, using his apartment to continue their affair. He also knows that Fran is being used by Sheldrake, for he will never divorce his wife and marry her, which is a pattern he has followed with a number of previous female victims.

One day, Fran takes an overdose of pills at Baxter's apartment after a rendezvous with Sheldrake, who she realizes will never commit to her. As a result, Baxter frantically seeks out the doctor living next door, and the two of them resuscitate Fran. Even after she is returned to full health, Fran still cannot give up her love for Sheldrake. Feeling humiliated, Baxter now realizes that winning over Fran is a hopeless case.

After this near suicide, Sheldrake callously asks Baxter for the key to his apartment so he can once again meet with Fran. However, this time -- despite now having been raised to a high-level position -- Baxter asserts himself by refusing. Even though he knows he will be fired, he exercises his strength and walks out on Sheldrake and, therefore, his

job. A while later, he offers to pay the doctor for the services rendered for saving Fran, which is a small but powerful act of generosity. Finally, Baxter decides to give up his own apartment that has been royally abused.

Resigned to celebrate New Year's Eve by himself, Baxter opens a bottle of champagne, but then hears a knock on the door. It is Fran, who tells him that she has left Sheldrake, though she holds back from revealing that she learned that Baxter had stood up to him and left the company. Baxter then invites her in, and they play cards together as they have done in the past, resuming their friendship. Baxter then confesses his love for her, and Fran in her own way reciprocates those feelings.

What is the inner message here? It is this: because Baxter overcame his usual weakness and stood strong against his hypocritical and abusive boss, life responded with the sudden appearance of Fran from out of nowhere, igniting their romance, and fulfilling his deepest aspiration in life.

In life, we are often confronted by crossroad decisions. When we make the right one, we attract conditions that are favorable to us in a related area. In Baxter's case, he chose strength over weakness, which attracted Fran and her love from seemingly out of nowhere. It was not his effort to woo her that won her over, but his right choice in a related domain.

We can also examine this dynamic in a proactive way. If there is something we really want, we can look around and examine the conditions in related areas. There we should determine if there are important choices to be made. If we identify it and choose in the right direction, not only will we bring about positive results in that immediate area, but we are likely attract sudden good fortune in another. It can be a new promotion, an opportunity of a lifetime, or the love of one's life.

Life Response Power of Eliminating a Dominating Negative Influence

Life has shown that the elimination of a single dominating negative influence can open the flood gates of enormous success --even for an otherwise mediocre organization.

A US baseball team had a certain level of success, but never won a championship title in the years since their beautiful, new ballpark opened. Its star player was a great batsman, perhaps the greatest home run hitter in the history of the sport.

However, he and others became mired in an epic drug scandal that tarnished the sport, the league, and the nation. After he left the organization, the team quickly fell to the bottom in the standings. But then within a year, and with a number of new castoff players it acquired, the team suddenly leaped over 25 other teams to the very top and won the World Series, garnering its first title in over 50 years!

How could this happen? When the underlying wanting influence was eliminated, the subtle energies shifted, opening the floodgates, enabling the team to leap to the title - even with a group of mediocre has-beens. Their level of play, enthusiasm, and camaraderie was unprecedented in their careers, as they rode a wave of unbridled positive energy to the pinnacles of success.

That is the Life Response power of expurgating a dominating wanting influence in an organization. The response is overwhelmingly positive.

That being the case, what is the single dictating negative influence in the organizations we are part of; or for that matter in our own lives and self?

Further Comment: We see this same essential dynamic in the critically acclaimed recent American film *Moneyball* based on true events from the early 2000s. As soon as the general manager removed a disturbing influence player, the entire team turned around

and went on the biggest winning streak in modern baseball history. The GM had garnered both the insight to see the disturbing figure and the strength to stand up to him. What he did not quite see is how he set in motion a startling set of positive events not only for his own team, but the entire sport at large. Together with high values against money taint and an innovative, technology driven method of determining talent, he changed the course of baseball history. This coming from an unknown executive for a franchise that was leaning heavily on hard times.

Strength of Young Elizabeth

In order to accomplish and succeed in life one needs energy, skill, knowledge, right attitude, personal organization, direction, drive, and many other qualities. One additional trait that stands out amongst the most successful of people is *psychological strength*. Those who show toughness, are unflinching in the face of adversity, are willing to take action when others would shrink demonstrate innate strength that invariably brings success. In fact, those who demonstrate such "intestinal fortitude" not only are more likely to invite success into their lives, but can evoke powerful and most unexpected positive responses from the environment. Sometimes the response to one's exercise of strength -- especially in the face of prior weakness -- can alter the course of one's life and propel one to the pinnacles of success. Such was the case for one young queen of 16th century England.

History tells us that Elizabeth was the daughter of King Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, the second of Henry's six wives. When Elizabeth was only two years old, her father ordered the beheading of her mother. Then when King Henry died, his son, the nine-year-old Edward, who was Elizabeth's half-brother, succeeded him. After Edward died, six years later, Elizabeth's half-sister Mary became queen of England. Mary, who was Catholic, earned the name "Bloody Mary" for her persecution of Protestants during her reign. Because Elizabeth herself was Protestant, and because Mary feared Elizabeth might be plotting against her life, Elizabeth was held in prison throughout most of Mary's reign. However, in the end, Mary reluctantly accepted Elizabeth's right to the throne, and after the queen died, the very-young Elizabeth ascended to the throne of England.

As it turned out, just at the time Elizabeth took up the reigns, English society was being torn apart by the conflict between the Catholics and Protestants. With each side seeking to win favor from the young queen -- frequently accompanied by threats of retribution if she did not bend in their favor -- each day Elizabeth lived in fear; not only that her regime would topple, but worse still, that she herself would be killed.

As portrayed in the film *Elizabeth* (1998), one day Elizabeth calls a meeting of the leaders of the two religious groups in an attempt to negotiate a settlement. Though she felt that she was in an exceedingly precarious position, she managed to hold back her fears, and began the meeting by making the extraordinarily bold statement that "no group had an exclusive claim on God". As a result, gasps and shouts of "outrage" and "heresy" were heard throughout the chamber. And yet, instead of cowering before the protestations of the religious leaders, Elizabeth gathered herself and the strength and courage to continue her presentation before the gathering. She then went on to argue that that all sides had to work together *for the sake of the people* of England, not for the narrow interests of a particular religion. In fact, she *insisted* on this point, and would have it no other way. She argued that as representative of the *people's* interests, it was her duty to bring the two conflicting religious parties to a decisive settlement.

Quieted by her persuasive arguments, and her unexpected forcefulness and show of strength, both sides *did* in the end come around to her point of view -- with a majority voting to support her proposal for a common English church. This was in fact one of the great turning points in English history, as it overcame the conflicting sectarian interests,

subdued and weakened the power of the church, strengthened the central authority of the monarchy, and increased the power of the people in determining the nation's destiny.

The story did not end there, however. Despite Elizabeth's considerable achievement, dark forces continued to gather around her. For one, the Papacy in Rome was very displeased by her actions, and, at one point, actually sent an emissary to have her killed. Though the plot was foiled, Elizabeth's problems continued, as members of her own cabinet now begun to plot against her. Elizabeth's life was still in grave danger. In fact, she now appeared threatened from nearly every quarter.

With the circle of malice tightening around her, she knew that something had to be done. And so, the queen searched deep within herself to find a solution. Then drawing on an unknown inner strength, Elizabeth came to the one and only conclusion that made sense, considering the current dire circumstance. Making perhaps the most important decision of her life, she ordered her enemies arrested or killed.

Not unlike what Krishna demanded of Arjuna at the battle of Kurukshetra in the Indian epic the *Mahabharata*, Elizabeth did what *had to be* done -- what was right and just, despite its sometimes-brutal nature. As a result of her action, not only did she establish security around her, not only did she establish the solid underlying conditions that would allow her to reign for *forty years*, but she was afforded a lifetime of opportunities to express all of her innate talents. In the end, Elizabeth's reign would come to be known as England's "Golden Age." In the short and long term, life had responded out of all proportion to a young woman's overwhelming courage, determination, and exercise of strength in the face of the most dire of conditions.

In this light, we can examine our own lives and see where we lack strength and toughness; or where we feel helpless, powerless, and not in control; or where we are shrinking, cowering, and overly deferential; or where we are fearful and lacking in courage. If we then reverse that position, taking to the necessary level of psychological strength, life will respond out of all proportion, propelling us to the heights of success, while eliciting a deep happiness from within.

Overcoming Limits of Habit, the Routine

Breaking the Habit

It is said that we are creatures of habit -- i.e. we like to persist in doing that which is routine and familiar, rather than what is different, fresh, and new. Sri Aurobindo tells us that this is due to our material, body consciousness, which tends to remain the same, rather than progress: to repeat the same things, rather than take fresh, new initiative.

And yet we can learn to be more open to change in our moment-to-moment lives. In any given circumstance, we can become aware of our fixidity, our reluctance, our unchanging habit, and instead take a fresh, new tact. And when we break that routine and pattern, not only do we experience the joy of a fresh moment, but we open the portals of possibility, enabling sudden good fortune to come our way. Let me illustrate with a recent experience.

For several years, I have been self-publishing my books through Lulu Press, a wonderful online system that is an alternative to traditional book production. An author goes to their website, supplies the manuscript file, selects a look for the covers, and Lulu

produces a book template available to the public. The consumer can then purchase a volume to order, 1 or 100, and have it shipped within a few days. It is a major revolution in the book-publishing field.

For several years, I have had little problems using the service. I would simply follow the steps and voila! new iterations of my books would be made available to the public. Recently, however, I have been trying to publish a new book, 'Higher Consciousness, Infinite Success', a compendium of the dozen or so major articles I have written at the Growth Online site, and have run into several problems. The main one is that when I send my Microsoft Word file to the site, the Lulu wizard would not accept it. I figured that it might be an error in their system, or that there is too much traffic at their site, or some other factor. For a month, I struggled to get a version of the file uploaded to Lulu so I could complete the book publishing cycle. Recently I simply resigned myself to the plight, hoping it would self-correct down the line.

Then I recalled that several associates of mine were using the Mozilla Firefox web browser instead of Microsoft's Internet Explorer. It was something I had never tried before, nor did I see a reason to. I sometimes even wondered why my friends were using it. I heard it was a little faster, but that did not seem enough to take me away from Internet Explorer. In any case, one morning, frustrated with my lack of success in uploading my latest book, and not having gotten a credible response from Lulu, I decided to download the Firefox browser.

When I loaded it up, it did indeed seem to be somewhat faster, though that still seemed only a relatively minor benefit for continuing with its use. Then I went to the Lulu site and tried uploading my manuscript through Firefox instead of the normal Internet Explorer. A moment later, I was shocked to see that not only did my manuscript file take the first time around, but I was able to get through all the publishing steps in record time! Later in the week, I made further changes to the manuscript, and was very quickly able to create a revision at Lulu. For me, it was a marvel to behold, as weeks if not months of frustration had now suddenly ended.

Even as I was having the experience, I saw the great life response benefit of embracing change in the details of life: of taking a different path, rather than following old habits and routines. When we perform an act in a fresh, new way, rather than in the tired old way, life immediately opens before us. When we get off the dime, and move away from our physical consciousness that is fixed and wants to repeat, we open the portals of possibility. It was another wonderful reminder that every moment we are offered the opportunity to break old habits and quickly attract the infinite to our doorstep.

Breaking Our Habitual Nature

Sri Aurobindo indicates that the predominant instincts of material existence are self-preservation, self-repetition, and self-multiplication. The bodily life in particular wants to persist, not progress; repeat, not enlarge.

This habitual nature causes us to be fixed, rigid, and unwilling to change. It thus shuns possibilities and opportunities.

It is an aspect of our physical consciousness, inherited from the inertia and incontinent of matter via our physical bodies. Our habitual nature is a slave of the subconscious and its mechanical reactions.

And yet when we perform an act in a fresh, new way, rather than in the tired old way, life immediately opens before us. When we get off the dime, and move away from our physical consciousness that is fixed and wants to repeat, we open the portals of possibility.

In this way, each of us can identify one or more dead or dull routines in our own lives, and experience that same sort of magic. If we come upon a habit or ritual that has no life behind it, and then try to do it differently, life will suddenly open up before us. What was once limited and finite will suddenly blossom. What was dull and unexciting will instantly energize. In that way, our fixed, dull habits and routines will begin to give way, attracting not only startling positive life conditions, but in that process bring moments of unexpected happiness and joy.

E.g. if my boss asks me to work weekends -- when I normally don't, and besides is something I don't like to do -- and catch my negative reaction, life will respond positively to that change. The effort to break the old habit will attract powerful positive conditions from life. This is precisely what happened to me many years ago, and the result is that I attracted the biggest sale of my life.

Or if I notice that I am walking along the same old path, and instead desire and see a new course to take, I am startled to discover a bookstore in an unexpired location where I find a volume that lists a person who will evaluate my upcoming book for little or no charge. That also happened to me, and I was able to get a detailed 30 page review of my book on Life Response for absolutely free, which helped me immensely in producing a far better version a year or two later. That form of Grace came because I literally took a different (physical) path.

Over time, we can learn to overcome the dead or deadening habit completely through the exercise of a steady Will, until the day when it is finally broken. In addition, if we intensely offer the matter to the spiritual Force, to the Divine Mother, then our mental will can turn into SPIRITUAL will, which will break down the habit much more quickly, while also dissolving related ones.

Finally, if we live life from a deeper center, we become much more sensitive to our reluctances, fixidities, and habits; our unchanging, repeating nature. In tandem with an indomitable Aspiration and Will to change these specific aspects of our nature, and our conscious effort to surrender the problem to the Divine Force, we open the portals of infinite possibility where our deepest aspirations in life are instantly fulfilled.

Another Road Taken at Fort Mason

Have you ever considered the extraordinary power of changing or discarding a routine or habit of yours? When we perceive something we have been doing repeatedly in the past, envision a new or different way of doing it, and then willfully carry it out, life tends to suddenly cooperate with our efforts, producing results that can border on the miraculous.

One day not too long ago, I decided to break one such routine. On this occasion, I decided not to walk through a large hilly park that overlooks San Francisco bay, which would have deposited me in the touristy Fisherman's Wharf area. Instead of climbing through that elevated park with its lovely view of the Golden Gate, I decided to explore the three long piers known collectively as the Fort Mason Center. These edifices, left over from Civil War days, are now divided into dozens of sections -- including headquarters for renowned dancing and theater troupes, offices for environmental and global movements, various California cuisine restaurants, and other interesting and unusual facilities. It has become a kind of mecca for the cutting edge, and the sometimes far out.

The first place I stopped at Fort Mason Center was a store that was dedicated to presenting the concept of time -- in particular, to showcasing a number of magnificent, unusually large timepieces. For example, prominently displayed was a 10-foot

computerized clock that was created to be accurate for up 10,000 years. It, like others on display, consisted of an astonishing array of gears and other moving parts.

At the time, I was the only one in the center, aside from the host. As I walked around the facility, I could hear soft, ethereal-like music playing in the background, which added to the already mystical atmosphere of the museum. Other than presenting these marvelous futuristic devices, the intent of the facility (longnow.org) was to capture the feeling of time itself -- or perhaps the *timelessness* of time. In fact, throughout the facility were posted a number of elaborate statements describing the nature of time -- including how we interact with it, what it really is, and others. There were also a number of books prominently displayed for sale on the subject. The entire experience was not only fascinating and thought provoking, but haunting and serene.

When I left the center, the guide asked me if I had any questions. However, finding myself in trancelike state, I could barely answer. As I exited the facility, I felt myself moving from the timeless like quality of that place back into time -- i.e. into ordinary life. I then looked around to get my bearings, and continued on my walk. Not a minute later, I came upon San Francisco's most famous and venerable New Age restaurant, Greens. Now over 25 years old, it is recognized as the home of the vegetarian movement in America, and one of the pioneer restaurants in the use of locally grown produce in the preparation of its meals. This very large restaurant has a spectacular view of the Golden Gate and environs, and is one of the main gathering places for the intelligentsia of San Francisco and Silicon Valley.

When I walked into the facility to see how things had changed, I saw that it pretty much looked the same; except it was a bit more modern, and the people were younger. As I contemplated entering the enormous main dining area, a man standing a few steps above me suddenly interrupted and called down in my direction. "Excuse me sir," he said to me, "do you have the time?"

Indeed, I was bowled over by the question, when you consider considering where I had just been! I then quickly responded that it was 2pm. Then I looked at my watch once more and called out that it was actually five minutes to 2. (I guess I felt compelled to be accurate since I had just been in a place dedicated to the specificity of time!) Shaking my head and smiling at this extraordinary little response from life, I then headed out of the restaurant. As I looked around, I could still feel that sense of timelessness and peace enveloping me.

Now in the bright light of the day, I noticed that I could walk completely around the 300-meter pier, which would in effect deposit me at the bay's edge. And so I did just that, discovering one of the most spectacular views I had ever seen in this city of many such views. Also, I noticed that the weather was somewhat unusual, as it was overcast directly above me, yet the entire bay -- with its shimmering hills and mountains in the distance -- was crystal-like, bathed in brilliant sunshine. The contrast was at once breathtaking and surreal, which was for me yet another response on this startling little "road not taken" adventure. As I stood there all alone at the end of the pier with its magnificent view, I felt the wonder and magic of life compressed into a single moment.

After that stirring, almost cosmic-like experience, I headed back inland to explore the other two piers. In fact, I was really looking for a special place that I believed was located somewhere in the third. A moment later, I then came upon the bookstore that I was looking for: one that I had visited once before nearly a decade earlier.

When I looked around the large facility, it looked at once familiar, yet somehow different. As I am want to do, I then immediately headed over to peruse the books on spirituality and religion. This time however, after rummaging through the shelves, I found nothing that caught my fancy. Slightly disappointed, and without much energy to peruse the plethora of other bookshelves, I decided to leave the facility. However, just before I exited the front door, I noticed a section of books prominently displayed that

were marked down to half price. Immediately, I found an interesting book that I thought a friend of mine would enjoy. Then something very special happened. I found a book on the subject of how to write spiritual books, and, in particular, how to submit them to literary agents. In fact, the book contained a listing of a number of agents -- with explicit, detailed information about each. I found this utterly astounding because in the last several weeks I had been constantly thinking about how to find an agent and publishing house for my new book! Now in one fell swoop, all my prayers were answered! In fact, as I walked out of the store, it occurred to me that this book could turn out to be the most important discovery of my life!

Like shifting away from a negative attitude, changing or overcoming a habit tends to attract instances of sudden good fortune. When I decided to get out of my dull walking routine and try something different, I was set on a journey that unfolded like a dream -- with unexpected occurrences, mystical like experiences, and infinite-like results.

Likewise, each of us can identify one or more dead or dull routines in our own lives, and experience that same sort of magic. If we come upon a habit or ritual that has no life behind it, and then try to do it differently, life will suddenly open up before us. What was once limited and finite will suddenly blossom. What was dull and unexciting will instantly energize. In that way, our fixed, dull habits and routines will begin to give way, attracting not only startling positive life response results, but in that process bring us moments of great happiness and joy.

That is precisely what happened to me on that mystical-like, sun-dappled afternoon at the shoreline of Fort Mason!

Changing the Habit, Routine

There are a number of things we do in life that are repetitive, occurring over and over as routine. After a while, the habit can become lifeless, which saps the energy out of it, reducing its inherent power for accomplishment.

Let's consider several ways we can change our approach to the habitual and routine, which will energize the act and ourselves.

DEEPER PURPOSE -- We can undertake the same routine act with more enthusiasm and will. E.g. instead of writing a weekly essay merely out of a sense of duty as routine, we can think about its underlying purpose to help others. This evokes freshness in our thoughts, and the content comes alive.

TAKE A DIFFERENT PATH AND APPROACH -- Instead of following the same approach to a recurring act, we can do it differently, such as writing with added flair or venturing into the unknown in a creative way through new imagery and language. Or instead of walking along the usual path on one's daily outings, we can follow a completely different one. As a result, we come upon the unexpected.

PERFECTION -- We can engage in that routine act so that it is made perfect. Instead of merely going on the same sales call with its inherent flaws and defects, we try to perfect every aspect of it, such as insuring that we have all of the vital information about the potential client, being sure that there is adequate time for giving the presentation, checking availability of stock to be sold, practicing all the essentials for successful salesmanship, etc. By perfecting the act we evoke freshness, delight, and vast success.

ADDING PERSONAL VALUES -- We can engage in the routine act by adding a value, such as writing the entry with greater clarity and accuracy, or by better organizing the content. There are a number of values we can draw from -- such as organization, customer service, accuracy, punctuality, tolerance, enthusiasm, self-givingness, honesty, etc. -- to give depth and power to the routine act we perform.

ADDING SPIRITUAL VALUES -- We can engage in the habitual act by adding spiritual values such as being patient, or maintaining a silent mind, or being equal in the face of intensities or difficulties, or being less concerned with self (ego) and more with giving to others. That will give tremendous spiritual energy to the act, which can evoke the unexpected and miraculous.

CONSECRATION -- Instead of merely accomplishing the repetitive act, we can first consecrate it so the spiritual Force is brought to bear, which has the power to elicit the very best conditions surrounding it. In fact, opening to the Force can turn the stalest routine and into an opportunity for the infinite to break out where before there was only finite and limitation.

FOLLOW PROCESS OF CREATION -- We can consciously follow the process of creation and accomplishment, which will energize the routine act and evoke its greatest possibilities. We do this by having a clear vision of what is we want to accomplish in the act, the will for it to occur, and execute it through determined effort and positive attitudes. Even the smallest routine like the act brushing our teeth can follow this process, which will not only energize the act, but draw out new possibilities.

PRIORITIZE A HABIT -- We can prioritize the activities we do in life, and see if the routine habit is worthy of its current status in the pecking order. Perhaps it should be a lower priority activity, or even eliminated completely.

GIVE IT UP FOR SOMETHING ELSE -- We can consider giving up the habit altogether for something else. E.g. instead of spending time writing weekly articles, one can spend more time on an activity that earns income in return, or does not tax the individual physically at the expense of other parts of his life.

GIVE UP NEGATIVE HABITS -- There are many habits we engage in that are unproductive, wasteful, or even harmful. We can examine what those are and reverse them. When we do, we can engage in a process where our lives may never be the same. E.g. one individual gave up the negative habit of being late, became punctual, which in turn set in motion a series of changes that altered the nature of his character and dramatically changed the course and success level of his life.

LIFE RESPONSE RESULTS -- All of these higher approaches to the routine tend to quickly evoke positive response from life. E.g. walking down a different path for one man led to him to suddenly discovering a new book store where he found a volume that changed the course of his writing career.

Anytime we engage in a routine act and do it with deeper purpose, with freshness, with enthusiasm, and by using personal and spiritual value, we allow the infinite potentials of life to rush in, turning the finite routine act into an occasion of infinite accomplishment and delight.

The Life of Spiritual Adventure that Attracts

The overwhelming majority of the time life is routine -- i.e. what we do and what comes to us is what is expected. Other times, life suddenly descends on us and offers up the unexpected, -- often taking the form of sudden good fortune. The latter tends to occur in response to our efforts to meet life's challenges, or by taking life by the horns and living it to the full. Here is a recent real life case in point:

One man I know of had not left California for 30 years -- save for two relatively short driving vacation trips across the western United States. For this individual then, the state of California had essentially become his entire nation!

One day recently, he was asked to fly down to San Diego in the southern part of the state near the Mexican border to perform some work for a client there. In the three

previous decades, he had never once ventured further south -- in California, or anywhere else -- than the Los Angeles area. He was therefore both excited about the trip, and concerned about his ability to navigate this new area.

When he arrived from San Diego on a flight from San Francisco, he discovered a very pleasing landscape, including a beautiful, warm coastline, soaring mountains, and a growing downtown skyline. Though he struggled at first to get his bearings, he was in the end able to navigate the freeway system and make his way to the client, who had their offices in a spectacular valley town north of the city. In the next several days, our friend successfully completed his work, while still having time to explore the coastal region and its sun-splashed beauty. After three days, he returned to his residence in the San Francisco area, with both new insight and an abundance of new energy.

Shortly after he arrived back at his home base, something peculiar happened -- his computer began to die. After very four very productive years of use, the computer suddenly and most unexpectedly ceased functioning. Since his entire business -- ne, his whole *life* - was contained on the machine, he was shocked by this sudden turn of events. He felt overwhelmed by the fact that without a computer, he was not only out of touch with the world, but all of the documents and programs he needed to get through the day were no longer available. Add the fact that this individual's profession was in the computer/software field, and that a major vacation to Hawaii loomed on the horizon -- his first travels outside of the United States in 33 years (!) -- you could imagine why he suddenly felt the weight of the world on his shoulders!

And yet despite this impossible, pressure-filled situation, our friend was able to conjure up the right attitude. Specifically, he viewed the turn of events as part of one great adventure that begun when he first embarked on his trip to San Diego, and was now continuing through these latest difficult unfoldings. He sensed that there was a purpose in what was occurring: that life was somehow trying to push things forward, and that he was willing to be a full participant in this latest adventure. It was with that attitude that he tackled the current problem of the expiring computer.

In the next several days, he did everything he could to get the machine up and running. However, for each step forward, he seemed to go two steps back. For example, he bought a new large external monitor because the built in one on his laptop had failed, only to discover that it distorted the screen, making all the web sites he created over the last decade unrecognizable. Because his old computer had so many connections with other add-on devices, and had so many wires running in and out of it, that when he changed one part, other parts would begin to fail. When the situation became intolerable, and his very lifestyle and businesses came into jeopardy, our friend perceived that a new approach was in order: that he go out and purchase a new machine.

That morning he arrived at the electronics mega store to purchase the computer. There he saw one that he liked, and a moment later a young man came up to help him. Our friend noticed that the salesperson had a soft and quiet nature. He then proceeded to tell the salesperson which machine he was interested, after which the clerk walked over to the giant metal cage to see if the item was in stock. Our friend, now desperate for any good news after days of incessant trouble, took the only course of action he knew: he opened himself up to the spiritual Force, and with great intensity offered the entire situation to the Higher Power.

After a considerable delay, the salesperson finally returned from his search. But would he have the computer that our friend wanted? It turns out that the salesperson was indeed holding a computer, but it was not the one our friend wanted. Instead, the salesperson found a different one that contained a microprocessor that was nearly double the speed of other one -- *and* at a lower price! At that moment, our friend knew

that the Higher Power had surely worked on his behalf. Thereafter, he felt grateful to the spirit that helped bring about this stunning turn of events.

When our friend arrived back at the office, he unpacked the machine and turned it on. He was instantly dazzled at how beautiful the screen image looked; how quickly the software loaded; and how many astonishing new features were already built in. He was particularly amazed that he could easily connect to the Internet through a wireless connection. One after another, he discovered new features that he was certain would make his life easier. As each new feature revealed itself, he felt as if he were on a magic carpet ride -- taken on a journey that transcended his experiences using his old, outdated machine.

Dazzled by these state of the art features, not only did he truly recognize how utterly out of date his old computer was, but now he saw that its death knell was actually a blessing in disguise; one that ushered in the wondrous new computer before him. He perceived that the failure of his old computer was no failure at all, but an opening to vast possibilities that arrived in the form of the new machine!

In addition to the computer episode, something else occurred after he returned from the "distant lands" of San Diego. He now perceived that he could take his long desired trip to Hawaii. Before going to San Diego, he was not sure. Now, however, after the trip, and particularly after he saw that he had a new machine that was reliable, he was sure. In fact, his trip to Maui -- his first trip out of the US in three decades -- was an equally great adventure, bringing an astounding array of additional life response experiences too innumerable to describe here!

When we live a life of adventure, life tends to attract the positive. When we break out of old habits, when we embrace the new, we release powerful energies, and as a result, life tends to respond positively from all quarters. When our friend journeyed to San Diego to meet with a client, it was the furthest he had journeyed south in over 30 years. For him, it was a great adventure to a foreign place in which he was required to solve the problems of others. As a result, powerful energies were released, which returned to him in spades in the form of an exciting new computer, and the realization of a dream vacation. Even when the computer died along the way, he saw it as a continuation of a natural and organic adventure that was in the process of unfolding.

The more we brave to go beyond the ordinary and routine; the more we embrace the possibilities that life presents us; the more we aspire for the heights -- the more energy we release that tends to attract very positive results fortune from our surroundings.

Life lived in its fullest is then the seeking and experiencing of Adventure. Through that dynamic, we not only attract the miraculous, but as a result are energized and delighted to no end. It is through such Adventures in Living that we experience not only the thrill of the journey, but the ecstatic fulfillment and enjoyment of the reward!

The Power of Personal Values

Application of Specific Values

Purity of Values Wins Case in Film 'A Civil Action'

In 'A Civil Action,' based on a true-life story, a highly successful personal injury lawyer Jan Schlichtmann, who likes to negotiate big settlements for his clients, represents the families of several children who died of leukemia. Jan is touched by several parents'

pleas, and decides to check out the polluting factories that might be responsible. When he discovers that one of them is a subsidiary of the big conglomerate Beatrice Foods, Jan convinces his partners to take on the case. During the trial, Jan contends not only with his well-financed judicial adversaries, but with the fact that by taking on the case he is forcing his own associates into deep financial debt, threatening their very livelihood.

It turns out that he not only loses the case, but his associates abandon him, and he himself is forced to move towards bankruptcy. However, in that impoverished state he perceives a new way to pursue the polluters. Then through a series of events, the case is renewed through other advocates, the victims win, and they are compensated by the courts for the amount of \$69 million.

We can look at the outcome of the case as life responding to the purity of Jan's values. He was at first an intelligent and clever attorney, driven by money. His higher values and idealism were buried beneath that attraction. He then however, takes on a case -- i.e. the plight of the victims of water pollution -- that moves him emotionally and idealistically.

And yet here too he is at first motivated by the possibility of a big settlement in order to make a personal fortune. Though he is tempted, his ideals of justice for the victims prevent him from doing so. Yet, interestingly he is at the same time destroying the people who are working with him, forcing them into near financial ruin, in order to pursue the case against an opposition with deep pockets.

It turns out that he loses the case in part because though his idealism is strong when it comes to the victims, he is still insensitive toward the plight of his own people. In other words, he is still exhibiting negative, even mercenary attitudes when it comes to money -- despite the fact that he has refused a settlement with the opposition -- and therefore life responds negatively in kind. I.e. life does not cooperate and he loses. In fact, the irony is that denying a lucrative settlement for the victims, while idealistically positive, causes his own staffers to suffer. And yet is only when he himself is driven into near bankruptcy that he is able to come up with the solution that leads to the resolution of the case in favor of the victims.

With his associates abandoning him, and now reduced to poverty, he is able to more fully and finally act from his idealism, i.e. his sense of justice, which are in essence his deep values. With the money taint gone, his consciousness was free to deal more purely with the issues at hand.

In that state, he was able to perceive a new strategy to solve the case. By moving away from money influence, he could think rationally, even intuitively, which enabled him to quickly come up with a plan that enabled him to find the man who provides the damning evidence that enabled him (through the EPA) to win the follow-up case. Life had in essence finally responded to his untainted idealism, by presenting his mind with a new perspective and insight on the direction to take the case.

Since he now had no money of his own, he was not able to pursue the follow-up case that he initiated though his intuition. Rather he had to send the new evidence he had gathered to the EPA (the Environmental Protection Agency), who then instigated the follow-up case. They then won a vast settlement for the victims -- even though Jan was no longer directly involved. Thus, life brought a huge settlement to the deserved victims only when the case was taken out of his hands. (That way his idealism could shine through and pave the way to a new strategy and new evidence that paved the way for victory. His old consciousness of money taint would not interfere.)

When a value is pure and perfect, life will respond to it. Jan valued that justice come to the victims, and with great passion was able to device an intuitive strategy that won the

day. Overcoming his mercenary attitudes toward money enabled him to overcome a wanting attitude that had once disturbed the purity of ideals.

Power of Values to Shape Our Lives

In the mid-1970s, I made a decision to move to California from New York City, where I was raised. Why I did so, and why I made other decisive turns in my life is the subject of this essay. My first thought on the subject is that I took these actions simply because I was *motivated* to do so. And yet, what really motivates us in life are the things we truly *value*.

Then what were the values that compelled me to move to California -- in particular to the San Francisco Bay Area -- where I have resided for these last 30 years? Well, it is true that after five years attending college at frigid Syracuse University in upstate New York I was compelled to seek the warmer climes of California. But I could have moved south to Florida or to the Southwestern parts of the US. However, having been raised in the urban/suburban environment of New York City, I valued culture and a certain type of urban sophistication I might not find in those other locales. I also enjoyed being near the water, not only because of its shimmering beauty, but because cities at the edge of the great oceans tend to attract a diversity of people and a richness of culture from around the world.

Though climate, beauty, diversity, and culture influenced my decision, there must have been something more specific that compelled me to move to this region. Looking at it in retrospect, I have concluded that I came to the area because of the existence of Marin County -- the progressive community that lies directly across the Golden Gate Bridge from San Francisco. Marin County at the time (and still is) was the prosperous land where many of the creative musicians, artists, and thinkers of the 1970s lived. From the articles and reports I had read while living on the East coast, the people who lived in that region were involved with matters that meant a great deal to me -- i.e. aspects of life that I truly valued. And because I deeply believed in those things, I wanted to be near them; to somehow participate in their way of life. And so I headed out to the SF Bay Area in 1975 in earnest -- and never looked back.

But I have still not identified the *specific* values of the Marinites that compelled me to join them. Let me try to list them for you. For one, the residents were in the vanguard of the changes going in society at the time -- including an appreciation of Eastern culture and spirituality, a concern for the quality of the physical environment, a dissatisfaction with the mindless materialism of modern life, the rejection of conformity of the previous generation, and the development of new forms of music that expressed their new world view. These were the underlying values that drove me to the region. These were the ideals and beliefs that shaped my life at the time, compelling me to venture across country.

Each of us is motivated to move our lives in certain directions. That motivation is determined by the values we subscribe to. Our values are thus the formations and ideations of thought, the distinct formulations of understanding that express what we perceive to be important truths about life. These ideals are then reinforced by our emotions and feelings, which turn those mental perception into a vital *passion* that we hope to realize in our lives. Whether we actually make the effort to implement them is another matter.

Without values or beliefs, we would be mechanical-like beings, driven here and there by the vicissitudes of life. Without values, we would be creature-like, compelled to action solely by our urges and passions. In this inhuman existence, there would be little consideration for truths we hold dear, let alone implement them to ennoble and enrich our lives. In this reality devoid of values, we would live unconscious lives, without

meaning or purpose. On the other hand, when we take to values, we live a purposeful and dynamic existence -- i.e. we become *truly human*.

This being the case, what are the truths of life, i.e. the personal values that you believe in? What are the cherished ideals and beliefs that have shaped your life; that are motivating and driving your life today? Why not take a little time and come up with a short list, and then consider how each has or currently is shaping your life.

If we think about it, we will see that people relate to personal values in a number of ways. *Thoughtful* people are continually thinking about those things they cherish and believe in. *Powerful* people are also motivated and driven to *implement* them in their lives. In fact, the most successful people are constantly evaluating their values, and are continually driven to turn them into a living reality. For these individuals, values are an inexhaustible source of inner power that energizes them to no end; driving them to the heights of success, while bringing about deep fulfillment in their lives.

Interestingly, not only do values energize us, but when we implement them, it energizes everything they come in contact with! If I apply the value of *customer service and delight* when I speak with the client, I energize the conversation, which leads to greater response from the person on the other end, who is now motivated to purchase the services I am offering. Also, if I am truly *sincere* in my belief in customer satisfaction, I create an *added* value that reinforces and builds on the first one. A combination of values applied to a situation dramatically energizes circumstances, which not only increases the likelihood of success, but turns the interaction into an enjoyable, even thrilling experience. Thus, implementing values have an innate capacity to create more energy, accomplishment, and joy in living.

Values are actually a very special power in the universe. It is one our minds can grasp for the purpose of *uplifting* life. Values are actually *spiritual skills* -- a divine gift that comes to us from the infinite Source of things. The highest of principles -- such as Oneness, Love, Beauty, and others -- descend from the heavens, and are reinterpreted as values by our minds. For example, the spiritual principle of Oneness is recognized by our minds as values of cooperation, integration, teamwork, and others. Likewise, the universal principle of Love expresses through values of goodness, selflessness, self-givingness, openness, tolerance, respect for others, and a number of others.

The last twenty-five years has seen an explosion in an interest in values. Tom Peters' book 'In Search of Excellence' started the ball rolling for values in the workplace. Religious leaders speak of family values, nations speak of moral values, spiritual teachers speak of the highest values of gratitude, benevolence, and self-givingness; even self-surrender to the Divine. Values drive us, motivate us, move life, move us forward -- enabling progress even evolution. Values are what enables life to take the Next Step -- whether they drive our own individual lives in a positive direction; improve the economic, social, and cultural conditions of a nation; or move society forward in its never-ending ascending path of progress.

Tolerance, openness, respect for the individual, and teamwork are several great *human* values, while Oneness, Love, Beauty, and Truth are some of higher *spiritual* values that they derive from. At certain points, the human and spiritual values come together and blend into one another, expressing through *spiritualized human values* such as selflessness, self-givingness, and gratitude.

Values are expressions of emotionalized truths that when implemented energize whatever they come in contact with, enabling the greatest positive results with the least effort in the shortest period of time -- whether it is for the individual, a collective, or society as a whole.

Values are the nexus to our future progress. It is the call of the Divine to the minds of men to seek a better life -- to pursue ultimate delight and fulfillment in life.

Cosmic Accounting

Whenever we move our consciousness to a higher level, life responds to that effort. Whether it involves a small or great matter, sudden good fortune will arrive in response to any movement to the positive.

Today I had my eyes examined for the first time in seven years at Lenscrafters. Like going to the dentist, people do not normally look forward to such events, unless they are compelled to do so -- i.e. when life forces one to change through difficulty, pain, or some other compulsion.

On this occasion, I wanted to pay for service rendered half by credit card and the half through my debit (i.e. bank) card. In essence, I did not want to run up my credit card more than I had to. As it turned out, I was unable to make this arrangement, instead paying \$300 via credit and the remaining \$100 through debit.

A half hour or so later after returning to my office (with my eyes still dilated and as a result my vision still blurred), I went to my American Express account to see if I could make a compensating payment to offset the extra amount I paid using that credit card at Lenscrafters. Unfortunately, when I tried to access the account, it was unavailable. I took it simply as a sign that my desire to make an additional payment to compensate for overuse of my credit card was not necessary; i.e. demanded by life. And so I forgot the matter.

However, when I then went to my mailbox, I found an unusual letter. It was from the state informing me that I had some unclaimed money due, which required additional identification papers on my part. As you might have guessed, the amount was virtually the same as the amount I wanted to pay on my credit card account! Life in essence compensated me for my aspiration to draw down on credit card payments by "sending me the balance." It would turn out to be the only other money related matter that came to me by mail or otherwise that day.

As we see, life will respond to any shift in consciousness to the positive; even the most subtle of changes. Because I felt it was the right thing to not overextend my credit card and pay half of Lenscrafters bill via debit card, life itself made up the difference. In essence, by taking a higher order decision based on a practical value, I aligned with conditions that brought the transaction back into balance. Thus, through some cosmic-like accounting, the equilibrium of life was reestablished.

Less is More

When a writer comes up with an idea, he initially expresses it boldly, albeit through limited beauty of expression. He then expands on the matter to bring out the fullness of the idea, only to realize that the expression is too broad and expansive. As a result, he rewrites what he has written before in a concise way. What comes out of this process is a small jewel, a beautiful expression of a profound idea.

Life does not seek out quantity as much as quality as an end result. It looks for the perfect expression, perfect outcomes that reflect concise truths of consciousness. The world can be said to be moving in that direction. Though we go about accumulating many things in life, we are ultimately seeking happiness. In spiritual terms, that is called "Delight of being," which is an even higher form of happiness because it never deserts us. The essence of gathering together of things in life -- material objects, wealth, family, power, position, and so forth -- is a means of creating One Small Thing, which is happiness, or better yet Delight of being. The quantity matters less than the quality. If it can be obtained through a small vehicle, then that is sufficient. What is important is the value, which is small and precise. It is Less than the sum of all things.

Each of us can look at our lives and determine what that essence is; what that True Thing consists of. When we know that, we can condense down all other things in pursuit of that deepest of personal values. By discarding, we move to the Essence. By abridging, we move to our Truth. By focusing and simplifying, we move towards our heart's desires in life. In that way, less is more, and more is less.

Power of Perfection

Consultant's Effort of Perfection Rewarded In an Unexpected Way

A management consultant and businessman was putting the finishing touches on a proposal that was to be sent out to a number of prospective decision makers. He had made a great effort in developing the proposal and accompanying brochure, gathering information from various sources, and doing everything he could to make things just right; in other words, to perfect it.

Now the moment arrived when he was going to email this proposal in which he sought backing for a very innovative software system his associate had developed. He then clicked his computer mouse and out went the message along with the detailed proposal document to a host of important decision makers.

Interestingly, at the very INSTANT he clicked the mouse, he also received an email message from a client. When he reviewed the contents he realized that he had been contracted to do consulting work at a considerable fee every month with that organization. It was an incredible moment, as he needed the funding to sustain himself, plus it was an opportunity to engage in some interesting management consulting work.

Though the click of the mouse did not to garner the specific results he hoped for from the intended audience (the decision makers for the software program), it did simultaneously attract an overwhelmingly positive result from an entirely *different* area.

What was the underlying cause of this synchronistic outcome? Because the consultant made the full effort to perfect the proposal and brochure, life responded instantaneously with a great opportunity and result.

This episode indicates that when you make the full, persevering, relenting effort to make a thing perfect, life responds out of all proportion. And often in the most extraordinary ways!

The True Psychological, Spiritual Individual

The True Individual

General

Questions and Answers on True Individuality

What is Individuality? Individuality is the capacity to express one's true, unique nature in deed and thought. It is the expression of what one deems to be truth, regardless of what others believe.

How does Individuality develop? How can it be fostered? It is fostered by knowing our true selves; of a longing for the truth of things, not merely the commonly accepted; by rigorous introspection of one's attachments and attitudes, as opposed to the truth of a matter; of an outflowing of creative capacity unfettered by common standards, approval, or social convention.

What is the relationship between Individuality and-

- *Creativity?* Individuality expresses as ultimate creativity because it reflects a unique slant on things; the capacity to create something fresh and new in the world.
- *Original thinking?* Individuality compels original thinking, as we are willing to explore that which has not been done before. It opens us up to infinite possibility.
- *Leadership?* Individuality creates fresh leadership. During the Cuban Missile, Crisis Kennedy asked his advisors to think of a fresh approach in solving the problem, which they did, and thereby at the last minute resolved a potential global catastrophe.
- *Genius?* If we are truly individual, we will explore that which has not been explored before. Our insights in that new field will tend to be fully original, compelling others to consider us to be genius in that area.
- *Entrepreneurship?* Individuality will compel us to take up new types of undertakings that have never existed before. This creates vast opportunities for us, as we are there first. Steve Jobs and Apple, from its earliest days onward, is an obvious example.
- *Freedom & democracy?* Individuality is freedom in the true sense. What good is it to be free if we just act like the herd? The term "liberty" expresses this freedom to be a true, unique individual. It is a step beyond "freedom." Society that fosters liberty in this sense advances individuality.
- *Education?* True individuality would compel a young person to seek knowledge in areas he or she is truly interested in. That knowledge would in effect reinforce and expand the individuality, leading to great creative results in life. Individuality would focus on the needs of the individual child, person not the mass of education. It would look into the soul needs of each person.
- *Culture?* Culture would be enriched and expanded through greater individuality. We would see new forms of culture, new ways of relating to society and life. Life would become fuller, more interesting, more dynamic, with new ways of looking at things, and sharing of them in individual and collective experience.
- *Romantic love?* More types of love would open up aside from the forms we have known so far. There would be more gradations and shadings of types of love than what we know now; just as romantic love, a new shading that only blossomed in the last 750 years, particularly the last 200, emerged. Romantic relationships would thus become even more dynamic.
- *Spirituality?* Individuality would take us far beyond the teachings of religion to an essential spirituality, as we would explore all dimensions of existence, of reality, of the spiritual dimension, unfettered by the social imperative. Individuality would also lead to unique, direct experiences of the spiritual dimension of life.

What is the relationship between the development of Individuality and the development of Society? Society would become more dynamic, more enriched, more open minded. Society would thus be energized to no end.

Is humanity becoming more individualistic? If so, why? What is the significance? Yes, of course. Just look at the Internet. With that knowledge, any person can become anything

he or she wishes to be. There is also an opposite movement to conformity, but then true individuality would see through it, compelling one to act based on one's conscience, one's unique perspective, and creative capacity.

Can Individuality be distinguished from and develop without increasing egocentrism and selfishness? Individuality is not the same as egotism, rebelliousness, and other destructive forms. Real individuality comes from Self, which is in touch with higher things in life. The rebel expresses his faux-individuality by being truculent for its own sake. Even if that which he rebels against is resolved, he will still rebel because rebellion is all that he knows. Ego is not individuality; it is separateness that does not want to know the full truth of things, and thereby be unique.

Is it possible to develop individuality in a manner compatible with the maximum progress for society as a whole? Yes, there is a balance between individuality and social cooperation. When we become truly individual, we also perceive the need for harmony with other things and individuals. As we make progress through our individuality, so does society. As society allows for maximum individuality, we thrive as individuals.

Power of Human Individuality

We can say that each individual produces a certain amount of output of being: for his own self, the society around him, and perhaps for something more. We could measure such contributions of individuals to life as a 'Composite Human Output' (or CHO).

It is my belief that the individual has secret, infinite capacities due to the fact our origins are from an Infinite consciousness and source. However, in relative terms, the individual throughout history has accomplished at a relatively finite level; i.e. the average person has produced barely the norm, or slightly above it. And yet through an elevation of consciousness, awareness, capacity, etc., a person can produce vastly greater human output, energy, and accomplishment; even exponentially more, as he will in essence be bringing to the surface the infinite potential that is buried in the depths of his being.

The key for this to happen is for that person to express his or her true individuality. If that individual expresses a true, original capacity, then the output -- the CHO -- begins to rise precipitously. For example, let us say, I accept the social norms, the standard conventions on how to live my life. As a result, I will generate X outcomes for myself and the world around me. (The quality is also to be considered, aside from the quantity.)

But now I move to a true expression of who I truly am, not what others dictate; what I am capable of expressing -- i.e. my True Individuality -- through creativity, through new thinking, through new ways to live my life, causing my CHO to vastly expand. Now my output is not merely that of the average person, or somewhat above it, but doubles or even increases several times. Einstein is one example of someone whose output was 10 times. In 1905 alone, he exceeded all major scientists combined in his insights through his various papers. That was made possible because he practiced his life beyond normal convention and dreamed to express that which was unpopular or unknown in a Newtonian-oriented world.

Here is a little personal history. Early in my life, I personally committed to a very unconventional path. I not only drew away from the social norms, but I discovered a personal course where I could be endlessly creative. My lifestyle was not only unconventional, but so was the nature of what I came to understand in the world, which I expressed in infinitely creative ways.

When along the way I came to progressively discover what my true, inner self was and aspired, then not only did my individuality increase, but so did my creative output. In that way, our Composite Human Output can rise from our current level of 1 to 2 or to 10

or even 100. In that way, the infinite potential that I believe is involved in our being as formation of Infinite consciousness comes to the surface.

Imagine then the effect of that person's on others and society. Then envision thousands, even millions of such individuals affecting the world. At that point, we will look around and see a planet that is very different from our current condition. And it will be because we have expressed our true individually by going beyond the conventional norm, and discovering who we truly are -- i.e. Self.

Dan in Real Life

Life presents us with many challenges, some of which arise through negative circumstance. In particular, it can be quite difficult to remain positive when the social atmosphere is wanting -- e.g. if people around us are behaving in ways that are detrimental or even harmful. And yet those who are able to maintain the right outlook in these circumstances, who are immune to and do not participate in the negative social activity, gain an interesting power over life, as they tend to quickly attract positive conditions. Let me illustrate with a film I watched the other day.

In *Dan in Real Life*, Dan Burns is a newspaper advice columnist, a widower, and a father of three daughters in the New Jersey suburbs. One day Dan and his children take a trip to the Rhode Island home of his parents for their annual family get together. After they arrive at the large house, situated on a bluff overlooking the bay, Dan takes some time off and goes to a local bookstore. There he meets a woman named Marie who mistakes Dan for an employee. He then proceeds to gather up several books for her, and in the process, hits it off with her. Suddenly love blossoms.

When Dan arrives back at the house, he lets his family know that he has found a potentially very special person. They are thrilled to hear this since it has been three years since he lost his wife. However, a short while later, his brother's new girlfriend arrives on the scene, and it turns out to be none other than Marie! She too was on her way to the family get together when she met Dan at the bookstore.

There then begins a tense situation in which his brother and Marie are somewhat romantically interacting at the home, even as Dan is now has fallen in love with her. After several days, the situation becomes unbearable for both. Because he appears so miserable, Dan's mother suggests that he call up a local girl on a blind date and ask her to come to the gathering. When the rest of the group learns that she is coming, they recall that she was a physically unattractive young girl, and so they begin mocking her for being an ugly duckling. At one point, they go as far as to launch into a rollicking, impromptu sing-along in which poke fun of "miss piggy face." All except Dan, that is.

A few minutes later, so-called "piggy face" arrives at the house, and shockingly turns out to be a beautiful woman. Immediately, Dan and her are physically attracted to one another. As a result, Marie becomes very jealous, which has the further effect of turning the emerging, partial love she felt for Dan into a full-blown blossoming of her emotions. This in turn compels her to truly seek out the relationship with him, once she breaks off with his brother. In the end, Dan and Marie fall deeply love and are blissfully married.

The moral of the story? Because Dan did not give into and participate in the mocking sing-along of his soon to be arriving date "piggy face," he attracted instead a beautiful woman. Furthermore, her arrival compelled Marie, the woman he loved, to commit to a relationship, which culminated in their marriage. That is the power of **remaining positive in a negative situation** -- in this case, in the face of social pressure to act falsely. The effect is that this person, the exception in the crowd, is propelled to the heights through complete emotional fulfillment. When we follow our own positive instincts and do not give into the social imperative of the herd, we release positive

energies that attract the very best of conditions. In that way, we develop "true individuality," which tends to lure the infinite potentials of life in our direction.

The Internet and the Emerging True Individual

Many think of the Internet as mere technological marvel -- a form of organization that is simply an extension of the electronic products and services that came before it; in particular, the computer and various communication devices. However, the Internet is more than that. It is an outer form and expression of our individual need to explore, discover, and achieve in life. It is a social structure that allows our individuality to ripen by connecting us the wider knowledge and wisdom of society so we can thrive and fulfill our deepest aspirations in life.

If the Internet is an indicator of new developments in the "support systems" of society, the individual himself is also undergoing a fundamental change. First of all, his life is becoming more oriented around his mind -- i.e. he is becoming more mental. Because he is more educated, because he is more aware of the world around him, and because is more conscious of his ability to direct the course of his life, his mental bent is in ascendance -- i.e. it is becoming the true leader of his being. As a result, he perceives that he truly has the inner resources -- the knowledge and power -- to become anything he so chooses.

One way this inner-directed person fulfills his deepest aspiration is by making full use of the information and knowledge available to him. As it turns out, the Internet serves this function perfectly well, as it supplies an infinite supply of facts, ideas, and insights to support his ever-deepening aspiration for self-knowledge, individual expression, and greater success. Though the Internet is an outer vehicle, still it serves an inner need -- as this vast organizational system provides truths from every segment of society so that the individual can consciously choose the future direction of his life.

In addition to this mental bent that fosters a truly conscious inner-driven existence, a second contributing factor to Man's increasing individuality is the availability of ever-greater levels of freedom in life. Unfettered by the demands of the old hierarchical order, unrestrained by old, outworn moralities and customs, the individual now feels freer than ever, even compelled to explore the vast array of possibilities available to him. This person perceives that he has full independence to become anything he puts his mind to. Once again, the Internet serves him well by providing a vast array of knowledge that he can choose from that meet his own particular needs and interests so he can reach his maximum potential. Thus, the Internet enables Man's newly inherited freedom to mature into ever-increasing levels of fulfillment in life.

A third fundamental change the individual is going through -- one not readily perceived by society, since it is more subtle and difficult to fathom -- is that he is beginning to move out of his essential Ignorance. By that term, I am not referring to the ignorance of the poor farmer or the individual who is without education, but to an intrinsic unconsciousness that is there in every person at birth: that we inherit simply by being human. We live in what can be called the egoistic ignorance, feeling separate and cut off from the rest of the world, living for ourselves alone, when in fact our fulfillment is predicated on a positive relationship with the rest of humanity. All we possess, all we achieve is based on what we have acquired from society. The Internet offers an unparalleled means for the individual to reconnect and more fully connect with the wider humanity of which we are a part.

In addition, we tend to perceive only a small part of any issue or matter, rather than the multiplicity of factors that make up that object. Dominated by our fixed habits, our virulent attitudes, and our hardened opinions, we tend to guard what little we know of a matter, and shun the wider and deeper knowledge available to us. Holding on to our

limited perceptions, we make faulty assumptions that lead to error-prone, misbegotten behaviors and actions that result in difficult, pain-filled lives. The Internet puts us in touch with an unlimited variety of viewpoints, perspectives and aspects of truth. Our emerging individual embraces the wide variety of truths, including the multiplicity of details, as well as the essence that make up the Whole of any matter or concern. The Internet, with its vast array of information and knowledge, serves Man's purpose, as it provides a more integrated, many-sided view of things. The Internet is thus a social power that forces us out of our false, limited view, and gives us the opportunity to embrace a fuller, more balanced, and integral knowledge. It moves us out of our limited subjectivity and brings us to deeper and wider objectivity rooted in truth. From that vantage point, we have the necessary insight and wisdom to redirect the course of our lives so that we can fulfill our fondest hopes and dreams.

As we look out at the arc of our human existence, of the progress we have made over the millennia, and, in particular, the rapid changes in human consciousness that are occurring today, it seems only right that this self-empowered, inner directed, highly conscious new type of person should appear. The emergence of this True Individual is the logical consequence of everything that has come before. Because of the freedom we have acquired, because of our ever-increasing mental bent, and because of our yearning to know the many-sided, true truth of things, there is a compulsion of Nature to produce the next iteration of human life. It is the True Individual.

In parallel and concord with these developments, we see a powerful new system of society taking shape -- the Internet --, which is serving this New Individual's needs in the extreme. Together they indicate that a new form of human existence is forming that is at once dynamic, creative, and spiritual in nature. It is a sign of the next stage of human progress: a signal of our evolution into a new way of living.

The Makeup, Planes of Our Being

Planes of Being of the Individual

Expressions and Needs at Each Plane

Humans are physical, vital, mental, and spiritual beings. We are comprised of these in varying degrees. I have a physical body, and all its organs, muscles, tissue, etc. at the physical plane. I have sensations, needs, feelings, emotions, attitudes, interrelations with others at the vital plane. I have thoughts, ideas, beliefs, engage in rational/logical thinking at the mental plane. And I experience peace, harmony, love, and blissful transcendence, amongst others at the spiritual plane. We are all of these things and more, as the planes interact as one thing; and I am one being

We also have *needs* at each of these levels, with the most basic and essential ones being at the physical plane, with gradually decreasing imperative necessities fulfilled at progressively higher levels, i.e. vital, mental, and spiritual. Most essentially, we need to function and be fulfilled at the *physical* level -- in terms of our health and well-being, proper nourishment, security and safety, and others. At the *vital* level, we require friendship love, family relations, emotionally fulfilling work, etc. At the *mental* level, we have the need to understand, to be conscious and put into effect the things we believe in, to organize our existence, to conceive of achievable goals, and the ability to think logically and rationally, amongst others. At the *spiritual* level, we seek and aspire to be fulfilled in terms of peace, harmony, truth, wisdom, goodness creativity, love, delight, timelessness, infinity, and other higher consciousness qualities.

Evolution Upward and Descent Among Planes

As we move up the scale of planes, there are a decreasing number of individuals who are realized there. E.g. there are far fewer mental individuals than vital-centered ones. And yet in the course of human evolution, we are increasingly evolving upward amongst these planes (actually their subplanes, e.g. from fact processing to true rational thinking of mind) in terms of our needs and nature. That is, we have evolved from essentially physical beings focused on survival and the material necessities of existence, to vital beings who seek to fulfill themselves, engage one another through social intercourse, and so forth. Now in the last several centuries, and especially the last fifty years, our mental capacities are accelerating. We are emerging as true mental-oriented beings.

As we evolve upward amongst the planes (and subplanes) as a society and individually, we may also notice corresponding *descent* that complements the process of ascent. For example, if I develop new mental capacities that I never had before, there will be the tendency to practice what I have learned at a plane below it. Thus, if I want to understand why I have certain physical ailments, and gain that knowledge, I can then turn around and *implement* it at the physical level -- i.e. a lower plane, so that I can now fully overcome my illness. In this way, the process of progress contains these loops of ascent to a higher plane and a descent into lower planes for its implementation. Overall though, there is still a movement upward.

Scale of Progress Among Planes

Also keep in mind that we can progress to different degrees; in an ascending scale of "development, evolution, and transformation." For example, if I change an attitude, I make a certain progress in life at the vital-mental subplane. This is development. If however, I change my vital nature from being coarse to something more refined in my vital interactions with others, I have evolved at that plane. Transformation is the complete perfection of that plane. E.g. I become a self-giving, calm, serene, and fully positive individual at the vital plane. Thus at each plane I can develop, evolve, and be transformed. I can also do the same for my entire nature; i.e. I can become a completely, integrally transformed being.

Types of Individuals (as Expression of Planes)

Using this approach, we also recognize different types of people from amongst physical, vital/emotional, mental, and spiritual. Though people draw from each of these planes to lesser or greater degrees, one plane usually stands out in that person's nature. For example, one individual is highly focused on his using his mind (such as a programmer, scientist, or philosopher), and is therefore of a mental bent; while another person is centered in his emotions, and is therefore predominantly vital in nature. Then there is a physical person who does physical oriented activities, has simple tastes and wants, with his mental life mostly developed.

What we call a "ripe soul" or "realized individual" has a spiritual center and orientation. His nature is to seek out and practice those methods and means that bring spiritual-like results -- such as meditation that creates quietude, self-givingness that enables harmony and love, or the experience of the transcendent divine within, which creates ultimate Delight and Bliss.

Perceiving How Life Presents Itself Among the Planes

It is also helpful to take any situation, circumstance, aspect, thing, and evaluate it in terms of the plane or planes involved -- physical, vital, mental, or spiritual; or any combination. This will give the observer more penetrating insights into that object of inquiry. For example, when trying to come up with a solution to a conflict between two parties, we may notice that one person is more emotional and vital, and the other more mental. In that way, we can appeal to the first person's emotions, or better yet come to work with them through a calmer basis, while we confront the mental person through the realm of ideas, through his better understanding of the situation. In this same way

we can evaluate, groups of people, communities, nations, speeches, developments in the world, technologies, and so forth. we will automatically then have a leg up on understanding the issues, giving us great insight for decision making, actions, and so forth.

We garner a tremendous power of observation and insight when we see the world and the unfolding of life through these four planes of existence. Perceiving the physical/material, vital/emotional, mental, and spiritual planes of being is one of mind's great tools to make deep sense out of the world around us.

Perceiving Things as Physical, Vital, Mental, and Spiritual

When you examine aspects of life, it is very helpful to see it in terms of each of the Physical, Vital, and Mental planes. It brings greater clarity, perception, and understanding of the thing under consideration. Sri Aurobindo and Sri Karmayogi have gone to great lengths to bring out these distinctions in life and advise us to do the same. Some examples:

-When I am creating this entry, I am using my hands to type (physical), my will to want to accomplish it (vital), and my mind to express the idea.

-When you meet a particular person, you can see that he is a physical-oriented person (likes to engage in sports all of the time), is often emotional (vital), and has little interest in expressing ideas (mental). Another individual has an entirely different combination.

-Man has emerged from a predominantly physical existence of hunter gatherer and agriculture to a more interconnected existence through trade and communications (vital), and has now entered a mental age where he uses his mind to a much greater extend to accomplish.

-An individual is very upset (vital), but then catches himself through the knowledge that he could pay a heavy price behaving this way (mental).

Look around and you will see that you can readily identify what is physical, vital, and mental. It gives you an entirely new perspective of how life functions, including insights into your own nature.

Finally, it is also possible to see the spiritual dimension at work, especially when you perceive any of its attributes -- including peace, harmony, oneness, goodness, knowledge, truth, beauty, love, delight, timelessness, and infinity at work.

Considering the Plane from which We Act

Any action taken in life can be done with the physical, vital, mental, or spiritual plane of our being leading. The uncontrolled urge to move is physical, the will and drive to take action is vital, the thought-filled analysis of the situation before moving is mental. Opening to the Higher Power or taking to silence before doing anything is spiritual.

Where our center of consciousness resides when we engage in acts determines not only its immediate outcome, but the psychological and physical baggage we accumulate over time. If it is performed at one plane when we are capable of doing it at a higher one, we break down in various ways. E.g. if you are compelled to merely act (i.e. physically without thought), though you are capable of considering the matter beforehand (mental), then you will tend to attract physical problems, such as illness.

It is therefore always worth considering the determining plane you are at before taking any action in work, play, etc., see where you can improve, and act from that new poise.

Doing so will not only enable you to avoid accumulating negative propensities and wanting energies, but will tend to quickly attract very positive conditions thereafter.

Over time, you can evolve your entire being upward to the point where your central personality is poised in that higher plane. It would be a vast growth: in essence, personal evolution in a single lifetime.

Health, Well-Being, Energy

Reluctance to Overcome Inner Causes of Illness

An illness indicates an imbalance of some sort that has an inner cause. To discover what that is would certainly be helpful -- both for our consciousness and our well-being.

One man I know of keeps breaking down in the form of fatigue, exhaustion, headaches, etc. It is primarily due to too much thinking. Given his natural propensities, he has overworked himself at the level of mind, and therefore needs to balance it with some other type of work, initiative, activity, exercise, etc. that will restore the balance. At the point he does, health will improve, and, ironically, life will provide him with the profound life lessons he seeks mainly through thought.

It turned out that Karmayogi helped this individual understand his personal imbalance, even though he sometimes fell back and repeated the same thing. As a result, his body broke down again in creative, new ways. When it became severe, he sought the advice of doctors. But when they examined him, they were baffled and found nothing. That's because the cause was inner. Naturally, they could find no inner cause, nor, as it turned out, any outer symptom!

Karmayogi tends to know the causes of our illness if we present him (or his agents) with the facts. (So does Mother, if we sincerely offer it up to her to let us know the truth.)

Steve Jobs had the unbalance of being too absorbed in technology and gadgets, missing the higher life and consciousness that he was (ironically) familiar with. His disposition was also argumentative and possessive (he was an orphan), amidst his multi-dimensional technological genius. A slow, fatal illness was the result.

People suddenly pass away or spontaneously incur some dreaded disease, even when there is no propensity to do so in one's family. It turns out that Jobs' biological parents are still living into their 80s.

When higher consciousness opportunities avail themselves, and we don't take it, then our inner being is not pleased. It wants improvement, lest the subconscious will evoke illness to demand it.

People around us will know the inner cause of our outer difficulties from different angles. We too will know several of them; though we will tend to suppress their veracity. The spiritual teacher can perceive the inner cause very quickly. Whether we want to follow their advice, or even ask for it is up to us.

One woman I know with diabetes has all the knowledge of the conditions and causes, yet is reluctant to change her habits. It is there in several generations -- both the disease and the dispensation towards unchangeability.

We are fixed beings. But Life is change; progressively so. The difference between the two is disequilibrium. It manifests through our troubles -- as accidents, illnesses, failures, etc.

Human choice is ours. When the WILL TO CHANGE can match our understanding of the outer conditions and the inner causes, there will be real progress.

Our fixidity, the chains of the physical consciousness, the downpull of the subconscious, our limiting attitudes, etc. keep solutions at bay; keep the disequilibrium intact. The choice is ours to bring it back into Harmony.

Restoring Our Physical Health

Energy is the source of everything in the universe. So too, all of the forms in the universe release energy to survive. We humans release physical energy when our bodies take to movement. We release vital energy when we are stirred by our emotions; when there is a will and drive to accomplish something; and when we interact with others. We release mental energy when thoughts enter our mind and when we think. And we release spiritual energy when we connect to our deeper spiritual selves or to the transcendent spiritual reality, or we move to selflessness and self-givingness.

When we are ill, there is an inadequate or unbalanced amount of energy generated in our being. It is indicative that something is amiss. To correct it we need to know the inner source of the imbalance. More often than not, there is a psychological issue at play -- e.g. a wanting habit, attitude, emotion, etc. Attacks of illness can also come to us externally from adverse forces in the environment, including the influence of others through the subtle plane.

Once we discover what that is, and then make the concerted effort to overcome the limitation, the right quantity and balance of energies are restored in our being, enabling the body, the psyche, the emotions, the spirit to become well and whole again. Interestingly the restoration of health can literally happen instantaneous to the discovery of the source of the problem. That is life responding at the physical/bodily level to our change of consciousness within.

Power of Preserving our Energies

The other day someone asked me why we are constantly in a state of action and motion; and why is our mind constantly full of thoughts. I answered that it was due to the fact that our physical, vital, and mental energies are not under control. I.e. if our physical energies were under a modicum of restraint, we wouldn't be in constant motion. Similarly, if our mental energies were held in check, our thoughts wouldn't be constantly running. Let's then examine uncontrolled energy at each of these planes a little closer.

One extreme of unfettered *physical* energy is the child who races around haphazardly here and there, as the mind has not learned to control and direct those energies. However, as we get older, our physical energies are absorbed in other pursuits: in dealing with work, family problems, romantic and other personal relationships, and so forth. As a result, we tend to move around less arbitrarily. Or to put it another way, as we mature, our vital and mental parts take the reins from the physical.

We also squander our *vital* energies in a variety of ways. Examples are taking to excessive drink and drugs, intense emotional or physical interchange, overreacting to the inputs of others, being absorbed in trivial pursuits, pushing ourselves too far, and many others. In addition, there is a litany of primal negative emotions, feelings, and attitudes -- such as anger, hate, and jealousy -- that constantly drain our vital energies. Most of the time, we are completely aware of this dynamic.

Then there are the various ways we waste our *mental* energies. For example, "running thoughts," -- i.e. the mind's tendency to constantly have to think -- is another form of uncontrolled energy release that depletes it. It is large part due to the restlessness of our lower, physical-oriented mentality, which constantly has to think about things in order to feel secure and assured. Then there is what I like to call "momentum thinking," which is the tendency of mind to constantly have to review current circumstance and conditions well after it is necessary to do so. Again, there is a kind of subconscious fear that if one is not constantly reviewing current circumstance that life will not work out well; when in fact the opposite is true. Finally, as the mind develops, through education and various life experiences, it seeks to express itself ever-more frequently like a powerful muscle. All three forms deplete our mental energies at a time they need to be rejuvenated for future mental freshness.

And yet, we can learn to control any of these forms of energy depletion if we just become aware of their expression, and then develop a simple method to restrain it. One method is to periodically scan ourselves, and determine if we are squandering our physical, vital, and mental energies. That effort, in tandem with our energy depletion knowledge, will generally reveal where we need to control ourselves. For example, if I go for a walk after completing a relatively important work, and I find myself constantly having to review and reassess every detail of my earlier efforts, it indicates that I need to develop a degree of restraint in that area. I therefore decide that every time I take that afternoon walk, I will not think of anything to do with work. If I do, not only will my energies be restored, but the effort to create that mental silence will attract positive conditions, including intuitions of important knowledge, from seemingly out of nowhere.

Another technique is that whenever we feel tired, we can consider what we did at the physical, vital/emotional, or mental levels that precipitated it. E.g. if we find ourselves exhausted the day after an intense meeting with a friend, then we know that it has drained our energies, and we should try to avoid such forceful interactions in the future.

In the end, it is only through self-analysis and self-discipline that we can maintain high levels of physical, vital, and mental energy. If we are vigilant, observe ourselves, and make the effort to change our energy-wasting ways, not only will our vigor and energy in life be constantly overflowing, but we will feel continuous joy in being alive. There is no more wonderful condition in life!

Love, Romance

Attracting Romantic Love Out of Nowhere

Is it possible to attract a romantic partner from out of thin air? I believe it is. The conditions are that (1) you have a real desire for a romance relationship, and (2) you are able to discover a corresponding wanting element in your being and reverse it. As a result, the man or woman of your dreams can emerge from out of nowhere.

In the German romantic comedy, *Mostly Martha*, Martha Klein is a workaholic chef, single-mindedly obsessed with the perfection of her culinary creations. After her boss, restaurant-owner Frida, catches her arguing with a pair of customers over the quality of her cooking, Martha is ordered to see a therapist to try to work out her control issues and poor interpersonal relationships. Meanwhile, Martha's sister, perhaps her only connection to a world outside of her job, dies in a car accident, leaving Martha in charge of her niece, the sullen and broody Lina.

Martha finds it extremely difficult to emotionally bond with Lina, demonstrating her psychological problems. Martha's world is then further turned upside down when the owner of the restaurant hires funloving and unorthodox Mario as a sous-chef to replace one of the workers there. Along the way, Mario challenges Martha's defenses and bonds with Lina, who begins to accompany Martha to work.

Martha begins to relax and open up to the possibility of a romantic relationship with Mario. However, after a second romantic interlude, it seems her psyche just cannot handle that possibility, and she in essence forces Mario out of her life.

One day after Lina tried to run away to Italy to visit her true father, Martha has an emotional catharsis and deeply bonds with the young girl. At that very instant, Mario knocks on her door, rekindling their relationship, which soon leads to their happy marriage.

What happened was that at the very moment the standoffish, obsessive, compulsive Martha gives into her feelings toward the young girl, the man of her dreams appears at her door, leading to the marriage and happy life that was unavailable to her until that point. By overcoming a deep-seated wanting attitude, life responded and brought the man of her dreams to her doorstep, when the relationship seemed all but over. That is the power we evoke when there is an aspiration for romance matched by a reversal of a limiting part of our being. Life immediately moves on our behalf, attracting the man or woman of our dreams out of thin air.

Here are several other examples of this dynamic:

- A mean-spirited retired military officer shifts to goodness by helping a young friend in a trial, and suddenly attracts the woman of his dreams on the way out of the courtroom.
- A man who is deeply in love with a woman is unable to win her over. But when he stands up to an abusive boss, from out of nowhere she immediately appears at his doorstep, confessing her love.
- A man in love with a woman is unable to win her over in full. However, when he refuses to give in and mock another woman when the entire group gathered at a reception does so, he attracts someone who causes the woman whom he adores to suddenly show great interest in him, leading to their marriage.
- When a man who has had a number of failed relationships finally gives up and works hard to earn a living, he attracts the most romantic relationship of his life.
- A man changes his arrogant and haughty ways, and suddenly finds out that the woman he adores who has rejected him in the past, now wants him, leading to their romance, marriage, and his greatest happiness and fulfillment in life.
- A woman, surrendering to the truth, finally acknowledges the questionable behavior of her family, attracting a wealthy man out of nowhere, leading to their marriage, their deep fulfillment, and vast prosperity for her family that had been teetering on failure.

In each case, an individual had an aspiration for romance, plus made a decisive change in their attitude that attracted their dream partner literally from out of nowhere. That being the case, ask yourself this: Do you aspire for romance? And if so, what key wanting attitude about yourself, life, or work needs to be changed? If you make that adjustment, life can reward you with the most fulfilling romantic relationship of your life.



SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Overview

A New View of Spirit

The Integral View of Spirit and Life Emerging in the World

The source teachings of the great religions of the world are available to each of us without having to follow that teacher exclusively. Jesus brought Love to the world, but we can follow the path of true Self-givingness without following Christianity. We can perceive that attachment, possessiveness, ignorance, and ego are essential causes of suffering, something Buddha professed, without having to follow the religion that arose after his passing. We can surrender to the True Self within and the Divine Reality above in the activities of life without having to follow Krishna who professed that profound teaching in his time and are several of the central precepts of Hinduism. We can embrace the fact that evolution is constantly occurring in life without exclusively becoming proponents of the works and principles of Darwin.

Thus in the modern era, we can take the *integral* approach to understanding the nature of the Reality. E.g., new spiritual teachers and evolutionary thinkers are taking the wisdom of the past and putting it into a modern context -- creating more dynamic, integral insights into the nature of existence. Because we have made great advances in our mentality in the past hundred years or so, we are able to perceive the variety of truths from all time and traditions, as well as new, modern insights, and integrate them in new holistic and uniquely perceptive integral views of Reality.

That is one reason that the current era is often referred to as 'The New Age.' It is a dynamic period in which we are able to develop a fresh, new perspective of existence, including the knowledge gleaned from multiple cultures; the various paths of wisdoms from a variety of traditions; the vast array of material, psychological, and spiritual insights from around the world; and meld them into a comprehensive view of existence. Interestingly, it includes new, unprecedented insight into the true nature, flow, and workings of life. For example, the recent interest in the principle of the Law of Attraction and the phenomenon of Life Response are merely the first wave of insights into how higher levels of consciousness can evoke instances of sudden good fortune. Of course, such laws and phenomena are not new at all -- as they were expressed in ancient traditions, such as the Indian Vedas and Upanishads thousands of years ago -- yet they are now being integrated into a modern context, giving them added dynamism and power.

The Indian sage and seer Sri Aurobindo drew on most if not all of the great spiritual precepts to come with an integral view that harmonizes such perceived dualities as spirit and matter, science and faith, and evolution and determination. Writing from the

deepest poise of intuitive, spiritualized mind, he had the vision of the integral view of existence. He then formulated an evolutionary, spiritual philosophy that was unprecedented in human history. He also had all of the essential experiences of the past masters and the ancient wisdom, and in a spontaneous expression of spiritual insight, developed his dynamic, unprecedented integral view of existence. He would then go on to describe a future humanity in which we would transcend our current human functioning, ushering in a new, divine life on earth.

There are many signs that we are moving towards this new integral view of life. We see nations forging closer political and economic ties and alliances; we see the embracing of one another's cultures; we see the communications of a plethora of beliefs and spiritual teachings over the Internet; we see a society more open to new ideas that go beyond one's traditional culture. This cross-pollination of wisdom and personal experience is enriching the world and every individual in it.

While many focus on the technological means of communicating the wisdom, the all-important knowledge itself is formulating into a new, integral, evolutionary, consciousness-oriented view of life. It is surely a sign of humanity's progress -- which I believe is in fact a New Awakening. It is also an expression of Sri Aurobindo's great precept of "Unity in Diversity;" that as we move towards ever-greater levels of human unity, we absorb an ever-expanding diversity of views and precepts about the nature of existence. As a result, an integral view of life begins to emerge that is infinitely profound, comprehensive, and dynamic.

Life Divine ... Here on Earth

People go about their lives. When we reach a state of desperation, we exercise our faith; otherwise, spirit is a distant dream. Faith works more often than not, depending on the intensity and surrounding circumstances. The result is even impacted by the yearning and status of our evolving soul.

The other way we relate to the Divine is through death. When someone we know passes from this earth, we imagine a heaven where they reside in a bodiless state, but similar to life as we know it. Who can say what the truth is. On the other hand, we rarely consider the possibility of a Divine life *on earth*.

For millennia, we related to spirit as something "up there", or "out there", or beyond the beyond; a release into an eternity, or as the ancient Rishis experienced, a merging into the transcendence. The possibility that it is "right here" was rarely considered. In addition, there was no compulsion to bring that spiritual power down into the details of our lives, because life was considered if anything a barrier to connecting to spirit.

Now that is no longer the case, as every individual can find fulfillment in his or her work, indicating that there is less time to commune with the divine apart from life. Now if we want to experience the Grace and Power, we have ample opportunity to practice it while fully engaging in the details of our lives. It is right here now; all we have to do is open to it. In fact, more and more we are compelled to do so because the human mind alone can no longer resolve the ever more complex problems of the world. Spirit *can* however because it is capable of moving in multiple directions simultaneously attracting instantaneous positive results -- abridging space and time, and defying normal causality and possibility. In that way, it is the ultimate Problem Solver.

The end result of this movement is that we are all moving to a new stage of human development and consciousness. First, we have arrived at the first great point in our ascent: to mentality and rationality, which is an enormous development and sign of human progress. This has particularly been the case in the last 50 years. Then we move higher to the next pinnacle of consciousness and discover and utilize the power of the

spiritual Force that is there in the atmosphere -- especially so in recent decades. We then apply that Power to the details of life, perfecting and divinizing it. As more and more individuals take to this approach, we see the first signs of a new type of existence emerging; a first glimmer of a new spirit-influenced and oriented society. It is the ultimate destination in our ascent to the Heights as a species.

This is indeed a radical departure in spiritual history. It is no longer a life of spirit apart from life, or a Death Divine of eternal comfort in the afterlife, but the emerging of Divine Life right here on earth. In the interim, we are taking intermediary steps to raise our consciousness. Higher attitudes, purifying and perfecting our behavior, emerging higher personal values, a mind that embraces all sides of an issue, and the ability to open to the spiritual Force are several of the bridging steps to the collective emergence of the spirit. They are not movements apart from life, but taken here in preparation for something new and unique in human history -- a Divine Life; but here -- on earth.

Connecting to Spirit as Householder, Aspirant, or In Between

It is true that we are slowly evolving from mental to spiritual beings. In fact, as mental beings, we can now consciously make the decision and effort to connect with Spirit in any area of our lives. When we do, we experience a palpable silence and rich presence within; we shift from selfishness to self-givingness; and we more acutely perceive the subtle truths unfolding around us. All told, by connecting to Spirit we experience an intense, ongoing joy and delight in being alive.

And yet we cannot all have the same approach to Spirit, as each of our lives are different. It would seem that there should be a variety of approaches to Spirit that would accommodate differences in people, including different stages in their psychological and spiritual development.

Therefore, let's consider two approaches; one from the perspective of the "householder"; and the other from the perspective of the "spiritual aspirant". The former tries to bring Spirit into life in order to create success, harmony, and well-being in the family; while the latter aspires to uplift his psychological and spiritual nature, making that the cornerstone of his life. Of course, there are untold levels in between.

The householder takes to the spirit by opening to the spiritual Force in order to create a happy and prosperous family existence. As a result, his or her life continually comes under control. The individual can engage in the act of "consecration" before major activities, such as an important business meeting; or to resolve a problem, such as a pressing money issue, the health of a spouse, or a child's education. By opening to the spiritual Force, positive material results quickly and miraculously move in one's direction. I.e., the activity engaged in unfolds marvelously, and the problem addressed tends to quickly dissipate. This sudden cooperation from the world around us I call a "life response."

The spiritual Aspirant on the other hand seeks to change and transform his very nature. This individual seeks to raise his consciousness, to come out of his essential Ignorance born of creation, and evolve and transform the parts of his being -- physical, vital, and mental -- through the power of the Spirit.

The Man of the Spirit seeks to come in contact with his evolving Soul within, as well as the transcendent Force above in order to transmute his psychological nature, and to infuse the spirit in all aspects of his life. He lives a life of adventure of ever-increasing consciousness, discovery, and joy. Eventually he surrenders his very life and being to the Will of the Divine, to be Its instrument for the further evolution of humanity on earth.

If we are serious about connecting with spirit, we can do so as Householder, Spiritual Aspirant, or somewhere in between. Each person who feels an inner call to move beyond his current condition is a ripe candidate. Only one should consider his status in life -- whether husband/wife, father/mother, worker, pioneer, spiritual seeker, etc. -- and determine what approach is best.

Whatever we choose, life will be a constant adventure, a continuous learning process, as we experience a never-ending procession of miraculous-like events that will make life truly worth living.

All Paths Are One, and Beyond

I was watching the wonderful 1940s film version of Somerset Maugham's novel, 'The Razor's Edge,' about the search for the Spirit in life by the main character Larry. At one point he goes to India and meets a great guru, and stays with him. After expressing his confusion about life's meaning and purpose, the great Sage tells Larry that we may begin with one particular path, but at the highest level of consciousness they merge into one thing. Specifically though one may begin with the seeking of Truth, ultimately the Path of Truth/Knowledge, Devotion, and Works are really one and the same thing, as each one implies the other.

I have been thinking about this subject recently; wondering about my level of spiritual connection amongst these three levels or paths. E.g. I am increasingly giving my inner and outer self to the Mother over these years, especially in recent times, but I haven't the passion of Devotion (Bhakti) as I see other devotees have as expressed. My opening to Mother is more spontaneous, idealistic, self-giving, part of the adventure of life, a feeling of Presence, yet with not very much of the vital or heart's intensity toward Her. Is it still the Path of Devotion then?

Sri Aurobindo says that the path begins with Truth; of what we are, where we are going, and life's true nature; and then all follows. I see this very clearly. E.g. how can we love, if we do not know the real Truth of existence? Mother in 'The Agenda' liked to say and emphasized "Truth, then Love." She indicated there that if we took to spiritual Love in full before higher realizations (of the truths of life and the guidance, security, and influence of Her Force), we would be crushed by Love's infinite power.

On the Path of Knowledge -- i.e. Sri Aurobindo and Karmayogi's Knowledge -- I have increasingly learned of the utility and power of consecration and surrender to Mother, which I have then practiced. Some others started with a miracle that occurred in their lives by evoking Mother. Was that an Idea (of consecration) on their part, or a movement of Devotion, or simply an act of desperation, which was really some aspiration of their Soul and Being? As a result of their wondrous experience, many then took to Her in earnest, which can be considered Devotional; but perhaps more accurately a "spiritual Totality."

When we arrive at Sri Aurobindo and Mother, we may come from different paths or life experiences, but ultimately the Path of three is one. Sri Krishna indicated this, as does Vedanta. Sri Aurobindo added the dimensions of the Psychic Being (Evolving Soul) and Supermind (as Creator and ultimate Force to guide us to a Divine Life). So through our higher consciousness we come to see that these Rays of Contact are really One; and yet in the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo, it is much more.

Much of our approach to the Spirit depends on our backgrounds, the culture we come from (e.g. the West is not very devotional; the East is), current social trends, the stage humanity has reached in its progress, etc.

In yet another area -- in his great essay 'The Mother' --, Sri Aurobindo offers the triple way of Aspiration, Rejection, and Surrender. There he suggests that the Path for

devotees begins with an intense Aspiration to raise our consciousness, for a new human existence, for the Divine to come on earth. This is accompanied by Rejection of all of our wanting qualities and propensities, and further still enjoined by Surrendering all of the details of our lives; in fact our very being and life's purpose to Her. So there too we have these intertwined Paths that are really integral and One. And here too, Sri Aurobindo's great discoveries of the Psychic Being and the Supramental Force and Power, add new dimensions, making it not only One but Integrally Dynamic.

Levels of Spiritual Progress We Can Attain

Yoga and Four Levels of Personal Progress

For people in the West, "Yoga" generally refers to physical movements and exercises that bring one a greater sense of physical and vital well-being. Yoga is far beyond that. It is to consciously develop, evolve, and transform our nature. If the physical movements take us from say a level 1 to a level 2, then dedicating ourselves to a life of conscious progress can take us from 1 to a 5, to a 10, or even to 100.

When a person with substantial skills adds similar ones, or a prosperous individual becomes more prosperous through the same methods, then there is "growth" -- i.e. progress that is more of the same. In this scheme, one rises from a 1 to a 1+ or perhaps a 2. On the other hand, improving several parts of our being is a more formidable change and progress that I call "development." E.g., a person giving up a persistent grudge about his difficult station in life, or an individual overcoming a virulent tendency to dominate and oppress others would qualify as development. Another example would be a general practicing doctor becoming an expert pediatrician, or a lawyer becoming a district attorney or even a judge. In our scheme, that individual would move from a 1 to as far up as a 5 or 10, depending on the nature of the change.*

If growth is more of the same (i.e. horizontal expansion), and development is to make considerable upward progress in one's character, station in life, etc. (i.e. vertical expansion), then *evolution* is to move to a *whole new plane* of existence. Evolution can occur *consciously* through a dedicated commitment to change over the course of one's life -- which is essentially what Yoga is -- or it can occur less decidedly and consciously as a result of conditions that arise in one's life. For example, in the film *Educating Rita* we see how Rita moves from a rough, street-smart woman to a semi-educated individual in an extraordinarily short period of time. She has essentially evolved a good part of her nature to a new plane of existence -- from a vital-focused individual to a more mental-centric one. Likewise, Eliza Doolittle in Shaw's *Pygmalion* does the same as she rises from a flower girl who speaks in vulgar tones to a more polished woman who speaks genteelly and with dignity. A degree of evolution has surely occurred in both instances. In Rita and Eliza's case, it occurred semi-consciously, whereas Yoga enables evolution to occur consciously and continuously throughout one's life. Thus, where development is a movement from a 1 to a 5 or even a 10, evolution takes one much further, to perhaps a 20. Conscious or semi-conscious, or even unconsciously enabled, it is a *vast* leap, ordinarily reserved for a very few in life.

Having identified these levels of progress, one wonders what is it that we actually change in our being when we develop or evolve ourselves. For one, each of us has several major wanting characteristics in our being. Each of these can be overcome through our willful decisions to change. E.g., I can change two of the most untoward parts of my character -- such as a propensity to laziness and pig-headedness -- to the point that I actually become its opposite; in this case, continually hard working and open-minded. Likewise, a disorganized, weak person could become a fully organized individual who continually demonstrates psychological strength in his behavior. In a life of conscious Yoga, one continually attempts to overcome each of our unique limitations

of capacity, skill, knowledge, attitude, opinion, belief, etc. To the degree we overcome our limitations, determines whether we are developing or evolving.

Our limitations of character and capacity do not end there however. For even if we were to overcome all of our own unique limitations, there are also wanting qualities that are *common to all humanity* -- such as our tendency towards anger, hate, fear, desire, jealousy, and many others primal emotions. In addition to these are the limitations of our *habitual* nature -- including our tendency to go on repeating our old ways avoiding change, continually rejecting the new and the unfamiliar, and an attachment to fixed opinions and beliefs, amongst. Overcoming the limitations of our primal and habitual nature is another goal that can be achieved through a life-long yogic effort.

Beyond development and evolution is the ultimate form of progress -- "transformation." Transformation is the changeover from a current *human* functioning to a higher, *supra-human* functioning. It is usually enabled by opening to the transformative power of the Spirit. E.g., while a vital/emotional person becoming a rational mental-oriented individual is evolution, transformation would bring about a radical change to the *mind itself*. Instead of knowing a thing through study, understanding, etc., one could come to know the truth of any subject through descents of intuitions of knowledge. I.e., through a *newly formulated spiritualized mind*, intuitions of the complete truth of a thing simply descend and appear in our mind without the hard churning of thought. Thus, the mind has been transformed from its usual functioning into its supra-human mental counterpart.

Such radical transformation can take place in the mind, in the psyche, in the emotional/vital centers, in the heart, even in the physical body itself. E.g., one of our other universal limitations concerns our physical body -- including the fact that we experience pain, illness; and that the body withers, decays, and dies. The transformation of the body would overcome this -- as we would live in constant health, and could eventually overcome death itself. That would require the transformation of the physical organs and systems of the body to a new type of functioning, enabling the emergence of a new type of human being. In our scheme of things then, such transformation would be a further exponential change that would take us beyond a 20, up to 100.

At whatever level we make our change -- development, evolution, or transformation -- we can utilize the power of the Spirit to help us along the way. We can offer up to the Divine any aspect of our nature that we wish to change, which will attract its infinite power to aid in the change. From our side we can make every effort to attain the necessary knowledge to understand this process, and make all necessary psychological and behavioral change to overcome the offending parts. It is a life-long endeavor, demanding vigilance, dedication, and sincere effort. It is Yoga in action.

Yogic life culminates when our entire being is surrendered to the Divine Will, Purpose, and Influence. We become in all aspect of our lives -- physical, vital, mental, and spiritual -- instruments of the Higher Functioning. It is the ultimate possibility of human existence, and the culmination of Yoga in life.

*Keep in mind that each number upward is not just an incremental increase, but something akin to an exponential one!

Spirit-oriented Expression

Qualities of the Spiritual-Oriented Individual

The spiritual-oriented individual-

- avoids fixation on marriage & its rituals; instead focusing on self-givingness, harmony, & love
- avoids preoccupation with private property and its acquisition
- does not resort to physical punishment (e.g. against children by parents)
- does not force children to be like themselves
- does not defer and look up to other's power and influence
- does not seek fame and personal recognition (they e.g. seek truth, new understanding instead)
- is not compelled to broadcast themselves to others
- does not proselytize (as it shows the shallowness of one's tenets)
- does not push and force life, instead waits for it to come to him
- does not assert his position, instead constantly learns from others)
- is not selfish, but constantly self-giving
- avoids the herd view, and thinks for himself
- is not satisfied with a single truth (seeking to know the many sided truth of things)
- does not seek answers through the hard churning of thought (but through intuition)
- does not confine himself to the ordinary views of how time and space unfold
- is not satisfied with empirical, mechanistic view of how life works and unfolds
- is not bothered by the negative, as he sees their utility
- is not constrained by the limits society has established, as he sees beyond them
- does not confine himself to society's values, but his own higher ones
- is not swayed or satisfied with other's opinions, but the true Truth of things
- is not satisfied with the visible, but the subtle and invisible as well
- is not attracted to gossip, knowing the mischief it creates
- is not taken by the current fad or outlook, but the longer view
- is not swept away by the tide of emotions in events, seeking the balance and truth of things instead
- does not seek a plethora of friendships for its own sake
- is not oriented outwardly, but inwardly
- does not seek to be entertained, but to understand
- does not seek vital interaction, but to connect through the heart, higher mind, and spirit
- is not partisan towards a side, such as in sports, but seeks beauty & knowledge from it
- is not overly influenced or deterred by another's age, whether young or old
- does not rebel for its own sake
- does not obsess about sickness and illness; remaining calm, steady, and positive instead
- is not agitated by broadcast opinions in e.g. the media, as he avoids them
- is not prone to react, but to remain still, observant, and understanding
- does not seek to perfect others, but to perfect himself
- does not seek to offer opinions, rather to be still, wait, and learn
- does not seek that which brings short term happiness, but long-term joy
- is not prejudiced towards another in terms of their station and position
- never feels condescending and superior, accept all as equal

- does not complain about others, life, and is accepting instead
 - does not blame others, but takes responsibility
 - does not seek to do something else, but accepts the current givens life has set before him
 - avoids the surface, and seeks the depths
 - seeks Harmony, Oneness, Truth, Knowledge, Goodness, Creativity, Love, Beauty, and Delight of being
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Spiritual Methods of Progress

A New Way of Living

We wake up from our sleep, and greet the day. We dress, have our breakfast, and head out for work. We experience the beehive of activity around us, and perceive it as somehow *external* to our own selves. At one point, we see people we know and the activities they are engaged in, and yet still we sense that their domain is somehow apart and outside of our direct influence. As we gaze out on the proceedings, we perceive that life seems to simply unfold on its own -- independent of our ability to influence and control it.

Finally, that morning, we come upon things that we *do* seem to hold sway over. E.g., an email arrives, and we know it has come in response to an earlier inquiry we made of that person. I.e., we initiated an act, which was in turn perceived by another, who then reacted in kind, and precipitated the message that arrived in our inbox. This is our normally accepted view of how life works -- i.e. the obvious, practical, material, mechanistic view of how circumstance unfold.

Then there are other outcomes in life that seem to have a very different and unusual dynamic. We recall sometime last week that we received a phone call informing us that we have been invited to bid on a very important new contract, when it was plain as day that we never initiated that inquiry. This fortuitous event clearly descended upon us on its own, from seemingly out of nowhere. But did it? If we think back on what took place, we will see that there was a direct relationship between our psychological condition at the time, and the sudden arrival of this most fortunate circumstance. But what was that condition, and how did it precipitate this out-of-the-blue result?

You then recall that at one point before this great opportunity arrived, you had changed your attitude about getting involved in this sort of work. For the longest time, you were opposed to offering these sorts of services, even though it utilized skills you already had. But then when you thought over the matter, you saw the light, and thus had a change of heart. In fact, now as you contemplate how that incident unfolded, you realize that your shift in consciousness occurred the day *before* this great opportunity unexpectedly arrived on your doorstep. Hmmm, you wonder aloud, perhaps there really is a connection!

Then you recall a friend's remark that there is a direct correspondence between your inner, psychological state, and the conditions of life around you. Moreover, he said that if you shift that position to the positive, life will *instantly* respond in kind. You recollect that he referred to this as "the principle of inner-outer correspondence." As you further reflect on the incident, it becomes abundantly clear that when you shifted your attitude from reluctance to acceptance of this type of work, life *immediately* responded and offered you the project of your dreams.

After coming to terms with these startling insights, you return to the ordinary chores of the day. However, just before you begin that effort, you stop and ask yourself, "does it really have to be ordinary?" "Can't I experience these serendipitous-like events throughout the day?" Suddenly, it dawns on you that instead of merely perceiving the obvious cause and effect events, today you will focus your attention on the more *subtle* movements of life: in particular, the sudden onset of positive conditions. In addition, you will watch to see how changes you made in consciousness precipitated them.

You then recall several methods for bringing about these sorts of miraculous-like results from a book you read on the subject of "life response." You remember that the simplest approach for eliciting these startling outcomes is to look around, and see how you can improve the *physical* condition of your environment. When you then go ahead and make a determined effort to straighten out your desk, as well as sort out all of the files and folders in your drawers, not two minutes later, you receive word from a client that a long-delayed, critical payment has arrived! Once again, you are startled by the instantaneous power you have to change the outer conditions of life from within. You shift some aspect of your being, and, voila!, life on the outside -- which has no obvious connection to what has just transpired on your end -- instantly responds in kind!

You then recall another principle mentioned in the book -- this one involving the enormous power we unleash when we focus our *intention* in life. As a result, you decide to concentrate on completing a software manual that you have long neglected. And what do you know, within five minutes of completing a large portion of that work, an order comes in for that *very same* application! It strikes you as a particularly stunning development when you consider the fact that you offer a number of different products. It is even more startling when you add the fact there had not been a single sale for this particular software application in the past six months!

As a result of these startling outcomes, you begin to perceive a subtle shift in the rhythm and orientation of your life. You sense a new understanding taking hold -- a new dynamic in how you approach life, and what you expect out of it. It is now patently clear that what is unfolding around you is indeed a reflection of your inner condition. That life not only responds at the obvious material/mechanical level, but at the *subtle, non-material* level as well.

Now you step back for a moment and look at the bigger picture, and begin to reflect on the entire arc of your life. Here too you begin to see things in a new light. In particular, you wonder if the successes and failures you have had along the way were directly attributable to your inner condition at the time. As you strain to recall your past history, trying to match important outcomes to your thoughts and feelings at the time, you begin to have one revelation after another. Through the haze of time, you make the connection in two critical instances: one in which you committed to hard work, which instantly attracted a dramatic business opportunity that completely turned your life around; and in another where you committed to paying off an old debt to a friend, that instantly attracted an offer that changed your living situation forever.

You also think back to the *negative* circumstances that descended on you along the way; and here too you clearly see the correspondences -- i.e. how your wanting attitudes and beliefs precipitated several unfortunate outcomes. In one case, you see that the hostility you felt towards another individual immediately attracted an abusive boss. In another, you recall how a lack of psychological strength kept you tethered to a single agent, whose clutches you were unable to break out of. You then perceive the possibility that had you only reversed your consciousness in those situations, life would have quickly dissolved the negative, and replaced it with a positive!

Now you begin to see the warp and weft of your life: the thread of circumstances that reflected your inner condition at the time. Then a new thought enters your mind, as it suddenly dawns on you, "but what about the present: how does inner-outer

correspondence apply to what is happening to me today?" And so you then begin to think about recent events in light of this new understanding. Immediately, you perceive why an important pending project has failed to materialize. It becomes painfully clear how certain limiting beliefs on your part were preventing the project from coming to fruition. It also dawns on you why negative developments unexpectedly emerged during a conversation you had with a colleague last week. You see the corresponding wanting attitude there as well.

Now at every turn, you are able to correlate positive and negative outer circumstances to corresponding qualities inside yourself -- to your attitudes and beliefs, to the level of your intention, and to the capacity to exercise psychological strength, amongst others. As a result, you now make a pact with yourself to be vigilant, and examine what is in your heart and mind whenever positive and negative conditions come your way.

Then another insight takes hold -- one that takes you into an entirely new domain of understanding. You realize that if you were more *conscious* and *aware* of what was going on in the first place as these situations unfolded, you would have been able to make the right decisions that would have avoided onsets of the negative, while still attracting the positive. But how can one be conscious and aware in a given moment if we are caught up in the flow of life; when our consciousness is dominated by the intensities of circumstance unfolding around us? It then occurs to you that if you had more of an *inward* orientation, you would not only be more mindful of situation as they unfolded, but you would be "detached" and more equal in the faces of life's challenges.

You then have one final insight, which comes to you in a flash. You perceive that not only do outer circumstances instantly change when you shift your consciousness within, but that the outer and the inner are really one and the same thing! I.e. what you perceive as your own self and what is outside yourself, are not two separate divisions of reality, but rather share a continuous stream of existence. In other words, the inner you and the outer world are One. That would in turn suggest that the entire universe is at one's disposal from within. Or, to put it another way, that the entire cosmos resides within one's own self!

As the day passes into evening, you continue revel in these profound, cosmic-like thoughts. Later on as you sit there propped up in bed, you wonder what it all means, and how you can use this knowledge in a practical way. A moment later, as these thoughts begin to fade, a gentle smile forms on your lips, and a light washes over your face. Soon thereafter, your eyelids grow heavy, and you drift off into a dreamless sleep.

The next morning when you awake, you recall the new vision you had the day before. It dawns on you that you now have an infinite power at your disposal -- one that can be used to quickly elicit powerful positive circumstance from life. After arising from your bed, you walk over to the window and gaze out on the lovely hills in the distance. Now as you are warmed by the morning sun, you realize that you have taken a decisive turn in your life: that you have come upon the shores of a New Way of Living.

Overview of Spiritual Habits

Below I have attempted to list out a number of spiritual habits worth practicing.

Spirit-Oriented Works – Do one's work for the highest values one can imagine, including service of the Divine.

Goodness – Do good things, the right thing in every and all situations.

Self-Givingness – Move from selfishness to ever-increasing self-givingness. Take pleasure in the needs, interests, and success of others. Show genuine affection for them.

Generosity – Give to others fully and generously in terms of resources (time, effort, knowledge, etc.) whenever possible and appropriate.

Goodwill – Have goodwill for every one you come in contact with. Send goodwill to others through the atmosphere. Avoid goodwill to those who mean harm. Be neutral there.

Humility – Avoid relating a matter to the ego in any way. Do not aggrandize one's self.

Gratitude – Feel deep thanks and appreciation for all or particular things that have come your way.

Soft/Reduced Speech – Speak in a low, soft voice; speak fewer words; if possible, not at all.

Silent Will – Hold back expression of one's thoughts and wishes, which *will compel others to speak it out*.

Taking Another's Point of View – In any conversation or interaction, see the truth in another's words, no matter how much at odds with your perspective.

Patience – Hold back all urge, intent to speed up what you desire. Impatience should not touch the nerves.

Equality of Being – Be calm in the face of difficulty; or when an intense positive arrives.

Inner Detachment (Non-reaction) – Maintain a poise of non-reaction to what others say or do. It is the first principle of taking to the Spirit.

Non-Initiating – Hold back from taking action whenever possible, attracting powerful positive conditions back to you.

Peace (inner spiritual) – Move from disturbance to inner calm. Make peace and calm your natural state.

Opening to the Spiritual Force (Consecration) – Open to the Force (Mother) before initiating activities, for situations, problems, wrong attitudes, etc. You will quickly gain life's cooperation.

Moving to the Depths Within (Concentration) – Center yourself in the inner being, not the outer surface. Peace, richness, right understanding, surrounding life movements will become the norm.

Living in the Now/the Ever-Present – Don't think about the past unless it is useful to the present. The same with the future. Know that all three can be joined and affected by being in the right consciousness in the Eternal Now.

Seeing Beyond the Positive & Negative – Perceive that the good and bad, positive and negative are useful for the unfolding of life's progress; your progress.

Seeing the Outer as a Reflection of the Inner – Look around and see that all things reflect one's consciousness. If you increase the corresponding positive, and eliminate the negative, the outer will instantly respond in your favor.

Inner Awareness of Subtle Forces – Become aware of the subtle forces of life unfolding around you, enabling right understanding, and decision making and action that enables life to respond in your favor.

Spiritual Sincerity – A constant aspiration for the Divine (Mother) to come into your life is spiritual sincerity.

Surrender – Offer every act, your very existence to fulfill the Divine (*Mother's*) Intent.

Mind's Movement out of Ignorance - Accept that the mind knows only a part, not the whole. Seek the many parts and truth of any thing or matter. It is the Truth that brings success and fulfillment.

Power of Mind and Spiritual Mind - Overcome the hard churning of thought to experience knowledge through silence, as light, illumination, intuition, revelation, and supramental perception. Constant consecration, calling, etc. will allow this to happen.

Faith (spiritual-) - Shift your trust from life to the Divine (Mother).

Calling the Spirit - Call the Divine (Mother) into your life for a period of time every day to evoke that power in general or for a particular matter.

Seeing The Marvel - See how each and every thing, positive and negative, as it arises, serves the purpose of unfolding for progress in life; in your life.

Infinite from the Finite - Realize that in the smallest thing, the finite can break out if the right consciousness is brought to bear.

Break the Habit - Perform an act one or several levels higher. E.g. a physical act with emotion (vital); physical or vital act with thought (mentality); mental act with inner silence or spiritual perception.

Truth - Know the full truth of a thing, and act from that truth. Be truthful, honest. Life will cooperate with that effort.

Values - Apply one's deepest values, such as tolerance, respect for the individual, harmony, etc. Take to new values. Understand that *values are spiritual skills*.

Spiritual Values - Take to any of the universal spiritual expressions -- Truth, Silence, Wisdom, Knowledge, Harmony, Oneness, Peace, Love,

Beauty, Delight, Infinity, Timelessness -- in increasing measure.

Evolving Soul - Seek the inner being, including the evolving soul within (psychic being) which will put you in touch with your highest nature and purpose.

Resolve Contradictions into Harmony - Resolve conflicts with another or other things or matters by discovering the higher harmony.

Contradictions as Complements - See the things you are in conflicted with and divided from as actually true complements; that serves the purpose of both your growth. Raise your consciousness to see the unity and resolve the contradiction.

Soul to Soul Connection - Perceive another's soul. Feel that yours and theirs are one and the same. Experience that inner Oneness.

Raise One's Attitudes - Constantly raise your level of attitudes, overcoming all wanting ones, while maintaining a general positive one.

See Divine in Others - Each time you meet with another imagine that they are the Divine, Mother. Respect them to that degree. In reality, it is the Truth of things.

Makeup of Our Being

The Spectrum of Human Consciousness

We have a limited view of what "consciousness" is. We believe that it is our waking mental awareness. But that is only one type. There is also an inner consciousness that is subconscious to us. It has subtle levels of awareness, is in touch with forces, powers that our normal mentality cannot even begin to fathom. For example, it can now what our deepest intentions are, even as we are not aware of them in our waking minds!

Thus, our subconscious has waking, powerful parts that are active and alive, below our own conscious level of awareness, perceiving and acting on its own accord. There we find the personal evolving soul, which is there to absorb the essence of our growth in life so it can continue on its journey of fulfillment through time. If we are in touch with it, it becomes our most profound guide, a leader of our progress, evolution, and purpose.

If there is a consciousness below our normal level of awareness, there is also one "above" and beyond our mentality. This realm is superconscious to us. It includes the universal consciousness that is in touch with all forms and forces in the universe, and beyond that a transcendent consciousness that is the Source and Stability, and Purpose behind this universe of forms. It is the consciousness of the Divine.

Interestingly, if we evolve our own consciousness -- e.g. through ridding our lower nature, overcoming wanting attitudes, meditation, higher knowledge, consecration, calling, etc. -- we can develop a constant and close relationship with our subconscious, which will give purpose and guidance far beyond our normal mentality. Likewise, we can be open in our hearts and mind to the superconscient that stands at the very source and heart of life in the cosmos, which will add greatly to our level of awareness. We then become a single center of power, wisdom, light, harmony, peace, love, and delight, as all the realms of consciousness are there at our disposal.

Transforming the Subconscious, Enabling our Supernature

The Mother said that in order to make the physical transformation, She had to overcome the unconsciousness of the subconscious, including its pessimism, its reinforcement of illness, and many other dark propensities. By opening to the superconscience, Sri Aurobindo says the subconscious is transformed from darkness into light. Mother attempted to do so by calling in the supramental Force. The more the subconscious influence was held in check, even reversed into the positive, the more She could continue on the process of psychical transformation that could end in immortality and a new divine body. She succeeded in part, and opened the path for others to follow.

If this is true, then the same applies for overcoming the pull of the subconscious on not just the physical, but the limits it puts on the vital and mental nature. For us, we can call in the Force to work on that influence. E.g. before going to sleep we can call in Peace and Mother's Force to overcome the subconscious influence that causes sleep to be disturbed and exhausting.

While we can call in the Force to overcome the subconscious tendency towards pessimism, fear, and the like, we can constantly open up to Her Force whenever it appears in our conscious awareness. E.g. when we feel we are getting sick and the subconscious heartily agrees, reinforcing the fear that now attracts the illness in full, we can control that thought/emotion, and offer it to the Mother. It will be one small step to effect the makeup and nature of the subconscious; here at the level of the physical.

Sri Aurobindo indicates that the form of the yoga for devotees is Aspiration, Rejection, Surrender. We can thus reject any negative that well up inside us, whether a dark emotion, thought, or physical propensity. Surrender will change it permanently as it is the complete opening to her Force to transfer our lives into that which the Divine intends for us.

True, Integral Yoga goes beyond this and is explained in the chapter 'The Triple Transformation,' in *The Life Divine*. It consists of first making the Evolving Soul/Psychic connection and it becoming the cornerstone of our lives. It is followed by opening to the Light that changes our Mind into spiritualized mind of intuition and supramental perception and other effects on our being, which he designates as the Spiritual Transformation. That in turn is followed by the Supramental Transformation that divinizes all aspects of our being though the full utilization of the supramental power,

which culminates in the physical change, and the onset of our becoming a gnostic individual.

Every technique Karmayogi has offered, from Non-reaction to self-givingness, culminating in sincere, active Surrender will dampen the effect of the subconscious, especially if it is accompanied by consecrating every negative that arises with the Will that it should never appear again in our lives. This will hold down the negative effect in both the subconscious and conscious fields of our awareness.

It should be pointed out that even now in Man there is a "conscious" aspect of the subconscious. E.g. in *Pride and Prejudice*, Eliza and Darcy were compelled by their subconscious to go to the ball and meet, which would lead to their change in nature, and thereby their love and marriage. The subconscious was actively working at many points along the way, pushing life forward, creating benefit. And not just for Eliza and Darcy. Charlotte appearing after Eliza rejected Collins that led to their marriage is another example of the subconscious influence, amongst countless others in the story. It is similarly there in the details of our own lives, if we were to pan back and observe its unfolding.

Perhaps in these instances the subconscious is in active relation with Subliminal being (which sits on the edge of the subconscious), which is directly in touch with the Superconscious that knows past, present, and future, compelling the subconscious to act through the individual in the present in order to create future benefit.

The more we call in Her Force into our being -- especially through Surrender of our entire nature and purpose -- the more the subconscious will become fully conscious. As a result, we will increasingly be aware of the positive cues it sends to our conscious awareness that will in turn enable us to act in ways that attract the Infinite from the Finite, and evolve our current limited nature into a Supernature.

Positive and Negative Human Traits

Recently, a fellow subscriber to the Karmayogi.net forum asked why does hate, anger, love, curiosity, admiration, etc. exist in the world. It was a very innocent yet important question that I would like to address.

Seekers of the Spirit throughout time have noticed that the Divine Reality expresses in various ways, including Peace, Oneness, Wisdom, Knowledge, Creativity, Beauty, Goodness, Love, Delight, Power, Timelessness, and Infinity. These are also qualities that the Supreme seeks to manifest in the forms of creation. We humans are the means by which they take shape on earth.

Interestingly, though the Intent of the Supreme was/is to spread these spiritual aspects throughout the cosmos, they initially took shape in their opposite form, as an inversion. I.e. life first emerged in the universe as *unconscious* physical matter; and only after, emerged higher, more conscious forms.

Thus, life, and indeed we humans have roots in unconsciousness mixed with the consciousness. And we have come to embody them in the form of both positive and negative character traits -- expressing the physical, vital, and mental levels.

An obvious question is why would a Divine Reality allow for both formations of darkness and light? Why not just manifest Its own, infinitely positive spiritual attributes? The answer is that it did so to enable the greatest variety, multiplicity, and possibility of experience. If there were only good traits, the diversity and depth of our life experiences would be limited.

Thus, over time, a vast array of positive, neutral, and negative physical, vital, and mental traits came to be. For example, feelings like fear, anger, hatred, are negative

expressions that originate in the *vital* plane of our being. (The vital is the dimension of sensation, desire, emotion, feeling, attitude, and social interaction.)

It turns out that not only are these negative expressions inversions of their positive spiritual counterpart of Oneness, Power, Love, etc., but inversions of our own positive human traits. For example, people who hate, secretly harbor love, but through circumstance inner and outer, have inverted to its darker side. A child might hate a parent because of their abuse, but secretly harbored intense love that reversed itself. In fact, the more intense the hate, the greater the possibility of love when the obstacles are overcome.

In humanity's evolution we emerged from physical existence where our physical traits predominated, such as hunting and other survival skills, to the development of more complex vital feelings and relationships, such as trade, cooperation, and affinity toward marriage, to sophisticated traits of the mind, such as analyzing, synthesizing, calculating, rational thinking, etc. These are positive or neutral characteristics developed over the course of human evolution.

And yet there are also negative qualities that developed, such as mental ignorance and falsehood. At the vital and physical levels there are far more and more virulent forms of negative character traits because as you go lower in human consciousness, the wanting characteristics tend to appear. Anger, hate, intense desire, lust, jealousy, et al are negative vital traits; while domination, tendency to violence, et al are examples of negative physical characteristics.

And so we see how life evolved both a plethora of qualities in the human, both positive and negative, to enable the greatest variety of experience, from which we can evolve our nature and through that discovery experience delight.

There are hundreds of human qualities that express at the physical, vital, and mental level; often centrally in one, though with a slight shading of another. E.g. attitudes are vital, but they have a slight mental aspect to them. Personal values and beliefs are predominantly mental, but also have a vital component in that there is a willful aspect.

If traits of human consciousness express positively and negatively, then we can take inventory of all of them, and determine where we are lacking. If we then make the sincere effort to strengthen the positive or overcome negative, we grow as individuals; plus it is highly likely that life will quickly respond in our favor to our efforts.

We also see several general wanting propensities in our nature. For one, many of our negative traits at the physical, vital, and mental level have at their root human Ego. It is the self-absorption and separateness of our being that has at its very root the fact that we identify with our own separate bodies and self at the expense of others. The ego expresses as different levels, corresponding to the dimensions of our being -- physical vital, and mental. For example, the need to dominate another is an expression of the physical ego. Hate and anger are expressions of the vital ego that has been bruised.

Many negative human traits are due to another overriding factor; our essential Ignorance born of creation. Our Ignorance has its roots in the unconsciousness and non-knowledge of our physical body, which is an expression of the dumb, material matter that it is based on. Stupidity, ignorance, falsehood, folly, error-proneness, poor decision making capacity, et al are examples of these.

In conclusion, the human individual is made up of hundreds if not thousands of traits that express positively and negatively. They are expressions of Divine Will that seeks multiplicity of expression in the universe to allow for infinite diversity, and therefore infinite variety of consciousness and bliss as each of us discover our Higher Nature.

Evolving Our Being

Bridging the Psychological and Spiritual Gap

In one sense, we look on our lives as a constant "becoming." We move from moment to moment, focused on those things coming up, whether it involves dressing for the morning, our next duty at work, an important meeting with a client, a trip across country, a holiday get-together, and so forth. There is a differential in time between the present and the events or activities we perceive coming in the near or distant future. We know it is just a matter of time for that gap to be bridged. It is simply the unfolding of life taking its course.

There is also a differential between what we are now and what we can become in terms of our own inner psychological framework and status. Here, we are not so eager to bridge this gap, as it requires us to change our nature. Actually, we are hardly even aware of the gap in the first place.

Yet, from one point of view, to fill the gap can be said to be the single reason we are here on earth. We each serve a purpose, which requires us to move from what we are to what we need to become. Not merely in terms of more success and achievement, but in terms of a greater consciousness and higher perspective. In addition, there is the perspective from the soul's point of view. It waits on us as well, and hopes we make the necessary effort to fill that gap. When we do, i.e. when we move higher in psychological and spiritual status, our soul -- i.e. our evolving soul -- becomes more satisfied in its appetite to acquire new knowledge in its journey of fulfillment through time. Or, to put it simply, when we grow by overcoming the differential between who we are and what we can become, our evolving soul within is nourished and grows as well. What can be more important in life than the fulfillment of our Truest Nature and Highest Self.

How then do we bridge the gap? We can be practical and note a series of key deficiencies that will help us overcome that psychological and spiritual differential. Very often the single key is a wanting attitude or two -- perhaps toward work, or others, or towards life itself. For example, one person persistently has problems with certain types of people, while maintaining an attitude of slovenliness and disorganization. Another person is egotistical, and does not readily take to be selfless and self-giving behavior. A third is reluctant to take up new opportunities, is persistently late, and is intolerant of new ideas. Each person in this way has a psychological differential between what he is now and what he can become. When that person overcomes the gap, that individual not only progresses rapidly, but so does his evolving soul within, thus serving an ultimate individual purpose.

There is another way to look at the results that come when we overcome the gap between who we are now and what we can become. Life suddenly and abundantly responds with good fortune. At that point where we overcome that wanting attitude, habit, belief, opinion, motive, etc., life immediately moves towards us with better conditions. E.g., when we overcome our disdain for several individuals, we are suddenly offered a better paying job; or a six-month back pain suddenly disappears; or a love longed for now shows an interest from their side; a long-term conflict suddenly resolves itself; and so forth. It is a subtle phenomenon of life that occurs just beyond the normal bounds of our awareness. When we make the effort to overcome the gap between who we are and what we should become, life responds with such "instantaneous miraculousness" -- as the impossible suddenly becomes possible, overcoming traditional views of what is possible, and how space and time function. By bridging the gap, the

infinite potentials of life replace the current finite that we are experiencing; and a potential future we could have attained over time moves into the present.

The first step then is to recognize that this differential exists. The second step is to list out the deficiencies between what we are what we can become. The third step is to make the attempt to overcome at least one or two of them. The fourth step is to be sincere in our efforts. The fifth step will be to experience the sudden good fortune that comes our way as a result of making this concerted psychological effort.

In addition to crossing the psychological chasm, we can also bridge the gap between our *human* selves and our *spiritual* selves. This is not for everyone, but for those who feel they are inwardly called to do so. One individual feels deeply that he must change from the ordinary propensity towards selfishness, and become selfless and more self-giving. That is a spiritual change. Another person feels compelled to create a deep sense of calm and stillness within so that he can far better meet the exigencies of life in the future. That can mature into the spiritual poise of "equality" -- where one is immune from the negative and positive intensities of life, which is a spiritual change as well. A third person wishes to move his center of consciousness inward from which he can look out on the world as "witness," and thereby be more in tune with the environment. It is the spiritual experience of Oneness with the world and life.

Each individual can formulate his own custom "spiritual portfolio," and aspire to bridge the gap between his current human functioning and that spiritual functioning. When he makes the effort to do so, not only will he be set firmly on the road to a radically different spirit-oriented existence, but life will respond with good fortune all around him, presenting the world as a Marvel, that he takes deep delight in. For example, one person aspired to bring the spiritual Force into his life. He then opened himself to that Power before engaging in activities, and found that nearly every time life would respond with sudden good fortune. In that way, he has begun to bridge not only the psychological between his current and his future nature, but the spiritual gap as well.

The Other Part of Spiritual Growth: The Personal Purification Process

There are two sides to spiritual growth -- the positive, and the overcoming of the negative. The positive is to come in touch with the spirit by moving to a deeper consciousness within, by aspiring for and connecting with a spiritual Force that attracts miraculous-like results, and in various other ways.

The other part of spiritual growth -- the personal purification process, which is in essence the overcoming of the negative -- can occur concurrently with the positive. For example, at any moment, we can become aware of what we are feeling, and make an adjustment in consciousness -- such as recognizing and catching a wanting attitude, or giving up a strident opinion, or withdrawing from irritation or anger. Each time we make the conscious effort to catch the negative, we develop a habit of expressing ourselves more positively for the future. In addition, each time we avoid catch and avoid such deleterious behavior, we attract positive conditions from the world around us. I.e. life instantly or very rapidly responds in our favor.

Longer term, this approach can become an ongoing routine, as we instinctively employ our "inner sentry" to monitor our behavior, emotions, and actions. As a result, over time, we purify ourselves and begin to distant ourselves from our negative nature. Eventually, negative movements and behaviors once so familiar are gone forever. At that point, there is not only personal growth, but evolution and transformation, as we rise to an entirely new plane of existence.

In tandem with opening to the spirit (where we feel it and use Its power from above and connect to it from within), the personal purification process enables a complementary and integral approach to personal and spiritual growth.

If we commit to and take up this method in full, we will be set upon a path of endless discovery. We will experience a new type of existence, one I call a New Way of Living, marked by continuous progress, endless good fortune, and an intense joy and delight in being alive.

Overcoming the Unique Contradiction of Who We Are

Every person is a contradiction waiting to become whole. And each person is a *unique* contradiction, whose greater success, progress, and happiness on life depends on overcoming a unique set of wanting characteristics. In can even be said that is the very reason we are individually here on earth: to overcome the unique differential between who we are and what we can become; to bridge the gap between our inner light and the darkness, in order to create a higher Light. If we seek to overcome the dark elements inside, we grow and evolve. If we don't, we fall back and regress. To the degree we take to that inner adventure, we are alive and live dynamic lives. To the degree we don't, we wither and die.

Consider the fact that the Soul has taken birth within us with its Own aspiration to acquire something more on its own journey through space and time. It aspires to learn that Something New through that the individual it inhabits movement out of its particular contradiction towards one's Higher Nature. When that person discovers what those lacking elements are, the evolving Soul gains some unfathomable sustenance it did not have before in its cosmic journey through space, time, birth, death, and rebirth.

It is actually a two-way collaboration between the individual, who can move out of his or her contradiction, and the evolving Soul, which seeks subtle sustenance in its voyage in and out of creation. When we move away from the surface of life to a deeper poise, we become more conscious, mindful, and aware. When we go to the deepest place, to the evolving Soul behind the heart, our consciousness develops the most. We perceive our purpose; we discover becomes our Inner Guide, and we feel connected to others, to the universe, and the transcendent Divine. The Soul is then the ultimate touchstone of our growth, progress, and evolution. And yet as we grow, we give the soul what it yearns for in choosing this life, our life. It us a two-way collaboration and fulfillment.

To put it simply, we can discover the half dozen aspects of our nature that are wanting, and make the effort to change them. They are usually found from amongst the following: (limited amounts of-) energy, will, focus, direction, psychological strength, skills, wisdom, positive attitudes, givingness, love, calm, organization, and personal values. It is mostly there in our wanting attitudes and beliefs. When we overcome what is limiting in our character, we move from our unique contradictory nature to a Higher nature, fulfilling our potential to be whole. The evolving Soul within us waits on us to make that change. If we do, both we and our Soul gain inner nourishment, and in that process experience the ultimate purpose of Life -- to experience intense Joy and Delight in being alive.

Overcoming our Blind Spots

After the independence of India and its partition from Pakistan in 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru led the country through its transition to democracy and a new modernity. He was a man deeply committed to his country, with a strong mind and a driving idealism. There has been no greater leader of that emerging Asian nation since.

And yet he was tripped up by one view that he seemed so sure of. He proclaimed that China was the very embodiment of his own high idealism. Unfortunately, he would be disillusioned not long after when in 1962 China invaded and run roughshod over his own beloved country. It was a blind spot of belief for sure.

In the 1920s and 30s Western idealists railed at the corruption of capitalism, and signs of emerging nationalism and fascism both in their own countries and abroad. They were highly perceptive in their analysis, sounding warnings that the people of the world would fail to heed. Many of these same writers, thinkers, and advocates saw the Soviet Union under Stalin as a real alternative, a potential Paradise on Earth, in opposition to the corruption and greed of a money-driven West. It took Solzhenitsyn's 'The Gulag Archipelago' to fire the first salvos against this view. Since then it has been discovered that Stalin was responsible for the deaths of nearly 30 million people of his fellow citizens. He had that many shot and killed in a reign of terror unknown in the history of the world.

In America, it has been faddish amongst the conservative elite to proclaim that unfettered, laissez-faire capitalism was the salve of the masses. That wealth and profits of the rich would trickle down to the masses below. That theory proved to be a disaster, as we saw from the recent financial crisis that threatened to ruin the economies of the world.

Like nations, peoples, leaders, philosophies, we too as individuals also have blind spots that we are ignorant of and oblivious to. We dearly hold onto one or more critical opinions or beliefs that are in direct contradiction to the truth -- affecting not only our own selves, but the people around us.

Perhaps those closest to us see that blind spot. Or maybe it is someone at a distance who perceives it, yet cannot express it in deference to our feelings. Then who amongst us are willing to confront such "certainties," challenging their truth worthiness? I am not sure if there is one in a thousand. If there such a person, then that brave soul is intellectually honest and sincere. For after all, who has the gumption to lay out one's attitudes and values, and deconstruct them to determine their accuracy and truth-value? E.g., who would make the effort to go to that goldmine and fount of information -- the Internet -- and discover the relative or absolute merit of one's most cherished beliefs? Whether we are a scientist, a leader, an advocate, or a parent, we are likely blind to something significant in our lives. And yet we are also capable of determining its veracity by gathering evidence from the world around us.

There is another approach to overcoming such ruinous blind spots. We can subscribe to an inner, psychological approach I call "taking another man's point of view." I.e. the next time you have a conversation or otherwise communicate with someone, make the effort to embrace the other person's point of view, no matter how far-fetched. See a glimmering of truth in it, while releasing your attachment to your own entrenched position. Doing so indicates an open mind that seeks knowledge and truth in life; that is open to a wider domain of possibilities. In that way, it is a spiritual-like approach to one's existence.

One interesting result of taking this approach is that it attracts sudden good fortune. For example, let's say we have been invited to a party by a friend or spouse, but are not inclined to go. Though others have recommended it in the past, we feel certain that it will be a waste of time. However, when we shift from our entrenched opinion and embrace their suggestion, then when you arrive at the reception, several startling conditions present themselves. Not only do you find yourself enjoying yourself, but a long lost friend appears on the scene, energizing you to no end. Best of all, you meet someone who offers you a great opportunity in a field closely related to your own. When you embrace another's point of view, life opens up and you are catapulted forward.

There is one other way to ascertain a blind spot. In the course of your day, watch for any significant negative conditions that appears in your life. It is a sure sign of something amiss in your being, for everything that appears on the outside is a reflection of your inner condition. For example, if an important project is suddenly cancelled, find the corresponding negative attitude or belief. It is a blind spot that has been there for a while, affecting present and past conditions.

Deconstructing our beliefs, taking the other person's point of view, and relating negative outcomes to inner perceptions, are three powerful methods to reveal and overcome our blind spots, which in turn will help us avoid a lot of pain and suffering in life. Will you then be brave and ask a confident, relative, or friend if there is something key that you are blind to? Or will you try to deconstruct several key beliefs to see their truth-value? Or will you fully embrace another's perspective today? Or will you take the time to consider how negative outcomes are direct reflections of wanting attitudes, opinions, and beliefs? If you make that effort, your entire life will be turned around, for nothing has a greater effect than identifying a blind spot and turning it into the light of truth.

Consecration, i.e. Opening to the Spiritual Force

Overview

The Great Secret: Opening to the Spiritual Force (Consecration)

Perhaps the greatest secret known to Man is the existence of a Power that when accessed can attract instantaneous good fortune, solve any problem, enable ultimate success, and bring about infinite great joy and delight. By opening to this spiritual Force before taking any action or commencing any activity, one experiences a sudden shift of luck, as life begins to cooperate from every quarter. For example-

-A salesperson opened to the Force before making a sales presentation to a potential customer. In the past, all efforts at winning over the customer had failed. Again, even after this consecrated presentation, the customer still would not budge. However, the salesperson was given a lead that led to an enormous sale through another customer.

-A man was trying to figure out a complex computer programming problem. He stopped racking his brain, opened to this higher Power, and forgot about the issue. A minute later, not only did a solution to his problem come to mind, but the new insight suggested a solution to a host of other related problems.

When we open to Force before commencing an act, we attract sudden good fortune, as problems are solved, new possibilities arise out of nowhere, and activities are completed in the shortest period of time with the least effort, revealing an astonishing organization and efficiency.

The process of bringing in the spiritual element before acting is called "consecration." By consecrating any act, activity, event, or circumstance, we enable the spiritual Force to take over, bringing to bear its Infinite powers to bear. One unique quality of a consecrated act is that the results that come are marvelously original and creative. They usually take shape in ways we never would have imagined.

A woman had an x-ray done indicating a possible growth in her chest. She had faith and decided to consecrate the return visit to the doctor. The doctor, completely baffled, told her that his new reading of this very same x-ray (not a new one) revealed a completely normal condition.

It should be pointed out that a consecrated act can affect not only our own selves, but a number of other individuals -- such as everyone in the local community, or the entire population of a state or nation. If a person is deeply interested in the problem affecting that collective, and consecrates the issue with great intensity, life can respond overwhelmingly and eliminate the burden for the entire group.

California was threatened by continuous energy shortages. There had been several brown outs, and there was an imminent threat for more of the same in the coming days -- even the coming months and years. One individual took a great interest in this issue, and educated himself on the subject from various perspectives. He then consecrated the problem deeply, offering it to the spiritual Force. In the next several days, the crisis suddenly and most unexpectedly came to an end. In fact, from that point on there was not a single major outage for years to follow.

Spiritual Results Too

In addition to these wondrous practical outcomes -- such as curing an illness, solving a problem, bringing a family together, or ending a drought -- a consecrated act can also attract spiritual results as well. Examples are the sudden arrival of profound stillness and richness within, a deep connection to others or the world around us, or a deep, abiding joy and delight in being alive. Here is a real world example:

An instructor's class was going very poorly one morning. Nothing seemed to go right. He then decided to consecrate the afternoon session by offering it to the higher Power. Thereafter, every conceivable thing went right. In addition, a deep peace and a palpable richness could be felt in the classroom throughout the remainder of the day.

This capacity of consecration to evoke profoundly spiritual response from life is indicative of the super-subtle -- i.e. causal -- nature of the Force. That expresses in two unique ways. First, we not only align with existing positive conditions as is normally the case with life response, but unprecedented, creative conditions that never existed before on earth suddenly appear.

Second, by opening to the Force, we experience various shading of the Spirit, including feelings of Peace, Power, Knowledge, Truth, Love, Beauty, Delight, Oneness, Unity, and Infinity. These are all attributes of the Infinite consciousness that we can experience through our consecrated efforts.

Solving Past Problems

In addition to consecrating current acts, situations, and circumstance, you can also use the Force to overcome the effect of past problems, errors, and mistakes. By consecrating them, you rid yourself of their negative influence on the present.

A software programming company made a bid for work from a potential client, but had trouble securing it because the client itself lacked the funds to go ahead, creating confusion about its future direction.

One day, several months later, this same client surprisingly asked the programming company back to submit yet another bid for work. This time before the first meeting, the chief programmer for the software company consecrated the event, including the offering of all past difficulties.

At the meeting that followed, the client immediately gave the job to the programming company. In addition, they asked the programmer to not delay and begin working on the program immediately at the client's site! To top it off, when the programmer did begin that work, he noticed that everything flowed perfectly in the development of the program. E.g., what would normally have taken days of effort was completed in mere hours. In addition, he had a feeling of serenity, richness, and well-being throughout the day.

When you consecrate past problems, misdeeds, and mistakes, their influence on present conditions instantly dissipate, and good fortune take their place. This is the case because the Force knows no limitations of time -- of past, present, and future -- as it simultaneously abridges all three. Thus, it can overcome the limitations that the past has over the present, even as it can attract the infinite abundance of the future to the here and now. (See MSS article on Consecration of past problems)

Changing Yourself when Results Do Not Come

Though the results of consecration are truly remarkable, there are instances where it will simply not produce tangible life response results. Though this seems disconcerting at first glance, there is a very simple explanation. The fact is that in certain situations the Force cannot work its magic unless a corresponding limitation or weakness on our part is overcome. And yet, as soon as we rectify that wanting element, a previously consecrated action quickly bears fruit. Here is an example:

An individual opened to the Force to consecrate a difficult situation he was having with his boss. Though he offered the problem with great intensity, still there were no results. He then thought about it and realized that for months he had acted too weakly and indecisively in his relationship with his superior. He therefore decided to confront his boss directly about the issues in question. When he made that effort, not only were current difficulties resolved, but a painful neck problem that dogged him for months instantly disappeared.

In situations where consecrated effort evokes no obvious positive results, it is helpful to discover the corresponding wanting element that is blocking the Force from acting. Often it is rooted in our attitudes, such as a negative feelings or emotion about others, ourselves, life, and work. Other times, it is due to a lack of cleanliness and orderliness, missing skills and capacities, lack of effort, bad decisions, and other limiting personal qualities. However, as soon as we identify and overcome that limitation, the Force immediately moves into action, releasing its infinite powers on our behalf.

From the Macro to the Micro

One of the more interesting aspects of consecration are the various levels we can apply it. Most individuals will have the wherewithal to consecrate major events in their lives, such as an important meeting with a client, or an upcoming marriage ceremony, or the first day of a child's schooling. This is the simplest and most compelling aspect of life to consecrate.

It takes more discipline however to consecrate less critical activities, such as the work session one is about to begin, or the class one is about to teach, or a drive one is about to take. Yet this too can attract powerful, positive results.

More challenging still is to consecrate the very smallest of acts, such as brushing one's teeth or the placing of food in the microwave for heating. Yet, consecrating these minor activities can elicit powerful response. This is the case because the Force does not make distinctions between the infinitesimal and the very large, as it is ready to rush in with its infinite powers wherever there is an opening.

"Unattached Intensity"

Yet another interesting aspect of consecration is that the more intense the consecration; (a) the more likely life will respond, and (b) the greater the quality of the response. By "intensity", we mean that our ardor for the Divine Help should be sincere and passionate.

Conversely, we need to be careful that our ego does not get in the way of our consecrated effort. E.g., there should be no demand or insistence on a particular

outcome. Instead, we should accept the results that come in full, for the Divine is always looking out for us when we open to Its power.

In the end, the best approach is a combination of the two, that we can call "unattached intensity." A fervor in offering the act to the Divine, yet detached from the results that come, welcoming all and everything that results. For example:

A consultant was working with a client. The discussions among the staff about an upcoming project became contentious, reaching a fevered pitch that could lead to fisticuffs! The consultant saw that he was now in a difficult situation, and the entire project was now in jeopardy. He also perceived that another project he was working on would also be endangered. As a result of these events, he became somewhat confused and agitated

That evening he offered the problem to the Divine. He asked, with great intensity, that for that Force to resolve the situation and ease his burden. He said something like "Oh Divine, here is my plight. [He then went on to explain the situation in details.] I offer the problem to you." He then let go of the situation, forgot the problem, and went to bed.

The next day when he met with the client, he was stunned that there was no further discussion of conflicting issue of the previous day. Instead, everything went orderly and smoothly. Most compelling of all was that palpable calm and silence permeated that room for the remainder of the day.

As we see a consultant's intense, yet unattached consecration produced marvelous results. That expressed in two ways: as practical results in the form of a negation of a previous problem, and as the spiritual results in the form of the calm and peace that permeated the atmosphere.

Moreover, as we practice consecration on a regular basis, we will find that intensity and ardor -- as well as patience, positive attitude, cheerfulness, and equality -- will always serve us well; just as expectation and demand will delay or cancel the action of the Force.

Inner Orientation for Maximum Results

There is one other obstacles that we are likely to face in our effort to make consecration an integral part of our lives. It is that once you take up the effort, there is a tendency for our lower consciousness to fight back and insist on its old habits and routines. As a result, our efforts towards consecrated action tend to wane over time, and sometimes stop.

What then can we do to prevent the reoccurrence of the obstacles presented by our unevolved, obstinate, unyielding, and inflexible lower nature? One approach is to begin to move our center of consciousness and frame of reference away from the surface bubbling and stimulations of life to a deeper poise within. From that status, we are less likely to find ourselves caught up in the visual and audio influences on the senses, and thus we are less likely to lose our focus and interest in consecrating our actions. Through meditation, concentration (i.e. inner, one-pointed focus), and other disciplines, we can shift our moment-to-moment awareness away from the surface of life -- from its bubblings, allures, and intensities -- to a deeper state within. Gradually, we will feel an inner space developing, and mental silence taking root. From that more spiritual-oriented poise, we are more likely to feel that urge to consecrate our actions, leading to ever-more frequent wondrous positive responses from life.

It also works the other way: the more we consecrate and offer acts, issues, and problems to the Higher Power, the more we tend to develop a more inward focus and orientation.

At the point, where we feel inner peace and silence, not distracted by the superficial, surface, transient, and are yet are also offering acts and events in our lives to the Spirit, we will have surely arrived at a dramatically new level of consciousness in our being. It is at that point that we have entered a new stage, a new path of personal progress, evolution, and transformation.

Consecration and Life Response

Consecration is the act of self-offering to the divine to affect the conditions of an act or situation, causing it to suddenly or quickly work in our favor. It is the spiritual Force acting in life, effecting life's conditions to our benefit. Here are a few examples from the last several days, narrated by associates and friends of mine.

"Today is December 23rd and it being two days before Christmas, I needed to do some errands. I thought that I would start my errands early in the morning and so left my home at 9 a.m. I drove to a local drug store to pick up a couple of prescriptions. This drug store is in the middle of a shopping center that normally has plenty of parking.

My errands for this day included picking up my prescriptions and doing my grocery shopping. I then arrived at the shopping center on this very busy day before Christmas Eve, pulled into the parking area and started looking for a parking space. To my discontent, I ended up driving around the lot three times looking for a stall. Then I found one at the far end of the lot, but I felt that I could try to do better, so I pulled out of the spot I and started another round about the parking lot. I then consecrated the act, offering it up to the Mother. As I was getting quite close to the drug store, a parking stall suddenly emptied and I was able to park my car near my destination! I then went to the prescription counter and made my purchase.

After making my purchase, I went back to my car and went through three green lights towards the grocery store, which was my next stop on this very busy day for everyone in town. I pulled into the grocery store parking lot, which very congested, yet immediately found a parking stall right in front of the store!

I then did my grocery shopping and as I was looking for a checkout counter, when I located one where the customer before me was completing her transaction. I sailed right on through and made my purchases. I then went back to my car to unload them into the trunk.

At that point, I called home to let my partner know I was on my way so he could help me bring up the groceries. When pulling out of the parking stall, three times, there was a car in the way of my exiting the stall. I remained calm until the area was clear.

When I finally got home, my partner was already waiting at my parking space for me and we then both unloaded the groceries very rapidly.

Despite great congestion round me, life cooperated at every turn due to my consecrated effort to Mother. If only life could always be like this!"

"A few days back I was in a bank counter queue and there were at least ten persons in front of me. I have to pay this before 11 am so that person in the other city can draw it before 12 noon. It was a tense moment, and I therefore consecrated the anxiety. Even before I opened my eyes, another counter was opened over to the side, and as a result, the existing line was cut exactly starting with me, making me the first person to pay in the new counter!"

"Similarly, we had arranged for consultants to meet a few days back to make an appraisal about a new product in a leading hotel. Later on, we felt that the timing was

bad, as everybody was in errand mood. We expected at least 80 pax on that day -- but at the scheduled time there were only 6 pax, and even they were not too relevant to the field. Though worried, I consecrated the anxiety and thought of Mother for some time. Immediately, people started walking in, and within 20 minutes or so it was up to 43 pax. Though it was much less than expected, later on we heard that the persons who attended were the "who is who" of the industry. They were exactly the cream of our target customers, who generally don't attend such meetings and prefers only one-on-one meetings."

As we see from these episodes when we offer activities, situations, problems to the Higher Power, life immediately starts working on our behalf. It is the miracle of consecration in action.

Consecration and Spirit-based Living

One of the choices that we have available to us is whether we or not we wish to move to the Spirit. If one does, then we can begin with one essential approach to life -- consecrated existence.

Normally, when we take up an activity, we just do it. Usually there is some thought involved, perhaps some planning, a certain will to achieve, and the physical effort to make it happen. This is the way we normally accomplish our objectives in life. However, if we choose to live a spirit-oriented existence, this approach will not suffice. In a spirit-oriented life, actions are taken not merely for our own sake, but for the Divine's sake -- fulfilling *Its* will, purpose, and intent. When we focus our intention to accomplishing an act for that Higher Purpose, we are in essence *consecrating* the act. When we do, stunning developments are likely to follow, as the act is infused with the spiritual powers of the Divine. Consecration in this way is then the central method that distinguishes a spirit-oriented existence from an ordinary one.

How then do we consecrate? It is actually rather simple. Before we begin any activity -- such as reading an email or meeting with a new client -- we can pause for a moment, concentrate ourselves within until we are somewhat still, and offer that which we are about to undertake to the Higher Power. When we do so, we not only give what we are about to embark on greater purpose and meaning, but what takes place thereafter will tend to have the stamp of the Divine action upon it. The act that we have consecrated will tend to unfold better, as positive situations and circumstance unexpectedly arise; where previously problematic circumstances will begin to dissipate; and where a feeling of calm and well-being will permeate the atmosphere. In other words, by consecrating the activity, life will begin to cooperate from all quarters. It is the power of the spiritual Force in action.

Let's consider an example. Say that you are about to begin an important activity. Before beginning, close your eyes, quiet your mind a bit, and then list out in your thoughts some of the details of what you are about to embark on. Now try to come in contact with the spiritual Force in the atmosphere. Then say something like "Oh Divine Force, I offer X and Y [the things you are about to embark on] to You. I do this work for Your sake, so that Your power, force, energy, wisdom may suffuse the work." Then let go of that deep aspiration, and continue on with the activity.

Sometime thereafter, notice if anything special has taken place. Perhaps an unexpected positive development has come to you attention, or you have experienced an unexpected instance of good fortune. If you see the benefit, consider if and how it is related to your effort at consecration. Try consecrating in this manner several times in the course of the day, and see what results come your way. At the end of the day, tally the benefits that you have received as a result of your inner effort to engage the spirit in the activities of your life.

As you experience the wonder of these powerful results, you will be energized to no end. You will begin to see the power of spiritual magic at work in your life; that life operates in ways you would never have thought possible; that you have an awesome power at your disposal to direct the course of your life. In addition, as you consecrate activities on a regular basis, you will have taken the first decisive steps towards living a spirit-oriented existence.

At a later stage, you will feel not only this sense of wonder, but begin to develop a certain desire to *surrender* to this Power. You will begin to see that you are making the effort at consecration not so much for your own personal achievement and success, but to fulfill the Divine purpose and intent. You will begin to feel that you are becoming an instrument through which the Divine Intention and Will can flow. At that point, you may begin to surrender you very life's purpose and existence to the Divine. Then your own individual soul purpose and the Divine purpose will begin to merge. Such spiritual experience and realization in the activities of life is perhaps the greatest joy known to Man.

How to Create Luck in Your Life

When we normally speak of luck we seem to be referring to a force that is beyond our control. Yet, we have found that one can bring about luck, enabling sudden great fortune to enter our lives.

In our own research we have seen that there are three essentials for enabling great achievement in life. First, one needs to have a clear aspiration and direction of what one wants to achieve. For that to occur, the details of what we want to achieve must clearly be organized and spelled out. Second we need to gain the sanction and endorsement of our emotions to see our vision through. If our goal is merely an idea devoid of our passion, will, and a decisive inner intension that this is what I really want to achieve, then the results we seek will never come about. Finally, one needs to make the tireless, persevering effort to see it come about. A half-hearted attempt to carry out our vision, will meet with half-hearted or no positive results. If these three elements are in place, then you have created the essential conditions for substantial success in life.

Still great success is not guaranteed, even with this full integrated effort. From your side, you may do all that is right and perfect for achievement, and still might not attain what you had hoped for. This is the case because life may simply not cooperate with your efforts. External circumstances, otherwise referred to as "events that are beyond our control," can simply cancel our efforts. Such events are considered "luck." Can we not invoke our own luck, and gain the cooperation of life so that our goals are royally fulfilled?

For example, let's say that you are a trainer. Even if you are fully equipped to perform a class -- i.e. you are fully organized, have all of the necessary skills, have the energy, the determination, will, etc. -- external circumstances may still block your way to success. E.g. the students may arrive late disturbing the smooth flow of the class. Or, the power in the building may suddenly go out. Or there is an emergency which prevents a key contact person from observing the class which could have led to substantial other work. If we had the cooperation of life -- what one normally one refers to as "good luck" -- then the achievement we had hoped for would undoubtedly come about in full.

How can we then gain control over life's circumstances; i.e. how can we attract the necessary luck and good fortune of life so that we can achieve our goals and moreso?

The answer is that we need to call on some other power that can gain the cooperation of life; that can create luck for us. Does such a power exist? We believe it does. It is the power to use Spirit in our moment to moment lives. If we call in the spirit just before

starting an action or event, we will see thereafter how life wonderfully cooperate, how everything works out smoothly and surprisingly. We will have invoked our own luck into the situation, propelling us to the heights of achievement.

The Power of the Spiritual Force

At the turn of the 20th century, Sri Aurobindo fought to throw off the yoke of English oppression of India. But then one day while in jail he had a vision and gave up the outer effort completely. He decided to free India from within -- i.e. through an effort in consciousness; by bringing a spiritual force to bear. On August 15 1947, India gained its freedom. It occurred on Sri Aurobindo's birthday. He had worked in the subtle plane all those years to bring about her independence.

Sri Aurobindo is better known however for his discovery of what he called the "Supramental" power. In his view this is the plane that enabled the universe to come about from a Divine source. It is also a plane that we can rise to in our own lives to bring about ultimate practical and spiritual progress. This Force has been pressing down and entering the earth's atmosphere, though in the last 25 years, its strength and influence has rapidly increased. Practically, the most important factor is this: when we open to its power, life's conditions are instantly brought under our control; sudden good fortune moves towards us from every direction. For those who have already surrendered to the Force in their daily lives, they have experienced one miracle after another. Among them are-

People long ill suddenly return to perfect health; those at the bottom of their fields rise to the top; items lost are unexpectedly found; families near ruin experience a boon; groups about to come to blows, relent; a decades long feud is finally diffused; impoverished individuals come into wealth; tornadoes destroy every other home but theirs; pilots shot down miraculously float to earth; nations about to go to war are mollified; the many-years sick become well; the physically unattractive becoming good-looking; a court case hopelessly lost is reversed; oppressive bosses act softly; hospital emergencies turn out to be nothing; those ready to die suddenly have reason to live; babies with defective hearts are healed; criminals on the loose are apprehended; college rejections are reversed; golden opportunities appear out of nowhere; violent arguments turn peaceful; oppressive armies retreat at the border; cash poor businesses find huge hordes of money; near bankrupt individuals come into windfalls; families in discord find harmony; men at the bottom are lifted to the top; enemies become friends; the forlorn find reason to live; the unloved are loved; heavy rain replaces drought; unprecedented solutions arrive for unsolvable problems; resources appear when there is extreme scarcity; individuals are saved from great embarrassment; a great energy crisis is cancelled; electrical power suddenly comes on; a new life's work presents itself; individuals hopelessly lost come upon their destination; small sales turn into huge ones; wallets and purses hopelessly lost show up; long empty stocks of inventory are filled; difficult medical operation go smoothly; people near death come back to full health; a raucous training session turns smooth; difficult to sell properties are purchased; rejections turn into acceptances; disagreements into agreements; obstacles of every manner and type disappear; dark conditions brighten, etc. etc.

By opening to the power of the spiritual Force, we can have anything we want in life. All we have to do open to that power and ask for our heart's desire. Life will then quickly move in our favor. The result will be a wonder to behold, changing our lives for the better, while altering our view of what is possible. Won't you try it out yourself?

Factors that Determine our Receptivity to Life Power and the Incoming Grace

Receptivity is the capacity of the Human Vessel to receive the incoming Grace from Life and from the Divine Itself. The degree to which Life responds with good fortune for us through those Powers will ultimately depend on our level of Receptivity.

Our receptivity increases-

- When our aspiration is for something significant or even great; rather than what is surface and superficial.
- When we are focused on a goal, which attracts the power to that particular intent.
- When we are not scattered in our being, which avoids deflecting the incoming Power.
- When our Mind is still and silent, instead of filled with thoughts.
- When our heart and emotions are calm and serene, detached from the intensities of life.
- When our consecrated efforts do not demand or expect anything; but are open to and accepts what the Spirit brings.
- When we are not bound by our fixed habits.
- When we are attitudes (towards self, others, work, life) are fully positive, instead of negative.
- When we are not want to our prejudiced opinions and wrong beliefs.
- When our Ego is the background, distanced from our thoughts, feelings, and actions.
- When we are patient, positive and cheerful in our thoughts and feeling.
- When our level of organization, inner strength, skill, capacity, effort, focus, etc. is the maximum it can be.
- When we take actions that are sensible and not rash or foolish.
- When we go the extra mile, and make the extra effort (e.g. in work).
- When we are constantly self-giving, rather than taking.
- When we express our own individuality, uninfluenced by the herd.
- When we surrender our life to the Higher Life; to the Divine.
- When our Surrender to the Divine moves from our thoughts to our emotions, culminating in the very fiber of our being.
- When our aspiration for the Divine is intense.
- When we have completer Faith in the Spirit, not in ourselves or life.
- When we are sincere in all parts of our being.
- When we take to higher values likes tolerance, openness, honesty.
- When the center of our being is deep within, rather than the surface.
- When we touch the psychic, the evolving soul.
- When we are able to constantly consecrate, which has the added benefit of penetrating us and forging an inner life.
- When the Mind sheds its vital and physical influences, including its perceptions tarnished by our desires, passions, and needs.
- When the Mind moves to silence, and then to intuition, universality, and supramental perception.
- When we perceive that the Inner, not the Outer is the ultimate determinant of our being.
- When our life movements are in touch with the evolutionary movements of the society around us.

- When the atmosphere of the surrounding collectives is positive, not blocking the descending power and grace.
- When one's own wishes are in alignment with the Will of the Divine.
- When we become receptacles of the Real Ideas of the Infinite Consciousness.
- When we are receptive to spiritual values like oneness, truth, wisdom, goodness, power, creativity, delight, joy, love, timelessness, and infinity.
- When we are pure of heart.
- When we are open to any and all possibilities.
- When we are One with, not separate from the Field of life.

An Experience at the County Courthouse

I had an experience the other day that verifies that the supramental power Sri Aurobindo uncovered, (otherwise known as "the spiritual Force,") evokes astonishing, unprecedented life movements. Moreover, it unfolds through a perfect melding and fusion of two elements -- Knowledge and Will -- two powers that it turns out enabled the supramental truth consciousness to create the universe from a Divine Source.

What happened was that the other day I had to appear at the local county courthouse. Though the matter was quite involved and a bit unnerving, I consecrated the event fully -- offering it to the spiritual force, i.e. supramental power. In addition, I stopped all thinking about the procedures I was about to go through, keeping my mind completely blank. Even though the issues I was about to tackle were involved and even intense, I cleared my mind of all thoughts and surrendered everything to the divine Mother.

Over the next several minutes, I began to experience an astonishing sequence of events. One by one, every decision I made proved to be the correct one; in every moment I seemed to be in the right place; at each point that thing fell perfectly into place. Life was cooperating at every turn, with an astonishing precision.

It was if I were on a magic carpet that was carrying me through a sequence of events that perfectly dovetailed with another. It was if I had no mind of my own, and all necessary knowledge was provided for me as I was carried from point to point.

This was NOT human life I was experiencing. This was some future type of human existence that Sri Aurobindo called "Supramental Life."

In essence, through my consecrated effort and the stilling of my thoughts, the Force replaced my own Will, while also providing the Knowledge when understanding was needed. These two, Knowledge and Will, were indistinguishable from one another in my consciousness. At each moment there was the Will to go to the next point as well as the Knowledge of how to do it. They had been become fused in my experience, as I was their servant and instrument. I was thereby taken out of time, overcoming space, and experiencing life outside the bounds of normal causality.

A while later when I sat down in the courtroom, I was simply overwhelmed. Even as I contemplated the astonishing events that had just occurred (and were still occurring), I felt a deep peace envelop me. As I sat there waiting for the proceedings to begin, I in a trance-like stillness that was accompanied by a gentle blissfulness. I could not imagine life any more harmonious and perfect.

Miracle Meetings through the Power of Spirit

Ordinarily when a meeting is about to take place, we prepare ourselves in a variety of ways. We review our notes, consider our agenda, think about potential problems and issues that may arise, and so forth. Little do we consider our ability to prepare *inwardly*,

through an elevation of consciousness; and by making that effort, evoke powerful response from life.

Over the last six months, I have been involved in what can only be called a project of a lifetime. Associates and I have been developing strategies and action plans for creating an expert system for personal growth. It is ambitious in scope and entails many dimensions of life. In the development of the project, a number of us have been meeting online using the Skype internet-based phone system to conduct our worldwide conference calls. The technology is marvellous; but the subject of our undertaking is far more astounding still.

I personally have been involved in a number of the discussions, though I went through a period where I dropped out of the conversation. During that time, I felt that my expertise would be better served elsewhere. However, when I rejoined the group six weeks later, the members told me that I had come in at an auspicious moment; just when things were moving from the theoretical to the practical application stage. Shaken a bit by the timely arrival, something in me said, "Wouldn't it be great if every time I came to this group conference call, something unexpected and positive like this would occur?"

And so I thought of various approaches to bringing the power of consciousness to bear on the upcoming meetings. I then thought of a powerful method that had worked for me in the past. Before coming together, I imagined the spiritual Force enveloping and descending on the participants. In addition, I would keep my own thoughts at bay and my agenda to myself when we connect.

The first time I used this inner, spirit-oriented approach, I was stunned when in the first minute I was informed that a decision had been made to move ahead and build the first module of the system. I was dazed because I did not believe this would happen for months, perhaps years. But there it was, rapidly moving to fruition from seemingly out of nowhere. Thus, my first attempt to evoke the future into the present had succeeded.

I then applied the inner technique a second time, and in that call, I learned that our founder had asked us to immediately develop a new, never discussed module for the system. I was again astonished, as this project seemed to come out of nowhere. And yet there it was, ready for our input so we could rapidly move it quickly to fruition. I am happy to report that this module -- RomanceEternal -- was released to the public on February 21, 2009.

This spirit showering, non-agenda approach produced powerful, miraculous-like results at least three times during that week. By holding back all thoughts and conceptions, and using the spiritual Force, life created unexpected, new conditions where there was nothing like it before. It as if you were a real estate developer had envisioned a complex of buildings to be built. You knew you would need to secure funding, gain permits, and execute a comprehensive project plan that would unfold over time. Except the next day when you visit the site, you notice that construction has already begun! You call out, "How is it possible? We have not even begun the permit process; nor have we hired anyone to build the buildings!" It is even more than this because the project *itself* came unexpectedly out of the blue, advancing our cause to the nth degree.

From these episodes, we see the power of using the active and passive dimension of spirit. When we shower others with spiritual grace and remain still inside, keeping our agenda at bay, what unfolds will be startling in the extreme -- as the infinite will replace the current limited reality before us (the finite), and the future will manifest in the present.

I welcome you to try this method in your own work and home life, and see if you too can evoke the miraculous.

Miracles of the Divine Mother

In *The Life Divine*, Sri Aurobindo describes the process by which the universe emerged from a Divine source. He indicates that a plane of consciousness called "Supermind" (or "Truth Consciousness") divided the Force and Energy of the Infinite to create the forces and forms that emerged in creation. All that has emerged and continues to emerge, including we humans, are a product of that process. What is perhaps most interesting for us is that this Supramental Force is also available to us, and if we open to it, we can create infinite-like results as well.

Over the years, I have known of hundreds if not thousands of examples where individuals followed this method -- evoking staggering, often life-changing results. Many of the people I am familiar with practice this approach by opening to the "Divine Mother" -- who is in essence the Divine conduit for the Force. Maybe She is the Force Itself. They usually open to Her power in a variety of situations: e.g. before undertaking an important activity, such as a major business meeting or an upcoming wedding; or when a serious challenge or problem arises, such as financial or health crisis; or when they wish to change a wanting part of their nature, such as a poor attitude or belief. Each time they offer it to the Divine Mother, the Force moves into action, producing astonishing results. Here are a few recent examples:

---An Indian national working in the US in the software industry could not get back to his country because his deputation had been delayed. The intensity of the experience also caused him to develop a serious skin problem. He and his mother then intensely offered the difficult situation to the Divine Mother. In very short order, she quickly learned that her son's trip to the US has been cleared by the officials, and he would be arriving in two weeks! Moreover, his skin problem was finally diagnosed properly, and, as a result, easily treated. The woman could not believe that both of her problems had vanished so quickly and miraculously.

--A man and woman in India ran a business. However, due to repair work going on nearby, the enterprise began to lose customers, and, as a result, they incurred substantial losses. The woman then learned that because creditors were now increasingly pressuring them to pay back loans, her husband had run away. As a result, she plunged into an inconsolable state. But then a friend came along and recommended that she sit quietly before a picture of the Divine Mother. A short time later, there was a call from her husband informing her that he was fine, and then indicated the place where he was staying. That night, he returned home safely.

--A man was very concerned that fires burning out of control in Northern California for nearly a month could soon lead to the deaths of hundreds, maybe thousands, as the smoke in the air had turned dangerously toxic. He prayed intensely to the Divine Mother, hoping for some change. The next morning when he awoke, he saw that the skies had suddenly turned perfectly blue, essentially clearing out the month-long orange-brown smoke and ending the crisis in the region. What happened was that an unexpected weather system had swept through the area clearing out the smoke, potentially saving the lives of scores of people. What had actually occurred was that the Force had moved into action and changed the conditions of life.

--A woman was called to jury duty, even though it meant she had to take time off from her job and engage in what she considered an unpleasant activity. As juror selection proceeded, it looked like she was going to have to remain there for several weeks. She then offered the entire matter to the Divine Mother. Shortly after, she was questioned by an attorney who explained the nature of the crime and asking her if she would be prejudiced in any way. She then responded that she had in fact been a victim of a similar crime. As a result, she was immediately dismissed from jury duty! Because she

consecrated the situation, the Force created and aligned with conditions that pardoned her from the case.

--A man in India was being set up with a wife through arranged marriage. One after another, problems ensued with prospective partners. Along the way, he even lost his job. Getting tired of the situation, he offered the matter to the Divine Mother. Suddenly another marriage proposal came in from one of his relatives. She turned out to be a very good girl, but he thought he could not accept it because he did not now have work. He offered the matter to the Force again, and soon found out that she too was a follower of the Divine Mother! They were then soon married -- and it occurred on the date the physical Mother made her yearly appearance at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram.

--A woman and her son were experiencing many delays in their travels as they navigated the various airports since there were no direct flights. As a result, they were continually fatigued and irritable along the way. Moreover, she began to rail against the system that did not provide more direct flights to her destination. Finally, she realized that the problem was in her attitude, which she then offered to the Divine Mother. She later learned that for the first time, direct flights were available to and from her local city to the desired destination, making the need for transfers unnecessary! Through the spiritual Force, she evoked a response not only for herself, but for the collective!

--A man was on the edge of financial ruin because all orders in his business had dried up due to the recession. He then offered the matter intensely to the Divine Mother, and immediately after an order came in that provided months of financial sustenance.

--A man suddenly felt intense gratitude to the Divine for having helped him secure such a fine and dedicated staff. Instantaneously, the phone rang and he received a very large order for products her business was offering. He saw the direct relationship between his intense gratitude to the Divine Mother and the immediate arrival of the requisition.

These are common every day experiences of people who have opened themselves to the spiritual Force. You can multiply these by a hundred or a thousand to include all of the incidents I have been privy to over the years. Some are startling and touching beyond believe. And yet this Power is available to every one of us each, every minute of the day. In fact, Its power is growing, as It is increasingly penetrating the earth's atmosphere -- meaning it is more accessible to more people, and is more concentrated, producing even more powerful results.

We have entered a New Age of possibility -- not only of freedom, accomplishment, and fulfillment, but of inner power via access to the Spirit. It is at once the Infinite consciousness that is pouring into life, becoming the source of all things, as well as a Power that we can access through the Divine Mother, evoking an endless procession of the miraculous.

The Divine-Net

What if you needed to know something and that knowledge simply appeared in your mind. What if you needed to know what to do next and an inner voice compels you to move in a particular direction. What if you needed to know the future direction of things and it is revealed in the present. The Internet will hardly help you in these areas, but the Divine-Net will. The former is a great 21st century tool; the latter a tool for all time. Why not then use the latter today?

An individual is walking down the street and is considering a problem. Where would he look on the Internet for the answer? It is unique, complex, and personal. The solution is however available on the Divine-Net. You still your thoughts, move to a deeper poise within, and open to the spiritual Force. One more thing: you forget about the matter.

Two minutes later an intuition of the complete solution to the problem appears in your mind from out of thin air. It is the power of the Divine-Net in action.

Another individual is about to make a sales presentation to a client. Through the Internet, she can find out about their needs, what is in stock, where they fit in on her schedule, and so forth. Beyond that, the transaction depends on her skills, persuasiveness, will, energy, et al. What seems beyond control is the outcome and fate of the event. What is needed is luck. With the Divine-Net this same person opens to the Higher Power. As a result, the conditions of life are immediately set in order; i.e. luck is created. E.g., the client who said he would be 1/2 hour late is actually 5 minutes early. The \$5000 hoped for order becomes \$20,000 when the owner reveals that he has opened three new locations. In addition, when this woman returns to her office, she experiences a revelation of an entirely new marketing scheme, which she adopts and revolutionizes her business. These miraculous-like events took place because she concentrated a moment and tapped into the infinite power of the Divine-Net.

Then one day a third individual comes up with a brilliant idea. Why not combine the Internet and the Divine-Net. Why not gather the knowledge -- including its principles and methods -- of the Divine-Net in a central location for all in the world to access. This enhanced Supernet even has algorithms that take into account a person's current situations, demands, and state of mind. It is thus cosmically intelligent and aware of the Flow of Life for any and all persons. It can therefore be broadcast instantaneously to each specific user, providing a highly personalized solution. It allows any person to tap into Its power and become the Master of Life -- i.e. to bring about the greatest results in the shortest period of time with the least effort.

The source of this enhanced world wide web is the Divine-Net, which through its actions transcends limits of space and time -- as the future continually appears in the present, and the infinite instantly replaces the current finite. It thus transcends all known notions of causality and possibility. It puts all of the conditions of life in perfect order, while revealing knowledge and right course of action that lead to perfect outcomes. The Divine-Net is always there at your disposal, ready to work its magic, drawing from the Infinite consciousness of the divine Reality.

Are you ready to make use of this Ultimate Resource of life? If so, why not tap into the instantaneous miraculousness of the Divine-Net today.

Case Studies

Overcoming Repetition through the Power of the Spiritual Force

Sri Karmayogi describes one central principles of life is its tendency to repeat. He also indicates that such repetitions, particularly those of a negative kind, will cease when Man understands at a higher level; i.e. when he perceives something new that he did not know before relative to the issue at hand. Interestingly, there is a complementary method that can also achieve the same result and more. We can offer the situation to the spiritual Force, which will overcome the inertia to repeat, while attracting other powerful conditions.

To illustrate what I mean, I would like to narrate the following remarkable experience I had the other day.

Every two or three years I meet with a friend of mine whom I have known for a quarter of a century. This is a person who I worked with many years ago and over time has become a successful software developer. As a result, he now lives in a prosperous

community nearby with his family. Whenever we get together, we meet for lunch at a local restaurant in my town in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Though the time for our meetings are normally 12 noon, I usually end up arriving just a touch early, sit at a table in the back, and face the front of the restaurant so I can wave him in my direction when he shows up. It turns out that every time we have our lunch get together, he arrives late -- usually 15-30 minutes. He then invariably apologizes profusely for his tardiness, since he is a well-mannered individual and has a soft, winning nature. For 25 years this pattern of lateness has repeated.

On this particular occasion I arrived a few minutes early, and instead of entering the restaurant, I decided to sit in my car in the parking lot until 12 noon arrived. As I sat there remembering the many times I met my friend here in the past, I also recalled how he always arrived late. In fact, it had become something of an ongoing joke between us. This time however, I decided to take a very different approach. I therefore closed my eyes and concentrated myself, and then offered the entire matter up to the Divine Mother, hoping for the best.

Well just as I was about to exit my car and enter the restaurant at 12, my cell phone rang. I saw that it was an incoming call from my friend. As I answered, I thought, "Here we go again! He's calling to tell me that he is delayed or that the meeting needed to be cancelled." He then proceeded to ask me if we were indeed supposed to meet today. "Oh boy, I thought, it's repeating once more." However, at the end of the short conversation, he said something startling. He told me that he was already in the restaurant, and was waiting for me at his table!

Somewhat shocked by the development, I got out of the car. Then I began to joyously laugh to myself as I realized that he did not know I was a mere 10-20 yards away from him in the parking lot. (The wonders of modern cell phones!) I now realized that I would be surprising him with my sudden arrival, since he likely thought I had not yet left home. Now practically dancing into the diner, I saw my friend standing and waving to me in the back, and scampered over to take my seat at the table he reserved.

When I sat down, I was filled with giddiness and awash in wonder. There were so many reasons! For one, it turned out that for the first time ever we were sitting on the exact *opposite* side of the restaurant we normally sat at. This struck me as very compelling. I also noticed that he was sitting at the opposite side of the table than before. That is, now he was facing front; where I always had that vantage point in the past. Add the fact that he had arrived on time after all of these years -- actually *before* me -- and it is no wonder that I was enthralled by the situation. It was obvious in that precious moment that life had completely turned around; both literally and figuratively.

As I sat there in a state of wonder, I understood clearly why this had all happened. Because I opened to the spiritual Force, to the Divine Mother before entering the diner, years of inertia-based repetition had come to an end. That Power evoked the very best conditions for all concerned.

There is one other interesting part to the story. After these developments, we then proceeded to have a fine meal and very stimulating conversation. In it my friend revealed that he had just gone through a very trying episode, where he was caught in a great blizzard in New York City. He then described to me in great detail the unbelievable difficulties he encountered in dealing with the wicked weather. How he had been forced into going places and using modes of public transpiration he was unfamiliar with as the weather created havoc with the situation. How he was forced to go to three different hospitals during those days to deal with three different family members who had suddenly taken ill. And so forth for the remainder of the time he was trapped in the city and could not make it back to California.

But what was really startling to me was that all of his adventures took place in the precise area of the city where I grew up; places and things I had not thought of in over 40 years since moving to California back then. In fact, he had practically retraced every haunt, transpiration method (bus, subway, and taxi), and station I used to make my way back and forth to Manhattan as a youth. It was too much to believe to discover that out of a thousand locales in that gigantic metro area, my friend had been moving about in the very specific ones that I did in my youth. The precise bus; the precise train, the precise destination train station; even the precise neighborhood where I lived. It was a million to one shot that this could happen. And yet I knew that the miraculous coincidence he was narrating was but another result of my earlier effort at consecrating his previous lateness.

After narrating his gripping story, my friend revealed that he was considering writing a book on the subject, which would not only include the great adventure he just narrated, but related subjects on human trust and fear that he has observed for decades in the American landscape. Now after suggesting this possibility, his face became bright in a way I had not seen in years, if ever before. In fact, for the first time in decades, I sensed that he had a new purpose and direction in life.

As we see, when life repeats in the negative, we can overcome that repetition by taking to a new, higher understanding. My friend must have done just that, as he finally arrived at his appointment on time. From my side, I also saw that by evoking the Spiritual Force, I was able to attract a plethora of astonishing conditions, including the overcoming of the poor habit of my friend, as well as a number of other circumstances that bordered on the miraculous. It reminded me once again of how opening to the Spirit can have an immediate and vast impact on the Character of Life.

The Moment that Changed Everything

In terms of consciousness, it was the most important moment of my life.

I had finally made the connection between my deepest spiritual aspirations in life -- the teachings of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother -- and the opportunity to implement them through work. I had joined Mere Cie Imports, who were selling products from Auroville and the Sri Aurobindo Ashram to boutiques, chains, and health food stores throughout California. Through a series of incidents, I was able to join up with the company in the San Fernando Valley in the Los Angeles area. It was in 1975, at the end of the hippy era and the dawn of the first New Age movement in America.

When I first met the owners of the company, I felt that inexorable Presence within; that palpable vibration of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother that I had felt before. But in this case, it just permeated the entire business. When I merely sat still for a moment, I fell into a state of bliss; that is how rich the atmosphere was. Certain that this was where I wanted to be, I agreed to come on board and begin selling their products in the glorious warm weather winter climate of Southern California. Living near the beach, with the job of my dreams in hand, I was ready to meld my deepest aspirations with a practical and stimulating work.

And yet, before I began that day's efforts, I had a short meeting with the principle of the company, who had only one word of advice for me. He said that each time I enter a store, I should "remember the Mother." When he said that, I was thunderstruck, for that put an entirely different light on the work I was about to engage in. For after all, wasn't one's aspiration for and the bringing down of the higher Consciousness and Force the very essence of Their teachings, and the very basis for doing the work? And yet in that moment, and too many before, I had all but forgotten that essential.

Fortunately, my then boss and now close friend had through that simple, yet powerful request reminded me of the fact. In essence, if we open to the spiritual Force -- in our terms, the Divine Mother -- before engaging in an act, life would respond out of all proportion. That Force would turn a routine act into an ecstatic experience, matched by tremendous sales or related results. In that way, the smallest boutique could bring the biggest sale, as any act could be an opening for the infinite to break out; as condition would conspire out of all proportion in my favor.

In one sense, my whole life has been a footnote to that moment when my friend made that dramatic request. Though I have opened to that Power a thousand times since, in current moments of my life, I am often compelled to ask; "am I performing the act before me in the normal human way, or through the Higher Consciousness." After all, wasn't that the very reason I was drawn to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother in the first place?

In that decisive crossroad moment, my friend confronted me with the ultimate spiritual challenge. Those words he uttered so long ago still reverberate today, as I am still challenged to take up that inner approach that has the power to dramatically alter the conditions of life.

California Fires and the Response from Life

Approximately three weeks ago, a very small weather system passed over Northern California. It produced no rain, but much lightning, an extremely rare phenomenon in California (i.e. the lightning). As a result, over 500 fires were started in the Northern and Central part of the state. They raged for several weeks, and produced abundant smoke throughout the region. Every day the sky would turn brown and you could smell it day and night. It was very concentrated in the Central Valley of California, which sits between two mountain ranges with no easy outlet for such smoke. Every day during this 2-week period, the smoke would drift into the SF Bay Area where I live. In combination with an intense heat wave where the temperature went above 107, the physical atmosphere was turning poisonous. Even I was affected despite air conditioning and other attempted remedies.

Over 1000 square miles of California burned and the air was getting worse with every passing day. The chance of rain or another system moving through was virtually zero since this is the dry season in the region. At one point, I thought back to last year when California hit nearly 120 degrees for several days, including my area. Over 300 people died and thousands more were taken ill. What is not generally known however is the fact that had the heat remained for another several days, thousands, maybe as many as 10,000 could have died. Fortunately, the weather cooled somewhat, averting the tragedy.

With this in mind, plus the fact that I was having headaches and felt I was slowly being poisoned by the air, and the fact that the skies were worsening and the fires were getting completely out of hand, one night before I went to sleep I felt an overwhelming aspiration for it all to end. I then explained the situation in detail to The Mother, and with an intense prayer asked that the situation cease. I then fell asleep.

The next morning I opened the curtain and looked at the sky. I noticed that there were several small high clouds. I looked out the window from the other side and saw the same. I then thought that these are produced when a weather system passes through. But these were tiny clouds, and I wondered what good they would do. Then as the morning progressed, I noticed that this was indeed an upper atmosphere disturbance (not unlike the earlier system that created the lightning strikes, but smaller and completely benign; i.e. a few tiny clouds but without the lightning). Then at one point, it was clear that the sky was no longer brown, that in fact the normal deep blue skies of

California returned for the first time in several weeks. Still I wondered if the Central Valley smoke would drift over and return; but it never happened.

It turns out that this virtually cloudless upper level weather disturbance/front had miraculously cleared out all of California. A day or two later 460 of the 500 fires were under control. The smoke had virtually disappeared. Life returned pretty much to normal.

The Divine Mother had altered the course of reality, and saved myself and countless others from what I believed was a looming catastrophe. I could only feel awe and eternal gratitude.

The DMV: Another Magical Moment through Mother

The other day I experienced something I have seen many times before as a result of consecrating an act to the Mother and Her Force.

Just before I arrived at the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) in Long Beach, California to renew my driver's license I consecrated the activity, offering it to the Divine Mother. When I arrived at the first line, it moved well compared to past experiences I have had at various DMV offices over the decades. Then I came to the second area where a hundred or more people were gathered and were waiting for their number to be called so they could go to one of the twelve booths where an agent would process their driver-related applications and renewals.

When I had arrived in the room, instead of sitting down in one of the many dozens of attached plastic chairs, I simply remained standing and leaned against one of the tables near the front. I then noticed that the numbers were counting down quickly and that within five or ten minutes I would be sent to one of the twelve agents spread out in a wide expanse before me. When the automated response system called out my number, it also indicated which booth to go to. The voice said that I should go to booth 12. It turns out that I was standing EXACTLY in front of booth 12, not a foot to the left or right! I was perfectly aligned with the booth, and I did not have to move more than three feet to get there, compared to the myriad of possibilities of having to walk over to one of the other eleven other booths that were set along the twenty yard-wide corridor.

I was startled at how life had given me this perfect Efficiency in space and time – though not surprised, because this was a familiar occurrence in my life.

I then walked the several feet to the booth and handed over the paperwork. The woman behind the window smiled, and was uncommonly friendly and helpful. The processing then went very quickly. As these events unfurled, I knew that all of this was due to my consecration to Mother a few minutes earlier.

It turns out that I have experienced this precise dynamic on a number of occasions after consecrating the activity. Often it involved being on a shopping check-out line where I had to wait for a number to be called. In these cases, I am informed that a space has opened, and it turns out to be EXACTLY in front of me, not a step to the left or right, even if there are 50 other booths I could have been sent to down a lengthy walkway.

This is Mother's special touch, as her Force creates the greatest efficiency in terms of space, time, causality, reality. It is another example of Her supramental power of Instantaneous Miraculousness – aka Life Response in action.

Consecration that Affects Others; the Collective

Consecrating for the Benefit of Others

We think of life response mostly in terms of our own selves; i.e. sudden good fortune coming to our own person. But it can of course apply to others; whether one other individual, or to a collective of people we are part of or related to. For example, if another individual is having trouble selling a huge, beautiful property in the mountains so they can move onto other aspect of their lives, we can consecrate that for them, asking the divine Force and Power to take care of it. Sudden good fortune is likely to follow for that person in ways we or they might not ever have imagined.

If we are so inclined, we can experiment and try to elicit good fortune for others. Certain basic rules of consecration will apply. E.g., the more intense the emotion we well up inside, the better. Also, the less attached to the result, allowing the Force to move as it sees fit (i.e. THY will instead of My Will Be done), the greater the effectivity and result. I would add one other rule: The effort to help another should be genuine and sincere. The more we feel genuine concern for the interest and concerns of others, the more likely they will garner the miraculous-like results.

Throughout this site, dozens, if not hundreds of miraculous-like life response incidents have been presented that occurred through the action of the Higher Power. The overwhelming majority benefited our own person; far fewer were evoked for the sake of others. By "others," I don't mean our spouse, children, and families, where we stand to gain directly from the result. Rather, I am referring to more casual or less attached acquaintance, such as our friends, business associates, and people we work with.

Interestingly, it is those who are a little more advanced in their conscious evolution (i.e. yoga) that are more likely to consecrate for the benefit of others. In fact, it is often the case that the beneficiary doesn't even know that such devotees have been working on their behalf.

When Sri Aurobindo's divine consort, the Mother, was in the body, she constantly directed the Force onto those individuals who expressed their concerns and problems to her. Results would then come as Grace for them, though they rarely recognized the source. If Grace was withheld, it was because of an obstinate or otherwise wanting attitude or quality on their part. (Sri Karmayogi says that now that She has retired from the body and unencumbered by the limitations of the physical being, that power is even greater as She watches over, guides, and graces her followers from the subtle plane.)

By the way, it is not necessary to reveal one's self as the source of another's success. In fact, in the most successful cases, the benefactor restrained himself from most if not all communication with the recipient, thereby evoking quick and powerful results. For example, in the late 1980s, Sri Karmayogi formed an international commission consisting of world luminaries in order to end the Cold War. Just as they were to have their first plenary meeting in Italy in 1989, the Berlin Wall fell and the Cold War ended, as he was able to evoke Her Force. Not more than a few dozen people in the world were privy to the fact.

My favorite example of evoking the Force for others came a few years ago, where one close friend evoked powerful response for several other individuals and organizations:

"One recent morning I sat down and concentrated in order to generate an attitude of goodwill to specific people I knew, and to aspects of work or life that I was directly related to. As it turned out, during that day I received back a series of reports of good news that related to the very things I had been concentrating on -- as well other aspects of work I had put aside because of lack of time. Here are the details:

I had been concentrating on the health of a friend who had developed diabetes, and whose ailment I felt responsibility for because of my attitude, and the pressure I had placed upon him in work. Later in the day, I received word that his blood sugar levels had declined almost back to normal following treatment.

I had also been sending goodwill to a client company I was working with, and praying that their revenues should increase. As it turned out, during the day, they closed a good-sized order that had earlier been in doubt.

But there was still more. The previous day I had asked a marketing manager at the company about the progress on a proposed collaboration with another company that could generate big dividends for my client. The manager had said he had not made any progress on the proposal for the last six weeks. During the day of my concentration, however, he reported that the other company had suddenly contacted him and proposed flying into our city for the first meeting within five days' time.

There was also the senior manager of the company's Bangalore branch office, who had been badly demotivated by the harsh words and treatment he received from the company's Chief Financial Officer, which had in effect caused local morale to suffer. I concentrated on sending him goodwill as well, so that he could recover his usually cheerful, enthusiastic disposition. During the day, his assistant reported that the senior manager's mood was back to normal for the first time in a month!

I had also been praying that rain should come to drought-stricken Madras (India), where drinking water is in short supply. That day it rained heavily.

Beyond these responses, there were two encouraging responses to my efforts of concentration concerning projects I had not been thinking about, but were high on my list of work to be accomplished. In the first case, I found myself seated on the plane exactly across the aisle from the head of a non-profit organization I had met nine years before. During the flight, he introduced himself and expressed serious interest in a development project that we wanted to promote but had not found the right agency for. It turned out that his agency would be the ideal candidate.

In the other case, a newspaper headline carried information that another project we had worked on to promote for the past year may now have been received by the concerned parties."

Imagining Spiritual Light Descending on Others

One of the most powerful spiritual techniques is to open to the Spirit before engaging in an act, such as an upcoming business meeting. That inner opening to the Higher Power is guaranteed to attract positive results soon after. Personally, it is an act of consecrating an activity by opening to the spiritual force and power of the Divine Mother. For others, it takes shape somewhat differently -- e.g. simply as a trust and faith in something greater than one's self.

Whatever the object of spirit, consecration is virtually unfailing in its ability to attract and align with the very best of conditions. It is especially effective for those who have deep faith in the spiritual Object, and do not make emphatic demands on what is to come.

It turns out that in the past year or two, I have been experimenting with a closely related technique -- one that can have an even more concentrated effect on ensuing events. It is to connect with the spiritual Power, and then imagine Its Light and Force descending and radiating down on the participants in the upcoming meeting. It turns out that every time I have practiced this technique, the results have been staggering. For example, right after the activity begins I learn that--

- dramatic new developments have arisen lately that I would never have imagined.
- creative, new approaches to problems are revealed in ways I never would have believed, putting the activity or project on a dramatic new path.
- things I expected to take months or even years to begin have suddenly moved onto the fast track.
- people are suddenly in full agreement on future direction of an undertaking when previously there was no consensus in which direction to move.

Each time I experienced one of these events, I felt a profound miracle had taken place. It seemed that way because something so radically different had occurred. And yet I was still able to recognize that an Infinite consciousness and power was responsible for these startling outcomes.

When we summon that Light and Force, imagining it descending and radiating down on the targeted party, we engage in an unparalleled act of the spirit. We evoke an infinite Power with the capacity to release infinite possibilities for the targeted recipients as well as ourselves. That being the case, why not give it a try?

Repeating a Life Response for the Collective

One of the interesting aspects things about Life Response is that once you have had the experience, you can repeat it at that same level. I.e. if you identify the inner behavior that precipitated it the first time around -- such as a shift in attitude -- you can go to the well again, repeating that higher consciousness movement and attracting an equal, if not more powerful response from life. In this way, your life can be a never-ending series of sudden good fortune moments -- propelling you to the pinnacles of success, while moving you swiftly along a path of personal progress and evolution. Let me illustrate with a recent example.

As you may know from a previous entry, I was able to marshal the spiritual Force to overcome a dire situation in Northern California. What happened was that last spring an unusual lightning storm hit the area, setting off thousands of fires throughout the region. After weeks of non-stop firestorm on the hills and mountains, the skies began to turn an ominous red-gray color in the major metropolitan areas like San Francisco and Sacramento. Worse still, people were beginning to feel physical effects to the point that there was concern that hundreds or even thousands of people could become seriously ill or die from the ever-increasing toxic poisoning. As a result, I called to the spiritual Force with the hope that the Higher Power could bring relief. As it turned out, the next morning I looked out the window and noticed that the air had completely cleared, when a most unexpected weather front moved in overnight. As a result, seventy-five percent of the smoke disappeared in a 12-hour period, and the remainder dissipated over the next several days, never to return.

Though a looming catastrophic situation had been averted, I did not rest on my laurels for I understood that the normal fire season was yet to begin. In fact, being a long time resident of the state, I knew that the infamous Santa Ana winds were due to let loose in early October, which was the usual period it makes its appearance. Knowing that we had the driest conditions in the region in 20 years, making the area a potential tinderbox, I considered what I could do inwardly to avoid what could turn out to be the most dangerous fire season in modern Northern California history. Such a conflagration would make the fires of the previous spring seem like a walk in the park.

As the Santa Ana period approached in late September, I closely watched for the appearance of any high winds. One day I noticed that wind velocity had reached 20 miles per hour with some higher gusts. Though not the 50+ mph of Santa Ana, I

became concerned, and so began to "consecrate" the situation just as I had done the previous spring. Not long after, I checked the weather map and noticed that an unusual early October shower was heading our way. When it passed through the region, the ground was nicely soaked, but I was still aware that the Santa Anas could rise up any day and cause havoc. But you know what; in the days and weeks ahead, the so-called 'devil winds' never arrived! For the first time in 30 years of observing weather in the region, the powerful gusts with the power to ignite and destroy thousands of homes and businesses throughout the area, never showed itself.

Then something equally remarkable took place. Instead of the gradual transition to the rainy season, two weeks after the normal Santa Ana period, it suddenly began raining hard, and did so for several days. It was in fact the earliest start to the rainy season I had ever experienced here, and would turn out to be the final insurance policy that dampened any chance of an inferno breaking out in this part of the state.

Once again, life had responded to an inner initiative to affect the collective. I was both relieved that a dire situation was avoided, as well as reminded of the awesome power we have to affect the conditions of life around us -- including those that affect a wide swath of the community. Finally, I was reminded of the infinite power of the spiritual Force to alter the world outside ourselves -- a power that according to the Mother is ever increasing, descending deeper into the earth's atmosphere.

One final point: At several points along the way, I was tempted to tell others of the progress I was making to alter the Santa Ana threat. However, I controlled myself, and never revealed a thing, including the arrival of that very first modest dampening rain. I knew that if I "spilled the beans" and told people of my success so far, everything would come undone -- i.e. the Santa Anas and their destruction would return and wreak its usual destruction. And so I held back from discussing my inner effort with anyone until the danger was past. (The principle is straightforward: until a positive development fully comes about, it is best not to discuss or get too excited about it, otherwise it will get cancelled.)

Now as I look around at what were parched hillsides only a few weeks ago, I see new greenery sprouting everywhere. This unusually early California rainy season has been most gratifying for me, as it has come about a month and a half ahead of schedule.

Faith

Your Level of Trust in Life

As we carry on our lives, do we ever stop to consider what it is we truly believe in; i.e. where we place our faith in our pursuit of personal happiness and fulfillment? Let's consider a gradation of possibility.

The unconscious individual is simply ruled by life. He does not consider the forces affecting him -- secular or divine -- but merely goes about his business in his habitual, "though-less" manner. This is what we call a person of physical consciousness; devoid of emotion and thought; ruled by of habit and repetition; a mere husk of a man.

Then there are people who have a certain faith in life; a hope that it will bring us that which we aspire for in our lives. Most of us fall into this category. We hope against hope for the best, though we cannot really be sure of the outcomes of life.

At a higher level still is the person who has a positive outlook on life, having faith that it will continually produce beneficial results. Even if the outcomes do not seem favorable, they are still perceived as helpful in the greater scheme of things. This is a more conscious person, who has some inability to see into life's workings, living just on the edge of spirit.

The spiritual individual places his faith not in life alone, but in the Spirit, the Divine. His actions in life are in fact self-offered to the Higher Power so that It will hopefully bring about the very best results in that person's existence, which it invariably does. You could say that this individual has great faith in Life through the workings and direction of Spirit.

A gradation higher of this view is the individual who has frequently experienced and seen the spiritual Force, the Higher Power to set right life's conditions on a regular basis. He not only has positive faith in the divine, but has begun to master the principles of life, including the nature and action of the evoked Spirit. (This individual like the previous sees all outcomes as positive. Negatives are simply positives in disguise. Yet the constant inner orientation and consecration of life's activities tend to create more of the positive.)

The highest perception of life is to see it as an unfolding of the Divine Will; as a Marvel of positive and negative interacting to enable life's further progress, evolution, and transformation. It is to see Life as the playing field of the Divine; of the unfolding of the Infinite consciousness in the finite, so it too can express the Divinity of the Source. It is to have faith in the Divine Unfolding in Life. Thus, it is to participate in that process. It is the highest possibility, action, vision, experience given to Man.

Where then do you fit into this scheme of faith? At what point in your psychological makeup do you put your belief, trust, and dependence? Is it possible to take it up one notch, to the next level higher? If so, how would you begin?

The power over life is always in your hands. It just depends on what, in whom, at what level you put your trust.

Taking Our Faith to the Next Level

Real faith is not just to place one's trust in the Higher Power, but to accept the results in whatever shape and form it comes.

I had a recent experience that demonstrates this principle. In this episode, I was owed considerable money by a client. I originally assumed they would pay in 30 days, but then found out it would be more like 45-60. Though initially slightly bothered, I soon accepted the fact in my mind and emotions for the most part. Then a series of very strange incidents occurred.

On the 5th of the month, the client informed me that the check would be issued soon in a week or so. 10 days or so after, I inquired again since I had received nothing till that point. The client then told me that the check had in fact been sent the week before, and yet I had not received it in the mail. We agreed to see if it would arrive in the next few days, but still there was the same result.

Now it appeared that it had somehow had gotten lost in the mail. When I mentioned to the building complex manager that I may have lost an important check, she noted that there had recently been problems with the mail, likely because we now had a new post delivery person. At each point in these proceedings, I consecrated the effort, offering the matter to the Divine, as did my housemate, and made the effort to put it out of my mind, putting my focus elsewhere.

And yet after a number of more days, the check still did not arrive. I then told the client via email of the situation and she mentioned that she could do a stop payment and issue another check instead. But then she hesitated and said why not wait till the end of the work week to see if it would arrive by post. I agreed. All along, I subtly understood that the Divine has Its ways. I felt the resolution would occur on Its terms, not mine.

When the check still did not come, I emailed the client to tell her to do the stop payment and issue the new check she earlier suggested. However I got a response instead that she was out of the office for several days. It had somehow fit the pattern! I then called the office to let others know that I had emailed this person about the missing check, and I assumed that she would now send the new check.

Several days later, I had pretty much given up on anything particular occurring. Also, if a new check had been issued by her, it would still not arrive for several days. But when I checked the mail on this particular day, there it was! (It turns out I arrived there just as the new mailman had placed the letter in my box.)

But then I suddenly realized that I had asked the client to do a stop payment on this check, so it was essentially worthless! I then decided to call her on the phone and tell her that the old check had finally arrived. She then told me that she never did the stop payment, meaning that the check I received was actually a good one. Moreover, she also told me that ANOTHER check for an ever bigger amount (that I suspected might also be somehow delayed) had arrived and would be sent to me that day!

Somehow, this all made perfect sense to me. In fact, I sensed all along that this confluence of the two checks might happen. I.e. I would receive the Net 30 check at the same time as the Net 60 one. I felt it was the Divine logic that transcended my own.

A little background: For several years I had worked with this client in developing a variety of proposals. Each time the jobs were about to start, they were cancelled at the last moment. In other words, all dealings with the client had worked out wrong in the past. Therefore, the current problems with the check -- it being on long term terms and it being lost/delayed -- did not surprise me. (I understand the principle that how things originate indicate what is to come.)

At each step along the way I had offered the matter to the Divine; having faith that It was in control, transcending my own limited perspective of space and time. I understood that the Higher Power not only knows the Big Picture -- including the nature of the client, my inner relationship with them, my own financial pressures, attitudes etc. -- but resolves matters through the logic of Its Infinite consciousness; which to our surface mind seems incomprehensible, even absurd.

It is one type of faith to ask the Divine to work on our behalf and resolve a problem. It takes an even greater faith to accept every movement and result that follows as a reflection of Its Will. It is thus this type of incident that pushes one's faith to the next highest level.

Methods of Spiritual Silence

Overview

Spiritual Silence and Inner Equality

Expressions of Spirit in Life

Though science may not prove its existence, and skeptics will deny it is real, individuals throughout time have had experiences that can only be classified as a higher order of consciousness. The common term for such experiences is that they are "spiritual" in nature.

One individual feels a sudden light and presence; another, an overwhelming sense of peace; while a third feels an oneness with all and everything that surrounds him. Such epiphanies come in many forms, depending on the individual's nature, the culture one is raised in, and other factors.

Take the spiritual notion of "Oneness." Throughout time, individuals have shared with the world their experiences of a profound connection with life. In some instances, it was a feeling of oneness with nature, in others a deep association with the entire universe, and in others still, a transcendent connection to the divine. In each instance, the individual experienced a sense of harmony, oneness, and unity with something far greater than his own limited self. These experiences reflect the actual Oneness that exists throughout creation, which is itself an expression of the spiritual Reality underlying all existence.

Another way we experience Oneness is through the deep bonds and connections we have with others. When we focus on the interests and concerns of another person, when we take to their point of view, and when we express our heartfelt thanks, appreciation, and gratitude, we are in essence moving away from our limited sense of self, and opening to a wider sphere of harmony, unity, and oneness.

Though such experiences of Oneness with the objects, elements, and individuals around us are truly profound, they are but one type of spiritual expression. For example, if I move from selfishness to self-givingness in my relationship with another, I not only experience a degree of Oneness with that person, but I also experience a degree of spiritual Love.

Then what is spiritual Love? It is certainly more than the physical attraction or attachment we have for another person. It is also more than the vital feelings and emotions we have towards others. It is instead something truer, deeper, and longer lasting. Spiritual Love occurs when the lover, partner, parent, friend, associate, etc. seeks to give of himself without expectation or reward, seeking only the fulfillment of the other person. Ultimately, the highest expression of spiritual Love occurs when we surrender to, and offer our deepest devotion to the Divine, thereby fulfilling Its intention in life.

In addition to spiritual Oneness and Love, we also experience the spirit as pure joy and Delight of being. One way we can feel that Delight is by being self-giving to another person, as well as feeling the joy of another person's progress and happiness. We can also feel such Delight whenever we experience something new in the world, such as when we discover a new possibility, or come upon a new idea, or when we have achieved a new level of growth in our lives.

The Witness Consciousness

There is yet one other way we can experience the Spirit in our lives. Behind the layers of our human makeup -- i.e. our physical, vital, and mental parts -- there is a level of pure beingness, reflecting the true essence of who we really are. Behind the substance, movements, and sensations of our physical bodies; behind the desires, wants, emotions, and feelings of our vital being; and behind the thoughts, ideas, and beliefs of our minds, there is an essential silent and unmoving Self and Being.

From this profound inner poise of consciousness, we experience the world as pure "is-ness." From this status, we make no value judgments; offer no opinions; express no wants and desires; experience no feelings, emotions, or sensations; and do not move, or

take to action. In this state of Beingness, we just are -- silently observing the unfolding of truths of life around us, without reaction or intention.

Interestingly, through this inner poise of stillness, we can harness a formidable energy and power. By silently observing the world this way, we become sensitive to the true truths unfolding around us, which gives us deeper insight into life's conditions, which in turn help us make the right decisions that lead to right actions. By looking out onto the world through a "witness consciousness," we are not only detached from the intensities and sensations of life, but we gain a vast power to affect it.

In fact, when we shift away from our normal "aggressive consciousness" to this detached, calm, and equal witness consciousness, life has a tendency to respond with sudden good fortune. I.e., when we withdraw from the tumult and activity of the mind, and instead move to mental silence; when we withdraw from the reactions, likes, dislikes, wants, needs, and attitudes of the vital, and instead rest in a dispassionate neutrality and equality; and when we abandon our attempts to aggressively seek out life and take action, letting the world come to us on its own, sudden good fortune will likely follow. Although any of these inner movements can elicit the instantaneous miraculousness of life response, I would like to share several episodes that stand out.

Silent Will

Experience tells us that when you refrain from expressing an idea or your intentions through speech, the other person will express what you held back shortly thereafter. When we restrain ourselves this way, the atmosphere around us gets charged with concentrations of mental and vital energy, which then penetrate another person's consciousness, causing them to identify with the idea, which then compels them to speak it out as if it were their own.

-A writer wanted to interview several executives at a major US company for a book he was writing. His contact there at first refused his request. The writer was about to describe several reasons why he should be able to meet with the staff, but instead restrained himself and held his tongue. A moment later, the contact suddenly began to describe several reasons why it would be useful for the writer to meet with the executives, and then actually gave him permission to do so!

-A thinker was having a discussion with another thinker. Ideas moved back and forth very swiftly. At one point, the first person decided not to express an interesting idea of his as an experiment in Silent Will. Several moments later, the second person expressed the very idea that the first person had earlier held back.

-A consultant, attending a meeting, restrained himself from joining a small discussion group where he had hoped to engage one of the individuals on an important topic. After the meeting ended, and the consultant headed to the subway station to go home, the very person he wanted to speak with suddenly appeared alongside him. Over the next hour, they engaged in the very conversation that the consultant longed to have.

The Power of Restraint

Though Silent Will compels others to verbalize our thoughts and wishes, there are other dimensions to this powerful technique. To show you what I mean, consider the following hypothetical situation:

Imagine that you are a project manager who is responsible for overhauling your company's production facility. Your assignment is to develop a new wing for the manufacturing plant, which will enable the company to produce its state-of-the-art hardware technology in large quantities. Your broad goal then is to deliver the highest quality result with the least expense in the shortest period.

You begin by polling your engineers to get their input. Their consensus is that the project will take six months to complete. You then use your project management skills to develop a schedule of how long the constituent parts will take. Interestingly, when you organize the project plan this way, a number of new ideas suddenly spring to mind, allowing you to shave off a month from the project. (It is life responding to your mental effort to organize things in the most efficient manner, down to the particulars, as we learned in the chapter on organization.)

As you make these strides in your project plan, you become very energized. As a result, you feel an intense urge to communicate your progress to others. However, rather than give into your eagerness, you decide to hold back. Several minutes later, a cascade of insights about the nature of the project suddenly come to mind. That knowledge allows you to drive down the project's duration by nearly half -- from 6 months to 2.5!

Stimulated by these startling developments, you are motivated to take your non-verbalizing, self-restraining approach a step further. Rather than obsess about what you will say to motivate your team, you decide not to think about the matter at all. In fact, you choose to wait for life to take its own initiative, which will be a signal to you when to take further action.

As a result, a cascade of remarkable events unfold. First, you receive a series of communiqués from team members who express their eagerness to get started on the project. This is a stunning development because they never took the initiative to contact you about projects they were part of in the past. You always had to contact them first. In addition, that afternoon you receive a call from your boss, the VP of operation, who expresses her eagerness to begin work on the project. This is from a person who hardly ever contacts you about anything!

In fact, over the next 24 hours, you learn of several other stunning developments in the firm. First, you discover that a dozen new people have been hired on in your department, giving you a larger pool of resources to choose from. You then learn that the company has unexpectedly purchased several new pieces of software that if implemented would drive down your project by another 50%!

Because of these conspiring events, the once 6-month project is now projected to finish in a mere four weeks! Several days later when your manager gets wind of this information, she drops by your office -- something she rarely does unless there is trouble -- and praises you to the heavens for this remarkable effort. She follows that up with a not too subtle hint that if the project goes as scheduled, you will be in line for a big promotion and raise.

From this imaginary episode, we see the power of restraining our thoughts, feelings, and actions. By holding back at key moments, we create the greatest results with the least effort in the shortest period of time, demonstrating Silent Will power in all its glory.

With that in mind, here are some real life examples:

-A man had been involved in a great project that is a once in a lifetime endeavor. He was participating intently and contributed a lot over the last several months. Then he got a little too involved, becoming tired, sometimes assertive and slightly argumentative. He decided at that point to withdraw from the discussion for several weeks. One of his partners then informed him that his schedule for implementation had now suddenly moved from several years to a few months!

-An individual had been involved in the development of several online expert systems. He had taken the initiative to read a book that contained highly relevant information for our project. A second stage was to organize all of his underlines, highlights, and notes so that the content could be used as the project moved forward. However, rather than

take an outer, physical initiative, he decided to restrain himself and hold back. Just after making this decision, he received a very unexpected note from the lead content developer who asked him to forward the name of the very book in question so he could use it for the system.

Reduced and Soft Speech

In addition to withholding the expression of our thoughts and intentions, simply reducing the quantity of the words we speak tends to attract positive conditions. This is the case because there is a power in our speech. Our vocalizations originate in our vital/life center, and carry a life-power and energy. When we speak too much, these energies are squandered, which tends to attract corresponding negative conditions. However, if we conserve our energies through reduced speech -- or, better yet, by remaining completely silent -- they are fortified and strengthened, which tends to attract sudden good fortune from our surroundings. Here are two true incidents:

-An individual was engaged in a lively conversation with a close friend. At one point in the discussion, he overcame his urge to discuss a new idea that had entered his mind, and instead insisted that his friend speak what was on her mind. She then articulated several concepts that he had never heard before, which energized and thrilled him to no end. By moving to silence, life reversed itself and turned a mundane conversation into an ecstatic moment of freshness and wonder.

-A famous, baseball player hit a home run in pursuit of breaking the all-time record. His teammate then hit another home run after. In the dugout, the two proceeded to engage in a friendly, though somewhat heated discussion about whose ball was hit harder and further. This childish bantering continued for nearly ten minutes. At the time they began the dialogue, their team was ahead in the game. However, shortly thereafter, the other team tied the score. In fact, that rival club eventually went on to win in extra innings, which turned into a heart breaking loss for the home team with the two incessantly chatting players.

-An instructor noticed that every time he engaged in lengthy discussions about politics or other social issues with someone before a class, he would invariably run into some difficulty with that very student during the course of the day. He later committed to never engage in such idle, debate-oriented conversations before his classes, which helped him avoid such negative life response thereafter.

One of the ways we can avoid such pitfalls is to identify those areas of our lives where we waste speech -- i.e. our "speech threshold," -- and then make an effort to draw back from it. For example, the trainer just mentioned could learn to refrain from speaking with students on controversial news topics before class, while a customer rep could cease from engaging in needless, idle conversations with her clients. In such instances, drawing back from one's speech threshold fortifies positive energy, which tends to attract sudden good fortune back to us.

Why then do we speak so much? One reason is that we love the sound of our own voice! Another reason is that we also enjoy the stimulation that comes from interacting with others. It has been suggested that 80% of our conversations take place in a social context, and it is in these stimulating interactions that compel us to vocalize our thoughts and feelings. If, on the other hand, we recognized this fact and controlled ourselves in these social situations, we would not only reduce the quantity of speech, but we would elicit very positive circumstance on those occasions.

It should be pointed out that in addition to reducing the quantity of the words we speak, we can also reduce the volume and pitch of our speech. When we speak loudly and boisterously, life tends to get disturbed and attract negative outcomes. However, if we practice "soft speech," by speaking in a low, soft voice, then good fortune moves our

way. In particular, soft speech tends to attract money and other forms of financial benefit.

One 39-year-old wealthy American businessperson lost all 60 of his employees, and was prepared to file for bankruptcy. However, at a relative's suggestion, he and his wife practiced psychological and spiritual disciplines, including speaking in a low, soft voice. As a result, two years later he was in a position to retire for life!

Equality of Being

In addition to mental silence, we can also practice vital silence. If we keep our emotions and feelings in tow when difficulties arise, not only do the problems tend to dissipate, but new, unexpected positive outcomes are apt to take their place. Here are several true-life examples:

-A training company secured work from a well-known global technology company. The class went very well, and the training company sent out an invoice to the client. Normally payment on the bill occurs within two weeks. However, the client informed the training company that they paid in 60 days. On hearing this, the individual managing the account at the training company nearly became unhinged. Fortunately, at the time, he was able to hold back his feelings, and eventually reverse himself to the point where he actually attained a state of calm and equality within. The following day the representative of the training company was shocked to discover that the client had paid for the work in full via the Internet that very morning! In essence, through an inner reversal from agitation to vital stillness, a long 60-day receivable had turned into a 2-day payment.

-A woman who had never driven a car long-distance was being hounded by a big-rig truck bearing down on her at high speed on a steep incline of an interstate highway. She was very concerned and bothered by the vehicle's imminent approach. Several minutes later, the truck suddenly swerved off the road, taking an unmarked exit into what appeared to be desert wasteland. When asked what she had been thinking about before the truck made its unexpected exit, the woman said that she had simply decided to stop worrying about the threat. In other words, be still and calm about the matter, ever to the point of ignoring and forgetting it.

-In a famous story set in the 19th century, a man made a wager that he could travel around the world in eighty days. His personality was such that he never worried about anything, no matter how dire the circumstances. As a result, he was constantly able to overcome immanent disasters on the trip.

At one point, as he was about to complete the journey, he was arrested, which, in effect, caused him to miss the 80-day deadline, and, therefore, lose the bet. Undaunted by the false accusation, and remaining utterly calm, he escaped from his captives. Arriving at the final destination point of the race, he learned that he actually had returned one day early, and thus had now, in fact, won the wager! It turned out that he arrived on the 79th day because he saved one full day by traveling east to west around the world.

-A company rented workspace from an owner who offered this service. When the principle of the company went on a trip, his own manager and several staff members got into an argument with this owner. When the owner threatened to oust the company from the space, they threatened legal action against him. However, when the principle of the company returned and learned of this contentious situation, he decided to remain absolutely calm and composed. He also told his workers to do the same.

Several days later, the owner of the rental space came up to the principle, and, shaken, told him that his own son had a heart problem. The owner asked the principle if he knew of a hospital where the child could be treated. The boy was then shuttled to a hospital that

the principle recommended. There the doctors indicated the need for immediate surgery. However, the owner did not have the money to pay for such an expensive operation. Once again, the principle came through, and was able to arrange financing for the owner through a bank he had worked with. The operation on the child then took place, and fortunately turned out to be a success. As a result of these extraordinary events, the owner felt eternally grateful to the very man whose company he had once tried to evict. An individual's absolute calm and composure in the face of adversity had attracted these most extraordinary circumstances from life.

The capacity to remain undisturbed in the face of intense circumstances -- whether they are extremely negative and displeasing, or even extremely positive and enjoyable -- is the inner power of "equality of being." Any serious movement away from either of these disturbed states to one of equality of calm is sure to attract benefit all the way around.

Like taking to mental silence, moving from agitation, fear, and worry to a state of calm and equality is an indicator that we have attained a certain level of stillness within -- i.e. of Beingness --, which is one of the essential ways we can come to know the Spirit in life.

Beingness and Life Response

There are powerful behaviors that attract sudden good fortune. Among them are having an intense aspiration for something to come about, moving to a higher level of psychological strength, increasing one's personal level of cleanliness and orderliness, and eliminating negative attitudes toward life, work, and others. When you take to any of these in a higher order, positive conditions quickly present themselves.

Here I will focus on some of the more spiritual-oriented techniques that have equal if not greater power to attract the miraculous. In particular, I will target those psychological approaches that issue from Beingness: that state of stillness where we are silent observers of the world, not compelled to action or reaction.

Don't React -- From a cosmic perspective, Beingness is the Stability and Calm behind all things: the Stillness out of which Energy emerged to manifest a universe of forms. We too have access to Beingness in our own lives. One approach is to practice the technique of "non-reaction." I.e. when any form of intensity comes our way -- whether from another person or from the conditions of life -- we simply do not respond. That not only brings a level of peace to the atmosphere, but attracts positive conditions.

The approach is simple enough: when someone expresses a thought or emotion, particularly when it touches our sensibilities, appearing negative in thought or feeling, we should not react. The same for any other intensity or disturbance that comes our way. For example, if your spouse returns home irritated and directs those energies towards you, remain still, despite the onslaught. Do not react with emotion, which will only intensify and further disturb the atmosphere, (and elicit further negative response). Likewise, if your boss abuses you, a provocative news story appears on TV, or your children cloyingly demand your attention, do not react with commensurate intensity. Each time you take that higher tact, not only will the sense of balance be maintained, but sudden good fortune can follow. E.g., your spouse may suddenly surprise you with good news, a boss may withdraw all vitriol for weeks on end from that point forward, a negative news event will suddenly turn positive, and so forth. If you can also repress your reactive thoughts and feelings, then positive conditions are likely to follow.

Don't Assert, Initiate -- Beingness is the ability to look out on the world as "Silent Witness," observing all that occurs through calm detachment. You care about what is before you; you consider it mindfully; but you remain stationed within as silent witness to all. In that state, you do not initiate or assert, but wait for life to take the initiative.

You can then respond as necessary. Practically speaking this method of non-assertion can be practiced from the mental to physical levels.

At the mental level, try to refrain from expressing a thought or opinion, allowing others to speak first. This will enable the flow of events to take their right course. Similarly, if you are in a discussion or communication, try to withhold what is on your mind. What may very well happen is that soon after the other person will express the very idea you wanted to convey. This is to practice a form of restraint known as "Silent Will."

We can also practice non-assertion and restraint at the physical plane -- i.e. at the level of action. For example, in the course of our day, we can take a moment to consider the utility of sending out an email, or making a call, or otherwise communicating with someone. When we do, we might find that much of it is trivial, or egotistic and self-serving, or a way to stimulate ourselves through social contact, or is simply unnecessary in the wider scheme of things. At least 50% of our actions are of this kind. For the spiritual individual, such initiatives tend to deplete one's energies, while producing little utilitarian result. Moreover, each time we restrain ourselves this way, positive conditions tend to present themselves.

Don't Complain -- Beingness also implies not taking to the negative. One is stationed within as witness to the world, avoiding wrong action. One example is to view a problem or challenge outside one's self and not complain about it. Complaining is a sign of a wanting attitude, psychological weakness, and wrong response. A spirit-oriented individual on the other hand gains power from right attitude, inner strength, and positive response, not complaint or grievance. Therefore, the next time you feel the urge to blame someone for something, restrain yourself. Not only will you create a more harmonious atmosphere, but powerful positive conditions will present themselves.

For example, one man stopped complaining about his spouse's lack of organization in dealing with her finances -- a problem that had persisted for years. Several days later, he was startled to learn that she suddenly found a financial institution to handle all of her financial arrangements, while substantially reducing her debt. It was a Godsend, ending years of disorganization and frustration.

Accept All -- Finally, the spirit-oriented individual expresses Beingness -- i.e. of the Being, or "Sat" in Sanskrit -- by accepting and embracing everything that comes his way. If a boss asks him to come in and work on a weekend in addition to the normal workweek, he simply accepts without challenge. In fact, one man did this very thing while working at a retail outlet, attracting the biggest sale of his life. At each point that we embrace the given conditions of life, we move to a higher plane and open to the infinite potentials of life.

There is a nice example of this in the film *The Devil Wears Prada*. There a young aspiring journalist accepts the fact that she has to work temporarily in a different field to sustain herself on the way to achieving her career goals. As a result, life responds and she secures a job as a secretary for a world famous fashion mogul. Moreover, at each point the young heroine embraces the demands of her powerful, often ruthless boss, she rises up further still. Even when the young woman's sensitivities are challenged -- e.g., she is asked to change her personal wardrobe and reduce her physical weight, a humiliating request indeed -- she embraces it, catapulting her to the very top of her profession. That is the power of embracing the all, reflecting the spiritual dimension of Beingness.

To accept all that comes is to embrace the universe of possibilities. It is to move from one's limited domain to a wider sphere where our hopes and dreams are realized. It is to shift from the turbulence of life to the stillness and stability within. It is to express the spiritual dimension of Being in our everyday lives, attracting extraordinary circumstance from the world around us.

Inner Strategies of Silence that Move Life

There are several strategies relating to inner Silence that can move life, i.e. evoke sudden good fortune:

Non-Reaction – Whenever another individual expresses a degree of intensity, particularly if negative, remain very calm and don't react. Not only will tension be diffused, but positive conditions will suddenly present themselves. Reacting, on the other hand, will only intensify the negative.

Equality of Being – If very negative circumstance comes your way, be very still inside. Soon after, the negative will dissipate and positive conditions will emerge in their place. E.g. a man was owed considerable money, but now discovered is was going to be delayed for 60 days. Rather than react, he remained calm inside. In a reversal, he soon learned that the payment would be issued that very same day!

Silent Will – Instead of broadcasting your thought or opinion, withhold its expression. Very soon after, the other person will speak it out for you. For example, a businessman was trying to convince a contact at a huge company of the importance of interviewing executives there for a book he was writing. After several minutes of explaining, he was getting nowhere. Just when he thought of defending the need for the interviews to the other person, he instead held back. The official then completely reversed himself and gave the writer all he asked for.

Reduced Speech, Soft Voice – If you notice any long term lack of success in life, check to see if you or others are talking too much or too loud. Making that inner adjustment to verbal silence will quickly overcome the wanting condition. One organization practiced this sole technique and went from near bankruptcy to prosperity in a short period of time.

Non-Complaining – Complaining about a matter only energizes it. On the other hand, withholding complaint overcomes the object of complaint. E.g. a man who constantly complained that his spouse was disorganized in financial matter practiced non-complaining. Within a day from out of nowhere a bank came forward and solved all of the financial problems the disorganized individual had.

Non-Initiating, Responding to Life's – Normally we take initiatives to accomplish in life. But our research has shown that when one initiates on one's own, it is more likely to fail than succeed. Is there a way out? Yes, it is by responding to LIFE'S initiatives. When life comes to you with an opportunity and you take it up, success is almost always guaranteed. One man moved across country with the idea of starting a house painting business. It was a self-driven initiative, and it ultimately failed. A while after, a friend of his family asked him to work at one of his chain stores. When he did, an astounding series of positive successful outcomes followed; and his life was changed forever. That is the power of responding to Life's initiatives rather than taking one's own. It is a power of stillness and silence in which we wait for life to take us to the next level.

Inner Poise – Instead of living on the surface of life, move your consciousness within to a deeper place. Good fortune will come from unexpected sources. E.g. a man was on a crowded train where everyone was miserable. Instead of being bothered, he moved himself inward and stilled his mind. Two minutes later, it was announced that another train was available on a parallel track. The men exited and hopped onto the other train, and found it to be completely empty! He had a literally blissful ride the rest of the way.

Don't Speak of a Thing Until It is Accomplished -- One of the most serious errors people make, is to speak out, enjoy, or celebrate something before it fully accomplished. When you do that, the thing gets delayed or even cancelled. How many times have we seen

sports figures speak out too soon, only to see their accomplishment go down the drain. Bottom line: Keep silent as much as possible until the thing is fully accomplished.

Take Another's Point of View – Instead of asserting your point of view, put yourself in the shoes of the other person, and embrace in full their thoughts, opinions, suggestions, no matter how right or wrong. Life will respond. On an important project, there were two individuals; one learned on principles of life; the other very limited so. The lesser individual also had no interest in learning these subtle principles. The learned man changed direction, and completely accepted the lesser person's point of view and requests, despite his limited knowledge. Soon after, the lesser man started to take deep interest in a number of advanced principles he previously showed no inclination to understand before. The project then moved swiftly ahead.

Consecration – When any difficulty arises in your life, do not react. Instead offer it to the Divine, i.e. the spiritual Force, and in no time there will be a dramatic reversal of conditions, or new, unexpected, and astonishing developments will come your way.

Squandering Our Mental Energy

Overcoming Momentum, Sense-Driven, Mechanical, and Pessimistic Thinking

So much of our energy is wasted instead of being harnessed, which reduces our capacities for success and fulfillment in life. Here I would like to focus on several ways we squander our *mental* energy.

1. Momentum Thinking

One unnecessary type of mental activity involves what can be called "momentum thinking." For example, let's say that you have been deeply engrossed in work matters during the morning. However, when you go on your lunch break, instead of relaxing, you mull over every issue you just left behind. As a result, not only have you failed to relax your nerves, but the thoughts that arise in your mind can now become scattered and confused. If instead you had stopped all thought, not only would the nerves be settled, but when you resumed thinking later on, it would be of a higher order. Just as you are refreshed when waking up from a dreamless sleep, stilling one's thoughts refreshes the mind so that when it reactivates, it produce far better results.

Over the years, I have found that some of the best realizations I have had occurred after I stopped all thinking about a particular matter; or stopped thinking completely. Invariably after taking to mental silence, not only does a relaxing calm and stillness take hold, but bursts of intuitive-like insight suddenly appear in my thoughts.

2. Sense-Driven Thinking

A second way we can cut down on thinking is by reducing "sense-driven" thought - the type of wasteful mind activity that comes from sense preoccupation. The sense data that comes streaming into our mind through our five senses tends to negate our rational thought processes, preventing us from perceiving the multiplicity of truths unfolding before us. For example, I come to an area where people are gathered, and see a fire truck. I am taken back by the whole affair concluding something dreadful has taken place, and then walk away from the scene convinced that there has been real trouble. However, a while later I discover that the fire department was actually putting on a show for the children in the area, which was virtually opposite of what I had earlier believed. Had I engaged my mind and thought about the matter earlier I would have perceived this possibility, but dominated by the sense inputs of the physical conditions

perceived through my sight - the number of children, the bright fire truck and what it represents - I lost touch with the truth of things.

It is something that happens to us many times a day, as our rational mind is cast aside and we are dominated by the inputs of the senses, which often leads to a surface view of the truth of things. This sense-mind is inherited from our animal ancestry, where the visual and the auditory dominate; where the instinct of survival is first determined by what our senses tell us, not the deeper truth that rational and logical thinking can reveal.

3. Mechanical and Pessimistic Thinking

A third way we waste our mental capital is by engaging in "mechanical thinking," which is the mind's tendency to think uncontrollably about every conceivable matter under the sun. It is the undercurrent of ceaseless chatter that the mind unconsciously engages in out of pure habit. It is the runaway train of the mind that "has a mind of its own" - seeking to overwhelm us with a continuous blitz of innocuous and unimportant thoughts.

For example, when I arrive at the subway station, instead of a still and quiet mind, I think about everything that comes to its attention - whether I will slip on the stairs, or whether I could fall onto the tracks, or why the subway sign is painted a bright orange. Likewise, when I exit the station, I wonder if my ticket will work in the reader, or whether I am even in the right station, or whether there are criminal elements lurking about. After I emerge from the underground, I see several trees, which recalls a dream I had of being lost in the metro, which triggers a childhood memory where I could not find my way home. Finally, a moment later, I wonder if I have lost my wallet, or whether I am going to catch a cold because it has gotten chilly, or whether the approaching crosswalk light is going to change in my favor. Throughout our day, we are engaged in a perpetual inner chatter that not only blocks out the essentials, but drains our energies to no end.

Such uncontrolled thinking is an inheritance of the lower, unevolved part of nature - part of the subconscious part of our being that lives in fear; that seeks to protect itself from harm. Like a wary small animal that constantly scans the horizon for danger, our mind is perpetually at work to remind us of potential dangers in the environment. It is an overly protective element that is afraid of the freedom of chance and possibility.

In fact, much of this ceaseless chatter consists of an acute pessimism - a mental inheritance from the holocaust of suffering, disease, and death of a thousand previous generations. Such uncontrollable, darkly shaded thoughts - e.g. "we will never make the opening," "the bridge will be backed up," "it never works out," etc. etc. - not only drains us of our energies, but releases unseen negative forces that tends to attract negative circumstance. However, if we learn to turn off the off this spigot of doubt and gloom, not only will we see through to the truths of the moment, to what really demands our attention at that moment in time, but we will tend to attract positive conditions from the world around us.

Overcoming These Limits of Mind

How then can we learn to control these forms of thought that drain our mental energies and thereby limit us in life?

First of all it helps to recognize them when they occur, and if they do, you can assert your will and order them to "Stop and be silent." In that way you can halt such wanting ruminations in their tracks.

And yet the problem is that we are so entrapped by these restless, surface thoughts, that we don't have the wherewithal to extricate ourselves from them. What to do?

The real capacity to overcome these limiting aspects of mind is to develop a deeper consciousness. The more we are settled within, in the deeper parts of our being instead of the surface, the more we will have the ability to catch these wayward thought flares, bringing them under control, thereby creating the necessary calm and silence for a more energetic and harmonious life.

Aside from catching thoughts, and developing the inner poise to do so, we can also engage in a spiritual discipline of "consecration" to bring about this change. That is, each time we recognize a wandering set of thoughts we can ask the Spirit - or in our case the divine Mother - to help us overcome it. By taking to regular consecration when these thought waves occur, we will not only see our consciousness deepen, which will allow us to increasingly catch these wayward flares of our mind, but the Force itself will begin to dissolve those wanting parts of our mentality that generate them in the first place.

Moving Life from Within as Harbinger of New Way of Living

Normally to achieve in life we develop a level of intent for something to come about, and then act on it. Without following this process of inner intention followed by *outer* activity, little is accomplished. This is the method we have instinctively learned for a thousand generations. And yet this approach may not be the preferred approach in the future -- at least for a potential group of emerging individuals whose orientation is no longer determined outwardly by social influence, but inwardly as a Spiritual Individual.

For the person of the future will move life from *within* himself, as he will be able to harness vast inner powers and in effect dramatically reduce the amount of outer action required on our part to produce a result. In addition, the outer results that do come from this inner orientation and approach will unfold miraculous-like -- i.e. suddenly and abundantly. Let me provide a simple true-life example.

An individual is frustrated that a friend of his does not readily take to higher levels of cleanliness and orderliness. He has suggested to her often that organizing her papers will improve her life -- i.e. attract sudden good fortune -- but to no avail. One day, he is about to make that same suggestion again after several untoward minor events, but instead he withholds his insistence. He then goes a step further by releasing the intensity and emotions behind his intent, to the point where he is able to forget the matter entirely. Soon thereafter, he is stunned to find out that the woman has suddenly began organizing *all* of her business papers -- a highly unusual occurrence -- without any prodding on his part. In fact, this behavior would continue on in the weeks ahead. Somehow, she was moved to carry out his *inner*-directed behavior of non-insistence. Life then responded to his effort of self-control, which brought about the object of his desire. (It also brought good benefit for her as well, as she now has a more organized environment, which itself has the potential to attract its own sudden good fortune.)

The life of the future man is then to move life around one's self *from within*, with minimal communication of one's intention or other forms of outer action.

There was an Indian saddhu who lived alone and apart from normal life, and yet maintained a deep concentration within, taking fully to the life of the spirit. There was also a beloved king who was nearly the opposite -- as he had vast influence, power, and fortune. One day there arose an opportunity to build a great temple in honor of the spiritual personality of Krishna. From his side, the king marshaled all of his resources to plan the temple; while the humble saddhu -- deeply devoted to an inner life of the spirit -- imagined from his deepest consciousness within what the edifice should be like. At no point did he reveal his conception and intentions to others.

Five hundred years ago, a wealthy, noble and enlightened king in South India decided to dedicate the last years of his life to the construction of a magnificent temple to Lord

Krishna. The task involved the labor of thousands of workers and skilled artisans over a period of more than 10 years. As the work progressed, the king turned more and more to prayer and meditation and gradually withdrew from day to day affairs.

One day while the king was meditating, he had a vision of Lord Krishna. Krishna appeared in a resplendent form and asked the king what boon he would like. The king asked Krishna to install his spiritual presence in the new temple on the auspicious day selected by the astrologers for anointing the inner sanctum. Krishna smiled benevolently at the king and replied, "I am sorry, but I have to sanctify another temple that is being completed on that day at a far off village in your kingdom." Then the vision vanished.

The king awoke and was startled to contemplate what the vision had told him. It was almost unthinkable that anyone but a king could have the resources needed to build a temple and it was inconceivable that any temple could be constructed in his kingdom without the king's knowledge. The king called his ministers and inquired about the other temple. No one could provide any information. Then he called for a retinue of horse guards and immediately set off to the distant village to inquire personally.

When the king reached the village he called the head man and asked about the temple. The village elder looked puzzled and assured the king that no temple was under construction in the village. Indeed, in such a poor village it was simply not possible. When the king persisted, the elder advised him to consult a wise old hermit in the village. The king asked to be taken to the hermit.

The king entered the man's hut and found him sitting on the ground in meditation in lotus position. When the king knelt before him, the hermit opened his eyes and bowed humbly to his monarch. The king explained the reason for his coming and asked the hermit if he could explain the strange vision of Krishna. The hermit nodded and smiled. "Yes, great king, I can explain it. It is I who am constructing a temple to Lord Krishna and sanctifying on the very day you mention. I prayed to Krishna to consecrate my offering on that day and he has consented." The king was baffled by the hermit's words. After a few moments, he asked, "But where is this temple you speak of? How is it that no one has seen or heard of it? How could one single man construct it?" The hermit smiled again and then replied, "Oh King. I have constructed the temple to Krishna in my heart, stone by stone, brick by brick for the past 10 years." Then the man fell silent.

The king sat in bewilderment. Then knowledge dawned upon him. He realized suddenly that the temple he was constructing in the capitol was the yogi's temple. He was only the outer instrument. The true creator was this poor, humble devotee. The yogi created the temple within. Life, in the form of the king, responded to his aspiration and fulfilled it in the external world.

Over the years I have made an explicit effort to capture incidents where individuals were able to instantaneously move life outside themselves from within -- experiences that I call instances of "life response." There are a variety of ways this phenomenon can occur. As we see in one episode above, it can happen by withholding our insistence on a thing, which involves blocking a demanding emotion and not expressing it on the outside. Life response can also occur by simply not expressing a thought we are eager to communicate to another. Doing so causes subtle, invisible thought and emotive waves to be generated, which then move out into the field of life, are picked up by another individual, who express it as if it were their own. To withhold verbal expression of our intent and another suddenly express it is to practice the discipline of "Silent Will."

There are a number of other such laws and principles that generate life response -- where sudden good fortune comes to us as a result of taking to certain inner behaviors. Perhaps the most powerful one is to identify and then change one of our negative attitudes. When we do so, life suddenly springs into action and attracts overwhelming good fortune -- often arriving from the most unexpected of quarters. E.g., A huge order

is placed by a client whom we have never contacted; a job offer doubling our salary rolls in from out of nowhere; a dispute we thought was hopeless, suddenly gets resolved; a project delayed unexpectedly gains transaction, and so forth. Life responds to us because we shifted our negative point of view to the positive, which mysteriously attracts life on our behalf.

Though on the surface this does not seem plausible, yet it is the way life works. This miraculous unfolding is constantly occurring just below our surface level of awareness. When we move our center of consciousness to a deeper poise, and examine the world from this state of "silent witness," we see that our movements within are constantly evoking a response from the world outside ourselves

Refraining from expression our intention is the very opposite of what we have been taught about human achievement. Through hundreds of generations, we have been told to acquire a skill, seek out the object of our desire, and when we discover it, do your duty practically and diligently. And yet, directing the course of life from within is a far more effective and efficient overall approach to accomplishment. It enables the greatest result in the shortest period of time with the least effort.

Individuals who have this inner-orientation have been known to evoke miraculous-like results -- such as suddenly ending a serious energy crisis, or even resolving conflicts and wars. Sounds far-fetched? Once you have had the experience of achieving without having to move a muscle or communicate a thought, then you begin to see life with very different eyes. Then the world is perceived as an endless opportunity awaiting our beck and call; all instantaneously accessible from within. At that point, we will have taken a decisive step toward a very different sort of existence -- one that I call a "New Way of Living".

Equality of Being, Non-reaction

The Phone

When you consecrate a challenging situation and do not interfere with pressing thoughts of how you would like things to be, or express your comments and opinions along the way, and just remain as still as possible in the mind, you are taken on a magic carpet ride of unfolding and are deposited on the other side with startling, beneficial results in hand.

Here's the recent experience that precipitated this thought:

My phone had not been functioning properly now for several months. When I then called a creditor of mine to make an overdue payment and she could not hear me on the other line, I felt enough is enough and felt compelled to bring the phone into the local Apple center for repair. And so my friend and I headed off to the big shopping center about twenty minute drive away. Before I entered the facility I decided to consecrate the entire matter; offering the issue to the Divine Mother, and also made a pledge to myself to keep all my thoughts and mental activity at bay, as my spiritual teacher had recently advised.

When I entered the Apple store I was greeted by a friendly individual, who escorted me to the Genius Bar, where they fix Apple-related hardware and software. When I sat down I reminded myself of the pledge I had made not to think about potential outcomes, keep my mind free of all thoughts, and let events and outcomes occur as they may. In other words, I was determined to remain as still as possible.

It turns out that I had made a reservation earlier via my PC and had arrived a few minutes early for my appointment. At almost precisely the arranged time a tech person stood before me with a bright smile. She proceeded to ask me questions about the phone's deficiencies. What was most remarkable however was the fact that she seemed to deeply care about the problem as well as myself to the point that I felt a deep inner, almost soul-like connection. This I had never experienced before from a service rep or similar. It was a sure sign that the consecration and the pledge for inner mental stillness were beginning to work their magic.

After doing extensive tests on the phone the tech indicated that the results were somewhat inconclusive, though it was highly likely that the phone had a defective antenna. She then told me that I could have a NEW phone of a higher end model at a nominal charge to replace it! That was naturally great news; yet even then I held back all thoughts to celebrate or anticipate; keeping my energies steady. She then escorted me to the next rep who skillfully facilitated the next set of fixes, and then that person handed me off to another who was even more remarkable in his skill and dexterity of copying the info, apps, et al from the old phone to the new phone; who then handed me off to yet another person who completed the paperwork and other phone settings in a way that amazed.

At each step I resisted friendly banter, kept my glee at bay, and as a result, each support person executed their work to near perfection. As I was handed off from one person to another, things happened faster and faster; yet matched with an ever-increasing perfection. All I had to do was control the energy inside me, and all would unfold miraculous-like.

As this was going on, I thought that my friend who accompanied me must have been wondering why I had taken so long. And yet at the very instant I finished up with the last rep and received my new, latest model phone, my friend appeared instantaneously in the entranceway. In other words, after sitting on a sofa about 100 yards away for almost an hour she arrived at precisely the moment I was leaving, creating a magnificent synchronicity and a topper to all of the wonderful events that had just taken place.

In the end, because I had consecrated the problem to the Mother and planned and executed the firm decision to keep all thinking and expectations at bay, I was taken on a wonderful magic carpet ride of success. Instead of complication there was smoothness and perfection; instead of anxiety and worry about the outcome, happiness and joy permeated every step.

And best of all, my first new smartphone in three years was now in hand!

Detachment that Overcomes Delay

One of my favorite strategies to take when things appear to be in limbo -- such as when an order is pending, or an important shipment is on its way, or an invoice is not yet paid -- is to shift my attention *away* from it and bury myself in something else, particularly when it involves hard work. Invariably, when I do, the thing delayed or held in suspension is suddenly unleashed. In fact, not only does it manifest as a sudden positive response, but just before it happened, it had all but been forgotten!

That is precisely what occurred the other day when I was waiting on a payment so I could send a link to a client to start using our web-based software application. Rather than worry about the matter, I simply lost myself in an important research project. When I had tried several times to find out the status of the payment, there was no tracking information available. But after I buried myself in the research work, and then later casually checked the status again, I learned that it was moving to fruition.

Now I saw that as a result of my *inattention* to the problem, by focusing on another matter, I was able to attract the payment that previously had been in limbo. Then there was a further development. Though the payment was now clearly in transit, would it actually arrive? After all, there was reason to be skeptical since it had been delayed several times, and anything could still happen. However, once again, rather than worry about the important payment, I buried myself in another work. This time it wasn't the research work, but the cleaning of my bathroom floor! And so I cleared out the room, gathered together the best cleaning utensils and materials, and scraped and scrubbed in ways I had not done in that room in years. Specifically, my goal was to clean out the accumulated grit that had gathered in the recesses of the bathroom tiles, requiring considerable physical effort on my part.

After completing the strenuous task, I collapsed back onto my couch, feeling both exhaustion and a sense of accomplishment. Then a few moments later, I heard a knock at the door. I knew just who it was. It was the FedEx delivery person with the longed for, often delayed payment. And yet when I examined the time, I realized that it had come an hour earlier than expected, indicating that the physical effort of cleaning the bathroom not only attracted the payments' arrival, but caused it to come earlier than what was indicated on the online tracking system. That struck me as a further indicator of luck.

When we shift our focus away from worrying about an issue or matter, and instead put our energies elsewhere -- e.g. by making a full, even exhaustive effort in another direction -- positive conditions quickly move in our direction. More often than not, the thing we had hoped for but then put aside is suddenly realized.

Just as focusing on an illness can intensify it, so too worrying about a matter tends to delay it. Yet focusing on something very much the opposite, such as hard work in an entirely different domain not only overcome our negative emotions, but attract positive conditions. For years, I have used this approach to overcome anxiety, worry, and delay about a matter; and in nearly every instance, it has worked its magic!

Louis Pasteur and the Power of Inner Equality

There is a wonderful moment in the 1935 film *The Story of Louis Pasteur* that I doubt hardly a critic would notice. It is an expression of the miraculous-like phenomenon of "life response" -- i.e. the spontaneous arrival of sudden good fortune. In particular, it is an example of how taking to calm and equality in the face of great difficulty can elicit powerful positive response from the world around us.

In the incident in the film, the famous scientist Louis Pasteur has been trying to discover a cure for hydrophobia -- i.e. rabies -- that ordinarily comes through a bite or contact from a rapid infected animal. It is Pasteur's belief that if he gives a mild dose of the disease to an animal, it will build up a resistance to it when it actually does have the illness. This is the approach Pasteur develops to cure rabies and other infectious diseases. I.e. give the sick patient a mild form of the disease, and the body will spontaneously generate a resistance to it, which will push out the illness when it enters the system

In this particular episode in the story, Pasteur believes he has a cure for hydrophobia/rabies, but many are skeptical. In fact, one key member of the scientific establishment, Dr. Charbonnet of the French Academy, is so sure that his cure is wrong that when in Pasteur's lab he grabs a syringe filled with a dense concentration of the virus and injects it into his arm! Pasteur is mortified, as he believes that Charbonnet has sealed his own fate. Not only was it not intended in such concentrated doses, but it was meant only for sickly individuals.

As it turns out, Charbonnet not only survives the inoculation, but the next day seems perfectly fine! In fact, after 30 days he shows no signs of the disease. While Pasteur is baffled by this outcome, Charbonnet flaunts the fact by parading around the Parisian scientific community, as well as high society circles, proudly pointing out how healthy he is. At one point, he boasts that the more he takes of the allegedly lethal serum, the healthier he feels! As a result of his public posturing, Pasteur's image is greatly tarnished in both scientific circles and amongst the general public.

One day an associate friend of his rushes into Pasteur's home to notify the great chemist that he has been made a mockery of throughout the country. Pasteur however *does not react at all* to this news. A moment later, however, his wife Marie has the thought that perhaps the dosage the doctor took was of an *old* batch, and therefore had no potency to affect him. Pasteur then rushes into his office to test out the hypothesis, which he then verifies to be true. A second later, it occurs to him that that he could give infected animals with the disease a low dosage of the serum and then gradually increases the dosage, thereby creating immunity without killing them. The idea has sprung into his mind like a revelation.

What does this story then teach us? From the point of view of life response -- i.e. the onset of sudden good fortune due to changes in our consciousness -- it is rather straightforward. Because Pasteur did *not* respond emotionally to word of his public humiliation, his wife Marie came forward and made her statement about the old serum, which set in motion events that led one of medicine's greatest discoveries. It is an illustration of how *inner calm and equality* in the face of negative circumstance attracts powerful positive conditions from the world around us.

If we think about it, we will see that being calm and equal is more than an inner psychological technique, but a spiritual one as well, reflecting the universal spiritual principles of Peace and Silence. Other principles, like Love, Oneness, Truth, and Goodness have their psychological equivalents as well, such as self-givingness, willingness to embrace the other person's point of view, generosity, gratitude, and others. Each time we take to any of these, we release powerful positive energies that tend to attract life response results.

Practically then we can do the following: when difficulties descend on us, we can try to move to a state of absolute stillness and calm. When we do, the difficulties will tend to quickly evaporate, and unexpected positive conditions will also tend to take their place.

But then a question arises. How can we turn ourselves on and off like a spigot as such situations arise -- i.e. readily shift from our normal psychological state to this poise of inner calm? One answer is that we can simply remember to put aside our emotions and take to that state when these intense situations arise. It does work for those who have trained themselves to do so. And yet this may not be enough, since we tend to be overwhelmed by life's outer conditions to have the wherewithal to move to this higher status on demand.

A more certain approach is to establish a more *permanent* inner poise of stillness and calm, which will spontaneously refrain from reacting to life's intensities. We can begin to produce this affect by moving our center of awareness back away from surface of life to an inner poise, marked by inner concentration marked by stillness, and silence. Through this approach, we develop an inner orientation, a "witness consciousness" that silently, calmly, and patiently looks out onto the world. Then when severe conditions cross our path -- whether as intense negatives, or even intense positives -- we will not be disturbed, as they will fall off us like the proverbial water from a duck's back. In other words, life will respond, and those severe external circumstance will tend to quickly subside on their own. In addition, an entirely new development might arise, outside the current situation, as a further positive response. Such unexpected developments can be so powerful that it can change our lives, as it did for Mr. Pasteur and the world.

Consciously Abridging Time

Because I had problems with Internet communication on my computer the other day, I had a little extra time on my hands. I then thought that rather than waste it, why not take care of one of the items on my long-term agenda -- upgrading the memory on my computer.

When I arrived at the service area at the local electronics superstore, I was greeted by four individuals in line ahead of me. Though that might not seem so bad, consider the fact that they were there to have their laptop computers serviced, and at the time, there were only two technicians on duty. Since each customer took ~15-20 minutes to service, I was looking at a half hour or more wait. I had been on this slow moving service department line before, and I had seen the look on the faces of the people "patiently" waiting. Well this time it was no different, as the person in front of me had that same silent, but frustrated look.

Because I had lost landline DSL connection to the Internet, I was forced on that day to use a wireless Wi-Fi connection at McDonald's and Starbucks. Now as I stood in this slow moving line, I thought that rather than stand around nervously for half hour waiting for my turn, I could make use of the wireless service that might be available in the store. And so I pulled out my computer from its case, and awakened it from sleep mode. I then discovered that a free Internet connection was indeed available in the store. However, when I tried to connect to that Wi-Fi service, it did not work. And yet when I put the computer back in its case and looked around, I noticed that the line in front of me had suddenly moved two spaces. That normally would have occurred over 15 minutes, but instead it happened in fewer than 5. I then understood that because I shifted my attention away from the "problem" of the line, life responded and moved it along overcoming the duration of time.

Now I sensed I was in one of those moments where I had the presence of mind to overcome and master life's conditions. Taking that cue, a moment later I made the conscious decision to give up all concern about the lengthy wait. As a result, the line moved again two places in less than 5 minutes. When I was then called to be serviced, I had in essence been served in less than 10 minutes, when it would ordinarily take 30 or more.

When I first explained my need to the technician, he said that the added memory could be installed within two or three hours. I thought that was too long, and asked him if it could be done sooner. Sensing my time constraints, he then said his tech people could do it in 45 minutes. I thought that was fine. I could after all go out to get something to eat and return in the allotted time.

He then told me it would cost around \$140 for 1GB of memory, which was the maximum additional amount my computer could hold. After filling out the paperwork, I was prepared to leave, but then stopped myself from assuming that our communication was over. As a result, I held my ground and waited for him to speak. He then proceeded to tell me that if a technician didn't return within the next ten minutes, he would install the memory himself. I naturally accepted this new course of action.

Now sensing that time was disappearing before my very eyes, I again held myself back from rushing off. He then said he wanted to check the memory configuration in my computer before he did the work. After a quick check, he told me that the computer would only take a 2gb chip, not a 1gb one, though either way it would only add 1gb of usable memory to the system. For a moment, I thought that would mean that the price would now double, but he surprised me by saying that it would cost *less* for the 2gb chip because it was on sale! Thus, my bill now went *down* by nearly \$50, despite the fact

that I used a bigger chip. In the back of my mind, I thought that small wonders were rapidly accumulating through my conscious effort.

When I then finally went off for the allotted 10-minute period, I came upon and watched a beautiful video on one of the flat-panel TVs called 'Above California.' When I arrived, the film was just showing my favorite spot in the state -- Mt. Shasta, the 13,000-foot snow-capped cylindrical peak in the north. I saw that as a good omen now, even as I have often thought of Shasta peak as a symbol of ultimate aspiration in life, including my own. Feeling light, lilted, and joyous because of all these events, I then returned to the technician who was in the process of completing the installation for me. At that point, I did not want to force the conclusion of the transaction, for I knew that right inner attitude could attract additional small miracles.

A few minutes later, the transaction was completed and I got the additional memory that would speed up my computer. In addition, I was equally happy because a potential half hour or more wait in line had been cut by over 75%; that an originally proposed 2 to 3 hour installation was reduced to a mere 10 minutes; and that my bill was substantially reduced from the original quote. I clearly perceived that it had all happened because I made conscious use of time through efforts of inner detachment, calm, and patience at various points along the way. It was a powerful reminder that if we make use of our inner power, time will shift from being an obstacle and adversary to becoming an ultimate instrument and ally.

Around the World with Phileas Fogg

There are many keys to accomplishment in life. Vision, organization, and drive are several. Another is the capacity to be calm and equal in the face of difficult circumstances. One false step and one can fall down the latter to success. If however, we maintain the right balance in those situations, not only will we make the best of negative conditions, but life will tend to cooperate and, *on its own right*, right the wrong. It is the phenomenon of life response in action. You remain steady when life threatens to spiral out of control, and life rights itself as if by magic. Though it seems miraculous-like, it actually happens all of the time, just out of our "field of vision." For one famous character in fiction, that inner poise of equality attracted overwhelming good fortune -- just at a time when all seemed hopeless and doomed to failure.

In his novel *Around the World in 80 Days*, Jules Verne describes the wonderful adventures of Phileas Fogg and his traveling companions. In the story, Fogg has placed a wager of 40,000 pounds that he can travel around the world in 80 days. Though his adventures will provide him with astonishing experiences that take him to distant and exotic land, his central focus and all-consuming effort is directed toward winning the wager. In addition to his single-mindedness of purpose, several other personal qualities will prove invaluable to Fogg in pursuing his lofty goal.

One of those is the fact that Fogg is an eminently *disciplined* man -- both in his emotions and in his thoughts. He has the innate capacity to accept every difficulty and ordeal that comes his way in a calm and detached manner. No matter how problematic or even absurd the circumstances, Fogg's emotions are always tranquil and calm, as if he were detached from the intensity of every situation. And yet, interestingly his mind is always fully engaged in the issue at hand -- enabling him to rationally and most logically deal with any and all circumstance. In addition, his creative capacities border on genius, as he is able to meld a native intelligence and a broad knowledge of the physical workings of life with insights and intuitive-like inspirations that help him solve nearly every problem.

These qualities are further enhanced by his essential kind nature -- which can be seen in the goodwill that he consistently demonstrates toward his fellow travelers, as well as the

people he meets along the way. That helps help him win the respect of others at critical moments on his journey, especially important when he and his comrades face imminent danger. He also exhibits other notable faculties -- including his ability to remain silent without speaking, unless situations dictate that he do so. Together with his utter punctuality and masterful planning and organizing capacities, Phileas Fogg is the very embodiment of stability, rationality, and equality -- making him the perfect candidate to accomplish his ambitious goals.

And yet, this is an adventure story that Verne is determined to infuse with a variety of life's exigencies. And so it turns out that at about the time Fogg first embarks on his journey, the Bank of England is robbed. Moreover, the robber himself steps forward and maliciously matches Fogg's physical description to the thief, which causes the high-level official, Mr. Fix, to believe that Fogg's wager is a pretense to elude authorities in Britain. Fix then attempts to arrest Fogg in England, but when he fails to do so is forced instead to follow him on his travels around the world.

Though Fogg has astonishing encounters in Brindisi, Suez, Bombay, Calcutta, Hong Kong, Yokohama, San Francisco, New York and Liverpool, he still has to arrive back in London before noon on the 80th day to win the wager. Though on his trip he discovers that he has been accused of thievery, he brushes it aside and instead focuses all of his energies towards winning the wager. Along the way, he utilizes his uncanny creativity, ingenuity, and scientific know-how to solve every problem that crosses his path.

However, when he finally arrives in Britain on the very last leg of the trip, he is arrested by the authorities for robbing the Bank of England. Though he manages to escape from prison, he soon realizes that he is 5 minutes too late to win the contest. However, life then responds in his favor when he discovers that he and his party have actually arrived in Britain *one day early!* Because he had traveled *east* from England in circling the globe, he and his party had actually *gained* a day when they returned 79, not 80 days later!

Phileas Fogg's utter calm and equality in the face of extremely difficult circumstances attracted a magnificent response from life that provided him with his greatest moment of glory and success. It is an indicator that life on the outside responds to one's inner efforts or capacities of higher consciousness. Maintaining a poise of inner calm and equality is one method that enables that miraculous-like dynamic. It is in essence a spiritual-like quality that tends to overcome the negative, while attracting the infinite potentials of life.

The Nature of Complaining and the Power of Non-Complaint

Complaining about others is a commonly accepted activity of life. But is it something we should engage in, or something to be avoided like the plague? In this short essay, I would like to delve into the nature of complaining, and reveal some startling aspects of this human behavior.

Complaining Correspondence

One interesting dynamic that I have documented over the years is that often the complaint we have towards others directly corresponds to the same limiting quality we have in ourselves. Other times it is more distantly related, with an indirect correspondence.

Here are some examples of *direct* correspondence:

-A greedy businessman who wants a very high price for his products will complain about the high wage demands of his workers forgetting that he is doing the same thing towards his buyers.

-A man who brags all the time about his own accomplishments cannot stand to hear another bragging about his accomplishment.

-An individual who resents the prosperity of others will complain that people are casting envious looks at his brand new car forgetting that he felt disturbed when his neighbor went abroad the year before.

Indirect correspondence is a little more difficult to see, but it too is there. E.g. we complain about a parent's stifling attitude, but we are stifling our own growth in that we are unwilling to work. They are both constrictive vibrations, though expressing in different ways. Thus often a child will have a particular propensity to be negative like a parent, but express it in a very different way. That lack of symmetry fools one into thinking one is not like the parent.

If we cannot perceive this dynamic in our own lives or those of others we know, we can certainly perceive it in works of great literature. E.g. in *Pride and Prejudice*, Mrs. Bennet complains about the indifference of her husband, but it turns out that she is indifferent to her boorishness and its effect on others. Mr. Bennet complains about his wife's obsessive behavior, and he is obsessively locked in his study. The correspondence is there, but it can express very differently.

Complaining and Lack of Strength

Often complaining indicates a certain lack of strength; i.e. a lack of fortitude and power over the situation. It is simply being in a weak position. E.g. an employee is viciously overworked by the leader who wants to expand his business to the heights no matter how much he has to push and overwork his staff. So the worker complains. What can he do? It is in the nature of the hierarchy of the organization of the society.

The "victim" has however at least two options: Silent Will (withholding the expression of a thought, which causes another to speak it out), and opening to the spiritual Force to bring life under control; or go somewhere else. And yet if he does the latter, the problem will tend to simply repeat. Thus it is best then to take the higher, consciousness approach.

On the other hand, a Captain of a ship is normally strong, and therefore does not have to complain. He gives orders, as he is in a position of strength. Even when he complains of another's limitation, it has less of the aspect of anguish, and more of the property of authority and self-assurance. Thus, complaining is often rooted in helplessness and weakness.

Complaining and Ego

Complaining is very often a product of our Ego; where we are stuck in the separative self, having lost touch with the Whole, i.e. others, and the totality of life. Developing an Inner Life (through constant opening to the spiritual Force) will help rectify this, as it tends to create harmony and oneness of being.

Complaining and Strained Nerves

Often complaining is simply the result of strained nerves. One has lost psychological and nervous balance, causing us to express difficulties as complaints -- towards others and life. Others still, internalize it, become self-deprecating, even self-loathing; or it builds up over time expressing in an explosion of anguish or illness.

Complaining and Progress

Complaining does however seem to mask a certain real desire for progress. It expresses however through the negative self. One has the urge for improvement, but the means of expression only reinforces the problem -- frequently due to impatience, weakened nerves, the assertive ego, weak position, etc.

The Consciousness-Approach Solution

We can still make that progress however, by taking to Sri Karmayogi's methods of non-reaction/detachment, silent will, self-givingness, etc. Any and all of these will always attract positive conditions.

One man consciously controlled himself and stopped complaining about his spouse's disorganization, and suddenly out of nowhere she discovered a service that organized all of her debts at a low price, overcoming 25 years of poor behavior. It was a fantastic progress; far beyond what he inwardly yearned for, but could not properly express through his previous lower nature of dissatisfaction and complaining.

Restraint

The Life Response Power of Restraint

One of the challenges of life is to know when to take a physical initiative, and when to hold back. Interestingly, when we restrain ourselves from taking outward action, we can attract results that are as great or greater than taking a physical initiative. Here is an example:

Recently I have been involved in the development of several online expert systems. One involves romance, another sales, a third, personal growth. It is the culmination of many years of research into the subtle workings of life that was begun by the multi-dimensional, spiritual genius Sri Karmayogi. In the early days of developing one of those systems, I had taken the initiative to read a book that contained highly relevant information for our project. A second stage was to organize all of my underlines, highlights, and notes so that the content could be used as the project moved forward. However, rather than take an outer, physical initiative, I decided to restrain myself and hold back. At that time, I sensed that doing so might attract positive results.

Well just after making this decision, I received a very unexpected note from the lead content developer who asked me to forward the name of the very book in question so he could use it for the system. Needless to say, I was stunned by this turn of events! I then realized that my earlier aspiration had come true, manifesting from the outside. That because I held back from taking further action, my associate came forward and essentially took up the work I intended to do myself. That is the life response power of restraint in life.

Normally, we believe that taking an outer action creates results. Of course, that is true. However, there is also a more subtle knowledge that *non*-action can also attract great benefit when applied in the right situation. Knowing the difference is to develop a great capacity and power over life.

It turns out that there is a spiritual principle behind this inner approach to accomplishment. Those who have come to spirit have recognized certain common experiences of consciousness -- including profound insight and Knowledge; a feeling of Oneness with others and the world; a dynamic, Creative urge; an inner swelling and feeling of Love; the experience of utter Joy and Delight, and several others. And yet behind these spiritual movements, there is another power -- not of action and movement -- bit of silence and stillness. It is the spiritual experience of "Silent Witness."

Consider the theory of creation. A universe of visible and invisible forms and forces took shape from a timeless, spaceless Being. And yet behind this unfolding there is a stability rooted in stillness and silence, standing back and observing Its creation. This silent, still Being is in fact the source of that which is created. It thus has a power to act and create, as well as to be silent, still, and hold back. It is the Creator's power of cosmic Action and of restraint as Silent Witness.

Well, it turns out that this same capacity is available to us. Through an inner poise of stillness and calm, we can silently observe the world, becoming still witness to life's current conditions. From there, we will know whether to act or to hold back. Because we are silent observer of the world, we develop the best instincts, enabling us to make right decisions that have the very best outcomes. In fact, they often come in the form of sudden good fortune -- i.e. life response -- which is what happened when I stood back and decided not to act, attracting my friend's own initiative and action.

From the Liberty of Ego to the Infinite Power of Self-Restraint

One of life's blessings is that we are endowed with full freedom to act. Thus, Human Choice, not fate, nor karma can ultimately determine events. Yet if we were to look closely, we would see that three quarters of our actions are based on ego movements; on initiatives that are wholly self-serving. Sri Karmayogi calls this the "Liberty of ego." We have the freedom of choice to determine the outcomes of life, but we abuse it through self-absorbed initiatives based on urge, compulsion, or other willful action that are self-aggrandizing. These in turn do not garner life's cooperation, but their opposite, attracting negative conditions back to us. Yet if in these instances we simply restrained ourselves and held back our action, life would constantly conspire in our favor.

In Jane Austin's *Pride and Prejudice*, like most great literature, we see several examples of this phenomenon. One is Mrs. Gardner's restraint in speaking to Eliza about Darcy at a particularly sensitive moment. Rather than raise the issue, she shows sensitivity and refrains from expressing her thoughts in deference to Eliza's difficult relationship with Darcy. She in essence avoids an ego movement, moving outward to embrace the concerns and interests of another person. As a result, life supports her non-initiative when soon after Darcy and Eliza come to an understanding, fall in love and marry -- bringing great happiness to the couple, while energizing both families to no end. Life has responded to Mrs. Gardener's non-egoistic restraint.

On the other hand, Eliza's mother Mrs. Bennet has no personal control; is constantly acting from self-interest and self-concern. Because she lacks restraint, her unflagging initiating and meddling continually backfires on her and her family. If only she stood back, looked outward from within, and restrained herself, life would have quickly brought her everything she hoped for -- including the marriage of her daughters to prosperous young bachelors, and without the travail and pain the family was forced to suffer through. Instead, her ego-oriented initiatives almost lead to its ruination.

It turns out that she is just an exaggerated version of every one of us. We too subconsciously engage in acts that serve our ego. If we could catch ourselves and suspend such actions, we would conserve energy, which would in turn attract positive conditions.

Practically speaking, each time we feel the urge to send a note, or forward a picture, or speak to a friend or colleague, we should ask ourselves whether this is a wholesome, fully positive activity, or is it being undertaken to tickle our ego; for the purpose of self-aggrandizement? E.g., are we tacitly seeking the approval of others? Are we hastily reacting and trying to assert our opinion? Are we looking to express our contempt for another in a backhanded way? Are we selfishly trying to gain benefit? And so forth, ad infinitum. If ego, self-aggrandizement, and selfishness is in any way behind our intention, we should refrain from acting. We will avoid the negative, while attracting the very best of conditions.

When we restrain ourselves this way, we build up positive energies that align with the very best corresponding conditions in the world. We essentially move from the local, ego plane to the universal, where our hopes and dreams are fulfilled. Considering that three quarters of our actions consciously or unconsciously issue from the ego motive, it would

be well worth examining every action we take to determine whether or not our intent is wholesome. If we avoid initiating when ego is present, we can avoid difficulties, while attracting startling positive results.

Ultimately, we can move toward the elimination of ego itself. That takes resolve, usually reserved for those who are on willing to follow a path of conscious evolution -- i.e. yoga in the East. To dissolve ego, one begins by moving away from the surface of life, where our consciousness is separative, and find a still and silent soul space within. From there our intentions tend to be in harmony with the world outside ourselves. From there, there is little need to initiate or take action, as what we aspire for tends to rapidly come to fruition.

Grow by Giving

Self-Givingness, Goodness

Overview

The Art of Self-Givingness

Self-giving is an egoless act of goodness and goodwill among equals that expects no return, derives no egoistic satisfaction from the giving. Giving is its own reward.

Also, every act of goodness attracts a corresponding positive outcome back to you in short order. (Note that over the years you have attracted good fortune as a result of your past givingness, though you are unlikely aware of it. Therefore, take to it more frequently, which will help others to no end, while attracting great benefit back to your person)

To be self-giving-

- Encourage others in their endeavors and aspirations.
- Give other more affection.
- Give others more attention.
- Focus on the other person's immediate concerns before insisting on your own.
- Put yourself in their shoes, and think about their issues at the moment.
- Take great enjoyment in their successes.
- Be kind and patient.
- Focus on giving, not on what you can take from others.
- Hope and pray for the success of others.
- In any interaction and endeavor focus on the other party's interests, not merely your own.
- Listen first, respond later.
- See things from the other's viewpoint; i.e. the truth of it, no matter how small, instead of insisting on your position.
- Focus on listening to another's position, rather than offering your opinions.
- Feel the joy of acting on another's account – e.g. in cooking or earning, think of the benefit to the family, or other related collective.
- Have only positive thoughts towards others; and block any negative ones.
- Move away from selfishness.

- Practice kindness and generosity of spirit.
- Show compassion and empathy toward others.
- Inwardly aspire for the success and happiness of others.
- Shift your attitudes and values from how you can benefit to how the family, the organization, or other collective you are part of can benefit.
- Call in the Spirit, the spiritual Force for any act of self-givingness you are practicing.
- Move from personal ambition to fulfilling the aspirations of those you serve.
- Practice values of openness, tolerance, service, and good-will in personal and work situations.
- Be generous with those who deserve it. Avoid tightness and stinginess.
- Be infinitely self-giving to your deserved customers, clients, students, peers, etc. Be willing to go the extra mile.
- Relate to the Soul of the other person, as if you were relating to your own.
- Imagine spiritual Light descending on others; e.g. before the meeting.
- Well up deep positive feelings towards others and broadcast it to them from within.
- Show compassion towards others in your immediate circle, and be helpful where you can.
- Show deep and genuine empathy for another's plight.
- Be pleasant, expansive, and ready to oblige when interacting with others.
- Be fully willing to forgive, eliminating all ill-will one feels towards another. Better yet, take full responsibility.
- Show deep affection, warmth, and friendship towards others.
- Make the extra effort to help a deserved friend in need; whether in the form of support or action on your part for their sake.
- Show genuine thanks and appreciation towards those parties who have helped you. Such gratitude always attracts.
- Be willing to elevate another's success to a deserved person, even if it is at the expense of our own.
- In any gesture of self-givingness, the intensity of the feeling and gesture is what counts; is what attracts.
- Give, not take is the simple answer.

Life Response Power of Self-Givingness

Life response is the phenomenon where sudden good fortune descends on a person due to an elevation of consciousness. It can come from a change in attitude, an intense aspiration for a thing to be achieved, to a decision, and to an action. One other way sudden good fortune comes is through acts of kindness, generosity, and goodness. We can sum them up as "self-givingness."

The other day I attended a meeting where people were gathered to watch a presentation. Sitting next to me was an individual who like me was eager to learn new things from the speaker. At one point, my neighbor turned over several leaflet pages to their blank side. I thought this indicated that he wanted to take some notes. I then wondered if he even had a pen to write with, since there was none present. A few moments later, he pulled out a tiny, thin pen from his Swiss Army Knife. It seemed a rather anemic writing utensil. I then offered him to use one of my pens, which he gladly and appreciatively accepted.

At the end of the presentation, gifts were handed out to lucky winners. Interestingly, the man next to me to whom I gave the pen won one of the larger prizes. Then astonishingly the next person counterclockwise to him at the table won the next prize. (There were a number of tables, mind you.) Then utter astoundingly the next person sitting counterclockwise still won the following prize! Now, I was the only one left at the table. As they were drawing, the astonished participants in the room were looking at me as the logical next person to win the prize! And wouldn't you know it, that is exactly what took place! *And* it turned out to be an expensive gift that I needed for my work!

From the standpoint of life response, an inner cause creates an outer effect. The cause on this case was my concern for the person next to me and his lack of writing utensil. When I observed his situation and extended myself by offering a pen, I performed a very small act of generosity that precipitated the astounding series of events that followed; breaking all odds. That is the life response power we generate when we practice self-giving behavior.

Here's another example I witnessed recently. In the film 'The Savages', we watch as a son and daughter care for their elder ill father who has Parkinson's. They (the Savage children) are both struggling artists, who have yet to make a breakthrough in their creative fields. The son is a writer, the daughter a struggling playwright. As it turns out the son is satisfied that they have put their father into a nursing home for care. The daughter however is not happy with this dismal arrangement, and seeks something better. Along the way, she discovers a much nicer home in a rural area. She then makes the journey to find out about it and apply for her father's transfer there. Most interestingly, however, is that when she arrives home, she receives a package in the mail with word that she has been given a very large grant from the government. It provides her with the money by which she produces her very first play -- on Broadway no less. From rehearsals, it seems it is going to be a big success.

In this instance, we see how an unsuccessful woman on the verge of poverty with no work in site is catapulted to a completely new life. Her act of generosity of seeking out better conditions for her father has attracted an overwhelming response in the form of the grant that provided the funds by which she would change the course of her career. It is the overwhelming life response power generated by sweet acts of self-givingness.

Subtle Gesture that Overcomes Disharmony in Still Walking

Family problems can be deep and troubling. Sometimes they are intractable for years, or even a lifetime. Each individual can find himself stuck in a rut that perpetuates family misery and disharmony. And yet a single insight or gesture on the part of one individual can not only change the immediate conditions for that family member's immediate circle, but can set in motion a wave of goodwill that envelops everyone, reversing circumstance and feelings from the conflicting and contradictory to its opposite.

We see a magnificent example of this dynamic in the recent Japanese film *Still Walking*. There family members come together to commemorate the death of the eldest son, Junpei, who drowned accidentally 12 years ago. The relatives arrive at the home of the elder father Kyohei, a retired doctor who lives with his wife on a hillside overlooking the spectacular seaside of coastal Japan.

Unfortunately, there is deep psychological misery in the family, not only because of the earlier death of the eldest son, but because of Kyohei's deep resentment toward his younger living child Ryoto who has failed to follow in his footsteps as a doctor. Worse than that, Kyohei has deep resentment toward Ryoto because he feels he has little of the capacity for success that his deceased older son had. In turn, that causes Ryoto to have a deep inferiority complex, which together creates great tension between the two at the family gathering at the parents' seaside home.

Meanwhile, the elder father Kyohei's wife also has questionable feeling about Ryoto's marriage, since he married a divorcee, indicating her prejudice in this regard. In fact, her feelings make Ryoto feel that much more anxious and self-doubting. In addition, the wife also has a difficult relationship with her constantly despondent and bitter husband, Kyohei, mostly over the death of their son. Only the elder couples' daughter, as well as Ryoto's unassuming and pleasant wife Yukari show genuine cheerfulness and goodwill amidst the gloomy family situation.

Now comes the key moment in the story. It is a subtle one, easily missed.

In one scene, Ryoto's wife Yukari and her little son are together in the bedroom talking. She sees that the little boy is indifferent to his step-father Ryoto, and longs for his real father through Yukari's earlier marriage. However, understanding his feelings, Yukari gently tells him that she and her first husband are the two parts that make him the whole that he is, comforting the young child greatly. She then tells him that he should also open himself up to his step-father, Ryoto. Yukari presents this in an endearing and humorous way that charms the little boy, causing him to want to reconcile with Ryoto. Yukari's tactic has proven eminently successful.

Well, at that that very tender moment, Ryoto serendipitously walks into the room, and sees the affection on the face of his little step-son for perhaps the first time, giving Ryoto a deep sense of well-being. Soon after Ryoto tears up an old letter that he wrote as a child in which he narrated how he wanted to be a doctor, which is a symbol of his current failures in his career, and all that is wrong with his relationship with his father. In essence, he has now changed his attitude for the better, a direct outgrowth of his son's new born affection toward him.

The ripple affect continues when soon after Ryoto and his father meet on the beach, where the elder, retired doctor out of thin air suddenly changes his attitude toward his only son. It is a subtle response from life to Ryoto's attitudinal shift. This then has the effect of energizing Ryoto's life further, which enables him to shed his past failures and achieve mightily in the years that follow.

In the final analysis, a strong, deep bond amongst all of the family members takes root, a startling reversal from what was there before.

As we see, one simple gesture of understanding and kindness can start the ball rolling and attract a series of circumstance in which years of resentment and bitterness are overcome for an entire family. Yukari's gentle gestures instigated and attracted a procession of outcomes that reversed a near lifetime of family travail.

What can we do if we find ourselves in similar circumstance? For one, through an increasing higher consciousness, we can use our subtle sense to identify that single behavior or attitudes or value that will moves our immediate relationship situation one step to the positive, as Yukari did when she spoke so kindly and insightfully to her once embittered child. Sometimes the key will require an act of self-givingness on our part. Other times, it necessitates an attitude of psychological strength. There are other situations still where the key is simply not to react to another's intensity. These and other inner tactics will certainly prove effective, and have the added benefit of attracting powerful positive conditions, as it did in the case of the Yokahama family.

There are thus a variety of practical psychological methods of overcoming family strife and acrimony. There are also spiritual approaches we can take. For example, one particularly powerful method is to simply offer the entire matter to the spiritual Force, which will tend to on its own break the logjam and acrimony and conflict, while attract powerful positive outcomes. In tandem with the right psychological approach, life will completely reverse in ways one could never have imagined.

By the way, these psychological and spiritual methods to change contradiction into harmony is not only effective for family situations, but for any collective, whether it is a business, in politics, or any other group association. It also works for personal relationships between spouse, friends, and others.

In the final scene of this uplifting film, we observe the elder Kyohei's and his wife "still walking" on the steep hillsides overlooking the beautiful coastal region, now finally rid of decades of bitterness and strife.

How Life Responds through Our Relationships with Others

Sudden good fortune comes to those who move their consciousness to a higher level. It can come by reversing a negative attitude, intensely wanting a thing, or opening to the spiritual Force, amongst others. It can come through our relationship with life, or more specifically in our contact and connection with others. Just as there are laws governing life response in general, there are principles specific to our relationships with the people around us. Here are a few, though certainly not an exhaustive list.

- If you think of another person's needs and concerns before your own, life will tend to unfold in a more perfect manner in the period that follows. E.g., you shift from your shopping needs to that of the person accompanying you, and as a result, your effort together unfolds magnificently -- bringing extraordinary efficiency to the experience. Or, if you focus on a relationship partner's immediate concerns rather than your own, then what takes place for yourself thereafter will unfold wonderfully in perfect sequence -- negating any misgivings you might have had.
- When we think negatively about a person, another individual will soon come forward who will express the same or similar negativity toward us. E.g., we are angry with an individual, and an hour later another person in a different field or domain of our lives steps forward to express similar annoyance with us. In essence, our negative energy aligns with negative expressions from other individuals across space and time. (The same principle works for positive views of another -- attracting wholesome results from other people.)
- If we give up our annoyance with someone, the problem that we originally perceived through that person tends to quickly dissipate. However, if we give them more attention, the problem intensifies -- i.e. the other person will do even more things to attract our wrath. For example, a person is rocking back and forth in a seat in front of us at the movies. If we give them greater attention, the rocking will intensify. If we shift our focus elsewhere -- e.g. to the film or some other area, or to non-thinking -- the rocking will cease. That other individual may even realize that they are not enjoying the film and suddenly move to another location!
- When a negative comes to us from another, do not react. Doing so will tend to dissipate the problem. It is the power of "equality of being" expressed in life -- a spiritual-like approach. For example, someone tells us that terms on an invoice owed has been increased from Net 10 days to 60 days -- dramatically delaying payment for us. The tendency is to react with fear or anger. If however, we respond with utter calm and stillness -- i.e. equality of being -- the condition will soon reverse. E.g., the next day they will unexpectedly call and ask us if they can pay through a simpler method, such as credit card, which enables them to pay the very next morning!
- We can also take the difficulties and challenges that come to us from another individual as an opportunity for personal growth. E.g., we perceive that cancellation of money coming to us from a friend is a result of our tightness and stinginess toward someone else. If we change that corresponding attitude, opinion, habit, belief, etc. in ourselves, then money or related benefit will fly in our direction. If we

also see that the experience is as an opportunity to grow as a person, then joy and delight will be our never-ending companion.

- If abuse comes to us from another person, it means we must deserve it -- i.e. is there is a corresponding aspect of our being that attracted it. If we can shed it, that would be best. If we offer the matter intensely to the spiritual Force, to the Divine that it never occurs again, it will be self-corrected forever.
- The best attitudes towards others are goodwill, self-givingness, and gratitude. Each of these expressed or taken to at a higher degree will certainly attract good fortune - - often of the life-changing sort. There are endless occasions to express such heartfelt goodness and self-givingness towards others. Can you identify several?
- Finally, when we express gratitude to those who have brought us benefit, then not only do we fortify emotional bonds, but life tends to quickly move in our favor. E.g., at the point, we finally express our thanks and appreciation to an individual who helped us many years ago, startling positive developments quickly present themselves.
- Interestingly, we can even express gratitude to those who have abused us. Not to the person directly (because they will only abuse us more), but to the Divine in that individual that allowed them be an instrument for our further growth and progress. It is a powerful, spiritual-like approach to life.

Breaking a Money Backlog through Self-Givingness

Self-givingness can express in a number of ways. Generosity, whether through one's inner intention or in a physical gesture in life, is an important one. It not only brings positive results to the recipient, including a relationship partner, but to yourself as well. In fact, I had that very experience the other day.

For over a month, money had been piling up for me. Not in what was owed, but in what was due to me. One unpaid amount was for \$13k+, another for 5k+, a third for 1k. With every passing day, the receivables were accumulating, while my bank balance was dropping rapidly toward zero. During that time, I hoped and prayed that money would come, but nothing came of it. In fact, each time things seemed to move forward, circumstance would intervene and payments would get delayed. It almost seemed insidious!

Then in the middle of night, I woke up and thought that instead of focusing on myself, I wanted to secure this money because my relationship partner needed it. I sensed that shifting from *my* needs for the money to *her* concerns might help the situation. The next morning I went to my online bank statement and was startled to see that the money backlog had finally been broken! An amount due from my ever-increasing receivables had finally been paid; the first major inflow of money in a month! That sum would turn out to benefit both of us.

In this case, I clearly understood that by moving from ego and self, i.e. my needs, to the concerns and desires of another, in this case my partner, I was able to attract positive circumstances for both of us. It was another indicator how inward-oriented self-givingness has a great power to attract positive conditions from life -- giving support, strength, and sustenance to our long-term relationships.

Strategies for Meeting with an Acquaintance

We normally associate "culture" with the social and creative arts of a society. Culture for the man, however, is something different. It is the way he comports himself when in the

presence of another. The cultured individual is predominantly concerned with the comfort and well-being of the other person he is interacting with. He willfully loses part of himself in that effort. Interestingly, when we act with culture, life tends to respond positively to our efforts by bringing us unexpected instances of good fortune.

This is one strategy when meeting with a friend or acquaintance. A related strategy goes a step further: it is to be wholly concerned with the interests and concerns of the other person -- as opposed to focusing only on our own agenda. When we do so, fresh, new opportunities tend to quickly reveal themselves. E.g., one man stopped himself from expressing what was on his mind, and encouraged his friend to talk about what interested her. As a result, she brought up a topic that he found utterly fascinating, filling the entire discussion with a sense of wonder and joy. By overcoming his ego sense, his sense of separateness, he opened up life to wider possibilities, to discovery and the joy that issues from it.

A closely related third strategy is to practice the spiritual technique of "Silent Will." Instead of rushing to express a thought or opinion, you hold it back, and remain silent. Shortly thereafter, the other person will invariably speak out the very thing that was on your mind! One management consultant meeting with an official at one of the largest companies in the USA held back his arguments for why it would be useful to meet with executives of the company for a new book he was writing. Up until that point, the officer denied him access to such interviews. When the consultant held back the new argument in this way, the officer suddenly began to express the very thing the consultant had intended to express -- i.e. the idea that interviewing said executives would be in the company's best interest. Because the consultant held his tongue, not only did he get what he was after, but years of interaction with the company followed. Compare that to a moment earlier when all his efforts to secure cooperation from the officer had failed.

There is yet another spiritual power that can be invoked when meeting with an acquaintance. It is to offer the situation beforehand to the Higher Power; i.e. to the Spiritual Force. One man utilized this technique before meeting with two relatives, and instead of the usual combative experience he had in the past, everything flowed smoothly and perfectly in the course of the day. He even noticed that the atmosphere had become suffused with a spiritual calm, something very different from the contentious meetings of the past. When we "consecrate" an activity beforehand in this way, life tends to cooperate from all quarters, eliciting marvelous outcomes and a lovely atmosphere.

In summary, we see that making others comfortable, focusing on another's interests and concerns, practicing Silent Will, and consecrating the activity beforehand, tends to energize any get together -- turning interactions of dullness and difficulty into ones filled with joy, wonder, and the acute cooperation of life.

Self-Giving through Soul Perception and Connection

One powerful way to experience the spirit is to express unconditional love. Other ways are to find silence and peace within, to experience an intense delight and joy of being (i.e. bliss), to know the true truth of things, to have spiritual knowledge and wisdom of the world, to create or perceive beauty, to live in timelessness, and so forth. Practically, the experience of spiritual love expresses by being selfless and being self-giving towards others. That is difficult to do, even for those we normally love, for we usually expect something in return for that love. Hence, it is human love, not spiritual love. Spiritual love is unconditional, not expecting anything in return.

One of the benefits of the self-givingness of spiritual love is that we experience great pleasure in the success and happiness of those we give to and care about. We know that

the happiest of people are those who give the most, and that the unhappiest and miserable are usually those who only take.

How then can we be self-giving all of the time? The major obstacles are two-fold. One, we are locked in our sense of self, i.e. our ego. From that poise, it is very hard to be self-giving, unless we are a ripe soul, in which case we are self-giving naturally. However, by moving to a deeper poise within and discovering our higher nature, or simply by perceiving the value of being self-giving, we can give love to others unconditionally. We can move within through various techniques as meditation, self-surrender to the Divine, and other methods and approaches that takes us to our truest self and soul status within.

Can we do this with every person we meet or pass along the street? Well, in a way we can. We can try this technique. Each time we meet someone, or pass someone on the street, we can imagine their souls, rather than what they look like, their personality, etc. Just relate to their soul, and you will make a connection with them. People will respond to that. If you can also offer a gentle smile to match, the other person will be uplifted.

Just as you can find your own evolving soul within, so too you can perceive the soul in another, or an animal, or even an object like a car or a computer. Today I passed by an elderly man who looked like he was suffering a bit. I did not relate to his outer garment -- i.e. his looks, or even his troubled face, but to his soul. He responded with a gentle smile. Using this technique, we can be self-giving all of the time -- even to those we barely know. We should certainly try it with those we know. Life will become very rewarding for you, and the object of your soul-perception. Perceiving the soul in another is a powerful spiritual technique that anyone can try in his or her daily life.

Life Response Power of Self-givingness in Literature and Film

Acts of Goodness Instantaneously Attract

There are several key factors that attract luck in our lives -- one of which are acts of goodness. When one engages in selfless and self-giving behavior, life tends to respond with overwhelming good fortune to our person. In each of three novels by author Jane Austin, an act of goodness changes the life of the heroine forever through the institution of marriage.

Near the end of *Pride and Prejudice*, Eliza Bennett shows her gratitude to Fitzwilliam Darcy for the effort he made in saving her family's reputation. He in turn most unexpectedly responds with a proposal of marriage, when she thought her family's behavior had disgusted him and he therefore no longer had any interest in her. They are thus happily married, and as a result her family come into a huge fortune.

In *Sense and Sensibility*, Elinor Dashwood showed an act of kindness very early on in the story by relieving a servant girl of unnecessary work that instantaneously attracts Edward Ferrars for the first time out of nowhere -- not two feet from her (!) -- who would later marry her.

In *Persuasion*, Anne Elliot shows deep empathy for Captain Harville's love for his beloved wife whom he must return to on occasion after long, one year commissions at sea, which instantly attracts a completely unexpected love letter from Captain Frederick Wentworth, which leads to their sudden engagement and marriage. Again, she thought he had no interest in her anymore.

In each case, a profound act of gratitude, kindness, and empathy -- three forms of goodness -- attract a powerful response that instantly turns the entire story -- leading to the joyous outcome of marriage for each of the heroines.

Life for us in the real world is precisely the same. When we look out at life through the eyes of others, sudden good fortune moves in our direction, as we now have shifted from the limited plane of ego to the universal plane, where our deepest aspirations are instantaneously fulfilled.

Generosity of Spirit in Julie and Julia

The 2009 American comedy-drama *Julie and Julia* depicts events in the life of chef Julia Child in the early years of her culinary career in the 1950s through 60s. This is set in contrast to the life of Julie Powell in the 2000s, who aspires to cook all 524 recipes from Child's cookbook during a single year, a challenge she described on her popular blog.

At the high point in the story, Julia Child discovers that her book of French recipes will be published by a large publisher, setting the stage for her illustrious career. Her book would go on to be one of the bestsellers of all time in that genre, and she would become the most famous chef and culinary teacher in the world through her TV series.

After watching the highly entertaining and breezy film of these true life events, I wondered what propelled Julia to the heights; i.e. what brought about the great response from life when her book was accepted by a major publisher? I then thought back to an earlier scene in the film. It is the one where she is gathered around a table with her two co-authors to discuss the future of the book that was now rounding into shape and ready for a publisher and sponsor.

In the gathering, the three women sat around a table and discussed the manner in which they would be listed on the cover of the book. One of the women was bitter and complained that the third (not Julia) would be listed prominently with the others since she had contributed so little to the writing. Julia however was more than conciliatory and was willing to have the third woman listed equally with the other two despite her limited literary effort. In fact, when this third person during the discussion revealed that she had just gotten a divorce, Julia instantly shifted the discussion, as she was more concerned with this issue than the order of or how prominently their names would be displayed. When pressed on the matter by the bitter woman, Julia noted that she did not give a fig about the matter and would be perfectly happy if all three names were listed equally.

It has been my experience any act of goodness comes back to that person in one form or another. Some refer to this as the "Law of Karma;" others, like myself call it a Life response; I.e. an instance of sudden good fortune due to expression of higher consciousness by that individual. Because Julia was so generous and self-giving when it came to the prominence of the names on the book, life rewarded her with a contract from one of the world's great book publishers, setting her on a road of fame and fortune that she never would have imagined. When we honestly and spontaneously give of ourselves to others, showing deep concern interest in their concerns, life returns the favor with goo, or in the case of Julia, great fortune.

The great spiritual personality known as The Mother said that generosity is to find one's own satisfaction in the satisfaction of others. It is to forget one's own self and share in the happiness and joy of other's experiences. Moreover, that spontaneous act of goodness and solicitude not only brings joy to both parties, but evokes powerful response from life; often changing the very course of one's life.

Self-Givingness Attracts Love in 'Scent of a Woman'

Life Response (sudden good fortune) has many subtle rules, nuances, and peculiarities. One example of the latter is that if you shift your consciousness to the positive in one

area of your life, you will often experience a response in a very different one. For example, when you finally get the courage to stand up to an abusive boss, life rewards you when a previously non-responding woman you have been wooing suddenly appears at your doorstep ready to begin a serious relationship. This ability to attract from one domain by reversing our consciousness in another is a fascinating aspect of life response. Here is another example from a film I watched recently.

In 'Scent of a Woman,' Charlie Simms is a student at a private preparatory school who comes from a poor family. To earn the money for his flight home for Christmas, Charlie takes a job looking after retired U.S. Army officer Lieutenant Colonel Frank Slade, a cantankerous middle-aged man who is now blind, alcoholic, eccentric, and difficult to get along with.

Charlie is distracted by a very big problem he is having at school. Three students have played a prank on the school's headmaster, Mr. Trask, by placing a balloon filled with plaster and bearing a profane image above his expensive car, which was presented to him by the school's board of trustees. Trask then pops the balloon, causing the contents to rain down on him and his car in front of the entire school. Only Charlie and another classmate, George knows the identity of the culprits, as they had seen them setting the booby trap the previous night. However, both of them refuse to reveal the culprits' names. After threatening both with expulsion, Trask tries to bribe Charlie by assuring him admission to Harvard if he names those who committed the prank. Charlie still tells him nothing, but is warned that he must or suffer the consequences for being a "cover-up artist."

When Charlie originally took the job, he was told that he would only have to stay with Colonel Slade at his niece's home and look after him. However, Slade had actually planned a visit to New York, and therefore enlists Charlie's help on the trip. He takes a room at the Waldorf-Astoria. During dinner, Slade reveals the real purpose for the trip: to eat at an expensive restaurant, stay at a luxury hotel, see his big brother, make love to a beautiful woman, and then commit suicide.

Charlie learns how Slade lost his sight by foolishly juggling hand grenades while drunk. Slade's crude behavior at dinner further alienates his brother and other relatives. Later, the blind Colonel tangoes with a girl whose perfume captivates him. He drives a Ferrari with a very nervous Charlie in the passenger seat. Slade tricks Charlie into leaving the hotel room to buy him a cigar, but a suspicious Charlie comes back to find Slade ready to commit suicide with his gun. After a few tense minutes, Charlie is able to stop Slade from killing himself.

By this point, Charlie has become very loyal to the Colonel. Charlie becomes the sole person to stand by Slade, and defend him against the Colonel's own family. Charlie's loyalty is not lost on Slade, as Slade offers him advice numerous times and even comes to see him as a true friend. In their intimate discussions, the Colonel reveals that more than anything in his life he would like a good woman.

Charlie eventually returns to school, where George, is about to reveal the names of the students involved in the incident. Trask conducts a courtroom-like assembly of the student body and the Disciplinary Committee. He questions George, who with the help of his influential father is able to weasel out of the jam by claiming to be only partially certain of the culprits' identity, suggesting that Charlie might have had a better view than he did. Charlie then refuses to give the students' names, and is about to be expelled when Colonel Slade surprisingly enters and delivers a compelling speech on his behalf, revealing that Charlie had been offered a bribe to inform on the other students. Slade then wins over the students and the committee. The students who played the prank on Trask are placed on disciplinary probation, George is given no recognition, and Charlie is exonerated.

Now here is the part of the story that I would like to direct your attention. As Charlie and Slade walk outside of the school, a beautiful middle-aged woman walks up and congratulates them on their effort. Slade though blind is dazzled by her beauty and intelligence. He indicates that he would like to see her, which she seems to desire as well. In fact, she seems to be everything he had (earlier) dreamed of. Slade then returns home. No longer bitter, he seems to have a new look on life, a new young friend in Charlie, and the real possibility of befriending the woman of his dreams.

In this story, a broken man changes his attitude through deep friendship with a student. He then offers his services when the young man is about to be condemned in front of the student body. That act of self-givingness instantly attracts the woman he so deeply yearns for now in his life. As we see, when we shift our consciousness to the positive in one area of our lives, we often attract positive conditions in another. If for example we have a deep aspiration to love someone and then act in another domain in a positive way -- through an act of self-givingness, or greater psychological strength, or higher attitudes, etc. -- life instantly fulfills that deep, original aspiration. When Slade attracted the lovely, sensitive, and intelligent woman at the conclusion of the story, it was the final outcome in a process that began when he expressed his deep aspiration for such a person, and then self-gave of himself in another arena, helping a young friend avoid a catastrophe.

We too can utilize this approach, if we are first clear about what we want, look around and overcome a glaring limitation in our being in any area of our lives -- whether a poor attitude, ego and selfishness, poor organization, weak effort, lacking psychological strength, etc. Life will then reward our efforts by bringing the object of our desire, whatever that is, to our doorstep.

Witness for the Prosecution

There is a wonderful scene in the film *Witness for the Prosecution* that shows how selfless and self-givingness can evoke the miraculous.

Sir Wilfred Robarts, a master barrister and an elder man in ill health, takes Leonard Vole on as a client over the protestations of his nurse. Vole is accused of murdering Mrs. French, a rich, older woman who had become enamored of Vole, going so far as to make him the main beneficiary of her will. Thus, strong circumstantial evidence all pointed to Vole as the killer.

When Sir Wilfred speaks with Vole's German wife Christine, he finds her rather cold and self-possessed, but she does provide an alibi for Vole's innocence. Therefore, Sir Wilfred is greatly surprised when she is unexpectedly called as a witness for the prosecution. On the stand, she testifies that Vole admitted to her that he had killed Mrs. French, and that her conscience now forced her to finally come forth and tell the truth.

As a result, Vole is likely to be found guilty and sent to the gallows. And yet Sir Wilfred, loyal to the end, presses on despite the futility of the situation, and despite his rapidly deteriorating health. At one point, someone asks him if it is worth pursuing the case any further because it could jeopardize his life. He answers that the life of his client is more important than his own life, and he will do everything he can to pursue the truth.

Not a few seconds after he makes that remark, he receives a phone call. It is from a mysterious woman who says she can produce shocking new evidence that will lead to the reversal of the case, which is in fact what occurs.

From a consciousness point of view, the phone call and presence of this woman is something more. It is a direct and immediate response from life to Sir Wilfred for having placed the life of someone else above his own. It is an astonishing act of self-sacrifice

for which he is instantaneously rewarded with information that suddenly reverses the evidence and wins him the case.

This is no clever ploy on the part of the writer to create dramatic effect, but is precisely how life works. When we take to selfless and self-giving behavior, life *immediately* starts working on our behalf. Negative situations dissipate, unthought of opportunities arise, and other forms of sudden good fortune come our way. It is in essence the phenomenon of "Life Response" in action. When we change our inner condition, life outside instantly responds in kind.

The Power of Goodness in Arden Forest

Goodness and goodwill are deeply admirable traits for they enrich the lives of others, while eliciting extraordinary positive response back to the initiator. If it occurs in a time and place where there is a positive atmosphere, the response from life can be overwhelming. With such munificent attitudes within such a positive environment, the harshest enemy can reverse himself and melt into the Light.

In fact, we see these very circumstance in Shakespeare's beloved comedy and meditation on love, "As You Like It." In the story, Frederick has usurped the duchy in France from his elder brother, Duke Senior, who is exiled to a place known as the "Forest of Arden."

It turns out that the exiled Duke Senior is a gentle, mild, and good man who responds to his plight and that of his followers with calm and philosophic stoicism, rather than hatred or despair. In exile, he accompanied by four other lords who follow Senior Duke to the forest out of loyalty. On numerous occasions, he demonstrates his goodness, generosity, and goodwill to those around him, including new arrivals who arrive in the forest.

Rather than the difficult and harsh life with tension and conflict one might expect from the followers, so many things go right for the exiled party. Because of Senior Duke's munificent character, and the subtle, lilting, joyful atmosphere that issues from it, life conspires to bring about a series of fortunate events. For example, the Duke's daughter Rosalyn -- a famed and cherished Shakespearean character -- quickly finds romance and then marries. Even the daughter of the evil Fredrick leaves his kingdom and finds love in Arden Forest -- to a man who has abandoned Fredrick's heinous conspiracy against Duke Senior! In fact, we witness a breakout of infatuation and mutual attraction among the lovers in that place, culminating in the marriage of four couples!

In addition, Fredrick's plot to destroy the party holed up in the forest is thwarted, as the positive, energized atmosphere gives strength to the forces that oppose it. Finally, Fredrick himself has a powerful spiritual conversion, which relieves him of his malice, while handing his kingdom back to the magnanimous and good Duke Senior. In summary, the overriding positive atmosphere of self-givingness, gentleness, and camaraderie serve to attract a plethora of positive results for the party, including four marriages to eight main characters, the astonishing conversion of Senior Duke's enemy brother, and his return as leader in his beloved homeland. It demonstrates the enormous positive energy and power that goodness has over life.

One other point about Fredrick's conversion should be mentioned. In this situation, his negative was not so much neutralized and negated by others, but reversed *within himself*. I.e. with no initiative and action on the part of Duke Senior's side, Fredrick underwent a startling conversion and saw the Light. Such instances of evil turning good on its own are very rare in life. In fact, it occurs nowhere else in Shakespeare. In his stories, negative individuals are sometimes victorious; other times are subdued or consumed. But never do they convert from the negative to the positive on their own --

i.e. seeing the light of Truth beyond their ignorance, falsehood, and evil. And yet in 'As You Like It,' that is precisely what happens.

In the final analysis, we too are capable of demonstrating our goodness and goodwill towards others. And we too can generate a positive atmosphere through that effort. As a result, not only will our warmth and affection energize others, but through that self-giving effort, we will quickly attract powerful positive conditions. If that is the case, then why not try this approach today? Focus yourself on the needs and concerns of others the next several times you interact. Then observe as your relationships improve, as emotional sweetness takes hold, and as positive conditions suddenly arise out of nowhere -- as they did for Senior Duke and his followers in Arden Forest.

Esther Summerson's Goodness in Bleak House

Goodness is a spiritual trait -- like Love, Beauty, Oneness, Wisdom, and Peace. It is expressed too little in life, though nearly all acknowledge and admire its appearance in others. When it rises in the popular mind, it is exalted; though for the most part it remains hidden below the surface of popular awareness, taking a back seat to the travails and celebrity status of various personalities. We are too preoccupied with material (or shall we say surface) matters to make it central in our popular discourse.

Charles Dickens was one of the greatest writers in the history of Western literature. He was a novelist who excelled at storytelling, especially when it came to describing the interactions of the classes of 19th century England. Often he shows how reactionary forces oppress the weak and the innocent, in the name of power and class maintenance.

One of Dickens greatest characters appears in his most complex underestimated novel *Bleak House* is the person of Esther Summerson. She is the personification of Goodness -- perhaps the greatest example known in the modern idiom. I say greatest because her Goodness was integrated with other great spiritual qualities -- even though she was not particularly of a spiritual bent. In other words, hers was *integral* Goodness.

An orphan, she is brought into a situation where she is employed as a companion to a young woman who is vying to win an inheritance in a very complex legal case. Raised by her aunt, Esther's parentage is a mysterious secret, which is finally revealed in the course of the story. Let us examine some of the traits that indicate Esther's Goodness and related spiritual qualities:

- She never has a bad word to say about another individual. Even to the meanest and cruelest, she withholds any harsh remarks, unless she is absolutely pressed to.
- She helps those in needs at every occasion.
- She focuses on the other person whenever in their presence -- withholding her own concerns; always deferring to theirs.
- She is quiet and speaks in a soft voice.
- She does not espouse philosophy or points of view, even though she has conviction.
- She rises to great strength when life prods her to do so.
- When she is seriously ill, all she thinks about is others. As they fret over her illness, she is more concerned with their anguish than her misery.
- She is extremely calm in the face of negative circumstance.
- She frequently knows the truer truth of things; and therefore tends to expresses right thoughts, makes right decisions, and take to right actions.
- She asks for nothing and gives everything.

-She attracts love from all sides.

-She accomplishes greatly through marriage to a doctor she loves, and is given a great house of her own, even though she originally arrived with nothing.

In essence, Esther's Goodness is married to Calm, Equality of Being, Equanimity, Silence, Seeing the Positive in the Negative, Fortitude, Strength, and Right Action. Compassion oozes from her every pore. She is a spiritual individual -- while rarely speaking of the Spirit in her daily life. As a result of these qualities, life perpetually responds in her favor. E.g., when she remains utterly calm when she has come down with a very serious illness, life responds with the greatest boon of her life when shortly thereafter she not only recovers, but discovers the identity of her mother, the single great longing and unsolved mystery of her life.

Goodness is a great thing to behold in an individual. When it is connected to other spiritual qualities like Silence, Peace, and Strength, it becomes integral -- and therefore takes on great *power*. There are many who are Good, but somehow fail or fall back due to deficiencies in other areas -- particularly lack of strength. Jesus serves as a great example as he had no power to overcome his crucifixion and death. When Good integrates with other spiritual qualities, one is capable of accomplishing unfailingly -- e.g. there is the sudden resolution of a great problem, or the unexpected uncovering of a dark secret, or the opening to a vast opportunity, to name a few. These each occur for Esther in *Bleak House*.

Some people are naturally good. The Divine easily comes to them. They are pleasant, expansive, and ready to oblige, anticipating another person's needs. To them, goodness is a way of life, an instinct, an article of faith. They cannot refrain from being good. Dickens' lovely character Esther Summerson is a prime example from whom we can learn several of the great lessons of the Spirit.

Goodwill

Referral of a Lifetime

A while back, I had the good fortune to attend a meeting of managers and consultants at Microsoft's downtown regional headquarters in San Francisco, where the focus was on their project management software. I had been to this gathering numerous times before and enjoyed every meeting. On this particular occasion, I knew that a representative of a company I had been referring business to would attend in order to discuss a variety of issues. While I expected solid results from past efforts, the report he handed me indicated that I had not only generated staggering revenues for the firm, but that I had earned a huge referral fee in return. In fact, it would turn out to be largest one-day financial windfall of my life!

In one fell swoop, I earned well over \$20,000, when in the past my biggest referral fee payday had been ~\$3500. Though I expected a similar amount this time, instead I garnered a 700% increase.

What happened?

For over a month, I was unable to figure out what I had done to attract this startling amount. I knew it wasn't mere chance or dumb luck, because I don't believe in such things. Nor did I believe it happened because of something obvious or outward I had done recently. Though I am normally able to make an association between an outer result -- especially as startling one -- and the inner cause that precipitated it, in this

case, I could find no obvious clues. That is, until a friend of mine helped me see the light.

It turns out that over the past several years, I have had a number of conversations with the owner of the firm -- dating back to before we had a business relationship. On those occasions, I expressed my admiration for his exceptional technical skills and knowledge, as well as his winning demeanor. In response, he offered his genuine thanks and appreciation.

But what my other friend helped me realize was that my persistent goodwill towards the owner came back in the form of that huge referral fee! Not only was the amount large (and is still expanding to this day), but the quality of the companies who signed on was remarkable. In fact, through a series of unfathomable events, the firm was able to secure a huge contract from the biggest telecommunication firm in the United States.

As we see, when we express our heartfelt goodwill towards others, life responds with marvelous conditions. And if our concern, good intentions, and benevolence are unwavering and constant, then we can attract *unprecedented* results, as we saw in this episode.

One other interesting aspect of this dynamic is that the response often comes in the form of money. When we relate positively to people, encourage them, and show genuine happiness for their successes -- devoid of personal or mercenary motives -- money floods into our life.

This occurs because our goodwill puts us in touch with universal powers, including the social force that money represents. When we give of ourselves freely in this way, that power begins to flow in our direction. And when we sustain that effort over time, it comes in torrents.

That truth was never more poignantly revealed than that day when I received a referral fee of a lifetime.

Evoking the Darkness and the Light

The other day I had a memorable experience that was filled with irony. It was a life response of the highest order; one that was not only a continuation of a pattern of previous responses, but one which touched me and the recipient dearly. It was also one that brought out both the darkness and the light in life; literally and figuratively. Let me explain.

For nearly a decade, I have been attending meetings of MPUG, the Microsoft Project User Group in San Francisco. Held at the Microsoft district headquarters on Market Street, the gatherings have always been lively affairs in which we watched interesting and informative demonstrations, at the end of which prizes were handed out to lucky winners. It turns out that over the last several years, I had the good fortune of not only winning several of the biggest prizes, but often knew in advance which prize I would win, and at what point I would win it. In other words, I was able to predict a life response event before it occurred. I was able to accomplish that inner feat because on those occasions I had the subtle sense of how life was unfolding, and perceived how life seemed to be moving towards certain outcomes, including the disbursement of certain prizes at specific moments.

Just as startling was the fact that in the course of the last several meetings I won the exact same prize from amongst many. Moreover, in each situation, I proceeded to give the prize away to someone else who had need for it, since I had little use for that product myself. In other words, because I knew that life tends to repeat, and because I sensed the subtle unfolding of circumstance on those particular occasions, I sensed in

advance that I was going to win that precise prize, at what point it would occur, and if I did, knew I would probably give it away. It is with that background that I would like narrate the events of our latest meeting.

When I arrived at the Microsoft district headquarters this time, I noticed that there had been some significant changes. Now the quarterly meeting was being held on the other side of the building. This indicated to me on some level that changes were the order of the day.

As usual, I arrived a little early that evening, and instantly saw our host and main speaker talking to several members gathered around in a group. As a result, I held back from bursting on the scene, and waited in the large break room to gather and prepare myself for the upcoming meeting. A while later, I summoned up the courage and entered the presentation room. Immediately, on entering the room, I was very surprised to see an associate of mine, who I had not seen at these gathering for a several years, and who also was the chapter's previous president. Let us call this individual "J." I was surprised not only because I hadn't seen him at meetings for a long while, but he was the one individual I had a somewhat poor relationship with among the members. For example, in the past, we would clash on my participation and involvement, or lack thereof, in helping run the meetings; and also had difference of opinions about the quality of certain presenters. Most telling of all was that he had a conservative political and social bent and was not afraid to let me know about it. In any case, our past relationship was dicey at best, and yet there he was, the first person I met when I entered the large room to start this latest gathering of MPUG.

I should also point out that J and I had a common friend and associate, namely M, who was not only the chapter head who led every meeting, including this one, but was also about to make the two major presentations that evening. It is also true that I referred a half million dollars' worth of business to M, which was a powerful response from life I have described elsewhere. Now as I pondered the current dynamic, I wondered if J would have such a harsh opinion of me since I had created the largest client for his friend's business in its decade long history.

With these thoughts circling in my mind, M, as head of the chapter and host, began the meeting and proceeded to give the first of his two presentations. After he was done, I drifted to the back of the room where the refreshments were. A minute or so later, my occasional detractor and former head of the chapter J arrived there as well. I then commented how very effective M's presentation skills was, and then went on to say that I thought that with such excellent presentation skills, he could indeed become mayor of a renown local town; something M indicated a passion for in the past. I then added that I would vote for him no matter what his political persuasion. To that J shot back with words to the effect that he would only vote for M if he had a conservative agenda, burst off, and returned to his seat, leaving me a bit stunned at his abrasiveness. Now as I sat there, I thought of our past experiences, as well as this latest brusque retort. My mind then focused on the current economic environment, and realized that like others, he still had not learned the foolishness of the laissez-faire view that had almost brought down the world economy. With that little flash of irritation, I quietly let out a charge of emotional and mental energy.

A moment later, just after the Microsoft rep that was in charge of logistics for the meeting had begun striking up a conversation with me about the smoothness of the meeting so far, the lights suddenly went out in the entire large room! Not only were we all now in the dark, but M, who was getting ready for his next presentation, could not easily see what he was doing. Immediately I understood that my flash of irritation had precipitated a negative response in the form of complete darkness,

Perceiving this, I decided from that point forward to withdraw any harsh feelings and emotions toward J, and instead foster cordial and good relations whenever possible. A

moment later, M began his second presentation, as the viewers, except the overhead presentation, watched in the dark. Fortunately, the lights came back on not one minute into M's speech, indicating that he was never discouraged by the darkness, so quickly attracted the restoration of the lights.

M's second and very effective presentation ended an hour later, and now the prizes were being given out. I then recalled many of the astonishing events in the past involving the disbursements of these rewards; experiences I have documented in other Essays. Once again, in this situation, all and everything seemed possible.

As the gift-giving proceeded, I saw a thick, valuable book on the table in front of the room. It turned out to be the same book that I had won on two or three previous occasions! It was now but one of 10 prizes to be given out. Those past experiences were remarkable, and yet there I was once again confronted with the possibility that it could occur a third consecutive time!

And so the prize-giving proceeded. This time however, my name was not selected for any of the first eight prizes. Still two prizes remained; that same valuable purple technical book, plus an online software application with a \$3000 value. M's helper then shuffled the remaining ballots to determine who would win the thick technical volume. At that moment, I once again felt the world disappear, while having the presence of mind to perceive that the same book come to me again. When M then called out my name as the winner, I was stunned, bemused, and ecstatic all in the same moment. When he then proceeded to hand over the book to me, I instinctively did what I had done on those previous two occasions when I predicted and won that same prize: I simply offered it to someone who could use it since I had limited use for it. I then called out and asked who in the group could use it. Immediately, the woman who was sitting right behind me said she did. I agreed, and M handed her the book. I then saw this as yet a third manifestation of what had occurred in the previous two meetings. Each time I serendipitously won that same book, I not only handed it off to another person, but it was given to the person I had struck up a conversation with previous to the evening's presentations. On each occasion, I had shed my shyness, and took an interest in the particular person sitting next to me, engaging in conversation about why they were there, their needs in terms of the technology, and so forth. And in each meeting, it was the person who I had made contact with, sitting next to or just behind me, who called out that they wanted and had a need for the book when I offered it. It was yet another startling dimension to these events.

But there was more to be one more turn in these events. Because I had handed off the book prize, M now put me back in the queue with the remaining contestants for the biggest and final prize; the \$3k 1-year subscription to a highly specialized online software application. When he then drew from the lot, I subtly felt a kind of whiteness, with everything going blank. M then announced the winner of the grand prize, and it turned out to be none other than myself! In that wondrous moment, I had the presence of mind to perceive that because I gave my previous prize to a person who needed it, I was put back in the cue, and then was put in position to attract the much bigger one.

I then stood up, both shock and bemused to receive the prize, while fully realizing the inner workings of the situation. How could I ever explain this dynamic to anyone! Then as I stood there and pondered the nature of the prize, I realized once again that I really had no need for it despite its great monetary value. And so once again I called out to the group and offered it to anyone who could use it.

What occurred next was one of the most astonishing moments ever. When I offered the grand prize to the group, a person just in front of me turned around and indicated that he could really use it. It turned out to be none other than my nemesis J! Stunned, I agreed that I would hand over the prize to him.

I then sat down in utter wonder at what had just transpired. In fact, over the next several moments, J stared at me with a very special look that seemed to be a wellspring of gratitude. It was so strong and heartfelt that it started to feel my own heart. Here was my one periodic adversary in the group, perhaps my only one in business in years, with an expression on his face that seemed to say "Are you really giving this to me? And is it really you whom I am receiving it from?" And in those moments when our eyes locked, I saw the welling up of emotion in his eyes.

As we see in this incident, when we change an attitude from one of irritation and hostility to one of goodwill and harmony, life quickly moves in our favor, life's conditions shift to the positive enabling an enemy to become a grateful ally; cancelling the effect of past difficulties and tensions in a single instance. When I shifted from a flash of irritation that earlier had literally and figuratively evoked the Darkness to one of hope for hoped for goodwill, I set loose a vibration that had attracted the Light that expressed as a revelatory experience. It was truly one of the most memorable moments and delightful experiences of my life.

Complete, 180 Degree Turnaround

One day recently, a contact of mine who I had been giving advice to told me about an episode involving a close friend of his. It turns out, my contact's acquaintance worked for a manufacturing group in India in a technical position. The friend is supposedly an emotional person, and had been upset because he was not appreciated by his superiors. He was constantly complaining that he was not getting his due recognition, and therefore had been threatening to resign from the company.

Fortunately, the cooler head of my contact prevailed when he convinced his friend to take a day off to consider the matter further. He also asked him to shift his attitude from hostility and bitterness to having positive thoughts and feelings towards his superiors and the organization as a whole.

Well it turned out that the very next day, my contact learned that his friend had suddenly and most unexpectedly received a bonus of 4.85 Laks (~2000 US dollars, a substantial sum in India) from the company! It was a stunning development, and a sure sign of the phenomenon of life response at work. Equally remarkable was the fact that he garnered the sum during the current world economic crisis when salaries were being decreased and people laid off.

When I read the story, I commented to my contact that neutralizing a negative attitude will always evoke a positive response. Moreover, if one goes a step further and turns negativity into *positive goodwill*, as the friend did here, then the response can be overwhelming.

Several weeks later, I received another note indicating that there was an update to the story. My contact wrote that he implored his friend to continue his inner effort of inner goodwill towards his manager, the CEO, and the organization; and once again, which the friend again took it up in full. The friend then called the contact back to tell him that another miracle had taken place. It turns out that he was suddenly and most unexpectedly asked by the CEO of the company to make a major presentation. Not only was it successful, but it was very much appreciated by his manager. Thus, he had now made a complete, 180 degree turnaround from bitterness and feeling underappreciated to garnering full recognition by his superiors!

In this case, we see how one individual showed inner courage by following the sage advice of his friend, thereby turning around a negative situation to its *complete opposite*. That same power is of course available to each of us. All we have to do is determine where we are expressing a wanting attitude, and then make an effort to

neutralize it, or better yet turn it into its opposite. When we do, we too will experience a miraculous-like outcome. Moreover, if we take to this approach on a regular basis, miracles will be our constant companion.

Keep in mind that the solution to the overwhelming majority of problems we encounter is *inward*, not outward. When we shift our emotions away from insecurity, ranker, and bitterness, we align with and attract the most positive of conditions. And if we go a step further and turn those feelings into their complete opposite -- e.g. from resentment to active, positive good will -- then we attract conditions that simply overwhelm, as was the case of the friend who saw his deepest aspirations in his work life fulfilled.

Gratitude

Gratitude that Attracts Good Fortune

One way we express the spirit in life is through an act of gratitude. When we offer our thanks and appreciation for the efforts of others -- whether individuals or organizations or society -- we move from the ego plane to the universal and transcendent planes. It is that movement that releases concentrations of energy that align with powerful positive conditions that come back to us as instances of sudden good fortune.

An individual was having a conversation with another where he expressed his admiration for Microsoft, who have bent over backwards to make each new iteration of its software backwards compatible with previous versions. It has sacrificed even its own state-of-the-art developments to insure that it is compatible with "legacy" systems. This individual went on to express his gratitude that Microsoft had thus performed a great service for society -- i.e. enabled organizational data to carry forward from the past so that it could be used in the future. At that very moment, another individual appeared on the scene with a check to pay the consultant for services rendered, when he thought that he might not be paid for a month. In addition, he was paid an amount that exceeded his expectations. It was life responding to his expression of heartfelt gratitude.

At each point where we express gratitude for those who have helped us -- including the divine Spirit itself -- life moves towards us with instances of luck. If you perceive this miracle even once, you are more likely to express your gratitude in the future. Even dark thoughts, such as perceptions of one's own failures in life, will give way to offering one's thanks and appreciation for current positive conditions. That gratitude will in turn have the effect of cancelling future failure, while attracting additional positive outcomes.

Harmony, Oneness

Overview

The Infinite Power of Harmony

There are a number of expressions of the Spirit in life. Silence, Being-ness, Truth, Wisdom, Timelessness, Infinity, Goodness, Love, Beauty, and Delight are several. Perhaps the most essential and basic is Harmony, whose higher expression is Oneness and Unity of being. For the Infinite consciousness, every and all things are interlocked in an essential Harmony and Oneness. And yet out of that essential Unity, a universe of infinitely diverse forms was created, including we humans. It is the same in our own

individual and collective lives. When we bring greater harmony to bear through our relationship with others and the world, we generate a vast creative power for accomplishment for ourselves and others.

Take modern day Europe, where the Euro has suddenly become the world's strongest currency. That's the case because several nations came together to forge a financial alliance: in essence, a collaborative movement of harmony. That harmonic effort has produced a financial instrument that has garnered the greatest respect and purchasing power in the world. It is the power that harmony generates that has propelled the Euro to its lofty position.

On the other hand, across the channel, the British have been unwilling to participate in the Euro, putting its own purchasing power at risk. Even the mighty US currency has fallen behind the Euro. Subconsciously perceiving the power of collaboration and cooperation (two practical expressions of harmony) now the Asian financial community is considering a currency of its own. If they adopt it, it will likely generate a (further) boon for that region as well. This suggests that a *global* currency would create infinite-like financial and economic well-being for the world, since it would issue from a higher harmony that integrates all nations.

Wherever harmony is created, energy and power is released. When the colonies of the US came together over 200 years ago, it resulted in the greatest economic, political, and military power in world history. But it is not only nations that gain power when disparate elements come together. So do other collectives -- including institutions, businesses, communities, down to the individual family. The more harmony created among their parts and people, the greater the power and results generated.

Harmony intensifies the positive bonds between people and things, focusing energy and releasing power for accomplishment. We can see this in macro events like nations forming, but also in micro events such as our daily work experiences. For example, we have all participated in meetings over the course of our careers. When most successful, it is often because a deeper connection and bond was created among the staff -- e.g. through mutual respect, by genuinely focusing on the contributions of others, and via collaborative decisions for future action. When we come out of these meetings, our energy skyrockets and our work efforts produce impressive results. In essence, the harmonic movement has created a new burst of collective energy now shared by each participant -- enabling individual and collective achievement. Interestingly that success often comes about through instances of sudden good fortune.

Similarly, any two individuals are capable of creating this sort a harmonic bond. For example, greater harmony in romantic relationships can produce the deepest form of love between partners. Each lover's willingness to forget him or herself, adoring the other for its own sake can generate a tidal wave of romantic energy resulting in an intense bond and affection that can last a lifetime.

The opposite of harmony is each party moving in its own direction, focusing on its own interests at the expense of the needs of the "Other," attracting negative conditions. For example, when the fascist juggernaut began to move across Europe at the outset of WWII, the "good" nations were unable to collaborate in any coherent way. That lack of harmony strengthened the enemy, who were then able to run roughshod across the continent. It was only the extreme collaboration and bravery of the British people, and the cooperative effort of the US and Europe that saved the world from that greatest of all evils.

The question is then how can we be in that state of consciousness that would allow us to be more connected and One with life around use. The answer is that the more we live in the deeper parts of our being, rather than the surface of life, the greater will be our

affinity, connection, and harmony with our surroundings, including the people we interact with.

But how do we move to that silent state, that witness consciousness that would enable to us feel more connected with the world and others? We can begin to build that new inner status by constantly opening ourselves to the spiritual Force. When we offer and consecrate upcoming activities in our lives, offering that act to the Higher Power, not only are the conditions of life quickly set right, but we develop an ever-wider opening to our deeper Self. As we come to know those profound Silent and Still parts within, we experience an ever-increasing bond with things outside ourselves, including the situations we encounter and the people we interact with. As a result of these harmonic experiences, we not only generate a vast power for success, but deep inner joy and fulfillment.

This being the case, why not ask yourself this: In what areas of my life can I create greater harmony? If you determine what that is and then make a sincere effort to bring it about, you will not only generate a vast power for accomplishment, but you will experience deep, inner fulfillment, as the separation between yourself and life will melt away into a blissful Oneness.

Overcoming Ego, Separateness; Power of Harmony

Coming Out of Ego as First Step of Conscious Evolution

Each of us is capable of overcoming one solitary deficiency in our nature: perhaps a wanting attitude toward someone, or a restrictive habit, or a mistaken belief. That in itself would guarantee continuous progress in life, as life will respond to that inner effort. At any time, we can also open to the spiritual Force, which will continually bring life's conditions under our control. If we follow these two methods, we would live ecstatic, happy, productive -- even magical -- lives.

However, we can go a step further and embark on an even greater journey. We can dedicate ourselves to a life of *conscious evolution*, with the purpose of evolving our nature to our highest possibility and potential. It would be a journey from our current status to our ultimate human and spiritual potential.

If we are interested in such an undertaking, how would we begin? The first major step of conscious evolution is to make the effort to *come out of ego* -- which is the main bar to discovering our higher nature. Doing so would enable us to overcome our current sense of separateness that divides us from others and life. It would shift our center of awareness from our own concerns, our incessant, oblivious self-regard and selfishness, to a deeper state of connection and commonality of purpose with others and life. It would be the decisive step that would take us to the frontiers of our higher nature; opening the doors to an entirely New Way of Living.

How then does one come out of the ego-sense, this very human tendency to focus on one's own needs and concerns, at the expense of others, and the true unfoldings of the world around us? We do that by moving our center of consciousness away from the surface of life and into the depths within. There we discover a stillness and silence that engenders a level of awareness and mindfulness of the flow of life, of the truths unfolding, and the needs and concerns of those around us. As we move away from the surface bubblings, the visual and auditory stimuli of the senses that pours in through our senses, we discover a deeper poise within, a stillness that aligns us more tightly with the rest of the world. As a result, our sense of separateness and hence our self-centeredness and ego begins to dissolve.

There is no bottom to the depths within, as there is no limit to how we can connect to, align with, and meld with the world around us. Behind the calm and silence we experience, there is a deeper Subliminal being that sends up its positive influences to the surface. Anyone who has ever experienced that sudden thought that warns us of what action to avoid, or what course to take in a cross-roads moment, has known the influence of that Inner Guide.

Deeper still we discover our True Selves, our personal evolving Soul within. There we discover our highest nature and being; that which illuminates our deepest purpose in life; that which connects us to the transcendent spirit; that which binds us to all around us, and to the unfoldings of life. Love, harmony, oneness, and bliss issue from there.

As we continually move to the deeper parts of our being -- from silence and stillness to the Inner Guidance of the subliminal to our Evolving Souls within -- our separative ego consciousness gives way, and our true nature blossoms. At that point we will have made the decisive change that takes us from our old nature to a new super-nature. At that point, we are well on our way of personal progress and our own conscious evolution.

Formula for the End of the Reign of Ego

Ego is the expression of separateness from the world around us. It is a vital movement in which we put our own concerns above those of others. Ego is in fact an outgrowth of the very fact that we are separate, individual physical beings divided materially from what is outside us. That separation is broadened through our mentality which tends to focus us on those things that support own interests and concerns above those of others. Ego is thus a plunge into unconsciousness of separation that has lost the inherent Oneness and Unity of being.

Is there then a way to overcome this limiting aspect of our nature so that we can forge more harmonic relationships with others and the world around us? It would seem that Ego can disappear through several movements on our part.

First, we can open to the spiritual Force on a regular basis; which will tend to replace our sense of separateness with that Higher Consciousness. By opening to the descending Higher Power, it becomes the leader of our being, replacing the Ego's usual place in the forefront. The more we open to the Force, the more we sense that the Spirit will bring the right things and lead us in the right direction; and the less we are inclined to insist on our own inclinations, positions, opinions, and preferences. Using the power of the Divine, our Ego dissolves, and we move with the right flow of Life that the Force is enabling for us.

Another way of overcoming Ego is by making the effort to move the center of our awareness away from the surface of life -- where we are absorbed with the inputs of the senses -- and instead forge a link with our Inner Being. From that poise within, we experience an acute stillness and quietude, as we are able to peacefully look out on the world as "silent witness" to life's unfoldings. As a result, we lose our exclusive identification with self; with that sense of separation from others and the world; and instead feel and experience a deep connection with life. The result is that instead of being absorbed in our own self-interests that lead to selfishness, we have harmonic thoughts and feelings with all and everything around us.

A third approach to overcoming Ego is to simply examine our own selves and determine when we are expressing that lower consciousness, and then make the concerted effort to overcome it. It will be there in our fixed habits, in our wanting attitudes, and in our one-sided, narrow opinions and beliefs. If we become aware of when our Ego is in

ascendance, and catch it when it occurs, then we will also shift from our separateness to a wideness of being that is open, tolerant, embracing, perceptive, and harmonic.

This final approach is an eminently practical antidote to the virulence of Ego. For example, one man went through a process of introspection and discovered that: (a) he was too eager to express his opinions; (b) was too absorbed in himself when having discussions with others; (c) was too willing to take rather than give in mutual relations; and (d) was obsessed with his own career, rarely showing interest in the success and well-being of others.

Together these three approaches -- opening to the Divine Force, moving the locus of our consciousness to our deepest depths, and taking inventory of our selfish parts and consciously overcoming them -- are a formidable way to end the reign of Ego.

Moreover, these approaches are not mutually exclusive; for we know e.g. that constant consecration of circumstance increasingly forges a link into our inner being, where Ego has no power. Thus, the more we offer the activities of our life to the Force, the more that Power penetrates our being, enabling us to more easily enter the deepest, stiller parts of ourselves, Our True Selves, from where we feel a deep Oneness and Unity with all existence.

Likewise, the more we develop an Inner Life, the more often we will tend to offer circumstance and activities to the Higher Power, and therefore the more we will perceive and aspire to overcome our egotistic and selfish propensities. In combination, the reign of limited Self and Ego is progressively replaced by a sense of Other, where we forge deep harmonic relationships with the world outside ourselves.

Overcoming Ego

We can scan our consciousness at any time and perceive to what degree Ego is at play. It takes many forms - physical, vital, and mental, but always expresses as Separative Consciousness - from others, and the flow and truths of life around us.

A brilliant doctor is insensitive to his patients' feelings. A patient is obsessed with his troubles, uncaring about others around him. The receptionist gambles on her computer, ignoring the proper processing of the patients' records. The doctor's girlfriend gets angry when she doesn't get what she wants, and his fellow practitioner won't listen to sensible advice, proud of her own limited knowledge.

In our physical actions and fixed habits; in our vital emotions and attitudes; in our mental opinions, beliefs, and decisions we express our separative consciousness that is Ego. Every moment there is a shading of one or more expressions of it.

An athlete feels inferior to the competition and is downtrodden, or the coach sits him down and he feels humiliated, or he glorifies a recent achievement, or he boasts that his team is in the way to a championship. They are ego expressions. In any field, any domain, at any point and time in our lives Ego is at play.

Our role as devotees, as seekers of higher consciousness is to be aware of, identify and overcome such ego movements, replacing them with their opposite - including humility, harmony, self-givingness, and love. Consecrating ego each time it arises in ourselves - i.e. offering it to the spiritual Force - overcomes it permanently.

Also keep in mind that left to its own devices, ego attracts negative circumstance. Disappointment, anger, callousness, self-pity, dishonesty, selfishness, self-absorption, desire, arrogance, pride, prejudice etc. consistently attract negative conditions.

By becoming aware of and controlling our reactions, and by connecting with Spirit inside, we begin to see that ego has no place in a conscious life; is in fact an obstacle on our way to developing our Higher Nature.

Oneness of Life

Interconnectedness of All

If we look deep enough, we will notice that everything in the physical world is interconnected. E.g. the weather in the northwest portion of the US this year (2010-11) has been unusually cool, causing the tornadoes in the southeast, as that air mass met the warm temperatures welling up from the south; and onward around the world. Likewise, droughts in one part of the earth cause havoc with supply in another. And so on and so forth for everything material across the globe and beyond. In this way, it is not too hard to fathom this phenomenon of interdependence at the material level.

What IS difficult for Man however is to see how everything non-material -- in the universe, amongst us, and within us -- is also interconnected. E.g. an individual changes his consciousness, and suddenly attracts an unexpected, positive response from across the globe that he has no outer association with. This is the phenomenon of "Life Response," which is a product of the subtle interrelationship between all things, visible and invisible.

Even material Science has embraced the reality of Non-Locality, in which one particle at one end of the universe can affect another instantaneously, even though there is no material relationship. This has confounded the scientist, who tends to only see a mechanistic and material causality. The incontrovertible interconnectedness of the invisible baffles modern man, who clings to his limited view of space and time, and cause and effect.

We also miss the profound oneness that exists among all individuals. That is so because we live on the surface of life. However, when we move away from the inputs of the senses, and open to our deeper parts, we begin to perceive the inherent unity and oneness that exists among all people. When we discover our deepest depths, our True Self and Evolving Soul within, we perceive all others as extensions of our own selves; or we as extensions of them. From that profound poise, our interests and concerns tend to dovetail, and there is a deep meeting of hearts and minds. Increasing Harmony, Oneness, Love, and Delight are the inevitable result.

As we see, there is an OUTER material association between all things, as there is an INNER one. The Inner -- the one that is not perceived through the senses -- subtly extends throughout the universe. All forces, energies, and movements are interconnected in a profound Oneness, even as our mind sees separation and differentiation. The universe is a Whole that contains infinite parts, even as our mentality perceives a small or single part in isolation, or in opposition to all the rest.

When we move to Spirit, we increasingly observe the Oneness that permeates the universe; that exists between ourselves and cosmos; and between ourselves and every other being. Perceiving life this way, we experience Reality from a very different perspective, enabling us to transition from ordinary life to one of profound Wonder and Delight.

Oneness with Life and Surroundings

Experiencing Oneness in the Depths

RP: When we go within we begin to overcome our divided nature that perceives dualities of pleasure and pain. Instead, we see the oneness of life; all things in their essential unity. That includes the unity of the inner and outer, and of spirit and matter. We see all things that appeared as contradictions on the surface as complementary in the depths.

Question: How can we then move to this depth to see life this way?

RP: Imagine you are going for a walk. At first, you perceive a busy life that is beautiful to the sight. You also hear a variety of sounds. Now you withdraw your attention from the things that catch your eye; as well as the sounds. You blur your eyes so you are not preoccupied by the visual sense. You withdraw to a secret place inside, and the outside becomes a misty dream.

You march on silently with a heart and mind empty and still. You then briefly perceive several thoughts inside, which you let go of, and then slowly fade and disappear. Now you are walking briskly, yet silently; still and free, and empty within.

You walk this way for several minutes. Up ahead you notice a commotion. You see people who appear to be in conflict, yet you sense that they are working things out underneath, despite the outer division. As you walk on you turn around and see them shaking hands. You sense that they now have much to think about and improve on.

You are silent in thought, yet mindful and aware. When you examine your inner conditions, you perceive no division anywhere within. All is clear and smooth.

Inside there is a solidity of stillness. There are no emotions. No desire. There is only flow, and calm.

Still concentrated within, you feel the first stirring of spirit. Then you gaze outside, and you sense that the world itself is a vessel of it as well. As is each person. You are no more important than they are. That they are an extension of you, and you of them.

As you walk on, you feel non-separation between you and life; a single continuous existence that flows from within outward, and from outward to within. All separation and division between you and life has disappeared. It is peaceful non-dual existence that extends forever, and returns to a vast stillness inside.

Now you feel your being extending outward to ends of the universe. You are in silent communion with the All and everything.

You sense that all division, conflicts of life are only surface occurrences; mental views of things. That underneath all is deep harmony and oneness.

You look out onto life and perceive stillness and peace everywhere. All is but a golden light.

Discovering the Oneness of Life

When we look out onto the world, we experience life in dual aspects: day and night, hot and cold, pleasure and pain, positive and negative, good and evil, etc. It is how the mind perceives the realities and unfoldings of life. As we develop more subtle inner capacities, we see shades of gray in between these polar extremes. As we rise in consciousness, we not only see the entire spectrum of possibilities from one pole to the other, but we begin

to lose the entire sense of polarity. When we rise to our penultimate selves, we only see and experience Oneness.

What is Oneness? There are many ways to interpret this term. Let me begin with one: Oneness is non-differentiation. Oneness sees the utility of all things; that everything and every side plays a vital part in the greater scheme of things. Good as well as evil, positive as well as negative; the pleasurable as well as the painful, and so forth. By having the consciousness of Oneness, one perceives the unity of life -- that both sides of any duality are necessary for the unfolding of life. E.g. WWII, in which 60 million died, was the greatest "negative" of all time, and yet it enabled the most positive progress in the history of the world (the UN, the European Union, rapid global prosperity, and accelerated social and cultural integration and unity, to name a few.) Progress that may have taken hundreds or more years occurred in not even 50.

Likewise, when we look back on our lives, we see that the greatest negatives in our lives were often the spur that enabled our greatest progress and success. Without them, we would never have become who we are. To see the value of the positive *and* the negative, or any other polar set of opposites is to begin to have the perception of Oneness. It is to recognize that all parts serve an emerging purpose -- not merely the good side, but the "bad" as well. To look out on the world this way is to have the vision of Oneness, which is to see life as it really is -- undifferentiated and One.

The problem is that we look out at the world through a divided consciousness, not from the poise of Oneness that perceives nondifferentiation. As a result, we feel pain and therefore suffer. We want this, but not that. We take pleasure in one outcome, but are repelled by another we did not seek. We are disturbed by certain "problematic" circumstances of life, when they are actually an intense spur for progress. Nearly every minute of the day, we look out on the world from our divided self, seeing and experiencing the polar or extreme divisions of life, not its undifferentiated Oneness.

However, if we were more conscious, we *would* embrace everything that we see and comes our way; both sides of the duality; all shades of the spectrum of life in between -- which would in turn enable us to live far happier and more fulfilled lives. Then why do we see duality instead of Oneness? It is because that is how we were born: with a divided consciousness. When we first became aware, we noticed that our body was separate from others, so we identify with it alone. The same with the division between our own selves and the world around us. When we live in the primitive consciousness of the body that is how we see the world. Unfortunately, many live their entire lives this way -- especially fanatics and other selfish or otherwise negative individuals.

One level up we see the world through our sensations, emotions, and feelings. We are not as brutally separate as when we are centered in the physical consciousness, but nevertheless we desire one thing over another, have endless emotional preferences, which leads to persistent disappointment and pain. Moving up further still, we come to mind, which is more stable than our vital/emotional being, and is not swayed or determined by desire. Still it sees the dualities of life, often taking to one side or the other. Our incessant opinions are proof of this fact. So is our ignorance and lack of integral knowledge on most matters. As we move upward to the more rational mind, we see more possibilities, more shading between the extremes, and we embrace these, which causes us to suffer less and become more insightful. Beyond that, the view of life through polarities all but disappears. In this highest spiritual consciousness, there is the perception of the necessity and utility of all things -- even the integration and unity of elements and circumstance that oppose one another. It is the spiritual perception of Oneness.

Our lower consciousness then sees division and duality; our highest consciousness sees Oneness. Our lowest consciousness is one of separateness that divides life into extreme

polarities, and experiences life this way -- primarily as pleasure and pain. As we move to a greater consciousness, those distinctions fall away.

How can we bring this higher consciousness into our own lives? When we move away from our ego-sense, we lose that sense of division. We then see the truth of things in their multiplicity of possibility, making us less prone to favor one truth over another, which means we will not only suffer less, but have insightful into the truths and conditions of life. By suffering less, we will in turn have increased positive energy that will help us rise in our careers, and will engender deep joy and delight in being alive.

How then do we overcome ego? We do it by moving within, to a deeper consciousness, away from the surface bubble and stirrings of life. In those calm, serene, undisturbed depths, we look out at the world with clarity, and without prejudice. When we are firmly entrenched in this consciousness, we sense more of the Oneness of life. We become mindful and aware of the multiplicity of possibilities before us, which enables us to make right decisions that lead to actions that end in success. We see all things in their rightful place in the Play of life, which enables us to be in harmony with all of life's unfoldings.

Interestingly -- and ironically -- living our lives this way helps us break down the dualities our higher consciousness perceives as necessary for our progress. Through that deeper poise, we tend to create the conditions of the Good, as opposed to the good that is opposite of the bad. This Good knows no opposite. It is self-existent without a dark shadow. It is a life of spiritual self-giving, gratitude, self-knowledge, silence, wisdom, love, delight, and oneness. No opposite emerges when we take to these spiritual behaviors. Dualities disappear, even at the lower emotional and physical levels of life. We in essence bring undifferentiated Oneness to the surface of life. It is indicative of our own spiritual progress, evolution, and transformation.

Eventually, we can come to experience the Ultimate Reality behind all existence, in which the Spirit and Life are seen as inextricably One. It is the greatest of all spiritual experiences as we see that we and our Creator are of the same reality; that we are One.

Oneness with Others

The Oneness of Adams and Jefferson

In the 8-part series on the life of the second president of the United States, John Adams -- a man who helped forge the nation -- there is a startling finale. For several years after his loving wife's death, he kept up an intense dialogue with Thomas Jefferson via post. Though they worked closely on bringing the nation together, and collaborated in their respective presidential administrations, they were also rivals. They even ran against one another for president. Sometimes their philosophies would converge; on occasion, they would clash.

What then was the startling finale? Because their correspondence was so intense, they ended up dying on the very same day. Not only that, but it was on July 4th, the birthday of the nation. Moreover, the day they died was the 50th anniversary of the birth of the nation! On the surface, it seems like a startling coincidence, yet if you see how closely they were in their correspondence, they had almost become two halves of the same person. The energies, forces, and vibrations were so intense; and their interlocking relationship so powerful, that they deceased on the same famous day. Because they were so far apart -- one in Massachusetts, the other in Virginia; and were too old to visit one another regularly -- they each had a bust of the other in their room to help them envision one another. We can imagine them each looking at, talking to their respective friend's bust as they penned their plethora of letters.

Two men had thus practically become One -- in mental thought, in spirit, almost in body. In our lives, the Oneness between ourselves and others also beckons us. However, we are too caught up in our separate selves to perceive those outside our own physical being. Though we do come together intensely in love --whether for spouse or children or friend -- that in part merely fulfills our ego. It is more difficult to experience that oneness with other people we come in contact with, where a business associates or a casual acquaintance. To share that Oneness in that way would mean that we have abandoned our separative nature, our ego, so that we are able to bridge the divide between us and move in harmony; experience oneness and unity with our environment and those around us.

However, we can only reach that state when we move away from the surface of life and discover our deeper parts within. There we find silence, and further still our own True Nature and Soul. From there we experience a universal state in which we feel deep commonality with the world around us, including the people we come in contact with. It was there that John Adams and Thomas Jefferson met and found harmony of being, despite their being so many miles apart.

Joy, Delight of Being

Bringing the Sweetness of the Spirit to the Surface of Life

When one has been cooped up in a home or cabin for days because of cloudy, gloomy weather, and then one emerges into the bright warm sunlight of a new day, the change is exhilarating. Now imagine if we were to emerge into an even greater place, where our current sun-dappled relatively-happy existence would seem like something cold, soulless, distant, and without meaning. It is the emergence from our current life into the spiritual life.

When an American friend of mine who expatriated to India 30 years ago to live in a spiritual community returned to the US, she found the place not only utterly alien but devoid of any spiritual feeling. As she rode the ever-widening highways of the San Francisco Bay Area and toured the region she was raised in, she felt an iciness and un-soulfulness in the atmosphere, lacking richness and sweetness and deep connectedness to a Higher Reality that she felt in the spiritual community of her adopted homeland. And this is one of the urban regions often most associated with happiness and joy in America. Imagine then how she would feel in other locales.

We cannot imagine this greater existence, because we only know and breathe in what surrounds us. We feel the atmosphere in our surroundings and believe that is the reality of life. We cannot imagine an entire society rooted in soulfulness, depth, sweetness, richness, and the deepest of sincere values. Some believe that is in fact the reality of things in the rural areas of the world. However, once you punctuate the surface, you see that there often resides an environment of profound ignorance, falsehood, and intolerance. When we go to our churches and temples, we may be moved by the spirit, only to be overwhelmed by the harsh reality that permeates the world that we reenter. If we bring the spirit into life after such experiences, we may be able to infuse our surroundings with a richer power, but that only lasts awhile.

How then can we permeate the atmosphere with a deeper consciousness? While we cannot immediately change the society, we can connect to the deepest depths inside ourselves, and carry around that feeling everywhere we go. Then as we look out into the

world, we will feel the sweetness there, which really does exist below the surface of things. Except we *will* experience it on the surface, even as others do not.

After a while, others can take to this approach, and bring down the spiritual power to the point that the outer atmosphere is as sweet as it is in the subtle plane below the surface. Then we can begin to create a new type of life on earth. Then wherever we travel across this wide planet, we will not just be happy because of the sunshine or the beautiful mountains and terrain, but because the world around us is suffused by something more substantial, by a quality that cannot be described, even though it can be felt. Then we will know that humanity has taken a great step, for they have brought to the surface the deepest spiritual secrets and feelings of life.

Thoughts on True, Inner Happiness (i.e. Joy and Delight of Being)

Ordinary happiness comes and goes. It is our favorable reaction to the events of life that come from the outside. Because life is unpredictable, this type of happiness is unstable. *True* happiness is *Joy* of Being, which comes from *within*, unencumbered by the exigencies of life around us.

-The happiest of people -- i.e. those who continually experience Joy and Delight of Being -- are those who are self-giving towards others; who literally lose themselves in the concerns, joys and successes of others.

-The major cause of unhappiness is seeing life through our ego-consciousness. When we move away from ego and separateness, and connect with others and life, we develop the possibility for true inner happiness.

-Ego and self-givingness are two opposites. Ego brings unhappiness or short-term happiness. Self-givingness gives perpetual, deep inner happiness and joy.

-The most joyful of people are spirit-oriented individuals, whose orientation is inward, culminating in connection with their True Selves and Soul, creating a sense of Oneness with people around them and the world outside.

-The more we connect to the Spirit, to the Divine Reality, the more ecstatic is our experience of life.

-As we give to others, Joy springs forth. As we shed our ego and negative propensities, Delight spreads throughout our Being. As we discover our True and higher self, our evolving soul within, Joy comes to us. As we connect to the transcendent spiritual Reality, we experience ultimate joy -- the Delight and Bliss of the Creator, once lost in creation, now rediscovered.

The True Spiritual Individual

The True and the Spiritually True Individual

Recently the state of California bet on the future of stem cell research in the United States, while most other states hedged their bets for what they considered moral and other considerations. California looked out into the world of possibilities and perceived that this new technology had great promise. Most others were unwilling to make the commitment for a variety of reasons. Rather than listen to the herd (of states), California thought the issue through and made the decision to move forward. As she has done countless times in the past, California thought for itself, rather than follow the pack. As a result, infinite benefit has followed for her and the world in a plethora of

domains of life -- including environmentalism, the personal computer, the Internet, biotechnology, the human potential movement, and many others.

The 21st century has been marked as the era of the True Individual -- i.e. the age where people truly begin to think for themselves. This Individual is no rebel, taking to his own position simply to part with the herd, but is rational and balanced; open to and perceiving the *myriad* sides of any issue. As a result, that person takes to truth-filled decisions and actions that tend to attract positive outcomes. By making rational decisions based on the *multiplicity* of truths -- rather than guarding a *single* truth related to that issue -- that person is far more likely to have an array of facts and insights at his disposal that enable him to rise to the heights, show a particular genius in a field, or be creative in ways unknown in that field.

Whereas the 20th century saw the emergence of the Common Man, the 21st opens the way for this True Individual. Utilizing that earlier-gained freedom, this new person chooses to go further and be rational in the extreme -- thinking for himself beyond the herdal view; seeing all sides of an issue, excluding none; and making judgments that flow from the true truth of things. The emergence of such individuals will not only open the way for accelerating insight, knowledge, and accomplishment, but portends an evolutionary leap for humanity.

And yet, to truly perceive the myriad of truths surrounding any object of inquiry requires a consciousness that is *open* -- that is *truth-seeking* in the extreme. That capacity however is not readily available when one lives at the *surface* of life. At that level, one tends to focus on the superficial and mundane; to what is pleasing rather than what is necessary; to what corroborates our own limited opinions, instead of what is true. As a result, we miss out on the preponderance of insight and knowledge that can lead us in the right direction. Or, to put it another way, surface living -- dominated by the auditory and visual inputs from the world around us -- leads to limited perspectives, miscalculations, and error-prone decisions and actions that thwart success and achievement in life.

And yet, if one is centered in a *deeper consciousness within* -- in mental and emotional silence; as detached "witness" looking out on the world -- then we will be far more receptive to what is unfolding around us; to the wider possibilities in the environment; to the insights and position that others have to offer. As a result, we will have the necessary knowledge to make the right decisions that attract powerful positive outcomes; accelerating both accomplishment and happiness in life. This movement toward a deeper consciousness within that is able to open to vast knowledge and insight is another hallmark of the emerging True Individual.

In addition, the way this new person absorbs that knowledge is quite different from the ordinary human method. Not only is information absorbed and processed into ideas and understanding through the normal channels of rational and logical thinking, but it also descends into this person through *illuminations* and *intuitions* of thought. Because our consciousness is deeper, wider, and more open, we continually develop new insights; continuously arrive at "aha moments" -- as a myriad of intuitive and revelatory knowledge-experiences enter our minds from the universal planes. As a result, we are able to acquire a many-sided, deep, penetrating knowledge of any matter, which becomes the basis for very right behavior and action in life. This ability to attract knowledge and truth in a flash from the universal domains of life is another hallmark of the True Individual.

Yet another dimension of this person is that he or she is constantly creating *the new and the dynamic*. Through a calm poise, that perceives a many-sided knowledge; through a persistent openness to the life's possibilities, the True Individual is opened to the portals of creativity -- enabling him or her to become *the dynamic leader, the ultra-artist, the*

pathmaker to future realities, the visionary who carries others into a most unexpected future.

As this individual moves deeper still to the True Self -- i.e. to the Evolving Soul within -- the descent of truth-knowledge and these spontaneous eruptions of creativity will only *accelerate*. In fact, whereas the True Individual derives his power predominantly by opening to the myriad of possibilities before him, the True *Spiritual* Individual opens the doors to the vast array of possibilities of the universal and cosmic planes. The more this person encounters his Soul and True Self, the more knowledge rushes in from the heights; the more creative possibility reveals itself; the more positive outcomes to situations rush to his doorstep. Thus, if I want to know the solution to a problem, I center myself in the deepest depths within, aspire for the solution, and offer it to the Higher Power. As a result, answers quickly, if not instantaneously, pour in from all quarters, as I am able to engage those higher planes *directly*. At that point, I am not only miles beyond the limited view of the herd, but I have even surpassed the multiplicity of truths that I can garner from my own personal vantage point. I now have a *direct, continuous link* to the highest planes of consciousness, with the infinite possibilities it continually offers. As a result of these developments, I am no longer just the True Individual, but I have entered the realm of the True *Spiritual* Individual.

The question then is how can we make this somewhat abstract vision of our future real and concrete? We can begin the process of becoming a True Individual by considering any issue that comes before us from *all* possible sides. As our mind focuses on a subject matter, we should actively seek to know as many sides as possible, while giving up our tendency to focus solely on our own dogged viewpoint or limited perspectives. By taking this approach, we will constantly absorb the necessary knowledge that will enable us to live more dynamic and successful lives.

The second step we can take to become a True Individual is to develop a deeper center of consciousness. We can begin to do this by moving our central focus away from the surface of life -- from the visual and auditory influences of the surface of life that impinge on and overwhelm our thought processes. Through concentration, meditation, and other means of drawing our focus inward, we are able to shift to a deeper center of awareness from which we are able to perceive the wider possibilities, the multiplicity of truths unfolding around us. As a result, we begin to become free thinkers -- unfettered by the influence of the social imperative; unshackled from our ego sense that is attached to one position at the expense of others; unburdened by our wanting, limiting attitudes and opinions. Through this deep basis, we deep insights continually unfold, we perceive issues from a variety of sides, enabling us get at the heart and essence of any matter. We do so not only through rational, logical thinking, but also through descents of knowledge from the universal planes of life. As a result, we become free thinkers, dynamic creators and great accomplisners, which in turn energizes us in the extreme -- filling us with deep delight and joy in being alive.

By taking these steps, we have the opportunity to partake in a noble experiment. We have the chance to be forerunners of a new type of person, whose existence is not determined by the outer conditions and influences of life, but by one's inner status and being. By taking up this golden opportunity, we can become the pioneers of the 21st century, the pathfinders of tomorrow -- helping humanity take the next decisive, evolutionary step.

Five Levels on the Scale of Personality

Based on Sri Aurobindo's teachings, Sri Karmayogi explains five levels of expression of Human Personality**, ranging from essentially none to its ultimate expression. It is actually as scale from non-individuality to ultimate spirit-based individuality. Each

person is stationed in one of these levels, or perhaps across two. Let's examine each of these.

(1) The first is *Manners*. The person stationed here does things simply because others do them. He mimics them, and has no real individual consciousness and purpose. He has an unformed Personality.

(2) The second and somewhat higher aspect is *Behavior*. Here one acts at a slightly higher level than Manners, and there is a limited degree of individuality present. Lydia in *Pride and Prejudice* is an example. Her energies went out wildly to wherever she wished to accomplish. There was little thinking or self-reflection in her action; with a limited degree of individuality present. They have their own motives, but there is no real formed character; no centrality of being; with the focus on doing behaving without much self-reflection. These are not distinct and memorable people, despite what they might accomplish. Mr. Bingley and perhaps Jane are other examples in the story. Most people in the world are fundamentally centered, stationed at this plane of being.

(3) The third level of human Personality is *Character*. This person has a more clearly defined and formed nature. They are distinct, with an individuality that is recognizable; that stands out. They are in many ways their own person, as opposed to the person of mere manners and that of (non-reflective) behavior. Both Mr. Darcy and Eliza of *Pride and Prejudice* have developed Character, which is in contrast with many others in the story. He is his own person, with a cultured, educated and aware disposition. Eliza is an independent thinking, lively, and self-aware individual, ahead of her times. If you examine the people you know or are familiar with you will see that some have this more distinct, readily identifiable, self-reflective, individualistic and conscious nature.

(4) The fourth type in this ascending scale is quite rare. It is *Personality (Individuality)*. People of this kind go further in life, have an exceptional role to play that stretches their being, and requires the most intensely individualistic of qualities. Michael Gorbachev ascending to the head of the USSR and ending the Cold War and Steve Jobs who created the personal computer and smartphone revolutions almost single-handedly are of this type. Eliza in *Pride and Prejudice* was slightly of this type beyond her capacity of Character. Darcy after his change in consciousness emerged somewhat as this type as well.

(5) The fifth type of nature is *Spiritual Personality/Individuality*, which is practically unheard of. This individual is extremely individualistic like that of Personality, except all of his cues are taken not from mind but from his evolving Soul, the Psychic Being within. For that person the Psychic is constantly giving direction to his life, enabling ultimate right awareness, actions, solutions, creative visions, etc. It is this level that the Mother is referring to in her statement "The inmost being, the true personality, the central consciousness of the evolving individual is his Psychic Being." Sri Aurobindo, the Mother, Sri Karmayogi are examples of this type.

The scale of Personality then is *Manners > Behavior > Character > Personality (Individuality) > Spiritual Personality/Individuality*. Where we fit in on this scale indicates our level of self-awareness, our individuality, our inner power in life, and where our Essence and Being stands in our evolving Soul's journey through multiple births.

**Note: By "Personality" we are referring to the development of character and individuality of the person, not the quickly recognizable surface nature as when people say "He has a lively and engaging (or dull) personality."

Further comments:

--This approach places us on a scale so we are able to see the degree we are conscious, distinct, individualistic, self-directed, and rooted in the spirit -- enabling ultimate living, right decision making, and ability to impact the world.

--*The Spiritual Individual* -- Both Sri Aurobindo and Sri Karmayogi indicate that one can become the Spiritual Individual by taking to Integral Yoga, which is to surrender ourselves, our lives, our very purpose to the Divine Being and Its Will - for us devotees the Divine Mother - which strengthens the Psychic connection and Its Ultimate Individualistic influences that guide our aspiration and action. That Guide also constantly monitors us, preventing us from expressing wanting qualities, attitudes, and behavior in the yogic process.

In addition, the Psychic Influence of the Spiritual Individual has a universal and transcendent aspect. I.e. the Psychic Guide is indicating what actions one can advocate for the world, for society, to improve them in a great way from within. Thus through spirit-based Individuality, you are releasing energies, advocating projects, works that have power to change the world. This is e.g. what I have seen from Sri Karmayogi for many decades; in his teachings, his programs, associations, his subtle influence that has in certain areas influenced the course of world progress and events.

And then there is the fact such universal power and activity is actually fulfilling the Transcendent, the Divine Intent behind it.

Note that in a way the Spiritual Individual (#5 in our scheme) is similar to the True Individual/Personality (#4) in that in both one can render great works, great service to society; except for the Spiritual Individual the cues are from Self that has surrendered to the Infinite Consciousness, the Divine Mother, and Her Will in the world. Here the progress one initiates inside for society is not just material, but spiritual - i.e. to bring forth the spiritual dimension in the details of life, furthering the Evolution. It's the work of the Avatar or similar, who is in essence a realized Spiritual Individual.

Levels of Depth of Being of the Individual

If we examine any typical group of individuals, we will see that they demonstrate a wide variety and broad range of personal qualities; from the indistinguishable and shallow, to those who are deep and individualistic. Based on the insights of Sri Aurobindo, spiritual philosopher and yogi Sri Karmayogi has developed a scale of five levels -- from the surface to the depths -- indicating the development and formed nature of individuals.

Manners

The shallowest and most unformed person is one who acts at the level of Manners. It is automatic, rote behavior that mimics others or the customs of society. If you look around, you may notice certain individuals who have no particular or solidly formed attitudes, opinions, values, or beliefs. They just imitate what others do; what society dictates. Theirs is a life of the surface personality and being. They may be good people, like a Jane Bennett and Mr. Bingley of *Pride and Prejudice*, but they take their cues from what is expected of them, by how society expects them to behave. Theirs is not a developed character and being, as there is little sense of Self.

Manners then is a set of formalized patterns of expression, action and response demanded of each of us by the society we live in, regardless of how we actually feel inside, which is often very different from the outward manners we exhibit.

Behavior

At a somewhat level higher/deeper is the person who asserts his opinions, attitudes, desires, values, etc. even as they may not exactly be their own. Mrs. Bennet in *Pride*

and Prejudice is constantly expressing her opinions of things, to the constant detriment of others. Likewise, she expresses no higher or deeper values and beliefs, as her nature is pure spontaneous expression of her wants and desires. She does not quite mimic others as in the lower of form of Manners; nor does she express a higher, more developed Character.

A large number of people fall into this category. If you ever see a friend who constantly expresses behaviors without a sense of what others think, they are essentially at the level of Behavior. They just do, and act, and behave, and do not know and do not ask why. They have more of a conscience than the person of Manners, but there is still an unformed character and sense of Self.

Character

Above Manners and Behavior is Character. Character is expressed by the individual who has a more fully developed sense of Self. His or her ways follow recognizable patterns of being, in which a more fully formed nature has emerged. Others recognize their distinct character, and they perceive their own uniqueness and sense of self as well. For example, in *Pride and Prejudice* both Darcy and Eliza have developed Characters. They have recognizable qualities of being that repeat, demonstrating essential personal attitudes and values that they subscribe to. Their sense of self, their consciousness of self has emerged.

If you look around you will notice several of your friend, relatives, and associates have established a unique, recognizable, repeating set of qualities that clearly identify that person. It is a formed character; a more developed sense of consciousness and being than those who without thought or reason express their Behavior, or unconsciously mimic others through Mannered thoughts and actions.

Character then refers to the fixed, repetitive, organized psychological formations determined by the person's values, which find expression in and through the surface manners and behavior but cannot be altered by conscious effort.

Personality

And yet if we examine the difference between Darcy and Eliza, two developed, formed Characters, it is only Eliza who also has a degree of development of Personality. What is Personality? It is the formed Character that also expresses one's Individuality in various facets of one's being and through life experiences. Darcy and Eliza may both demonstrate distinct, recognizable, repeating qualities of Being; have distinguishable character and natures that others and they themselves are aware of; but it is only Eliza that is her own true person. She takes her cues not from others perceptions of what is occurring or what things mean, but from her own unique, individualistic vantage point and view of things. She is able to do this because she has a native intelligence that is married to a set of personal values that give her an added sense of the truth of things. She thinks, behaves, and acts from her individualism underpinned by a greater knowledge, a deeper insight, born of a unique set of values, unencumbered and untarnished by the position of others and the herd mentality of society. Thus, she is able to break out beyond her formed Character and when circumstance demand it, express unique, individualistic, values-oriented approaches and responses to life. She tends to see a spade for a spade; has deeper insight into things; and acts in ways that go beyond the norms, the accepted and taboo.

When Michael Gorbachev decided to take a different approach and bring down the Soviet Empire from within, it was an expression of Personality. Though right in the heart of an anachronistic and decaying system, he had the keen insight and high values to express his individualistic view of the dire conditions, and had the strength of conviction to bring it about. Einstein also had that power of Personality into an entirely different field. In

fact, Einstein might have been a more developed Personality still; not only in his unique, individualistic insights in his field of science which often came through an intuitive sense, but in the creative, dynamic, unconventional ways he conducted his Life.

Thus, we can see different degree by which one expresses his individuality, conviction, personal values, and strength amongst individuals of Personality. And yet it is also the case that few individuals have any formed Personality, as their being struggles to even have a developed Character.

As MSS says, "Personality represents the capacity for expansive or creative initiative that transcends the limitations imposed by character, society or personal experience. It has the capacity to respond freshly to a situation, to attempt what has not yet been done before, to transfer formed capacities from one field of activity to another."

True, Spiritual Individuality

Then there are the exceeding rare individuals who are not only formed Characters; are not only Personalities who express their Individuality through unfettered, keen, bold, dynamic thought and action, but who take their cues from the influence of the deepest Self and Soul being. For example, an Einstein may express a highly individualized Personality by imagining the unimaginable and expressing his unique points of view in related fields of life, but it is another thing to express the Individuality of One's Soul. Let me explain:

Every person has a True Self and being; an evolving soul within. It has taken birth in ourselves in order to learn from our experience in Its journey through time. It continues on through multiple births until its unique mission is complete. An evolved individual is one who has made contact with his Soul and being; who perceives its purpose, and therefore his own life's purpose. When he then acts from that Soul being, he is expressing ultimate Individuality, taking cues from Its Essence and Insights into Nature and Life. They are far more perceptive, penetrating, and powerful than anything one could have developed through one's normal mental perceptions and unique experiences in life.

When one garners insight and influence that emanates from one's evolving Soul being, you perceive ultimate, individualized approaches for dealing with life's circumstance. It is a step beyond the creative, perceptive, daring, values-driven individuality of Personality, to the continued spiritual, cosmic influence and guidance of the evolving Soul and True Self within. It is the expression of individuality of the Evolving Soul that is in touch with forces -- earthly, universal, and transcendent -- that give continuous, dynamic, right direction and Guidance from the very source and Truth of things.

Examples of such Spiritualized Personalities are rare in the extreme. The Great Indian sage and seer Sri Aurobindo is an example of one, as he garnered his extremely unique and individualistic perceptions and the Life Power he garnered as a result by connecting to the Psychic, Soul Being within. In fact, he used it to change the nature of reality around him, including the history of the world from within. Likewise, his spiritual partner, The Mother, did the same. They were/are True Spiritual Individuals who take their cues from their Soul being.

So we see the scope of the levels of Being of who we are and what we can become. It ranges from surface to depth; from mindless manners to soul-based influence and individuality. While most people in the world function from the level of Behavior, not demonstrating a distinct, repeating, recognizable formed character, there is also a considerable number of individuals who have a formed Character, demonstrating a sense of repeating distinctness and limited self-awareness. On the other hand, very few have that developed, formed Personality, where one acts from deeper conviction and values expressing their individuality; and only a handful still function as True, Spiritual

Individuals where the Soul guides us and offers individualized suggestion and influences on how to act and what to avoid.

One question then is how we can rise within this scale of being; whether to the next highest level of Self, or a fuller formation at that plane.

Assuming that readers here have at least a somewhat developed sense of Self, of developed Character, then how can we begin to emerge into a more formed individualistic Personality. Or to put it another way, how can we evolved from the fixed, identifiable Character of a Darcy to the more open, individualistic dynamic character of an Eliza Bennet or an Elizabeth I, or an Einstein, or a Churchill, or a Gorbachev, or a Steve Jobs?

To do that we must overcome our fixed nature, not be determined by the influences of the herd. In other words, *become our own person*. And do so at every level, psychologically, emotionally, even physically. If we begin to get our cues from the deeper parts of ourselves, from our highest aspirations and deepest values, expressing them in ways in which we are True to ourselves and our Individuality, then we will be making the great transition from formed Character to formed Personality. This is the evolution of consciousness that Sri Aurobindo has explained in *The Life Divine*, and which Karmayogi has taken up and explained in great detail.

Then there are the very, very few, who can begin to find their True Self and Soul, experience all of its spiritual values, like Peace, Wisdom, Truth, Goodness, Power, Creativity, Beauty, Love, Delight, Timelessness, and Infinity, and express their nature from there. This is the ultimate

Tending the True Self that Fosters Individuality

Individuality begins at the point where we psychologically and outwardly express who we truly are. Moreover, those who are truly conscious of their own uniqueness will more readily bring it to the surface, creating real benefit for themselves and the world at large. Finally, the society that fosters that indwelling true self and individuality of the person will create a multiplying effect of ever-increasing creativity and accomplishment in the world.

In the recent powerful Indian film '[Like Stars on Earth \(Every Child is Special\)](#),' we see this latter dynamic in action. There a young boy with dyslexia becomes an outcast from his peers and the school system. And yet one progressive teacher steps forward, sees beyond the surface and into the depths of the child, fostering his individuality as a painter with a genius-like artistic temperament. This, it turns out is the complete opposite of the mass education system that operates on a hierarchical structure, with the teacher all knowing; departing knowledge to a strained or reluctant classroom of children. A better system would therefore be the opposite; where the teacher begins by discovering the true essence, spirit, and aspirations of each child, drawing it out, which allows it to flow and expand through a process of self-discovery. This approach not only energizes the child to no end, but turns learning into a joyful experience.

This approach to education -- and indeed to life itself -- suggests that there really is an essence and true self of each person. That somehow we are here to express our True Individuality, which not only expresses through our own creative, individualistic path, but has a unique influence and impact on the world. Some go a step further and see true individuality as our "spirit," our spiritual essence; even our evolving soul that has a mission and purpose trying to express through the unique capacities and potentiality of the person it inhabits.

In sum, the person who becomes consciously aware of his or her true self will facilitate the expression of his or her individuality, thereby accelerating the process of personal

accomplishment and growth for themselves and the world. Moreover, social organizations where facilitators like teachers and leaders bring out the true essence and potential of individuals will foster an ever expanding community of entrepreneurs, creative artists, and free thinkers. One could even imagine a society where the number of geniuses expands a thousand-fold through this dynamic. In fact, one Indian school taking this approach advertised its goal as "every child a genius."

Albert Einstein, Leonardo D Vinci and others were not only infinitely creative individuals expressing their individuality, but had a conscious or semi-conscious sense of their essence and purpose. We too can come to know our true selves and purpose; our inner mission, by looking deep within, which will release powerful energies that will become a springboard for infinite realization and accomplishment in life.

The Life of Spiritual Adventure that Attracts

The overwhelming majority of the time life is routine -- i.e. what we do and what comes to us is what is expected. Other times, life suddenly descends on us and offers up the unexpected, -- often taking the form of sudden good fortune. The latter tends to occur in response to our efforts to meet life's challenges, or by taking life by the horns and living it to the full. Here is a recent real life case in point:

One man I know of had not left California for 30 years -- save for two relatively short driving vacation trips across the western United States. For this individual then, the state of California had essentially become his entire nation!

One day recently, he was asked to fly down to San Diego in the southern part of the state near the Mexican border to perform some work for a client there. In the three previous decades, he had never once ventured further south -- in California, or anywhere else -- than the Los Angeles area. He was therefore both excited about the trip, and concerned about his ability to navigate this new area.

When he arrived from San Diego on a flight from San Francisco, he discovered a very pleasing landscape, including a beautiful, warm coastline, soaring mountains, and a growing downtown skyline. Though he struggled at first to get his bearings, he was in the end able to navigate the freeway system and make his way to the client, who had their offices in a spectacular valley town north of the city. In the next several days, our friend successfully completed his work, while still having time to explore the coastal region and its sun-splashed beauty. After three days, he returned to his residence in the San Francisco area, with both new insight and an abundance of new energy.

Shortly after he arrived back at his home base, something peculiar happened -- his computer began to die. After very four very productive years of use, the computer suddenly and most unexpectedly ceased functioning. Since his entire business -- ne, his whole *life* - was contained on the machine, he was shocked by this sudden turn of events. He felt overwhelmed by the fact that without a computer, he was not only out of touch with the world, but all of the documents and programs he needed to get through the day were no longer available. Add the fact that this individual's profession was in the computer/software field, and that a major vacation to Hawaii loomed on the horizon -- his first travels outside of the United States in 33 years (!) -- you could imagine why he suddenly felt the weight of the world on his shoulders!

And yet despite this impossible, pressure-filled situation, our friend was able to conjure up the right attitude. Specifically, he viewed the turn of events as part of one great adventure that begun when he first embarked on his trip to San Diego, and was now continuing through these latest difficult unfoldings. He sensed that there was a purpose in what was occurring: that life was somehow trying to push things forward, and that he was willing to be a full participant in this latest adventure. It was with that attitude that he tackled the current problem of the expiring computer.

In the next several days, he did everything he could to get the machine up and running. However, for each step forward, he seemed to go two steps back. For example, he bought a new large external monitor because the built in one on his laptop had failed, only to discover that it distorted the screen, making all the web sites he created over the last decade unrecognizable. Because his old computer had so many connections with other add-on devices, and had so many wires running in and out of it, that when he changed one part, other parts would begin to fail. When the situation became intolerable, and his very lifestyle and businesses came into jeopardy, our friend perceived that a new approach was in order: that he go out and purchase a new machine.

That morning he arrived at the electronics mega store to purchase the computer. There he saw one that he liked, and a moment later a young man came up to help him. Our friend noticed that the salesperson had a soft and quiet nature. He then proceeded to tell the salesperson which machine he was interested, after which the clerk walked over to the giant metal cage to see if the item was in stock. Our friend, now desperate for any good news after days of incessant trouble, took the only course of action he knew: he opened himself up to the spiritual Force, and with great intensity offered the entire situation to the Higher Power.

After a considerable delay, the salesperson finally returned from his search. But would he have the computer that our friend wanted? It turns out that the salesperson was indeed holding a computer, but it was not the one our friend wanted. Instead, the salesperson found a different one that contained a microprocessor that was nearly double the speed of other one -- *and* at a lower price! At that moment, our friend knew that the Higher Power had surely worked on his behalf. Thereafter, he felt grateful to the spirit that helped bring about this stunning turn of events.

When our friend arrived back at the office, he unpacked the machine and turned it on. He was instantly dazzled at how beautiful the screen image looked; how quickly the software loaded; and how many astonishing new features were already built in. He was particularly amazed that he could easily connect to the Internet through a wireless connection. One after another, he discovered new features that he was certain would make his life easier. As each new feature revealed itself, he felt as if he were on a magic carpet ride -- taken on a journey that transcended his experiences using his old, outdated machine.

Dazzled by these state of the art features, not only did he truly recognize how utterly out of date his old computer was, but now he saw that its death knell was actually a blessing in disguise; one that ushered in the wondrous new computer before him. He perceived that the failure of his old computer was no failure at all, but an opening to vast possibilities that arrived in the form of the new machine!

In addition to the computer episode, something else occurred after he returned from the "distant lands" of San Diego. He now perceived that he could take his long desired trip to Hawaii. Before going to San Diego, he was not sure. Now, however, after the trip, and particularly after he saw that he had a new machine that was reliable, he was sure. In fact, his trip to Maui -- his first trip out of the US in three decades -- was an equally great adventure, bringing as astounding array of additional life response experiences too innumerable to describe here!

When we live a life of adventure, life tends attract the positive. When we break out of old habits, when we embrace to the new, we release powerful energies, and as a result, life tends to respond positively from all quarters. When our friend journeyed to San Diego to meet with a client, it was the furthest he had journeyed south in over 30 years. For him, it was a great adventure to a foreign place in which he was required to solve the problems of others. As a result, powerful energies were released, which returned to him in spades in the form of an exciting new computer, and the realization of a dream

vacation. Even when the computer died along the way, he saw it as a continuation of a natural and organic adventure that was in the process of unfolding.

The more we brave to go beyond the ordinary and routine; the more we embrace the possibilities that life presents us; the more we aspire for the heights -- the more energy we release that tends to attract very positive results fortune from our surroundings.

Life lived in its fullest is then the seeking and experiencing of Adventure. Through that dynamic, we not only attract the miraculous, but as a result are energized and delighted to no end. It is through such Adventures in Living that we experience not only the thrill of the journey, but the ecstatic fulfillment and enjoyment of the reward!

Developing an Inner Life

Living from the Depths

Moving to the Depths Within

We can move the focus of our consciousness away from the surface of life, from the bubblings and churnings of the outer existence, to a deeper poise within. Stationed in this deeper poise inside ourselves, we are able to shift our consciousness from preoccupation with the sense data streaming into our minds from the outside through our five senses, to a clearer and more rational state of mindfulness. As we move our concentration from the surface to the depths, not only do we withdraw our consciousness from the bombardment of surface visual and audible sense inputs to the clear rationality and logic of thought, but we move away from our ego sense, of our sense of separateness from others and the environment. As a result, we develop a wider view; and we are able to embrace the multiplicity and right relation of life unfolding around us, enabling perceptions of the true truth of the life before us. This in turn leads us to perceptions of the possibilities before us, which provides choices, out of which we can make the right decisions, resulting in actions that end in perfect success.

Let's take an example. An individual who is living in his surface consciousness is listening to a conversation that others are having. He picks up on one point that is particularly striking to him, which is to make sure that he downloads the latest updates to his virus protection software. The rest of the crowd responds loudly in agreement. This information is very helpful. However, had he truly listened to other aspects of the conversation; had he had the *inner wherewithal* to sense the deeper meaning between the words, he would have perceived other critical issues being addressed; issues so important that it could have changed the course of his career. If, through meditation, inner concentration, or other means, he had established a deeper poise within, he would have had the ability to perceive issues that were critical to his life. Thus, we see that establishing a poise that is untouched by the perturbations of the surface, centered in the quietude within enables us to have an even greater grasp of the unfoldings of life outside ourselves. We thus access a great power, as we are able to continually have more knowledge, which allows us to make better decisions, and thus take to the right actions that lead to great success in life.

Moving Within

Only when you have begun to break the never-ending link of our consciousness to the surface of life can we move within. Only when we are able to move the focus of our thoughts away from the constant input of the five senses to *rational* thought, or even beyond that to *silence* in the mind, can we break the connection with the surface.

We *begin* this process of bringing the spiritual Being into the Becomings of our lives by *first* moving into the depths of our being, away from the surface of life. We move from mind preoccupied with sense data to mind centered in the silence of the depths. Then we can move further within to the deepest depths where we discover the Inner Being, the personal evolving soul.

We move into the depths within, develop an inner poise, discover the silence there. Then, if we are lucky, we go further within and find our evolving souls, and bring in this spiritual power into our daily lives, changing ordinary life into infinite life.

Living within, you are more in harmony and unity with the environment, with others, with the emerging truths in the atmosphere.

Connecting within will enable you to have a deeper sense of what is unfolding around you at any moment in time. From that inner poise you will be far more in tune with others, with the environment, to the moment to moment unfoldings of life. This will enable you to have better ongoing understanding and knowledge, which will enable you to develop keener *insights* into what is happening around you. As a result, you will make better decisions; you will take actions that are based on truth, which means they are far more likely to end in *success* and achievement. In other words, you will have the inner poise that can enable vast knowledge, accomplishment, and happiness in your daily life.

What Does it Mean to Live in the Depths?

If you have been following the 'A New Way of Living' area of Growth Online you probably have noted our reference to the importance of "living within" or "living in the depths of our being" instead of on the surface of life. But what does that really mean? What do we actually know and sense and feel when we live our daily existence centered deeply in the inner being within? Here are some of our experiences of what it means to live in the depths:

-When you live within in the depths, you feel very calm and peaceful. There is a stillness, even when you are moving.

-When you live in the depths, you are very much in tune with what's around you.

-When you live in the depths there is a feeling of softness, and at its best a feeling of sweetness, even of an inner bliss. We experience the inner joy and delight of existence. This is the key experience!

-When you live within in the depths, you have a heightened sensitivity to the feelings, thoughts, and actions of those around you. You perceive them in a far more positive and empathetic light.

-When you are stationed within, there is a kind of patience that envelops you. That patience and equality gives you the steadiness that helps life point you in the right direction, so you know what are to the right actions to take, enabling you to do your very best, with perfect outcomes.

-When you live in the depths, there is an awareness of more of what's going on around you; more awareness of the possibilities, the multiplicities, the truths, and the subtleties

and complexities (and the simplicities!) of all around you. You become the surveyor of life around you; enabling a great knowledge, insight, and wisdom at any moment.

-When you live in the depths, you connect with the subtleties of life that life is presenting at every moment, enabling us to have a great power of awareness, knowledge and action that we normally wouldn't have. Our heightened radar of consciousness is now able to pick up on the various subtle, "low frequency" signals life is presenting us, helping us understand what we should do next or in the near future; or even what not to do.

-When you live within in the depths, you live your greatest "efficiency" in life. Your efficiency is your ability to create great results with the least amount of effort in the shortest period of time

-When you live within, you sense life continually responding in a positive way around you. You experience these startling miracles on a very regular basis. You also sense what actions to take to invoke your own life responses, and you are continually amazed at the instantaneous, miraculous life responses that occur around you as a result of your inner movements of consciousness and your right outer actions and initiatives.

-When you go to the greatest depths within, you connect with your personal spirit and soul. You experience it there just in the chest behind the heart. There, you sense the very deepest meaning and purpose of your life. There is no greater sense of security and meaning in all one's existence! Over time your personal spirit and soul becomes an inner guide that is aware of your foolish or wrong outer attitudes, perceptions, opinions and actions. It steers you in the right direction; and all the while you feel the joy and bliss of this connection.

-When you live in the inner soul being you connect and extend outward to the universal forces and powers in the cosmos. You have a global, universal sense of things. You feel connected more deeply with others, with all forces, movements, emergences that are occurring on earth and beyond. Further still, if you are lucky, you connect with the ultimate source, power, energy, and spirit of existence; i.e. with the Divine Reality, the source of all existence and delight in life.

The Psychic Being (True Self, Evolving Soul)

Ways of Connecting to the Evolving Soul

Sri Aurobindo says that the Soul, about the size of the human thumb, resides invisibly behind the heart. It is not just a static soul however, but an EVOLVING entity, which has entered a series of individuals in its cosmic Journey through time, and now lodges in our own being, hoping to learn new lessons through our experiences in this life.

How then can we get in touch with this soul, this "psychic being"? There are a number of specific ways, but the simplest general approach is that whatever deepens our consciousness brings us closer to the psychic. That includes such spiritual-like approaches as moving into harmony with others and with life, being selfless and self-giving, sensing the deepest truth of things, and creating beauty in the world.

Karmayogi indicates that regular Consecration, opening to the spiritual Force, the Mother before activities or events is the most powerful way to connect with the evolving soul. Consecration efforts not only evoke powerful positive conditions from the world around us, but deepens our being, taking us from the surface of life to a deeper poise within. Gradually we plunger deeper still to the inner being (the subliminal), culminating in the psychic, the evolving soul in the deepest depths of our being.

Another method of connecting with our True Self is by continually taking the other person's point of view, which is to accept at face value what others say and believe, no matter what its truth content. It opens the mind from its partial view to a many-sided truth of things, which also in effect deepens our consciousness, taking us to our True Self. Taking another's viewpoint melts away the mental ego and deepens our center of being. In fact, any movement that dissolves the Ego, whether a self-giving gesture or widening the mind to its spiritual capacities such as intuition and revelation will help create the psychic opening.

Then what is it like to experience the Evolving Soul? It is to experience all of the spiritual attributes of creation -- including Peace, Harmony, Truth, Goodness, Beauty, Love, Delight, Infinity, and Timelessness. The experience of the Psychic Being is one of stillness; it is to feel oneness with others and life; it is to perceive the deepest and widest truth of life; it is to spontaneously do things to please others; it is to perceive the majesty of creation; it is to find deepest meaning and purpose; it is to feel deep affection and compassion for others; it is the capacity to evoke plenitude out of current limitations; it is the ability to bring the future into the present in an instance by connecting to the supramental power from this deepest place within us.

The realization of the evolving soul indicates the birth of the Spiritual Individual, who will be the basis of a new type Being on earth, a Supramental Person, which itself is a harbinger of and will usher in a new Spirit-based Life on earth.

Psychic Being

There is the Divine reality, a portion of which enters your being, gives you your individuality. It is your Soul. Its source is beyond the manifestation, a piece of which is in you. There is also a deputy of the Soul called the "Psychic Being." It is a terrestrial entity that is developed in you that has been on its own journey of realization through multiple births. It seeks your experiences to further that growth. It is a journey from Ignorance to Integral Knowledge.

We can come in contact with the psychic being through concentration. When we do, we experience the spiritual attributes the Infinite intended for the creation -- including silence, peace, harmony, knowledge, wisdom, truth, goodness, love, delight, timelessness, and infinity.

When we are in touch with the Psychic Entity we experience its Guidance, continuously indicating what we should and shouldn't do.

Coming in contact with the psychic being is a requirement for making the Surrender to Her in the integral yogic process. Spiritual and Supramental realization are further stages. The deeper we go in, the more the mind expands to intuition, revelation, and supramental perception of the complete knowledge of a thing inside without a single thought.

The Mother says the psychic being is like a flame, but cool. She also says that if you get in touch with it you can remember corresponding moments where you were in touch with the psychic in previous births. The psychic being resides behind the heart, in a cave, about the size of a thumb.

The psychic is experienced as an emotion, but not like a vital emotion. It is such a powerful experience that it wells up tears in us, but not tears of joy or sorrow, but something beyond.

We live on the surface of life, and need to break through the crust that separates us from the psychic being. Sometimes the psychic cries out as it is buried inside and we have not made the effort to get in touch with it. It is called Psychic Sorrow.

By going deep within we touch the Psychic entity. When we do we feel the transcendent more acutely, and therefore wish to surrender to the Divine Shakti, Mother. Now we live for Her, for the Divine, and our entire life's purpose is taken in that direction. We become direct instruments for the evolution, including the emergence of Spirit in Life. We are set on the road to becoming the Supramental Being, and as a result an instrument for the emergence of a Divine Life on Earth.

The Personal Evolving Soul (The Psychic Being, the True Self)

Each person has a soul, which we can think of as an inlet of the great ocean of the Divine spirit. The soul is in essence a spark of the Divine in each of us.

This soul *extends itself* to something we call the *personal evolving* soul, otherwise known as the Psychic Being or the True Self. This personal evolving soul has been moving from one body to the next seeking its own progress and evolution, accumulating experiences along the way to enable its growth. When this personal evolving soul enters or develops in you as an extension of soul, it is seeking yet *additional* progress through your *own* growth and progress.

When we go into the depths within, and discover our personal evolving soul, we have made the decisive movement that will enable a never-ending progress in life so that we can overcome the divisions and dualities in life; not through the slow and painful method of Nature, but through the power of connecting to our inner spirit, our personal evolving soul, our True Self.

The psychic being is our True Self, the personal evolving soul, the Inner Being.

Just as the unknowable Divine evolved a Spirit state called the Being, our souls evolve a personal evolving soul called the Inner or Psychic Being.

Just as the Divine Being came about from the unknowable Divine in order to begin the process of creating the universe, we can connect with the Inner Being to enable ultimate creative capacities for accomplishment and joy in life. The Divine Being is/was the creator of the infinite universe. We can likewise be the creators of an infinite reality for ourselves and the world.

Our purpose is to bring the spirit, the spiritual Being into the Becoming of life. We can begin this process by finding our own spirit, our evolving soul within.

The Amazing Journey of the Evolving Soul

Sri Aurobindo indicates that we are evolving from Ignorance to Integral Knowledge, amongst other ways. However, that monumental effort of transformation cannot be completed in a single life, so it requires multiple births.

Who we are in essence consists of a Soul that is a spark of the Divine, as well as its deputy, the Evolving Soul. When we die, our Soul (Jivatman) returns to its source, yet its deputy the Evolving Soul, the Psychic Being continues on its journey through time. It journeys on by taking on another birth, and another, until fulfillment. It does so in order to become fully realized, including the garnering the Truth and Integral Knowledge of its being. It acquires that cosmic wisdom by being reborn in another person and taking and integrating the essential experiences and realizations of the person it inhabits. It repeats that in each birth until fulfillment.

Those who have taken to the spirit are generally those whose soul has passed through many births. Hence the expression a "ripe soul." And yet a person can evolve quickly in a SINGLE birth. The spiritual Force offers that possibility for us.

Jean Valjean in *Les Miserables* went through several births semi-consciously. We can do it fully consciously by making a full effort of personal growth, evolution, and transformation. Surrendering to the Higher Power is the method. Interestingly, doing so puts us in touch with the Psychic Entity within us, the Evolving Soul. As a result, we now have access to the Inner Guide that shows us the way from moment to moment, as well as enabling us to experience a profound oneness with others and all of life.

In this way, not only do we evolve our own individual selves to our highest possibility, and give sustenance to the Evolving Soul on its Amazing Journey, but through that successful effort we help move the world forward in its own cosmic journey through space and time.

The Psychic Being (the Personal Evolving Soul)

The great secret of evolution is for the individual to find his personal soul guide, his psychic being, and live from that inner pose. From there he can master all of life; see the widest truths around him, know what actions are the right one, be one with others, their inputs, and knowledge; and be one with environmental, and that which is unfolding around him.

To live from this deepest inner soul, this psychic being is a continuous delight and bliss.

When you live in the psychic you tend to enable illuminations, visions, and intuitions of knowledge into your being. You begin to know the object of knowledge less from thinking but from "knowing," as the objects of knowledge that you wish to know simply enter you. Thinking to derive at an understanding, conclusion ends as the knowledge simply enters you.

This inner, psychic being, also becomes your Guide. Because of its influence you are better able to see your mistakes, perceive wrong movements, and do the right things. You see false movements of the mind, which tends to see a part of the truth; it sees the false attitudes, opinions, and judgments of the vital and mind; and it perceives the fixidities, rigidities, and one-dimensional views of the physical consciousness. Stationed in the psychic being one tends to want to change as a person because stationed deep within the Guide points out one's defects quite clearly, and centered in the psychic and its profounder view of one's life one tends to want to implement the changes!

Methods of Discovering Our Psychic Being and Our Ultimate Transformation

As Sri Aurobindo and Mother explain it, the individual has an essential Soul, a spark of the Divine. This is the formation of the Supreme that allows us to take on an individual form. When the person dies, the spark goes out of him, returning to the Source Consciousness. Aside from this Soul is an evolving Soul, an adjunct that is unique to each of us. Sri Aurobindo and Mother call this the Psychic Being. It is an evolving Soul that takes on multiple successful births into separate individuals as it seeks in its cosmic journey experiences on its way to an ultimate realization and fulfillment.

As an individual progresses, he may come in touch with this Psychic entity, this True Self and evolving soul within. Through it one can experience all of the spiritual values of creation, including peace, harmony, knowledge, truth goodness, delight, love, eternity, and infinity. Through that Soul connection one receives ultimate guidance, develops ultimate inner power to affect change in the world, even as one perceives one's ultimate purpose as well as the true meaning of life.

In Sri Aurobindo's Yoga one gradually develops an inner consciousness that includes passing through the Subliminal being that is in touch with the superconscient forces in the universe, culminating in the deepest depths, the Psychic Being. From there one

Surrenders to the Divine Mother on the way to a further and ultimate Spiritual and Supramental transformation.

The Spiritual change is essentially the transformation of the Mind into the spiritualized mind; and the Supramental is the development of an ultimate consciousness that embodies all of the spiritual values of creation – from oneness and unity to love and delight; from timelessness in time to infinity. As a result one has overcome the separative ego, as well as our essential Ignorance born of creation, developing a supernature that is the basis of a new Divine Existence on Earth.

How then do we move from the current surface consciousness, dominated by the lower vital and physical nature to this deeper Psychic element and orientation within us? Sri Karmayogi indicates it is through constant consecration, non-reaction, taking the other's point of view, mental silence, reduced speaking, self-givingness, and overcoming our ego movements that we are able to get in touch with and bring the Psychic depths to the fore of our consciousness and being.

From there one experiences constant inner guidance, silence, peace, oneness, truth, goodness, love, delight, timelessness in time, and instantaneous miraculousness (infinity). We pass through the supramental transformation of each of the mental, vital, and physical planes of our being, developing extraordinary spiritual capacity beyond the current human. We become not only spiritualized Individuals, but Universal beings who are instruments of the Transcendent Intent. In essence, we become individual, universal, and transcendent beings; gnostic individuals who are the vanguard of a new society, a new supramental life and species on earth.

Connecting with One's Personal Evolving Soul

What is the soul? A commonly accepted definition is that the soul is a portion of, a "spark" of the Divine that each person has within him at birth. This soul is in the noblest person, as well as the most wretched. In one sense we can say that the very reason we are born is because we have manifest a spark of the universal spirit within us. Just as the universe exists as an extension of a Divine reality, so too we each exist because we have a soul spark of this Divine reality within us.

Now consider the fact that each of us actually has *two* souls! As an individual begins to live a life of progress, or lives an inner life, or connects to the spiritual Divine reality, something interesting starts to occur deep within. The spark of the Divine, this soul within us, starts taking on a new *companion* aspect that has an individualized, *personal* character. The Indian sage and seer Sri Aurobindo calls this personalized soul the "Psychic Being." (Not to be confused with having "psychic experiences.") When we grow as individuals, when we touch the inner consciousness in the depths of our being, when we connect to the Divine reality in our lives, we begin to manifest a new personalized soul space, the Psychic Being.

Next to the *unchanging* soul spark of the Divine, the personal evolving soul, the Psychic Being is *dynamic*. It is dynamic because it reflects each person's individuality, including *changes* in growth and development of the individual; whereas the "first" soul, the universal soul, the soul spark of the Divine is the same in essence in everyone; a part of, an eddy of the changeless, infinite, timeless, spaceless, unfathomable Divine. The Psychic Being is also dynamic because it is an *evolving* entity. It evolves through the accumulated positive experiences of the individual it inhabits. This individualized personal soul at any point has a certain level of spiritual substance, essence, and Wisdom; and seeks to *enhance* these through the growth and progress of the individual human it inhabits. As the individual in the course of his life grows, develops, and evolves his capacities, attitudes, habits, opinions, sentiments, values, and other aspects of his being, the Psychic Being absorbs those essences from the individual's experiences and

realizations that are useful for its *own* further evolution. In other words, when you evolve, *it* can evolve!

If the individual stops growing relative to the needs of an evolving Psychic Being, It will begin to withdraw from that person, searching for new opportunities for greater sustenance for its further development. It normally withdraws by leaving the individual, and merging with the higher realms of consciousness not of this world. If the right vehicle is found, the Psychic Being then enters that new individual in its quest for further nourishment of consciousness, i.e. to further evolve. This is what we mean by the term "rebirth."

If we are able to help the Psychic Being evolve, how can it help us? If we learn to connect with the Psychic Being that is there in the depths of our being within, then life will move in a decidedly different direction for us. The first major effect that the evolving personal soul can have on us is that it helps us live our lives in the best possible way. It does this by "watching over us," insuring that we act in the right way, do the right things, and take the right actions in life. For example, when we do certain things or take certain actions, it subtly lets us know if it is the right or wrong thing to do. It also watches over the movements of our emotions, reactions, thoughts, habits, attitudes; and subtly suggests, intimates which movements are good and which are deleterious and harmful to us, to be avoided in the future. In this way our personal evolving soul, this Psychic Being becomes our Inner Guide in life.

A second result of our connection to our evolving soul is that we start experiencing everything around us from a very different perspective. By living in the deepest depths we start to move away from and are less influenced by the *surface* activities around us. We are no longer overwhelmed by the input of the surface life, absorbed through our five senses, which deleteriously affects our feelings, our thinking processes, and our actions. As we withdraw from the surface of life, we are less likely to act from our ego-sense, from our intense and over-wrought individuality and separateness. As a result we see all of life around us in a new light. We open to the greater possibilities that are always there in the atmosphere around us. We open to wider the influences and possibilities that are emerging at every moment. We withdraw our own will and needs and desires in favor of the will and needs and requirements of others. We sense what the truth of the moment is; what is right, what is the correct action to take (or not to take). In this way we enable a greater harmony, unity, and oneness of purpose with all and everything around us.

Also, as our field of awareness, insight, and consciousness expands beyond our own selves, we begin to sense that we are not only an *individual* self, but that we are also a *universal* self and being. We begin to sense that the universe and its forces and powers are really an extension of our own individual self. We sense that the consciousness of the universe is intimately connected to our own consciousness. At that point we begin to develop a cosmic consciousness within us, as we sense that all the forces, powers, and subtleties of the universe are there at our disposal.

Then there is the effect of touching the Psychic Being on one's knowledge in life. Normally we know things through our senses, mixed with the thinking faculties of mind. When we want to know something we might need to undertake an investigation, or learn something new, or find it out from others, or simply think deeply on it. The process is long-winding and time consuming. However, there are greater powers of mind higher than one can utilize in one's life; where answers come *directly* and *instantly*, without having to go through a long process of investigation, learning, or even thinking. In this way knowledge simply comes, *descends* into our minds as sudden flashes of light or illumination, as visions or revelations, or as great descents of the object of knowledge and inquiry, complete, in toto, into our minds as intuitions. As a result of our connection to the universal consciousness and mind through our association with the Psychic Being,

these experiences of light, illumination, vision, and intuition begin to happen more frequently.

This descent from the universal is greatest when we have descents of complete *intuitions* of knowledge. If, for example, we wanted to know the solution to a difficult problem that would normally take weeks if not months of inquiry, it would simply descend into our minds, without any thought, giving us future knowledge today; e.g. abridging months of hard fought mental inquiry into literally a few moment of time. Needless to say this can totally change our effectivity and efficiency in life. We become the masters of time and space; we bring the infinite future into the finite present.

As we touch the evolving soul within we not only develop experience illuminations and intuitions of future knowledge in the present, but we also start developing a most astounding new perception of the world; a *unitarian* consciousness. What does that mean? Well normally we perceive the world in terms of conflicting opposites; good and evil, pleasure and pain, and other divisions, dualities, and opposites of life. In the unitarian consciousness we no longer view these conflicting *opposites*, but as necessary *complements* to one another needed in order for life to progress. The good cannot get better without the bad; I cannot improve myself except through my rival or the conflicts, challenges that life presents to me; the nation cannot progress except through its conflict with others. In this unitarian consciousness, we begin to perceive that the contradictory and conflicting parties are *necessary* to one another to enable higher harmonies to emerge. Pairs of opposites is Nature's way of progress. Moreover, as we see the complementary nature of opposites that need one another for each to progress to a higher harmony, we actually become instruments and *enablers* of that higher harmony. By seeing the complementary nature of related conflicting pairs, we sense where they are moving towards, and thus have a glimpse of their future direction. From that point we can develop strategies that help them get there *without* conflict! Connecting with the evolving personal soul enables us to extend out to have a glimpse of this unitarian truth consciousness.

Perhaps most rewarding in connecting to the Psychic Being within is when we experience the Delight of existence; the joy of being and living in life. Perhaps the single great reason this universe emerged from a Divine Reality was so that we who dwell here could experience the delight of the Divine spirit. The divine created the universe for delight, and when we touch our evolving soul being, our Psychic Being, we uncover that hidden delight in creation. In the Psychic Being of the individual is buried the great hidden Delight that emerged from the Creator in creation.

When we connect to the Psychic Being we experience our inner personal guide, experience great awareness of the environment around us, open the doorway to the universal consciousness and its forces and powers, open to descents of light, vision, and intuitions of complete knowledge and integral knowledge, experience the oneness, purpose, and emerging harmonies of life beyond the dualities and conflicts of existence that we see on the surface, and enter the pathway of bliss and delight. To experience the Psychic being even *once* in our life is one of the greatest experiences a human being can have. To make it a permanent *realization* is to open the portal to the infinite potentials and delight of existence.

The Journey of the Soul

The spiritual tradition tells us the soul chooses to be born in a particular set of conditions in order to make progress during that person's lifetime. After the lesson has been learned, the soul leaves the body to assimilate its experience and then reincarnates in a new life to make further progress.

For example, in Jane Austin's *Pride and Prejudice*, Mr. Darcy, though a very wealthy man with a polished exterior, presents a haughty and arrogant disposition on occasion. And yet when he meets Eliza Bennet, he is overcome by his feelings for her, struck by the light in her eyes. Yet to win her over, he realizes he has to change his nature, which he does, leading to a critical event in the story where he is able to demonstrate his dramatically improved character. As a result, Eliza responds very favorably, culminating in their happy marriage. In essence, Darcy has made a powerful progress in life; precisely what his soul had sought when it entered his being at birth.

Over a decade ago, an individual I know of went through an intense change of his own. Not so much a shift from lower to higher character, or wanting attitudes to a higher disposition, but a powerful psychological and spiritual transformation that took shape through months of intense fear. So great were the 3-6 hour daily onslaught of causeless terror that during that he had to constantly remain in a state of immovable meditation, calling peace and calm to prevent that person from going mad. Along the way, he came to understand that this was what his soul sanctioned in order to move to the next stage of his life. In fact, from that day on, he embarked on a profound personal and spiritual journey that included a new career as a thinker and writer. Because of that cathartic episode, he was reborn into a new life, enabling his soul to make a great progress.

As it turns out, there are also uncommon individuals who actually make *several* such changes in a single lifetime. These rare souls go through consecutive stages of transformation that give sustenance to their souls in its journey through time. One such individual is Jean Valjean, the main character of Victor Hugo's nineteenth century masterpiece, *Les Miserables*. In fact, Valjean passes through four distinct life-changing stages that enable him to grow from a husk of a man to a veritable saint.

Jean Valjean's first transformation took place in prison, where he spent 19 years for the petty offense of stealing a loaf of bread. There he not only developed a new level of physical strength, but a new emotional intensity through his newfound cause of social justice. Because of the harsh abuse he suffered, he committed himself to overcoming similar abuses in society. As a result, Valjean had changed from an individual who hardly spoke or looked at anybody, to one dedicated to overcoming injustices in the world.

However, Jean Valjean's soul was ready for more growth. And so in his second incarnation, he came to know a humble bishop who showed him the power of selfless and self-givingness. When the bishop saved him from the authorities after escaping from prison, Valjean came to deeply admire his goodness, goodwill, and generosity. It was a spiritual like perception for Valjean, as he now saw the brute, husk of the man he was, and the self-giving man he could become if he emulated the bishop's behavior. And so from that day on, he dedicated himself to a life of self-givingness.

And yet Jean Valjean's being was ready for more change. As long as the soul aspires for progress, life will continue to present challenges that compel its further evolution. In the years that followed Valjean was able to realize his aspirations of self-givingness by becoming a beloved and prosperous businessperson. However, one day Valjean learned that someone named Jean Valjean had been convicted of a crime. He knew that this was not the case because he was the person with that name. After wrestling with his conscience, he went to the court in Arras and revealed that he was the real Jean Valjean, thereby freeing the accused. However, by doing so, the authorities learn that he was an escaped convict; forcing Valjean once again to be a fugitive from the law. It would mean that he would have to give up all that he had built up in his professional life. What actually occurred was that life tested his full commitment to his personal ideal of self-givingness. By acceding to a level of psychological purity, by doing what was right and true, Valjean had made the third great growth and progress of his life.

Though his mind and life found great emotional satisfaction in his new solitary existence, his soul aspired for more growth and adventure. That would come in the form of his

relationship with his beloved adopted daughter Cossette. Though he rescued her as a child from the clutches of evil, and poured his love into her in the years that followed, Cossette blossomed into a young woman and found herself in love with Marius, a self-giving, young idealist.

Upon learning of the romance, Valjean through a great psychological and spiritual-like effort withdrew his possessiveness toward Cossette, retreating to his home so that she could exercise her freedom and pursue her own deep love for Marius. As a result, over time, he became weary, fell ill, and began to wither him away. However, as a result of that self-restraining effort, life responded in overwhelming fashion when near the end, Marius and Cossette arrived at his deathbed, confessing their deep love and appreciation for all he had done in lives, including saving Marius's life at the barricades. Most telling, when Cossette confessed her deep love for Valjean, all that he aspired for in his life was fulfilled, enabling him to die a happy man. That giving up of attachment to the one person he so dearly love din the name of Cossette's best interest was Valjean's final effort of self-givingness in life. He had now reached the heights of spiritual purity, of selfless love through non-attachment. As a result, he had now completed his multi-birth journey of the soul in a single lifetime.

A soul is born in each of us in order to derive one essential progress. Just as we are evolving, so is the soul through in its own cosmic journey. But the soul will only find fulfillment in us if we rise to a higher level of consciousness. The soul of Mr. Darcy was fulfilled when he made the psychological adjustment and changed a central part of his nature, winning over the woman he loved. Jean Valjean went steps beyond and evolved his being four times in a single lifetime, an almost unprecedented event that is indicative of a very rare soul.

This being the case, then what is life asking of us? What does our soul seek through change in our own being? Or to another way, how can we improve ourselves in a way that gives sustenance to our soul?

In the end, we not here merely to exist, or even to love and achieve, but to make one essential progress in our lifetime. But do we know what that is, and if so, do we understand what needs is to be done to make it happen? If we can identify those parts of our being that need change, then we will move in harmony with our soul's aspiration. If we then go a step further and make that change, not only will we progress and evolve, but so will our soul in its journey through space and time. *[Thanks to Mother's Service Society for their source materials that contributed to this article.]*

The Journey of the Soul and the Fulfillment of Our Life's Purpose

There are infinite souls in the cosmos.

- Each soul is itself evolving; seeking to reach its highest consciousness of being.
- An individual soul enters an individual human being.
- It enters that particular person because it senses that through that individual's life experiences, particularly his personal growth, it -- the soul -- will evolve.
- This is the journey of the soul, which continues until it finds fulfillment.
- It enters a series of human birth consecutively until it absorbs the necessary experiences that give it its ultimate fulfillment.
- This is from the perspective of the evolving soul. Let's look at it from the perspective of the individual:
- When one grows in consciousness and progresses in life beyond a certain threshold, so does the evolving soul.

-When a person moves toward a deeper consciousness, he is actually beginning to move towards his True Self, i.e. the evolving soul. As begins to touch his soul, he begins to have greater inner and outer power over life.

-When one touches the soul directly, not only does one have ultimate spiritual experiences -- such as the feeling of Oneness, the decent of Knowledge and Wisdom, an intense Delight and Joy in living, et al -- but one comes to know one's ultimate purpose in life.

-At that point, our own purpose and our evolving soul's purpose converge. We see our own deepest purpose in living by touching our soul. On the other hand, the soul becomes more fulfilled, and progresses in its evolutionary journey as we take to actions and behaviors of the very highest consciousness resulting from our soul connection. Our life, and the soul's existence are then fulfilled in one another.

-Thus, all efforts in life to discover our own True Self, our spiritual-based evolving soul will enable our ultimate fulfillment in life. The infinite possibilities of life open us before us in no time at all.

-We can begin the process of making the soul-connection by moving from our current surface association with life to a deeper poise within. Through meditation, non-thinking, concentration, prayer, etc. we begin to discover the Stillness and Silence within. Our connection with the outer world will then move toward greater harmony. At the next stage, we discover the Silence behind the silence, which is the evolving soul. It is there that we discover the springboard of infinite possibilities, taking to actions and behaviors that express it. As we do so, the evolving Soul absorbs our new life lessons as it continues on its evolutionary journey through space, time, and beyond.

Surrender

Surrender and Our Ultimate Purpose in Life

Consecration is to open to the Higher Power to bring down its Force into the details of our lives. Surrender is the highest formation of consecration, as it compels us to offer our very existence to be an instrument of the Divine.

But why would we be compelled to surrender our very existence to the Higher Power, fully follow Its Will, and be receptacles for its Intent?

Perhaps if we understand things in the wider context, in terms of the nature of the Reality, and our role in it, we will be compelled to Surrender our being with greater intensity and more often.

In *The Life Divine* chapter 'The Destiny of the Individual,' Sri Aurobindo indicates that there is a Transcendent Will, and so it created a universe to produce the forms that could carry it out; to realize Its Real Ideas as actualities in endless multiplicity. We in turn as conscious Individuals serve to become instruments of that Divine Will, enabling the universe to fulfill its destiny of carrying out the Intent of the Being.

In that context, Surrender has a deeper meaning. Through a complete opening to the psychic being within and to the spiritual Force above, we are "Informed" of what our role is, what our spiritual duty is, and can then carry it out. As we succeed, through that accomplishment, through that designated, particular personal growth, we serve a wider cosmic, universal purpose, which in turn fulfills the transcendent Intent, making real Its Real Ideas, Its cosmic Intent.

By Surrendering to Her Force (from the poise of the psychic), we increasingly discover our Highest Purpose, and are increasingly inclined to act in the direction. When we do, life responds out of all proportion. Even just surrendering without knowing the who,

what, or where of the purpose of our being can have a similar effect, as we Trust at the level of Pure Faith without Understanding.

We can think on these issues, and consider our current role in the world, and our potential role in future. Through Surrender, our highest Role becomes increasingly clear, and the strategies and particulars are revealed so we know which direction to turn and specifically how to be and act.

Naturally, the intensity of the Surrender and the receptivity of our being will determine if we are able to Catch the Wave in full of the Cosmic Intent of the Transcendent Divine. If we are, we will serve It well; we will be excellent collaborators of the Infinite. As a result, we will increasingly come to know and fulfill our individual Destiny in the world.

Acquiring True, Integral Knowledge

Our Essential Ignorance; Movement to Integral Knowledge

The Journey from Ignorance to Integral Knowledge

The vital being, including one's preferences, desires, needs, etc. sees what it wants to see, not the true truth of things. Also living on the surface where the senses dominate -- including sight and sound -- blinds us to the many-sided truth unfolding for any matter or thing. The result is our constant misreading of life, which leads to poor decision making, and therefore faulty actions. In essence, these blockages of the lower vital being as well as the surface being are forms of Ego, which separates us from the integral truth of things. In Ego we are centered in the lower self, which asserts its Ignorance. Is there then a way out to the opposite of Integral Knowledge?

Sri Aurobindo asks us to develop a deeper center of Self, which will tend to be open more to the many-sided truth of things, as the deeper your poise, the more the mind opens to light and intuitions of knowledge without thought.

How to develop that deeper center? The most powerful way is consecrating the circumstance of your life to the Force, to the Mother. Consecration not only quickly puts the conditions of life in right order, but over time deepens your poise and center of being, enabling you to shed ego, and the various vital aspects of yourself that block the inflow of the integral Truth. Through that deeper center, the Details, the Whole, and the Essence of any matter can come to you in a flash. From that deeper poise of your subliminal and psychic being, you just know all that needs to be known from moment to moment, in any given circumstance.

Another method is to constantly take the other person's point of view, which also melts away the ego, embracing the Other, which enables the Truth to stream into our consciousness, whether from the other party or the general atmosphere as a response from life.

It is also helpful to know the subtle laws of life, because when you recognize them in action in the course of your day, you will perceive the deeper truths that are trying to express themselves.

Our normal ongoing experience of mind is to know a tiny part of the inbound, and be ignorant of the rest. However, we can overcome it by engaging in the great journey from Ignorance to Integral Knowledge that Sri Aurobindo's has laid out for us as part of His integral Yoga, which is the ultimate means of conscious evolution.

Progressive Movement Out of Ignorance

The New York Times raised this question recently: Why do so many people believe they can drive safely while using cell phones but don't believe that others can do the same? The simple answer is that it is human nature to see the flaws in others, but not in ourselves. Of course, others see our flaws quite clearly! This in turn raises many issues; one of which is our inherent Ignorance born of creation.

When the Infinite consciousness descended to create a universe of forms, it shed its Awareness. When material forms were created, there was virtually complete unconsciousness; an Inconscience in Sri Aurobindo's terms. The Supreme consented to this unconsciousness to allow for the greatest diversity of forces and forms, from the unconscious to the conscious; from less to more positive; from false to true. When these forms evolved -- particularly us -- we would discover our higher nature, develop greater awareness, which would elicit in us deep delight. In this way, the Static delight of the Infinite Divine could express a Dynamic Delight through the forms of creation, including us. In other words, for the expression of infinite forms of Delight, Ignorance was allowed. In fact, it was very necessary for this process.

Because of our inherent limited consciousness, each of us has a limited field of Awareness. It expresses from the material to the mental. Our material consciousness focuses us on our own distinct selves at the expense of others. Our vital desires, needs, passions again separate us from the same in others. When Mind enters the picture, then our separation becomes insidious, as our ego takes form; and there is an aggressive desire to defend our own interest at the expense of others. In this way, we perceive the Truth of things through a distorted lens. We perceive the small Part of any matter, not the many parts, let alone the Whole of the Truth. Thus, our being is blind to our own defects because we miss the total view of ourselves; filtered by the distorting lens of ego and sense mind.

In this way, a person while driving can glance to the side, dial, and talk on his or her cell phone, oblivious to the wider truth that we are putting others at risk. It is one of a thousand ways we express our Ignorance born of creation. It is an instance of how we are limited to a perception of the small part, though others see the parts we are missing -- about ourselves, as they perceive our selfishness, ego, error, falsehood, obliviousness, and a thousand other faux pas.

And yet our future evolution is to outgrow our fundamental Ignorance, which can progressively grow into an Integral knowledge. The intervening stages require us to take specific inner actions, such as shifting our attitudes from the negative to the positive, to be more self-giving rather than taking (i.e. shedding our selfishness), to have an open rather than a closed mind, to take the other person's point of view, and so forth. This would be a tremendous achievement, and a sure sign of human progress and evolution.

And yet this is just the first step to a further stage of spiritual evolution, which requires a disciplined yogic-like effort. In this transmutation, the very nature of our mind would have to be changed, as it would evolve from an instrument of the part, of division, of separation, of exclusivity to one capable of embracing the totality of Truth. It requires an opening to higher planes of mind, beyond rationality and insight to intuition, revelation, and supramental perception. I.e. multi-faceted, integral knowledge just comes to us from out of nowhere without the hard churning of thought. The many parts of a thing, the whole, the essence, just appear in our Minds in a continuous flow of Truth.

Needless to say, at that stage, there will be little or no possibility of driving dangerously while on the phone, for our own selves will have merged with the Selves of others in an inextricable Oneness.

Spiritual Approach for Overcoming Human Ignorance Born of Creation

A reader suggest that human nature tends to see and read and accept only what matches our already existing map of thoughts. If that is true, how can we ever move beyond those bounds and gain a higher understanding of Reality. My answer is as follows:

You have addressed the issue of human Ignorance square on. In essence, we only know what we know, and there is little compulsion to move beyond that understanding, unless Life forces us to do so, which is Nature's Way of Progress through contradiction and conflict.

Sri Aurobindo in his spiritual opus *The Life Divine* introduces us to 7 Essential Ignorances born in Man born, including the fact that we don't know the various parts of our being, we don't know how to make the parts and planes work in harmony, we don't perceive that we are also universal beings, we don't perceive our cosmic purpose, we don't perceive the divine Reality that permeates All, and so forth. This multi-varied form of Ignorance is the central problem of Man that Sri Aurobindo addresses in *The Life Divine*. He says the way out of the conundrum of Ignorance is to develop our consciousness. We do that by moving away from the surface of life and the sense inputs that dominate our mind, and discover our deeper Being within. Doing so, our mind expands and we spontaneously intuitivize the integral truths of any aspect of life while perceiving an infinite Reality that permeates all planes of existence. Having such experiences then become our great pleasure and modus operandi. As a result, gradually our multi-faceted Ignorance is replaced by a profound Integral Knowledge. It is a great step in the process of becoming a transformed individual, who can be a harbinger of a divine collective life on earth.

I would add that from this inner poise, we are also in the best position to perceive the subtle and profound laws and principles of life, most of which are unknown to the world. Karmayogi has outlined dozens, if not hundreds of them in astonishing detail. With that knowledge, plus the intuitional status born of an inner existence (which can rise to supramental perception), we can soar far beyond our human Ignorance born of creation. *Therefore, at every step, we will be open to new knowledge, to new understanding, to profound laws of life, and to miraculous unfoldings that follow in the footsteps of every effort we make to raise our consciousness -- completely the reverse of our current propensity to embrace only that which we know.*

How can we facilitate this? Karmayogi indicates that constant opening to the divine Mother forges the link within to our True Selves, to the evolving Soul, which in turn enables our minds to soar to spiritual mind, including revelation and supramental perception which catapults us far beyond our current understanding, knowledge, and power. Gradually, we grow out of our current limitations at all planes, and can become harbingers of a new species and a Divine Life on Earth.

Mind's Limits, Higher Functionings

Beyond the Brain to Mind and Knowledge

Scientists are unable to make the distinctions between Brain and Mind. They think of it, even speak of it as the same thing. But this is an observation that is partial and therefore in error. Brain and Mind are in fact two very different entities. The brain is a physical organ for processing, while Mind is the plane in which knowledge is accessed.

An analogy is the physical computer that processes 1s and 0s based on the inputs of Software. Brain is analogous or even equivalent to hardware, and Mind to software.

If the brain is a physical entity by which the individual human can process knowledge so it can function, then the Mind is the plane of mental existence through which knowledge may enter. In other words, Mind exists at several planes, including the plane that processes facts into ideas, as well as a higher functioning of logic and reason. Beyond this are spiritual planes of mind, including intuition, revelation, and supramental perception through which knowledge enters the consciousness of the individual in part or complete without thought.

Knowledge is then a third aspect beyond Brain and Mind. Knowledge is the truths of existence that come into our field of awareness through the particular plane of Mind accessing it. An analogy is that if Mind is the software, then Knowledge is the content of the software, like the actual information or the words in a novel written with word processing software.

It should be pointed out that knowledge exists everywhere in space and time; even beyond them. The method and degree we access it is determined by the plane of Mind (i.e. mental consciousness) we are in. The higher the plane (such as intuition), the greater, the more perfect the knowledge that comes into our field of our awareness; and thus the deeper and more profound our understanding.

Thus, we can say that the triune of Brain, Mind, and Knowledge roughly corresponds to computer hardware, software, and content.

But what is this Knowledge (i.e. content) really? It is pulsations of truth emanating from the transcendent plane, expressing itself in the universal, and picked up by the human mind as it circulates throughout the cosmos. In other words, Knowledge is Divine in its origins.

Sri Aurobindo speaks of "Real Ideas" that emanate from a Conscious Being, who has an Intention to express Itself in a myriad of ways through creation and the forms that It contains. These Real Ideas roughly correspond to certain basic cosmic aspects of consciousness -- including silence, oneness, truth, power, creativity, love, delight, timelessness, and infinity. These Real Ideas are various knowledge-vibrations of these essential aspects that come to us through the universal planes of mind.

However, we don't normally experience these individual divine aspects directly, as our consciousness is not at the necessary, high enough plane of Mind to know them. Instead we access them in somewhat lesser formations, such as through human values. E.g. the social value of "tolerance" is a combination of the higher aspects of oneness, truth, and love. I.e. if I am tolerant, I am open to others inputs, meaning I have overcome my own ego limitations and have created a sense of harmony (that is, Oneness) with them. It is also a movement of Truth since I am open to others' point of view beyond my own; to the true truth of things.

The Knowledge that comes in through the planes of our awareness/Mind is further diffused in normal human consciousness to lesser formations than values -- including facts, attitudes, motives, and others. An analogy is to the book (written in the software program) that is providing important ideas and principles, as well as detailed facts that back up the argument.

Overall, the true nature of our mental structures and faculties is a fertile field for discovery. The scientist is at level one, barely if at all distinguishing between Brain and Mind. Cognitive Science is one branch that is trying to develop a greater understanding in this area, even as it is still tethered to the error of the sameness of Brain and Mind. Another field, Cognitive Psychology is perhaps a truer and more valuable field, as it is forced to confront the ways we think, how we think, and what we are thinking about

beyond the firing of neurons and other components of the brain the physical scientist is focused on.

These movements indicate that Man is trying to understand his True Nature, even as he is limited by the plane in which he is trying to comprehend it. It is like a wrestler wrestling with himself. Still, there is a forward movement toward understanding Mental Existence, if only we stand back and understand the aspects of the individual, universal, and cosmic Being that make it possible.

Limits of Mind and the Opening to Spiritual Mind

The dominating instrument of our being is our Mind. Yet mind is such a flawed instrument that Sri Aurobindo and Mother asks us to stop thinking, allowing the Mind to rise to its spiritual dimensions, including silence, intuition, light, revelation, and supramental perception. Stilling the mind of thoughts is the first step in this process. It creates silent mind, the first step in the ascending levels of mind that culminate in Supermind. Developing a deeper center within through constant consecration enables the consciousness to deeper and the mind to soar beyond the bounds of the limited ordinary human mind.

Among the ways the Mind is faulty:

-It is exclusive, taking to one position or knowledge at the expense of others. This exclusionary tendency of mind is at the root of the Falsehood Man experiences in life.

-It dwells too often on the surface, being influenced by the senses, especially sight (the visual) and hearing (the auditory), which leads us to wrong conclusions as often as right ones.

-Its thought patterns are overly influenced by the needs, wants, desires, and preferences of our lower vital and physical nature. How can one perceive Truth if it is clouded over by these limitations of attitude, habit, preference, and the like in our thought processes?

-Its opinions, beliefs, and values, make a mockery of what is calls rationality and rational thought. Logical thought can only happen when the mind and vital are at rest, not influencing the flow of logic in the mind's process.

-It tends to go down one path of thought, unable to easily bend and take up related or complimentary thought patterns. Scientists are burdened by this as they see only an empirical/material or mechanistic view of existence, and cannot easily connect it to the social, psychological, subtle, spiritual, etc.

-It is unable to recognize the subtle unfoldings of life and the principals guiding it, therefore misses the power of mind to successfully and supramentally navigate life.

-It is preoccupied by endless chatter, on all matter of subjects, throughout the day, when it should be resting, which would give it sharp knowledge garnering power when activated.

-It sees in divisions and dualities, unable to perceive the subtle shading in between. It tends to contract in extremes, as positive and negative, black and white, harmful or helpful, ad infinitum. It is thus rigid and inflexible in its moment to moment functionings.

-It along with our Finite nature, the separateness of the Ego, and being bound to Time are the four aspects that are the roots of Falsehood and therefore what need to be overcome for Truth to reign in life.

Most of the second half of Sri Aurobindo's metaphysical and spiritual opus 'The Life Divine' is an exploration of the way out of this fundamental Ignorance and the way to replace it with an Integral Knowledge. Movement to the depths within, culminating in connecting to our soul, the evolving psychic entity within enables the mind to soar beyond the limits of ordinary Mind to spiritual Mind of silence, intuition, light, revelation, and supramental perception.

Sri Karmayogi asks us to engage in constant self-offering to Mother (consecration), taking the other person's point of view, non-reaction and other methods, which helps

deepen our center of consciousness within, which enables the Mind to soar to its spiritual heights, allowing integral knowledge to flow in every moment so we have truth information that when acted upon enables instantaneous miraculousness. This is the one critical aspect of bringing about the Supramental Life.

Limits and Higher Functionings of Mind

Mind is an instrument of knowledge. On one side, it is a limited, even flawed mechanism that prevents true knowing. On the other, we see that it has the potential to function in ways that can garner infinite-like truth about the object of inquiry. Here then is a rundown of several of Mind's limitations, as well as examples of its higher functionings, including its spiritual capacities.

Limits of Sense -- Mind is limited when it is preoccupied with the input of the senses, causing us to constantly come to erroneous conclusions. E.g. you enter a room, look around and observe the physical situation, and comment to a friend about what you think is taking place. She then tells you that your observation is faulty; that something quite different has been occurring. You have thus been deceived by the visual; of what you observed with your very own eyes. It is the same with other sense inputs, such as the auditory and tactile, which do not allow the mind to ponder the issue through rational and right understanding, but draw it to conclusions that are false and limited in truth.

Limits of the Vital and Physical -- Another equally troubling limitation of the Mind is its tendency to adhere to positions that are dominated by our vital and physical parts. In essence, our desires, needs, wants, opinions, and prejudices tinge and distort our thinking, and hence our ability to know the true truth of a matter. For example, when we discuss an issue, we see that we have come to conclusions that favor our personal wants, desires, and attitudes, not the real truth of that matter. Thus, Man is dominated by his vital and physical being, with Mind coming to conclusions that support its own emotional and physical biases and prejudices.

Limits of Single- Line Thinking -- Similarly, the Mind in its attempt to grasp the truth of any object of inquiry normally likes to go down but one particular path of thought, ignoring all other aspects of the object under consideration. There is something limiting and confining in the Mind, which takes pleasure in pursuing that one line of thinking; missing or being oblivious to all others. For example, we see how scientists are very energized by their one perspective of a matter, often defending it vehemently, while dismissing all other possibilities or domains.

Limits of Part Perception -- In a similar vein, conclusions that Mind arrives at are partial at best. It knows one or a few aspects of a matter, missing most of the others. Thus, it does not see the whole of what is under consideration, but only the part. For example, listen to a discussion and you will see how one person knows one aspect of a matter, with another perceives it from an entirely different perspective that is also true. And there may be a dozen truths, facts, and perspectives that are also valid concerning that matter. Our normal mentality has a limited capacity to grasp the multiple truths of a matter, let alone the whole or Essence of that object of inquiry. This perhaps more than anything shows our essential Ignorance of who we are, what we can become, and life's nature and potentials.

Rational Mind -- And yet there is a way out of Mind's limitation. It is to engage in rational, logical thought. When Mind sheds the influence of the senses, and is not dominated in its conclusions by one's emotions, feelings, attitudes, desires, demands, and attachments, it can engage in pure thought, in rational and logical thinking. Unencumbered by the sense inputs and the domination of the vital and physical, it can begin to know through reason that can perceive more of the truth of things; even begin

to perceive the variety of sides that make up the whole of a matter. This purer mentality formulates truth through synthesis, analysis, and other logic formation to build arguments, perceive possibilities, and come to conclusions that lead to more sides of the object under consideration. Philosophers, thinkers, and technical programmers are examples of those who engage in pure thought. Unfortunately, most of us make far too little use of this great mental capacity.

Silent Mind -- While rational mind is a great mental capacity that comes closer to right knowing, there are higher forms of understanding that bring us even closer to a many-sided, integral perception. They are in essence "spiritual" in nature. For one, when we halt our thoughts, still our minds, engaging in mental silence, we give ourselves mental rest. As a result, when mind is reengaged thereafter, it is not only fresh, but as a result comes to more inclusive, complex, and insightful conclusions. Mind bathed in stillness of thought comes up with the very best of thoughts that deliver more true truths of life.

Light, Intuition, Revelation -- An even higher form of mentality still is where thought simply enters our mind as light, intuition, or revelation. Light comes when one perceives an image of truth knowledge in a flash,, as in Archimedes famous "Eureka, I've Got It." Beyond these illumined experiences, one can have sudden intuitions and revelations of truth that just appear in the Mind without any flash; in fact without any thought at all. The object of knowledge simply enters the mind and known. E.g. while taking a walk, the entire problem I have been addressing over the past week just appears as a thought wave in my mind. No hard churning of thought is involved here.

Supramental Perception -- Though intuition and revelation are sudden descents of knowledge of an object into the mind without thought, they usually provide only part, angle, or perspective of the truth. Garnering a complete many-sided, integral revelation in an instance is of a higher form, called by the Indian sage and seer Sri Aurobindo "Truth Consciousness" or "Supramental perception." This is knowledge by identity, where we perfectly connect with and know the truth of the object under consideration from its myriad of sides; from its wholeness and essence, through a sudden revelation. In fact, it originates within one's self anew, never having existed before. In addition, that integral knowledge of the object is accompanied by a power for that truth to manifest as a living reality in the physical world. Thus, in supramental perception one not only has integral knowledge of a thing, but a will and power for its effectuation in the world.

The Subliminal Influence and Guide -- Not only does thought emanate from our surface mind or the universal plane, but it also percolates up from our Inner Being. The subliminal as Inner Guide is constantly sending up positive messages to us of what to do, and what not to do. As we develop our inner, spiritual capacities, we more readily recognize and adhere to these subtle influences. As a result, we tend to more often make right decisions that lead to beneficial outcomes.

The Plane of Cosmic Mind -- We think of Mind as something local inside ourselves. But Mind is a plane of existence that is there in and behind the universe, and existed before the physical cosmos came to be. The Cosmic Mind, sometimes referred to as the Mind of God contains universal truth of the Divine, and is a plane where all knowledge resides. It exists in the superconscious that is beyond our Mind capacities, but it can also exist in our mentality if we learn how to widen ourselves and open to it.

As we overcome our limited surface Mind and take to its deeper and higher faculties, we are increasingly in touch with the Real Ideas, Essential Truths, Integral Knowledge that is contained in Cosmic Mind. In fact, if we explore its nature, we will come to discover that Cosmic Mind is the instrument of the Infinite consciousness, enabling the forces and forms of the universe, seen and unseen, to come to be.

In the Divine Mind, all knowledge is integral and One, a status of understanding that we are fully capable of realizing.

Levels of Mind that Open to Cosmic Planes of Knowledge

There are three planes of consciousness in Man -- the physical, the vital, and the mental. The physical is -- in ascending order of consciousness -- our bodies, including its material substance, its inner and outer movements, and its sensations. The vital is a higher plane, and includes our desires, feelings, emotions, attitudes, and emotive relations and interactions with others. The mind is a higher plane still, and includes mental functionings of fact-gathering and conversion; idea production; development of beliefs and values; and rational thinking; all out of which comes various levels of understanding and knowledge.

In the course of evolution, we see an ascent of consciousness from that of the relatively unconscious physical body (as in primitive life forms) to more conscious vital parts (as in animals) to the much more aware and conscious mental plane (especially in higher primates, culminating in humans). It is in the plane of Mind that Man has distinguished himself from the animal; though even there his mental understanding is limited by the needs of his lower physical and vital nature.

Here I want to narrow the focus to the planes and dimensions of the human Mind. As devised by Sri Aurobindo, Sri Karmayogi, and others, we can distinguish between several increasingly conscious planes or divisions of our mentality -- ranging from the simpler fact-processing capability to the more complex planes of reason to spiritual-like powers of direct knowing without thought. Let's examine each more closely.

Physical Mental -- The simplest aspect or dimension of the human Mind is that which captures information from the world and processes it into facts, associations, and ideas. It is the mechanical part of our mentality that we can call the Physical Mental. (We will see that there are three essential subplanes of Mind, this being the first and most basic.)

Vital Mental -- The next highest plane of mental consciousness is that which turns understanding and ideas into personal beliefs and values. At this level of Mind, ideas are personalized and emotionalized to express what we believe in; perceive to be of value. This is what we call the Vital Mental.

Rational Mind (Mental Mental) -- The highest level of Mind proper is rational and logical mind. There we engage in purer thinking, using logic to build up our understanding of any object that we are considering. This higher dimension of mind is more in touch with the truth of things, as it strains to know the object of knowledge by developing an argument through a logical sequence of thoughts.

Limits of Rational Mind

And yet even logical mind can be prejudiced in its comprehension, as it can be unduly influenced by our bodily and emotional needs and influences. E.g. if I am overly-attached to my family at the expense of others, it can skew my view of things, including how my mind builds up its so-called logical point of view. There are in fact few if any individuals who engage in pure thinking untainted by our physical, vital, and psychological prejudices.

This tendency to be attached to and argue one side of a matter, even amongst highly intelligent "rational" human beings, is what Sri Karmayogi calls "intellectualization," something the Western mind finds great difficulty growing out of. However, we can shed that tendency, when we develop an inner life of calm and stillness that looks out on the world as a non-prejudicial "Silent Witness." From that poise we more readily embrace, even seek out the many points of view of any matter; the true truth of things. As a

result, true rational thinking/rationality is born, and therefore a truer understanding and knowledge begins to take shape.

Spiritual Mind

Then there are the ultimate planes of mentality -- Spiritual Mind -- which consists of an ascending scale of levels beyond mind proper. There we have sudden insights, blinding flashes of truth, visions of possibilities, and sudden descents of knowledge coming as Light.

And yet even these spiritual-based insights involve a small degree of thinking; where the churning of thought still precedes the sudden descent of knowledge. E.g. when Archimedes experienced his famous moment of Light and exclaimed "Eureka, I've got it," he had been pondering the issue from many sides (i.e. engaging in rational thought) as he bathed in the tub.

Well it turns out that there are higher spiritual planes of mind still, where one experiences sudden intuitions of knowledge without any thought at all; where revelation of truth simply appear in one's Mind from the universal plane.

Beyond this is an opening the cosmic Mind itself, to the universal consciousness, where anything can be known in its many-sided truth. However, even here there is not the perfect, all-encompassing direct connection with the object under scrutiny or consideration. That is left to spirito-mental dimension of Supermind (aka Truth Consciousness), where anything is known in its *totality*, and where one also has the *full power* to realize and make it real. Thus I suddenly know the thing under consideration in its totality, even as it tends to manifests as a living reality in life. In Supermind knowledge and will for manifestation are fused.

Also, each thing known is understood in connection with every other in Supermind. Thus it is a *unity consciousness* of perfect awareness of all the parts, the totality, the whole, and the essence of any matter; all perfectly integrated and One in one's consciousness.

Sense Mind to the Subliminal

Thus, we see a scale of mentality, from lower to higher, beginning with fact processing that generates ideas; to vitalized ideas that become beliefs and personal values; to a lower and higher scales of rational, logical thought; to spiritualized mind of silence, illumination, intuition, revelation, cosmic consciousness, and supramental perception where one is in complete identity with the object; where knowledge and will are fused; where our knowledge is integrated and one with all related truths of existence.

This is what we may call a *vertical* scale of mental human consciousness. There is also a *horizontal* scale, ranging from the surface of our lives to the deepest depths within us. Let's then examine these.

At the surface, the mind is preoccupied by the inputs of the five senses. The mind perceives the world through what it sees, hears, etc. and then comes to a conclusion about things. Often this is faulty, as our eyes can deceive us from understanding the true truth of a matter. E.g. if we see a person being arrested, we may misjudge the event, concluding that he must be guilty, when in fact he is being put in the squad car to protect him from another. There are an infinite number of examples where this surface *sense mind* comes to utterly wrong conclusions. It happens to each of us a dozen times a day, as we come to wrong perceptions based on what we see, which is at odds with what is really happening.

Understanding life merely through the five senses, without engaging in logical, rational thought is an inordinately *physical* way of perceiving existence. E.g. we see how the scientist is confounded when he tries to evaluate his subject matter solely based on

visible, measureable, quantifiable, material, physical fact; when the truth of the matter is more varied, complex, and lies much deeper. Likewise, the American who lives on the surface of life bemused by all of the material objects that serve him in life is a slave to this outer, sense-oriented physical mind.

Not only can we move away from surface mind to rational mind, but we can also get in touch with a deeper mind inside us. Buried within us is a subtle form of mind, a *subliminal* mental being, also called the *Inner Mind*. This mind is in touch with the universal forces; to what Sri Aurobindo calls the superconscient, or universal mental existence. Thus this subliminal mental being has awarenesses and perceptions that transcend normal causality and views of space and time; just as the universal plane does. These subtle thoughts are constantly percolating up from the depths to the surface of our being, providing critical hints of what to do and what to avoid, providing an Inner Guidance that can be infinitely valuable to successful living. Along with the intuitions of knowledge that descend into us through spiritual mind, these inner intimations of the subliminal mentality can provide deep, profound insights into the nature of things and the workings of life at any given moment.

The more one develops an inner life, the more the mind expands to the spiritual mental planes above, and to the subliminal mental planes in the depths of our being. Through inner concentration, meditation, (and most recommended) continuous opening to the spiritual Force, i.e. consecration, one can over time forge a powerful inner existence of calm and serenity that enables mind to soar to the universal heights above and to the deepest depths within. Streams of truth will then constantly come into our being from all directions, giving us profound knowledge, wisdom, and power, enabling us to become the Master of Life.

Planes of Mind in the Individual Human

Vertical and Horizontal Scales

We can perceive two scales or dimensions of being in the makeup of the individual human. A vertical plane, that has evolved upward from the physical body to the vital/emotional life center to the mind; and a horizontal plane ranging from out outer being to the inner. Here we'll focus on the plane of Mind.

Above the physical and vital planes on the vertical scale there exist several planes of mind. The most basic is that of fact, knowledge, and idea processing, which can be called the Physical in the Mind. Above that are the sentiments, opinions, beliefs, and values (the Vital in the Mind). Higher still is the mind proper of rational, logical, and conceptual thinking (Rational Mind).

Above these three planes in the vertical scale of Mind are the planes of Spiritual Mind, including where mind thinks more clearly steeped in mental silence (Higher Mind); mind perceiving light and illuminations of knowledge and truth (Illumined Mind); mind garnering truth/knowledge directly without thought (Intuitive Mind); mind having universal awareness and consciousness (Overmind); and Mind garnering the many sided object of truth directly in a stream without thinking and with a propensity to manifest that knowledge in its integral fullness in life (Truth Consciousness, Supermind).

Below all of these planes of Mind are also aspects of mentality in our Physical and Vital/Emotional being, including the mind element in our feelings, emotions, and attitudes (Mind in the Vital), and the mentality of the physical body itself, including mentality in the body's physical parts, actions, and movements (Mind in the Physical).

As mentioned earlier, mind also expresses along a horizontal scale from Outer to Inner. The Outer Mind is what we normally experience in life, including the outer sense

information we are perceiving, the flow of thoughts that move through our cognition, our psychological thoughts tinged with feelings, etc. On the other hand, the Inner Mind is a subtle plane of mentality also known as our Subliminal mentality. It is in touch with the higher consciousness of the universal superconscient, and sends up positive intimations and guidance to the Outer Mentality we are conscious of and normally live in. It turns out that the more we are settled in a deeper poise – through meditation, concentration, consecration, and the like – the closer we come in touch with the Subliminal/Inner Mind and its bubblings into our conscious mind.

(Keep in mind that the Inner/Subliminal Mind is actually part of an entire Inner/Subliminal Being, which consists of physical and vital components in addition to the mental one; just as there is our outer mental, vital, and physical being that we normally engage and are aware of.)

There is also a vast Subconscious being, which also normally lies beyond the boundaries of our normal awareness. It contains many negative qualities – pessimism, fixidity, and the like -- that need to be overcome for human evolution and transformation to occur. And yet the Subconscious (subconscient) is also conscious at its own level and secretly compels us to move in certain directions and take certain actions that our outer mind is not aware of. Behind the subconscious being (which actually contains a physical and vital component in addition to the mental) is an Inconscient, unconscious plane which contains the utter Ignorance of matter. Then there is the Soul being, which contains the spark of the eternal within, as well as an evolving, psychic being particular to each individual.

Thoughts on Our Evolution in Terms of Our Mentality

From the perspective of human progress, evolution, and transformation, we can make a series of generalizations about the mental planes of being:

-One is that in the course of human evolution, we are moving up the vertical scale of mind from fact and idea processing and mental beliefs to the rational thought of rational mind. The movement toward rationality of the Rational Mind, i.e. logical thinking is accelerating, especially in the last 50 years.

-The movement above rational Mind to the spiritual planes of Mind is rarer, though there is a similar gradual movement into these planes as well. It is the destiny of humanity to increasingly experience mentality through mind steeped in silence, as light; as intuition without thought, and being in direct connection with the object of supramental perception.)

-The deeper our poise of being is in the horizontal scale of being, the more the mind rises along the vertical scale of Mind -- to rationality of rational mind, the steeped in silence of higher mind, the light of illumined mind, the intuition of knowledge without thought through intuitive mind, and being in integral identity with the knowledge of supermind.

-The more we consecrate, open to the spiritual/supramental force, the more we move to the depths of our being, and the more mind opens to the spiritual planes of mind.

-The human individual is normally far too absorbed in the outer mind on the horizontal scale, especially the most surface mentality referred to as the Sense Mind, There one is absorbed in the inputs of the senses, particular the visual and auditory, which prevents us from perceiving the true truth, the multi-sided view in any matter. There we see a tiny part, which itself might be false!

-Withdrawing from sense and sense mind is one of the fundamental conditions for integral yoga (conscious evolution). As a result one becomes more rational. Then by

withdrawing thinking, the rational mind can soar to the heights of the spiritual planes of mind.

-Consecration overcomes the influence of the most outer Sense Mind and even rational mind, moves the consciousness to a deeper poise (in the Inner being), allowing the mind to soar to the spiritual heights and planes of mind.

-One of the keys to evolution is the transformation of the subconscious being. The greater the Inner/Subliminal mind has with its outer associative source, the superconscious, the lesser the darker influence of the subconscious has on our being. Again, consecration, opening to the spiritual force enables this to happen.

-s we move to the depths, connect with our inner being, even associating with our True Self, psychic being, our evolving soul within, the mind soars to the spiritual heights of mind, including Supermind.

-The spiritual planes are not just of ways of acquiring knowledge that are increasing in identify with the object, but also offer powers of truth over the life/vital being and body of the individual, enabling growth and progress. Light of knowledge has a power to overcome limits in our being. Supramental truth consciousness not only enables us to be in perfect identify with the object of knowledge, having full, integral knowledge of it, and with a perceptions of the unity of all elements, but has a will and power for that knowledge to manifest as real formations of forms in life. In fact, when we consecrate we are opening to the supramental power of the supramental plane.

-Thus the ultimate, gnostic, supramental being functions from the planes of spiritual mind, is centered in the Inner/Subliminal mind and the psychic being, and live in complete identity and harmony with others and with life.

Cosmic Planes of Mind

One final point: In their essential nature, the planes of mentality that exist outside or beyond the human. All of the planes discussed so far are planes of Mind that exist throughout the cosmos; even beyond in the Source of creation.

E.g. in the process of the emergence of life from a spiritual Source, a plane of Supermind emerged to convert the essential Conscious-Force and Real Ideas of the Divine Being into formations in the universe. In that process, Cosmic Mind emerged from Supermind, Overmind from it, and so forth downward in the INVOLUTION, until mentality was all but absorbed at the dawn of creation in Matter.

Now in the EVOLUTION, as we/humanity evolves we have begun to embody the planes of Mind that were already there. And when we move from rational mind to the planes of spiritual mind -- like intuitive and supermind --we are simply connecting with planes of universal mental being that are already there.

Thus, the course of evolution for the INDIVIDUAL human is to increasingly move upward amongst spiritual planes of mind on the vertical scale, and deeper within realizing the Inner/Subliminal Mind on the horizontal scale. Likewise, the course of evolution for SOCIETY is to move from a physical to vital to mental existence, and beyond that to a spiritual existence, culminating in a Divine Life on earth.

In this way we fulfill the Intent of the Infinite Consciousness to manifest Its spiritual properties -- Silence, Peace, Harmony, Oneness, Unity, Knowledge, Truth, Goodness, Power, Delight, Love, Timelessness, and Infinity -- set loose in the cosmos and perceived through our mentality as we scale the heights of the highest and plunge into the depths of the deepest planes of Mind.

Different Expressions and Results of Mental Energy

A reader asked a question: "Can the traits of intellect, genius be explained in terms of energy?" I responded as follows:

We know that mental activity generates mental energy. The quality of the energy released created depends on many factors; including the type of mental activity engaged in -- e.g. thought processing, aspiration, values, pure logic, awareness, light, intuition, etc., which are expressions at different mental planes.

The quality of the energy also depends on the intensity of the engagement of that mental process. E.g. the programmer engaged in pure thought, may be only slightly engaged or fully. The more he is, the greater the intensity, thus the greater the mental energy produced.

We also see that the higher the plane of Mind used, the greater the energy generated, which manifests as a deeper, more integral, and many-sided knowledge of any object of inquiry.

E.g. Karmayogi says that taking to mental Silence taps into waves of energy from an unlimited reservoir and source. From this plane, the Mind functions more smoothly and effectively through its thought processes, generating greater energy, and hence greater mental results.

We also know we are capable of experiencing intuitions of knowledge without thought, where an idea simply enters into our mind complete, without thought. When Einstein realized $E=MC^2$ and other conceptions, he often did so through sudden intuitions of knowledge without any thought at all. There must be some energy going out in us that attracts this sudden ideation. Many yogis say that the deeper the connection within to our self, and soul, the greater the opening to the universal planes from which we experience intuitions of knowledge. So the inner being or an opening to the superconscious planes must generate that energy.

The energy at the level of Supermind, of supramental perception via the spiritual Force has ultimate energy power of attraction, as at once we both KNOW the thing under scrutiny in its essence and variation, and it also MANIFESTS as a living reality. E.g. when I open to the Force, I unleash an energy that gives me the answer to the problem, while also setting in motion events where the solution is used to generate a result that is of great benefit to me. There is perhaps what we might call a Causal Energy creating causal results. It is causal because a thing is created/caused from out of nowhere; where there was nothing before to generate it.

Thus energy can be generated from the normal mental functions -- from sense input accumulation to idea processing to expressions of our personal values to rational thinking of the intellect to even purer thought of the philosopher -- all the way up to the spiritualized mental experiences like silence, light, intuition, and supramental perception. The higher the plane, the more integral the knowledge; plus at the highest planes (particularly the supramental) we attract life results of that knowledge.

We could therefore say that as we use mind at higher levels, we generate corresponding higher formations of mental energy. That generates more complete understanding and Knowledge, but also increasing power for that Knowledge to manifest as a real, material formation in the world. Offering the mental activity to the Divine, to Mother engages the supramental power directly, gives both knowledge and (often instantaneous) material results. These must derive from a higher, ultimate formation and intensity of energy, which can be called "Causal."

It would be an interesting study if scientists could measure when different aspects of our mentality or planes of mind are used. On the other hand, their instruments, which normally seek, factual, physical, empirical evidence, may prove futile, and only observing how life responds, both in terms of the knowledge we garner (inner) and the real material results that follow (outer) will give us a truer understanding of the nature, scope, intensity, power, effectivity, etc. of the mental Energy released.

The Truth About A Sandwich

A sandwich was ordered from a fast food restaurant. In addition to ingredient A, the customer ordered ingredient B. When he opened the sandwich, he only saw ingredient A, causing him to remark that he was overcharged. However, a friend, who ordered the same, said that in fact ingredient B was in the sandwich, hidden under ingredient A. The first person checked, and lo and behold there it was!

The problem is that the Mind took in the sense information at face value. The visual sense overwhelmed the ability of mind to think and ask the question. "Is ingredient B hidden below ingredient A?" In this way, we are constantly making errors of judgment through the visual and other forms of sense absorption; i.e. through Sense Mind. Regular Mind of Inquiry to ask if Ingredient B is underneath was blocked.

This is the way, we ordinarily function. The entire second half of Sri Aurobindo's *The Life Divine* confronts this issue directly or indirectly in hundreds of pages. It is the Ignorance in the mind of man that needs to be overcome through transformation.

There He tells us that in a deeper consciousness, we do not give in to sense alone, and we have the wherewithal for the mind to function logically and ask its reasonable questions. When we go to the very deepest depths, our mind rises to supramental consciousness. There the Mind would have instantaneously known that ingredient B was under ingredient A without even having to think about it. It is the Truth Consciousness and Awareness.

When we consecrate often and intensely – opening ourselves to the spiritual Force, to the Divine Mother's power – our center of awareness deepens to Truer Self and Being, and our Mind opens to the instantaneous, multi-sided Truth of supramental perception, where all sides of a matter can be known in a flash. It is Totality and integral Unity consciousness that is in perfect identity with the object of inquiry.

We thus have a long way to travel from sense mind to ordinary mind to Super-mind.

Constant consecration will help us move to this multi-sided, integral, and infinitely profound Truth-garnering capacity.

In addition, we can start with this moment-to-moment, simple inquiry: "Are my senses fooling me." They very often are.

Incident at Hearst Castle

At a renowned historical monument in California, people are waiting for their tour bus to take them to the top of a nearby mountain where they will visit a beautiful estate -- Hearst Castle. There in the waiting area below are machines that imprint a likeness of the castle on a coin that the user inserts. An energetic man, who is leading a group of young boys on the tour, walks up to the machine, and examines it very briefly. He is then joined by one of his followers -- a young man of perhaps 10. The boy is looking at the device trying to understand its workings so that he can create an imprint. The man briefly looks at the machine, and then conveys his understanding of its operations to the boy -- insisting on his own method.

The man puts in the required coins, helter-skelter pushes several parts of the machine, but then is dumbfounded when *nothing* happens. Desperately searching for the right button or lever, the man cannot find the way to make the machine operate. However, a moment later, the young boy tells the man that he must use the *very large crank* at the front of the machine to create the image on the coin. The boy then shows him how by gripping and then pushing the crank round and round in a circle. A moment later, the coin appears in the return slot with the image of the castle imprinted on it. With a smile on his face, the boy looks at the beautifully engraved coin. The man looks away sheepishly, bewildered, and feeling a bit foolish that a young boy showed him something *so obvious* that he was unable to see it himself.

All of human ignorance can be seen in this one event. It is, in fact, a microcosm of the way we all live our daily lives. An unbiased observer would surely notice our own perpetual error-prone and other false behaviors if he were watching us on a moment-to-moment basis at a close distance. I had the opportunity to do so for an instant in this case.

At any point, we think that we have the knowledge of a thing; that we are acting in truth; that we really know what we are doing -- when in reality we are living in a state of perpetual error and falsehood, i.e. Ignorance. We are not only ignorant of the *best* way to do a thing, but worse still we are ignorant of the variety of ways that are open to us in that moment in time. Rather than embrace these various truths in that moment, we perceive only one truth, a single approach amongst a myriad of possibilities that life has put before us. *And* that lone, single approach we subscribe to may be utterly flawed! In the case above, we see that clearly, as the man knew only had one bit of knowledge from the totality of truth of the procedure for accomplishing the act. And the one thing he purported to know was completely flawed. The boy, on the other hand, perceived a variety of truths, and so was successful in his effort to secure the imprint on the coin.

Let us return then to our little episode to show you what I mean. When the gentleman approached the machine, he saw a device of a certain size, shape, color, and contour. He made the quick, impulsive decision that all he needed to do was put in some coins, and take some action thereafter which would give him the desired results. At no point did he take to *conscious thinking*. Rather he was in a mode of *unconscious reacting*. More specifically, he relied heavily on his the input of the *five senses* to arrive false, error-filled conclusion. He utilized his senses of sight and touch to absorb the sense-data streaming in from life, which did not provide him with the necessary information to make a realistic assessment. He saw images -- which is "sense thinking" -- instead of engaging in *logical* thought. That inadequate sense data was in turn transmitted to his brain, after which he was stimulated to react (instead of think) which led to a decision and a corresponding action that turned out to be mistaken.

The key is that at no point did he consciously engage in *deliberative thinking*; of true rational thought about the possibilities before him, and the way to address a common problem. Instead, he semi-consciously *reacted* to the visual sense information streaming into his mind, and made a decision based on this inadequate sense data. This is the key to the whole misguided affair, and is at the heart of why we make so many errors and take so many missteps in our daily lives! Rather than functioning from the *higher* logical or self-conceiving aspects of mind, we function from the *lower* sense-reactive part of mind. The trouble is that when you function from the "sense-mind," you invariably cut yourself off from the full truth and knowledge of things that are offered to you at any moment of time. Unfortunately, this is our normal state, whether we perceive the fact or not.

Why then do we, in a thousand variations, miss the vast truth knowledge available at any moment in time -- only grasping a tiny part, which itself may be misguided? It is quite simple really: we live too much on the *surface* of life. Our center of consciousness

is always focused on the frothings of what is in front of us; drawn to and overly stimulated by the surface bubbleings of life beyond our skin. When we live this way, we function in *reactive* mode -- constantly responding to the push and pulls of sense data coming in from the outside. As a result, instead of having true knowledge in that moment, of perceiving the many-sided truths related to the object before us, we see only a *part*, a very limited part through the clouded and skewed lens of our limited surface consciousness. And from that woefully inadequate perception, we have extremely limited and often false knowledge about a thing, which in turn causes us to come to erroneous conclusions, which lead to misguided decisions and failed actions.

The solution to this thousand-generation dilemma is to shift our consciousness to a deeper poise -- to move our center of awareness inward, and remain there whenever possible. Gradually a stillness will begin to take over our being, and we will begin to look out on the world as "silent witness," instead of as "intense reactor." From that poise, we tend to think less with the body -- i.e. through our senses -- and more with the mind proper; i.e. through logic and rational thinking. As a result, we have a more comprehensive sense of the object we are engaged in or are otherwise pursuing. As a result, with a fuller array of knowledge grasped in that moment, we perceive the right thing to do or say, which invariably leads to right decisions and successful actions.

When we live from a deeper poise of calm, silence, and equality of being we avoid dozens of such misperceptions in the course of our day. Living in that consciousness also enables us to overcome our ego-sense that separates us not only from the truths of life, but from other people around us. Centered more in the depths within the depths, we overcome our ego-sense and separateness, and become more aligned with the concerns and interests of others. As a result of this harmonic status, we not only have a broader array of data and inputs from which to act, but we attend to attract the cooperation of life.

In the end, each of us is no different from the man at the coin-imprinting machine -- continually misperceiving and taking to wrong behavior and action. We just are not aware of the fact. However, if we were to watch a movie that kept track of the thoughts in our minds throughout the day, we would see a continuous *misreading* of reality; a continuous obliviousness to mistakes we are making as the conditions of life unfold. However, we can change that reality by establishing a deeper poise within, which more readily enables us to think things out and deliberate on them in a conscious manner, instead of merely reacting to them on the surface. Then we will continually absorb the right knowledge demanded of every situation, which will enable us to move in the right direction, taking us to the pinnacles of success in life, which will be accompanied by a deeper sense of joy and happiness within.

The Delusions of Sense Mind

Today I was driving on the highway, when I noticed that a car up ahead in the lane to the left of me had come dangerously close to the car preceding it. I assumed at that moment that he had gotten himself in that position because he was tailgating, i.e. not allowing enough space between him and the car in front of him. After observing this scene, I cautiously passed on the right. A moment later, however, I too had to slow down because a pile of debris had suddenly appeared on the road in front of me. Apparently, a garbage bag had fallen from a vehicle, had broken apart, and was now littering all lanes of the highway, including mine. And so I then made my way through this obstacle course of litter, and once clear, resumed my drive.

As I continued on, it quickly occurred to me that I had completely misjudged the situation. I had assumed that the car was tailgating, and the driver had simply acted in an uncivil manner; when in fact he had actually slowed down to avoid hitting the car in

front of him, who had also slowed down in order to avoid the very same debris that I myself would wade through moments after. Furthermore, I also realized why I had come to this faulty conclusion. I had been so overwhelmed by the input of data streaming in through my senses -- in this case my eyes -- that my mind unconsciously jumped to a wrong conclusion. In the situation, my mind was unable to distance itself from the sensation my senses perceived, i.e. from what I was seeing, and thus came to the erroneous conclusion that the driver had acted in a hostile manner, instead of the truth that he was trying to avoid the debris.

Then what would have enabled me to have perceived the truth of things? It turns out that when the mind is calm and relaxed, it is more likely to engage in sensible, rational thought. That is the power of a *rational* mind. When mind however is preoccupied with sense data -- instead of observing through stillness, calm, and detachment -- it tends to think *reflexively*, which leads to faulty conclusions, causing us to miss the true truth of things. This is the lower action of mind, which I call *sense-mind*. It is the condition that is the cause of so many errors of perception, that lead to faulty decisions and failed actions.

If you were to observe yourself in the course of the day, you would see how often sense-mind is in the fore, and therefore how often your conclusions, decisions, and actions are wanting. The number of minor wrong suppositions that we jump to in the course of day through the reflexive action of sense-mind is utterly shocking. E.g., one time I observed myself over the course of an hour, and I noticed that I had come to at least half a dozen wrong conclusions in that period alone! Whether it concerned the status of a missing cup, or the whereabouts of an email, or my interpretation of the meaning of a news story, I was continually coming to the wrong conclusion. Each time my mind saw things, and reflexively jumped to a conclusion that proved to be false.

In the course of weeks, months, and years, we make thousands of such errors, so many of which go undetected. Though all are important for successful living, unfortunately some are major, which we will in the end pay dearly for. From this perspective, life is an unending series of wrong associations, misjudgments, and conclusions that lead to ill-fated decisions and failed actions. It is a nightmare of continuous falsehood and failure that we are for the most part unconscious of!

When we live on the *surface* of life, as we normally do, sense mind is in the ascendance. Error and falsehood follow. However, when we move to a deeper poise, through concentration, meditation, or by otherwise stilling our thoughts, our minds become a truer *witness* to the occurrences of life outside ourselves. From that poise, we are able to perceive more of the truth unfolding around us. We perceive the *multiplicity* of facts, rather than the one conclusion sense-mind has identified -- one that is itself often in error.

The Indian sage and seer Sri Aurobindo said that man was born of an essential Ignorance of creation. He is unconscious at so many levels -- of his place in the world, of his purpose in life; and, as we have just seen, of the true nature of what is occurring around him. He concludes that so long as we look out at the world through the lower functions of this sense-mind, we will live in perpetual ignorance, which will leads to error, falsehoods, and even evil. However, when we move to a deeper poise within, we begin to move out of that essential Ignorance, and come in contact with the wider truths of life around us. At that point, we move from being the victims of life to life's Master.

Moving from the Part to the Whole

Moving from the Part to the Whole

In any object or matter, there are two elements -- the various parts, as well as the whole of those parts. The Mind of man is limited. It only sees a Part, not the Whole. It divides and grabs onto the part it finds convenient, missing the other elements, not to mention the overall Whole or the deeper Essence. As a result of missing the Truth of any matter, Mind resides in a perpetual state of Ignorance. To perceive all of the parts, the Whole, and the Essence of any object or matter at any moment in time is to perceive the Truth. To ascertain it we must rise above Mind moving to intuition and an ultimate Truth consciousness. Sri Aurobindo calls it the Supramental Consciousness.

Life has a peculiar way of evolving. It moves from the part to the Whole. Nature's (i.e. Life's) great method is to find two parties that each know a part and have them come together in contradiction and conflict. Each side knows what the other does not. Still each knows a part. Through their mutual contradiction, they move from the exclusive belief to the other side's understanding; i.e. the greater truth, which is the Whole. As a result, there is a further progress in life, which is Nature's intention. They have moved through their conflict; resolved their contradiction. Interestingly, from the perspective of the Whole, there was never contradiction, only complementariness. I.e. they helped one another in their progress, to enable the Whole to emerge, which is the further progress in life.

To see how conflict is the method by which we move from the part to the Whole, we can examine any event in life. Say I go for a walk and come upon what looks like a disturbance, with police cars and fire trucks. My senses tell me one thing. I come to a conclusion. I walk away from the scene having this perspective. It is the part. The reality and truth of the situation was not at all what my senses indicated. The security teams have merely come together to devise various strategies. There are other reasons as well. That is the Whole. We knew the part, through the false impression the visual sense drew into the Mind. It is our essential Ignorance born of creation. However, when we move to a deeper consciousness within, we separate from sense and from within perceive more of the possibilities unfolding around us.

The scientist sees matter. He believes in the empirically true. He understands the mechanistic workings of life. He does not see the influence of emotion, psychological movements, the power of ideas, the subtle workings and principles of life, not to mention the Spirit that is the source of all, and to which we are evolving. He is blind to all of these. He thus sees the part. Life however is a Whole.

Spirit and matter are integrated and makeup a Whole. We believe in matter. Some of us believe in the Spirit. Each us a part. The whole is to perceive the Spirit moving in the details of life, through matter. To perceive not just the spiritual being and the Becomings of life, but the Being in the Becoming. The One in the Many, as well as the Many in the One. It is to perceive the ultimate Reality, Brahman, the Absolute. The Creator and Creation as One Integrated Whole.

Perceiving All Sides of a Matter

Man is not inclined to embrace all sides of an issue, only the one that meets his current attitudes and beliefs. A San Francisco newspaper recently published a letter to the editor from a nearby Berkeley group indicating the displacement of people and corruption involved in building dams in Burma and Guatemala. On face value, who can argue with such sentiments? Unfortunately, they conclude that the dams cannot be built; in fact

that dams overall are not a wise approach to meet the needs of the public. Somewhere else, people argue vehemently for the need for new dams in parched areas -- a noble and useful aspiration indeed -- yet ignore the problems generated, including the effect on people and the environment.

The truth is that we rush to protect our side of the argument, failing to embrace the *totality* of truth available to us. Why not see the benefit of dams to help the flow of water around the nations for agriculture, the poor, the cities, etc. while acknowledging that tactics being used in their development may in fact be harmful. The Berkeley people see little benefit in building dams; the other side is blind to corruption and negative influences of such construction. A rational mind embraces all sides, and comes to the right conclusion. Liberal democracy has its roots in such a many-sided view. It is also a spiritual capacity for the mind to embrace all sides, while also seeing the Totality and the Essence. I.e. it is a spiritualized, mindful, open, and aware.

Mind is a dividing mechanism. It also tends to be exclusive. I.e. my truth and understanding is the best and I will defend it. We each do it all the time. We defend our point of view instead of learn, seeking out all sides of an issue. It is the vital ego that asserts the side it knows, not perceiving its essential Ignorance in that matter. We are like this in endless way -- as we are unwilling or uncurious to know all sides of an issue; where we so certain of our position, even though the multiplicity of truths both beckons and eludes us.

And yet we have the capacity to develop an inner poise from which we can develop a level of mindfulness and awareness that has the natural tendency to seek out all sides of an issue. It is Inner Curiosity that is spiritual in nature, as the Mind rests in quietude, open to and allowing True Knowledge to descend into it from all sides. Practically speaking, each time we are in a meeting, or reading a paper, or taking in information, we should be willing to absorb the multiplicity of truths of a matter, holding back that tendency to look for the ammunition of fact that supports our own limited attitudes and beliefs. A true rational person absorbs knowledge in mental silence, perceiving the possibilities, the deep arguments, the justification and flaws in logic, the Essence behind, as well as the Totality. It also includes our ability to have illuminations and intuitions of truth and knowledge that come into our minds without thought from the universal spheres. This is the next level of human consciousness beyond Mind proper that we are evolving towards.

Floating in the universe is the complete Object of Knowledge that we are addressing; its essence from all sides, its totality and details integrated. Our higher, spiritualized mind is capable of being in Identity with that integrally complete object. It is our evolutionary destiny to move out of Mind's exclusivity through inner spiritual means and continually grasp that total object of knowledge on any matter or subject that comes to our attention. It will be a sign that humanity has risen to the next stage of evolution. That at any moment in time we are able to grasp the totality of knowledge of a matter, enabling deep, integral understanding that leads to perfect decisions that result in extraordinary outcomes in life.

The Emerging Multi-sided Understanding in the World

In *The Live Divine*, Sri Aurobindo explains that we humans exist in an essential Ignorance, on its way to an Integral Knowledge. One way that takes shape is our inability to grasp the many-sided truth of any individual thing or matter. We tend to know one or a few sides of an issue and believe that is the full truth. This limited knowledge, this Ignorance of the whole is rooted in the exclusive nature of Mind, which tends to embrace one view of a thing and avoid all others. That exclusivity is in turn supported by the separative nature of Ego, which divides us from others and the world,

and therefore the integral, multi-dimensional truth of things. However, when we move to a higher consciousness, we break these bonds, move away from Ignorance, exclusivity, and separateness, and embrace the multi-sided view; i.e. the integral truth off any issue. In that way, we not only have the knowledge to make right decisions that result in powerfully, positive outcomes, but we evolve out of our current limited nature, and begin to embrace a Supernature.

Interestingly, not only are individuals moving from Ignorance to Integral Knowledge, but so is society as a whole. One very prominent example is the emergence of the Internet. Through this integrative technology, we are compelled to embrace the many-sided view of things. Functions such as blogs, discussion groups, and the like force us to look at a variety of perspectives of a matter, which obliges us to shed our limited view. Through this social technology, we are forced out of our own exclusive view; for who wants to appear foolish when others clearly see the limits of our argument. That is the positive power of the social collective on the individual; just as the individual can positively impact society.

The Internet is not the only way the collective is embracing the multi-sided view. It happens elsewhere in society. For example, there are business meetings to discuss a variety of perspectives on any matter. Also, the more enlightened companies, who value their employees, seek to get their perspective of things. This adds to the collective knowledge and wisdom of the firm, leading to more rational decisions and actions that lead to successful outcomes. The more one has the multi-sided view of things, the more one can succeed in an ever-upward spiraling path.

In these cases, individual or collective, there is a movement from ego, separateness, and a sense that we know it all, to harmony, oneness, and unity with others' points of view. As we become more rational, i.e. mental, human beings, we open ourselves to the multiplicity of possibilities and insights of the world, shedding our attachments to our very limited understanding and view. This movement is an evolutionary one -- Ignorance to Integral Knowledge.

With this in mind, why not ask yourself these questions. What limited view do you cherish? What multi-sided knowledge do you refrain from seeking in order to have the "joy" of your own ignorance, falsehood, and folly? Are you willing to truly listen; even take another's point of view? If so, you are a true rational individual, well on the way of the spiritual path of knowledge and wisdom.

Becoming Truth's Instrument

When we watch a play by Shakespeare, we see life presented from many perspectives. We see it through the life experiences of the individual characters, as well as the through their interaction. Through this myriad view, we afforded the opportunity to know the totality, the Whole of what is unfolding at any moment in time. We could say that it is the total or near-total Truth of life presented to us through the poetic genius of Shakespeare.

If life is this perpetual unfolding of this totality of truth, the individual experiences nearly its opposite. He perceives through the small perspective of his own consciousness, through the clouded lens of his limited knowledge. We call this the "essential Ignorance of Man," where Man cannot fathom the totality of truth unfolding around him, as Shakespeare is able to express in his plays. In fact, the individual cherishes his part knowledge, relishes it, adores it, as his emotions get wrapped up in the limited truth he perceives. It is falsehood that can even lead to evil.

We each live our lives from a very limited perspective of the truth. It almost seems pathetic, as we are limited creatures far removed from the totality of knowledge in the

domain we are addressing. It is as if the details of truth were all around us, but we have attached ourselves to one small thread.

However, humanity is evolving, and we are capable of becoming more than we are -- including the capacity to know the multiplicity of truth unfolding around us at any moment in time; or knowing all sides of an issue rather than the one we are overly attached to. If we move to a deeper consciousness, our mind expands. When it expands, it becomes hungry to know all sides of an issue or matter. As a result, we then restrain ourselves from defending what we already know, while aspiring to know to know more -- including the details, the totality, and the Essence of any matter. From that deeper poise, we constantly open ourselves to another's point of view, no matter how at odds with our current viewpoint. We hunger to get at the truth of things. We may even aspire spiritually to become an instrument of cosmic-based Truth itself.

So when we go about our daily lives, we should stop and think if we are truly aware of all perspectives of a matter, and consider what it will take to garner that wider, detailed perception of the truth. If we do, we will be creating the very solid basis for right decision-making and action, which invariably leads to very successful and happy lives.

If we take this approach, then the Truth inherent in creation can become something we constantly aspire for in our lives. Then we will also serve a divine purpose, as Truth's human instrument.

Opening the Locked Box

Each of us have perhaps half a dozen cherished beliefs we subscribe to. It can be about life overall, or in a given field like economics. One well known financial expert who has a syndicated radio show believed in low interest rates by the Federal Reserve, the anathema of taxes, and safe, incremental investment. Some seemed true, others decidedly not so. We each then advocate those views unchanged throughout our lives. In essence, we take those half dozen positions, opinions, and put them in a box that we then lock tightly. We then subscribe to none others. As a result, our thoughts, opinions, and attitudes are fixed and false. In addition, we never venture to open the box and consider their veracity - i.e. by excluding the wanting ones, or adding new ones of truth.

The truly Rational Man however operates much differently. Logic dictates that he continually examines his positions and points of view. He continually opens that box and lets in the light of day; or rather the light of truth. He does not keep that box shut for a lifetime, as every one of us do, refusing to absorb new knowledge and insight.

By considering its contents, that man fulfills his life's obligation to grow as an individual -- giving his soul nourishment in its evolutionary ascent. When we keep the box locked, we waste the precious life that has been given us. On the outside, we live lives of error, falsehoods, and evil. Inside the box, truth calls out for its release, yearning for the Light.

A Thing and Its Opposite are True

Man is filled with endless opinions. He is more than happy to express them to any eager ear willing to listen. Literature is full of such characters, and we laugh as they extol the virtue of their ignorance. Mrs. Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice*, the mother of five unmarried daughters is a prime example.

The foolish person who acts from his whims and urges is not a rational person. Like Mrs. Bennet, she thinks with her body; not her mind. She follows her needs and desires, and avoids rational thinking. This is the irrational individual. The rational person is different, as he thinks before acting, or at least considers an idea through a thought process. The trouble is he too is irrational in his own way because he comes up with one opinion

through that thinking process, and sticks to it virulently, avoiding all others. The *spiritually* rational individual is different still. He too uses the power of reason to consider a matter, but is willing to examine all sides. His goal is to embrace the Truth from all angles -- i.e. to seek the Whole that contains all its constituent parts, as well as the Essence. He has shed mere opinions of the irrational and even the rational individual in his pursuit of truth. Armored with that Truth, he is well position to act rightfully and forcefully. He will never fail this way, while the irrational and rational are constantly meeting with failure.

In the process of becoming the Spiritually Rational, he embraces one overwhelmingly powerful principle. *It is that everything and its opposite are true.* He knows that any opinion he extols can be challenged by the reverse. From that poise, he has a fully open mind. From that poise, he is able to move beyond the limits of mind -- which guards its own limited truth -- to *spiritual* mind, which opens to all position, including the very opposite of what one believes. It is thus supra-mental truth perception.

Richard Nixon was a brute as president. His social views were anachronistic. His political ploys poisonous, and his foreign interventions tragic to say the least. We have strong opinions of him in America. Yet he went to China and helped open up that country to the modern world. We see the emergence of this great country now on the world stage. The fixed view of Nixon is challenged. The opposite of what we thought he was is also true.

Everything we believe about a matter somewhere has its opposite. The spiritually rational man knows this, and uses it as one of the great tools for knowledge acquisition, problem solving, decision-making, and right action (or inaction). Seeing and embracing the opposite is spiritual technique based on a spiritual principle of life, that lies beyond any opinion, any thought, any reasoned argument; actually beyond the bounds of Mind's capacities. It is there in the Cosmic Mind; in the unitarian consciousness of the Divine Creator.

Holding a Thought in Our Mind and Its Opposite

It is difficult to hold two thoughts in our mind that contradict one another. If they are opposite, how can we subscribe to one or the other? And yet the spirit-oriented individual who has transcended ordinary thinking tends to embrace *all* sides of an issue that make up the Whole, rather than the exclusive part ordinarily subscribed to. By moving our center of awareness inward away from the surface, we enable such multi-opposing perceptions of truth.

Mohandas Gandhi was the redeemer of India, bringing her to independence in 1947 after years of hard-fought battle. Can anyone but admire; no, *revere* the Mahatma? And yet his practice of "Ahimsa" -- non-violent action -- caused a 30 year delay in Indian independence, the partition of the nations into two (including Pakistan), with nuclear missiles pointing at one another. Also immediately after Partition, millions died in the separation. When the British were on the ropes years earlier, and were on the verge of leaving the country through Indian *force*, Gandhi stepped in and halted that action because it was not derived through non-violence. Thus, independence was delayed in the name of the gimmick known as Ahimsa, bringing great suffering and problems in its wake.

It is difficult for the mind to hold these two apparently conflicting ideas -- Gandhi's greatness and his tragic error -- together. And yet that is the truth that overcomes our propensity to see only one side of an issue. For example, China annihilated the Tibetans in the 50s and 60s when she tried to make her way towards independence. The Dalai Lama and followers were forced into India. China had undertaken the most despicable actions to defend her territory: an abuse of the collective ego. And yet at the same time, the Dalai Lama realized that Tibetan Buddhism had become crusted over. In India and

his travels around the world, he came to perceive a modern, new evolutionary perspective that he never would have enjoyed if he remained with his people in Tibet. Because he was forced to run, life compelled him into a new, dynamic perspective of the religion he led. It is an irony of history that only an open mind -- i.e. a multi-sided perceiving spiritualized mind -- can fully appreciate.

Each of us are tethered to a limited view of things. We stick to it fiercely. Yet Nature works on multiple fronts simultaneously -- enables what seem to be contradictory occurrences to happen at the same time. E.g. the EU might not have ever come about, or if so in hundreds of years, if the Nazis in the guise of evil hadn't rampaged through Europe.

Man in the 21st century and beyond will begin to unshackle the propensities of exclusive mind, and embrace a true hyper-rationality of spiritualized mind, which is willing to look at all sides of an issue, and embrace each of those truths, no matter how contradictory they may seem on the surface.

Even the brute Nixon went to China to open up that once-closed land.

Taking Another's Point of View

Taking the Other Person's Point of View and Life Response

One of the most extraordinary principles of Life Response is that when we give up our own view of things -- however much correct -- and embrace the other person's position -- however much in error or at odds with our own perception -- life responds out of all proportion. This mind-twisting truth is no mere concept, but a lived experience that conscious individuals have had throughout time.

Taking the other person's point of view is to take the view of Life, of the deeper and wider truth of things that also has the benefit of attracting good fortune to your person. If e.g. you accept the view of a creditor you owe money rather than assert your own argument (even if correct!), good fortune will quickly come back to you -- whether the relief of long-term physical pain, or the sudden emergence of work and income when they were practically non-existent, or other forms of benefit.

To take the view of another is to connect with the universal truth of things, to a consciousness that has integral knowledge of all sides of a matter. It is, to use Sri Aurobindo's term, the "supramental" perspective that has a great power to attract: to bring the universe, others, and the best of circumstance to your doorstep.

Here is an illustration of this principle:

A few years back, several colleagues and I collaborated online on a potential expert system for the Internet. While some of us had developed a deep knowledge of human consciousness over the years, a new partner in the group had not yet had such experiences. Interestingly, when we tried to communicate some of those insights to our friend, it did not stick.

Sometime later our new partner contacted me asking for help in developing an initial round of introductory materials for the planned expert system site. But in order to respond, first I needed to know what the purpose of the expert system was in the first place; including what benefits users would derive from using it. Since we had not come to any consensus in months of discussion with other members, coming up with an introductory statement for the site seemed premature.

However, rather than focus on our differences and the “logic” of the situation, I decided to try something different and simply embrace his point of view. In other words, I was ready to do whatever he requested; no questions asked.

And so, not only did I accept in full his apparently limited conception of the system, but I agreed to develop materials for the site reflecting that view.

When we later had our first follow-up discussion, interesting things started happening. First, he boldly suggested that I include several of my own articles at our introductory site. This was a total surprise and delight for me because I had not expected to use this content for this reduced site. And besides, I did not think my colleague had read any of my articles!

Then when it came to reviewing the materials he asked me to put together, there was another surprise. In it I had included a powerful life principle that I did not believe he understood, or would ever make the effort to comprehend, as that was not his nature. And yet startlingly and most unexpectedly we had a very stimulating discussion on that very subject, which left me a bit dazed. In fact, he now saw the overwhelming benefit of the principle, to the point where he was expressing unbridled, gushing enthusiasm for the idea!

Listening to his response, I was dumbstruck by his interest and passion. After all, this was not the sort of feature he seemed able grasp in the past; and now he had suddenly become its advocate and champion! Needless to say, I was startled by the turn of events.

As it turned out, the group would go on to develop a series of powerful online programs, including the consciousness-oriented TenfoldSales.com for sales professionals and RomanceEternal.org for human relationships; applications that likely would have not been developed if my colleague hadn't been drawn in.

Reflecting on the incident, it became clear that because I opened to his conception of things, instead of fixating on my own, life opened up in ways I never would have imagined. By shedding my own perspective and embracing in full his point of view, I entered a wider sphere of existence from which I elicited good fortune for myself, my associate, and the entire team.

Thus in a supreme bit irony, through this “pretzel logic of the Infinite” of acceding to another’s truth over my own, I was able to attract the very things I had hoped for. That is the staggering power of taking to and fully embracing another’s point of view!

Embracing Another’s Point of View

When you live in the surface consciousness rather than the depths, you tend to ignore the full truth of things. E.g. if another individual brings up a point of view about a matter, you are less inclined to embrace it. In the deeper consciousness, one is accepting of all truths of a matter. In fact, when another person expresses a point of view, rather than reject it or challenge it outright, one remains calm and perceives how it fits in within the context of one’s own view, as well as the wider object of inquiry that is being addressed.

From the supramental point of view, all truths related to a matter have their own truth, and one perceives that. Thus, Supermind is a consciousness of Unity. It sees any point of view in terms of the Whole, the Essence, and all other truths related to a matter.

Imagine that you are having a discussion in a group, and you express your opinion. Normally, one hopes that others agree with it and embrace it. However, when another expresses a different view, the tendency is to feel scorned or otherwise neglected, and we tend to defend our position. This is called “Intellectuality” by Sri Karmayogi.

However, when we are centered in a deeper poise, we shed our ego, are not so defensive, and tend to embrace other' points of view. From the depths within, culminating in the Psychic Being, the Evolving Being and True Self our minds expand upward into spiritual domains, where we perceive the truths of other positions relative to our own; even relative to the object of inquiry under discussion.

From the deeper poise within, of "Witness Consciousness." we have a harmonic view rather than a separative sense from others, and from other truths, circumstances, and possibilities. From these deepest depths, we transcend our emotional, vital ties to things, and in that freedom embrace all positions and possibilities. From the subliminal depths within, we have an all-embracing consciousness that takes in all truths of a matter, even as it sees each truth relative to the all other positions, including one's own.

Thus, in this meeting, there is a rapid movement toward the deepest truths of a matter. With that knowledge, one can make the most profound and insightful of decisions that lead to very powerful, positive outcomes. By rising beyond our separative and exclusive view of other's thoughts and opinions, we open to a universal plane, out of which come decisions and actions of great truth, wisdom, goodness, power, harmony, and delight.

Insight, Illumination, Intuition, Supramental Perception

Archimedes Eureka Moment of Vision through Spiritualized Mind

When Archimedes had his Eureka moment, a vision of a possibility came to him. When he acted on it, he was able to solve his conundrum. Such envisioning is a movement of the higher, spiritual dimensions of mind that knows without the hard churning of thought. When Archimedes sat in the tub, he realized that he was displacing water, which he saw could be the very method to determine if the king's crown was pure gold. When he realized that possibility as a vision in his mind, he became so excited that he ran out into the streets naked crying "Eureka, I've got it!"

In the film *A Civil Action*, the John Travolta character had a similar expertise, when he recalled water spilling over the edge of a table from a tipped over glass. That enables him to envision something related to the legal case he was lead prosecuting attorney for. That vision of possibility turned out to be the decisive turn in the case that would eventually garner a \$100M settlement for his client victims. Again there was a vision of a possibility that perceived the object of truth without going through the exercise of thought.

And yet there are methods of connecting with the object of knowledge even more directly. It is the great spiritual power of mentality commonly known as "intuition."

Then what is intuition? It turns out that Travolta played another extraordinary character in the film *Phenomenon*. In that role, George Malley has a powerful mystical experience that changes the course of his life, which leads to a radical change in his perceptions of reality. In fact, from that day onward, he has one revelation of truth after another, startling the local folk. The experiences are so frequent and powerful that at one point he comments that he cannot control the constant revelations that fill his mind. In essence, he has risen to the realm of intuitive mind, a plane of mentality where truths just appear in one's head without any thought at all. No reasoning, logical thinking, and hard churning of thought here; or even the envisioning of a possibility. It is pure knowledge that has entered the mind on its own. In that sense, George Malley's has moved beyond the experiences of Travolta's character in *A Civil Action*, as well as Archimedes in his famous Eureka moment.

Sri Aurobindo has described an ascending scale of mentality that ranges from limited sense-oriented thought, where mind is preoccupied by the input of the sense, and where

the object of truth is hardly known at all and ignorance abounds; to rational thought where one uses the power of reason to come to an understanding, but which is often limited, brittle, and one-sided; to silent mind, where through a still mind one engages in purer forms of rational thinking that bring clearer thought results; to envisioning (illuminated mind) as experienced by Archimedes (and by Einstein when he envisioned riding along a beam of light, which gave him the profound understanding of the relative nature of space and time); to truth consciousness (aka Sri Aurobindo's Supermind, where one moves into complete identify with the object, garnering, many-sided integral truth about the thing or matter, embracing and perceiving the unity of each and all, while simultaneously harboring a vast power for it to come about in the world.

Thus, at any moment there is an object that can be known; a truth about some matter that we can come to understand integrally, wholly, and dynamically.

Take this example. Imagine a box on the other side of a house. Our normal mentality can only come to understand it by inference, such as someone reporting that there may be a rectangular figurine on the other side of the home. But is that true? Is it rectangular? Is it even there? Normal mentality, including its highest form of rationality and logic stands helpless in its ability to know the object in its detail and multiplicity.

Spiritual Mind however does know the object more directly; as one has a vision of the box or knows through revelation of truth that there is a 3-dimensional square container on the other side, as one simply gathers it within one's self through the plane of universal mind. Higher still, Truth Consciousness/Supermind knows in a flash all its salient aspects, as a multisided, integral truth-knowledge rises from within. It is an ultimate revelatory experience that puts one in direct contact with that object -- whether it is material, fact, idea, circumstance, or matter. Moreover, through that supramental perception, life tends to bring that very thing into existence; or we are fully energized to do so, and have the method to manifest it as real.

As a result, one has overcome the limits of space and time, as we attract the many-sided truth of the object at a distance, doing so in an instant. It is a new form of Knowing that transcends Mind, apprehending Truth directly. It is an indicator of the emergence of a New Humanity.

Ignorance of Mind vs. Integral Knowledge and Power of Supermind

Though Mind is a great development in the evolution of consciousness from out of the physical and vital realm, it is still a limited instrument of understanding and knowledge, and one day is likely to be passed over. Sri Aurobindo calls this next stage of mentality in human evolution 'Supermind,' or Truth Consciousness.

Sri Aurobindo tells us that though Mind has served a great role in our progress, it is still an instrument of Ignorance. For one, it does not give us *direct* knowledge of things, but instead goes through a process of hard churning of thought and mental contortions to arrive at understanding that is still far short of full integral knowledge and perception of that thing. As a result of this fundamental Ignorance of Man rooted in our limited mental capacity, there is far too much error, miscalculation, misconception, falsehood, and even evil in life. Consider the limitations of Mind compared to the staggering knowledge capacities of Supermind:

The normal human mind essentially takes facts of information and tries to aggregate and synthesize it into ideas. Or it takes a whole of a matter and attempts to break it down into parts. Mind thus constantly engages in a difficult and complex process of synthesis and analysis to come to an understanding about any object of inquiry. In addition, Mind also tends to stay in one line of reasoning, in a linear direction, missing all other tracks and possibilities. As a result, mind's understanding not only comes

through effort and strain, but what it does perceive is normally very partial and incomplete. This is what leads to ignorance, falsehood, and evil.

Now consider Supermind. It knows the object of inquiry in toto, directly, without having to gather facts and data and build them up or break them down. In Supermind, one does not need to engage in the hard churning of thought, as the details and whole simply appear in one's consciousness whole and complete. It garners knowledge of the object of inquiry through direct identification with it. Thus, time, space, and effort are overcome and replaced with instantaneous, integral, many-sided perception of any matter. This is the future of 'thinking' and knowing as envisioned by Sri Aurobindo, and experienced today by an infinitesimal yet slowly expanding number of individuals.

Consider a practical example, Imagine you are trying to understand the nature of a case. Our current, limited Mind tries to synthesize what is available or analyze or breakdown information to get at an understanding of it. Though that process, it may only come to a very part understanding. And it also may take weeks, months, or years just to come to that limited, part understanding. Now consider Supermind. It perceives the totality of the case inside without the necessity to garner external facts. It just knows. Moreover, it knows all sides of the case, and how each part relates to the other parts, as well as the Whole of the matter. In Supermind one garners instantaneous and integral knowledge of any object of inquiry complete without the hard churning our current mentality. It knows the object perfectly and completely from all sides and in relation to its whole and essence in a flash without analysis, synthesis, and other forms of reason. In fact, reason is abandoned altogether for its own Super-Reason that transcends the necessity of logic.

There is one other notable quality of this supramental Truth Consciousness. It not only has instantaneous, integral knowledge of a thing, but also has the power for its complete realization. When I know in Supermind, I have the full power to manifest that knowledge, making it real. Thus, not only do I have the integral understanding and knowledge of a case in a flash, but now have the instantaneous power to solve and win the case, as life tends to cooperate with any efforts on my part from any and all directions.

Practical Applications of Supermind, i.e. Truth Consciousness

The human mind thinks in a number of distinct ways. Two of them are Synthesis and Analysis. The former is to bring together that which is separate; the latter is to break apart the whole into distinct parts. Analysis is to parse out from the given "One" to particulars so we can function in life. For example, if I come upon a shopping area, I cannot simply look at the structures in front of me as one complete undivided, featureless mass, and accomplish that way. Instead I need to separate the whole of the center into distinct parts so I can find my way to my specific destination. This is how Mind navigates its way through the real world.

The problem is that when Mind engages in this analytic, parsing, breaking-down into particulars process it loses touch with the totality around it. That is, when my Mind perceives distinct entities from out of the One, and then focuses on a particular part -- whether a particular destination, or a particular idea rummaging through my mind -- I tend to lose connection with the totality of outer circumstance or inner mental truth surrounding or encompassing that particular. In the case of working my way through the shopping area, I am so focused on reaching my goal that I lose touch with the whole of the surrounding material and non-material existence, causing me to e.g. accidentally bump into another individual, or feel irritable when the store host leads me in the wrong direction, or suddenly find myself in a lengthy line. The problem is that my mind has not accounted for these unfoldings, and is bothered and disturbed by them. As a result of

focusing on the part I have lost touch with the whole -- whether the needs of other people, other truths presenting themselves, and other circumstance unfolding around me.

As a result, I am locked into a narrowness of my own doing that limits what I know and how I can act. The infinite potentials of life that are always there in the environment to be grasped are missed. Because of my Mind's absorption in the part, I am walled off in the little corner of my mental world, cut off from the true unfoldings and vast possibilities of life.

And yet there is a way out of this conundrum. There are higher formations of Mind that are spiritual in Nature, that reconnect me to a wider existence. In these spiritual dimensions of Mind, when I parse a specific from the Whole to accomplish in that moment in time, I am able to remain in touch with the ever-changing totality of existence. Though I am fully engaged in a specific detail, of my specific interest, there is something in my consciousness that is open to and connected to all other possibilities: to the variety of details unfolding; to the various mental truths related to what is taking place; to the needs of others; and to the "intention" of what life itself is subtly seeking to achieve.

In fact, by moving away from Mind absorbed in the auditory and visual inputs of sense, or Mind and self-absorbed in one's own desires and needs, to a higher and deeper Silent and even Intuitive Mind, I not only have an awareness of a wider field of existence, but as I go through my own actions, a plethora of positive conditions reveal themselves at various points along the way. From that higher consciousness where the Mind is so much more open to subtle and not so subtle influences, vibrations, not only am I that much more aware of inner and outer conditions, not only am I able to easily accomplish what I set out to do, but I gain the sanction and full cooperation of life, as new, unexpected possibilities, opportunities, realities present themselves from seemingly out of nowhere.

This capacity to be in touch with the part, other parts, and the Whole simultaneously, while evoking astonishing Luck from the environment reaches its apex and possibility in the spiritualized Mental plane of "Supermind," also known as "Truth Consciousness."

In Supermind -- revealed to the world by sage and seer Sri Aurobindo -- we not carve out specifics specific from the Whole as in ordinary Mind, but we retain utter unity with all other parts of that totality, as well as with Whole itself. In supramental consciousness, even as I am absorbed in my specifics -- idea, emotion, or action -- my antennae of consciousness is spontaneously scanning the environment of the inner and outer planes. In that state I am open to, mesh with, tuned into other related circumstance, individuals, and actions. In that ultimate spiritual consciousness, I always sense a wider movement; an essence of what is truly occurring; garnering a deep, ever changing knowledge. And yet at the same time life dovetails with my efforts, enabling me to attract its full cooperation. At the plane of Supermind, I not only Know, but life takes me on a Magic Carpet Ride of unending achievement, wonder, and bliss. In other words, Supermind is a plane of an ultimate *Consciousness*, of awareness and truth, and an ultimate *Force*, of power and actuation. It is Consciousness and Force as one, together.

We see this most readily in our relationships with others; particularly those whom we are most close to, such as our spouse. We discuss a matter with our beloved, and after a while, our Minds break out into particulars it is most fond of, causing us to see the same issue from different points of view. I take one side of that matter, and she another; even as there is a third, a fourth, and so on to infinity. Moreover, I assert my side, and she hers. As we are identified with and assert the part, we have lost touch with the other's position, not to mention all other positions and possibilities. We are lost in the contradiction of our opposing or dissimilar views.

But from a higher, supramental perception, we would remain in constant relation with our partner's perspective. We would take it up as if it were our own. We would also see things from other, non-expressed perspectives, i.e. other parts and possibilities of the issue, even there would be a subtle awareness and recognition of the Highest Possibility of that matter. In essence through supramental perception, we are fully open to the varying parts, the Essence, and the Whole of things.

In supramental conversation or interaction there is always a sense of the highest possibility and purpose of what is being addressed. In the case of the dialogue between spouse, it is the importance, sacredness, and sustainability of our relationship. The constant attempt to maintain it, broaden it, and deepen and intensify it is the very character of Truth Consciousness. As a result, when I express a position or point of view, I am fully in touch with that Ultimate Purpose, which allows me to be far more accepting of another's position; while opening to a plethora of possibilities. Our minds have opened to the widest and deepest shading of Truth and purposefulness, leading to marvelous interactions of pure joy.

You see a similar dynamic in group communications, such as at a meeting. If you Mind focus on your own interests alone, you lose touch with the higher, more universal truths available in the atmosphere, which includes in this case, the welfare and well-being of the firm. But if your Mind falls silent, if you move to a deeper status within, you develop a wider sense of things, which will put you in harmonic relations with others, including their thoughts and ideas. From these depths not only will you be able to contribute in ways that elevate your own point of view, but also the positions and contributions of those around you. That in turn leads not only to the very best ideas, decisions, and actions for the benefit of the organization, but evokes positive conditions from life -- whether in the form of breakthrough ideas, unexpected good news, or other positive developments.

Thus, we see that Supermind is not just a CONSCIOUSNESS that perceives a specific or part in terms of other parts, people, and circumstance, i.e. the Whole; but is a FORCE and POWER that evokes enormous good fortune for one's self and the world. When we rise to Supermind, whether by developing an inner orientation, stilling our mind, giving up ego, or surrendering to the Divine Mother, the universe pours into our being as a higher, wider, integral knowledge, while creating optimal conditions that benefit us all.

Sri Aurobindo tells us that the Supramental Consciousness and Power will be the foundation of humanity's future existence. It will be the means of a startling, dynamic, creative life; unprecedented in human history. It can in fact become the basis of a New Humanity, culminating in what he calls a "Divine Life on Earth."

The Coming Super-Revolution in Our Ability to Know

The issue of whether a computer can match the current level of thought of a human being is an intriguing one, yet only touches a fraction of our potential to know and secure knowledge in life.

The real question is not whether a computer can match say 100% what humans are now capable of thinking, but whether through elevation of human consciousness we human beings are capable of knowing and cognizing at 10, 100, or even 1000 times greater the level we do now. This is the real Knowledge Revolution that awaits the world.

It may in fact take 50 to 300 years to reach this capacity, as we move from our productive but narrow focused human logic, which is exclusive, partial, and limited, to higher forms of perception through illumination, intuition, and revelation of knowledge; where we garner the truth of any matter from all sides in a flash. This is an example of a new evolution in human functioning that goes far beyond our current capacity to think

and know, let alone the very limited capability of a computer/machine, which merely mimics the current limitations of the mind.

Einstein demonstrated this capacity to instantly know the entirety of a matter for a few seconds when the material formula of life -- $E=mc^2$ -- was revealed to him, changing the world forever. Each of us is capable of opening to that universal Mind power not just for a moment, but ongoing throughout our day, creating 10, 100 or 1000 times greater understanding of any object of inquiry. This is the radical revolution of human perception that awaits us. It is a movement beyond the local domain of limited mental reason to the non-local domain of infinite capacity to perceive every and all sides of a matter or issue in an instant. Though it may strike some as science fiction, this capacity is a living reality, particularly for those who have learned to expand their consciousness beyond the limits of human logic, to spiritualized mind and beyond.

Consider these scenarios:

- A research project you are working on that you expect will take a month to complete is finished in two days when you suddenly know the answer to that project's most compelling problem in a flash.
- An email arrives in your inbox with the complete, multi-sided explanation of an issue that you have been grappling with from one partial angle, reducing your workload from 2 weeks to 2 hours.
- You garner an understanding of a subtle working of life regarding a matter, and as a result, you make the right decision that quickly attracts astonishing results, shortening your effort from months to hours.

These are but a few examples of the future-knowing capacity of humanity; surpassing our current ability by leaps and bounds. It is not merely to use reason to know a thing, but to move into complete identity with its many-sided truth, its totality, and its essence in the blink of an eye. Sounds super-natural? Actually, it is *supra-mental*, and an indicator of the next stage of human evolution.

Knowing without Thinking

Sri Aurobindo indicates that the human mind is a transitional instrument that will be shed in the course of our evolution. He means that intuition, revelation, and supramental perception would replace the current hard churning of thought, reason, and logic. Thus, in given moment, we would simply "know," perceive truths, garner insights, and comprehend that which is under inquiry without having to think things through. Knowledge about any thing just appears in our mind complete.

Actually, we hardly engage in our most basic reasoning instrument -- rational thought -- let alone evoking knowledge directly through intuition. Rather than thinking through things, seeing all sides of a matter, and coming to right conclusion, we use our reasoning faculty mainly to serve the needs and desires of our lower, nature -- including the urges of our vital and physical being. As a result, conclusions that do not conform to our ego-based needs, desires, opinions, and attitudes are filtered out, leaving us far from truth of any matter. It is irrational use of the logical, rational mind.

Still, direct revelation of truth without the need of thought would be a most compelling development; a milestone in human evolution, a shortcut to the truth, and, of course, a time saver! Imagine a conversation between two people where intuitional expression and knowledge is the standard. Revelations of knowledge would flow into our minds, and be passed on to the other person in a symphony of interaction, taking our exchange into new, unforeseen directions. Insight that would have taken several conversations are garnered in one, leading to vast improvements in effectivity, productivity, and success.

It turns out that a number of individuals are having these intuitive like experiences today, although they are hardly conscious of the fact. However, if we make such direct access of knowledge a *conscious* act, then we can have these truth experiences constantly. How can we then consciously cultivate this infinite-like mental potentiality? Here are a few suggestions:

The first thing to do is to recognize when you have one of these experiences. That when you suddenly have a profound insight without the hard churning of thought, you have had an intuitive experience. Then you know it is a real and powerful phenomenon of life. If you then make the conscious decision to cultivate these sorts of experiences on a regular basis, then it will surely occur more frequently.

And yet simply recognizing and wanting it may not be enough to sustain such experiences; for we are prone to easily forget about it and fall into our old routines. Rather, we need to create a new basis of consciousness from which these instant knowledge experiences of spiritualized Mind can more readily occur. In particular, one needs to develop an inner orientation and poise for the mind to open and widen to the universal plane, from which we garner revelations of truth.

Since it is difficult to simply change our nature and forge a new orientation of inner calm, we can employ a substitute method that will help us progressively create that new inner nature. It is to practice the act of consecration; i.e. offering an upcoming event or current situation to the Higher Power. Offering a matter to the spiritual Force not only helps us gain the cooperation of life relative to our situation, but over time, a new orientation is forged within.

That in turn causes us to have greater overall faith, as well as a softer, richer, calmer poise and orientation. As a result, our mind tends to expand upward, opening to the universal plane where all knowledge resides. We then experience descents of truth more readily, which gives us the knowledge to make right decisions that lead to powerful outcomes that propel us to the heights.

The Decisive Competitive Advantage of Intuition

They say that Knowledge is Power. In America, there is currently fervent discussion and hand wringing over how to retain its economic edge in the face of global competition, especially from China and India. A national panel has been established with a litany of solutions to this challenge -- ranging from improving K1-12 education, favorable tax policy, jump-starting the number of engineers and math wizards the country produces, more research in technology and science, and so forth. The idea is that by having greater technological knowledge, America will develop greater economic power that is competitive with, actually exceed the rest of the world.

All of these -- there are 20 major recommendations -- are fine solutions for establishing a competitive edge. But it is not merely an *edge* that we seek -- that any nation should seek -- but a *decisive advantage*. From an efficiency perspective that would entail creating the greatest benefit with the least effort in the shortest period of time. From a spiritual perspective it is to overcome space, time, and possibility. I.e. attract from out of nowhere a vast array of deep knowledge and positive circumstance to the here and now.

Such mind-numbing efficiency would enable an organization to produce the technologies and the products of the future in the present. One could e.g. discover the answer to a technological problem in a single day and develop a product within a month instead of the usual months, years, and decades of effort. Plus it will turn out to be *precisely* the product the market yearns for.

How could this supra-rational, mystical scenario come about? It can happen when individuals experience *intuitions* of knowledge. For example, through an elevation of consciousness I suddenly receive a solution to a long-term technical problem, or attract a vision of a new product, or have the subtle sense of what society subconsciously yearns for.

In this way, the future moves into the present; i.e. we are abridging time into no time. Thus, almost instantaneously, I can develop a 5-year advantage over my competitor, as I sense the unfoldings of the future in the here and now. I receive intimations of knowledge -- in the form of illuminations ("Eureka, I've Got It," said Archimedes); intuitions of the heart of the matter under scrutiny or the many-sided truth of subject; and revelations of the very thing that the future yearns for and is moving towards. With that knowledge, I develop products and services that leave competitors -- including competing nations -- in the dust. But, how to evoke such staggering intimations of where the future is heading?

We develop this ultimate knowledge-gathering power by moving our center of consciousness away from the surface of life, from the auditory and visual inputs bombarding our senses, to a deeper poise within. There, we develop a sense of calm and serenity, an inner silence that enables us to look out on the world as Silent Witness. From that still inner poise, we perceive the subtle movements of life; from within we have intimations of how to proceed and where to hold back; and from there we experience continuous descents of revelation of truth that give us the knowledge to move forward.

When we then proceed in our life from these points, every decision will tend to be the right one, and every action perfectly executed. As a result, we overcome space and time, as conditions of life continually work in our favor. In essence, we move from the ego plane, that of separate self, and move to the universal plane, which puts us in touch with the many-sided truth that comes from intimation and intuition. We garner the knowledge that is far ahead of our time; that puts us miles ahead of others in our domain. In essence, we bring the infinite potentials of life, normally waiting on a distant future, to the here and now.

Technological innovation that brings an edge over the competition is one thing. Instantaneous knowledge that compresses time, bringing future knowledge into the here and now through intuitions of truth is a step far beyond. It is a cosmic-oriented Decisive Competitive Advantage, available to anyone willing to pursue it.

PS I would add that consecration, i.e. self-offering to the spiritual Force of a business situation and condition will also attract intuitions of knowledge into one's mind without thought that can give a tremendous competitive advantage.

A New Way of Living through Sudden Descents of Truth Knowledge

Is there such a thing as "Truth," or rather an absolute Truth behind an object, thing, or subject matter? I believe there is. Unfortunately, the mind, which is a great but limited development in human evolution, has not the power to grasp it.

Mind, the fundamental way we come to know the world, is a dividing instrument. It looks out on the whole of a thing, matter, subject, and divides it into one or more constituent parts, so that we can live our lives. However, it is a flawed instrument. Among its flaws-

-It tends to see only one side of an issue or object that consists of many sides.

-It takes that one or limited number of sides, and insists that it is the full, whole, entire Truth, when it is only but a woeful small part; even a false part. Thus, though the

Mind is a dividing instrument to make sense of the world, it tends to be exclusive of all other parts.

-Supported by our ego-sense the exclusive knowledge becomes the basis for our error, falsehood, misconceptions, an ultimately wrong opinions and beliefs. That leads to wrong behavior and actions that lead to negative experiences in life, including pain and suffering. At its worst, it leads to evil.

If Mind had known the whole truth, the many-sided truth of any object or issue, it would be an excellent instrument for extremely successful living. Can Mind then rise into something where it is able to perceive the essential Whole of a thing; the many-sided Truth of any object of inquiry to enable this infinite-like life?

Yes, it can. When Mind withdraws from the surface bubble of life and discovers a deeper poise; when it moves to a poise of Silence within, the truer, many-sided parts of any object begin to reveal themselves. No insights begin to more easily arise in our Mind through our thought processes.

For Mind to withdraw from the surface and its sense, one need take to consecration -- opening to the spiritual Force -- on a regular basis so that we reach a level of depth within that causes our thoughts to still in silence and our mind to soar beyond its current moorings to its spiritual possibilities, including increased an increased many-sided view of things.

There is a further stage of mind's ascent into its spiritual realms. It is when intuitions of thought appear in our Mind without the need for thought at all. From an increasing silence and inner poise within, objects of knowledge just appear in our mind as if from out of nowhere, without the hard churning of thought. We just know things. One insight after another appears in our mind from out of thin air. Sometimes the Whole of something comes all at once. Then it is revelation beyond intuition. Now we have vast knowledge of a matter which gives us enormous decision making and action power to attract infinite possibilities to the here and now.

Through consecration, meditation, and other techniques, we can penetrate our deeper nature, establish Stillness and Silence in the depths of our being, enabling integral knowledge, i.e. the many-sided truth of things to suddenly come into our Minds. It is an indicator of an entirely new way of living, in which the infinite potentials of life are miraculously drawn towards us in the here and now. It is but one glimpse into the next stage of human evolution.

"This Morning I Awoke with the Entire Solution in My Mind"

Normally, we have to exercise our mind to understand a thing or to come up with an answer to a problem. It involves the hard churning of thought. There is also a more refined mind where we are able to know a thing with less or even *no* thought. They come through sudden *illuminations* of understanding -- as in Archimedes famous statement: "Eureka, I've got it!"

Beyond these are even higher forms of mental perception of pure *intuition* and *revelation*, where knowledge simply enters our mind without any thought at all. In these cases, you simply know a thing directly without rational or logical thinking. It is a direct opening to the truth of a matter, which comes in a flash; simply appearing in the mind as a formed knowledge.

Imagine if you could have such revelations all the time. It would enable an ultimately efficiency in knowing, and would propel that person to the heights. It is in fact the very quality that enables human genius.

Where do such intuitions and revelations of knowledge of a matter come from? They originate in the universal plane; in a Cosmic Mind that has the complete knowledge of any object of inquiry. Through that universal mind, the object of inquiry in its fullness exists, and we have the ability to come in contact with it. When we do, that wave of knowledge pours into our own mind as a complete thought that is perfect.

We also have direct intuitions from *within*; at points inside ourselves we are connected with that cosmic plane. Where do they exist? There is a subliminal being inside each of us that is in touch with the superconscience. Like the experience of pure intuition that enters from the universal Mind, suggestions percolate up from this subliminal part within, providing intimations of truth, including what to do and what to avoid. It is in essence our Inner Guide that reveals itself through intuitions of truth.

These intimations from within also reveal themselves in sleep. Thus, we may wake up in the middle of the night or after a night's rest, and have the complete understanding or solution to a matter. Almost every one of us have had that experience at one time or another.

As we develop a greater inner life, the tendency to have direct intuitions of the object of knowledge intensifies. As we open to our deeper consciousness, we expand upward to the universal/spiritual planes of mind and inward to the subliminal being, which intensifies intuitions and revelations of truth. As it does, we move from being limited *mental* beings who have to think all of the time to get at the answer to any matter, to *spiritual* beings, who have access to all truths of existence in a flash.

It is a harbinger of the next stage of human evolution; tomorrow's way of understanding that is available to us today.

The Divine-Net

What if you needed to know something and that knowledge simply appeared in your mind. What if you needed to know what to do next and an inner voice compels you to move in a particular direction. What if you needed to know the future direction of things and it is revealed in the present. The Internet will hardly help you in these areas, but the Divine-Net will. The former is a great 21st century tool; the latter a tool for all time. Why not then use the latter today?

An individual is walking down the street and is considering a problem. Where would he look on the Internet for the answer? It is unique, complex, and personal. The solution is however available on the Divine-Net. You still your thoughts, move to a deeper poise within, and open to the spiritual Force. One more thing: you forget about the matter. Two minutes later an intuition of the complete solution to the problem appears in your mind from out of thin air. It is the power of the Divine-Net in action.

Another individual is about to make a sales presentation to a client. Through the Internet, she can find out about their needs, what is in stock, where they fit in on her schedule, and so forth. Beyond that, the transaction depends on her skills, persuasiveness, will, energy, et al. What seems beyond control is the outcome and fate of the event. What is needed is luck. With the Divine-Net this same person opens to the Higher Power. As a result, the conditions of life are immediately set in order; i.e. luck is created. E.g., the client who said he would be 1/2 hour late is actually 5 minutes early. The \$5000 hoped for order becomes \$20,000 when the owner reveals that he has opened three new locations. In addition, when this woman returns to her office, she experiences a revelation of an entirely new marketing scheme, which she adopts and revolutionizes her business. These miraculous-like events took place because she concentrated a moment and tapped into the infinite power of the Divine-Net.

Then one day a third individual comes up with a brilliant idea. Why not combine the Internet and the Divine-Net. Why not gather the knowledge -- including its principles and methods -- of the Divine-Net in a central location for all in the world to access. This enhanced Supernet even has algorithms that take into account a person's current situations, demands, and state of mind. It is thus cosmically intelligent and aware of the Flow of Life for any and all persons. It can therefore be broadcast instantaneously to each specific user, providing a highly personalized solution. It allows any person to tap into Its power and become the Master of Life -- i.e. to bring about the greatest results in the shortest period of time with the least effort.

The source of this enhanced world wide web is the Divine-Net, which through its actions transcends limits of space and time -- as the future continually appears in the present, and the infinite instantly replaces the current finite. It thus transcends all known notions of causality and possibility. It puts all of the conditions of life in perfect order, while revealing knowledge and right course of action that lead to perfect outcomes. The Divine-Net is always there at your disposal, ready to work its magic, drawing from the Infinite consciousness of the divine Reality.

Are you ready to make use of this Ultimate Resource of life? If so, why not tap into the instantaneous miraculousness of the Divine-Net today.

Inner Orientation and Integral Knowledge

Go Inward to Soul to Move Upward in Mind to Truth

An animal looks around; hears sounds and responds to the situation. Its knowledge is limited to what it perceives through its five senses. Any mental deliberation is limited in large part to this sense data streaming into the mind. We humans inherit this limited capacity. We are prone to see what is around us and come to a wrong conclusion. We arrive on the scene of a police incident and make a conclusion based on what we see. As a result, we come to the completely wrong conclusion, We do that a dozen times a day, and it occurs billions of times an hour across the world, creating a stupendous stream of universal falsehood. More astounding still is the fact that we humans are unaware that it is happening.

However, if we shift our consciousness inward away from the surface bubblings, perturbations and impacts of the visual and audio on the senses, we are better prepared to deliberate on the variety of possibilities before us. I.e. we are more likely to use rational thought, and think about and perceive the variety of possibilities and truths of that moment. Thus, the more inward our orientation, the more likely we will be able to perceive events and come to right conclusions.

As we move deeper within -- whether through concentration, meditation, prayer, etc. -- and away from the surface of life, we are far more likely to consider more than one side of an issue or thing. Thus, we get closer to the truth of that object in that moment. As a result, we have greater knowledge to make right decisions that end in positive outcomes.

And yet we can go deeper still, to the subliminal being and the Evolving Soul within which is in touch with a super-consciousness. As we do so, our mind expands further, as we more frequently have illuminations and visions of insight and knowledge. Archimedes "Eureka, I've got it!" is one famous example, as in a flash he grasped the solution to an issue he was grappling with. It is sudden truth knowledge coming into our thoughts as light. Further still, one can have direct intuitions of the object truth without the need for thought at all. The right knowledge simply appears in our mind, giving us direct access to the object of inquiry or matter. It is direct truth cognition; direct contact with the object of inquiry; and an indicator that we have moved to the deeper parts of our being.

The principle then is simple: the further we move within and distance our self from the frothings of the surface, the more our mind expands. By moving to a deeper consciousness and poise, we move from limited, animal-like sense mind; to rational, logical thinking; to clear thinking in silence; to light, illuminations, and vision; to intuition of truth through direct identity with the object. Thus, the deeper in we go, the higher we climb in the scale of mentality, and thereof far more effective we are in our understanding, decision-making, and actions. It is also the path that will take us from our current human condition to a supramental capacity to change the conditions of life from within.

One final issue still needs to be addressed. What is the most effective way to create a beachhead within, and establish a true inner poise? It is difficult to truly penetrate our inner being through conscious efforts, such as concentration and meditation. It is much easier to reach these depths when we constantly consecrate, i.e. self-offer the details of our lives to the spiritual force; the supramental power. By doing that consistently in all aspects of our lives, we create a powerful connection to our deeper self, which in turn causes our mind to the spiritual heights of light, intuition, revelation, and supramental perception.

Thought that Evokes Ultimate Response

The mind does not normally work alone. It operates in relation to our vital and physical being. It is in fact normally dominated by and a slave to their needs and desires. Wanting attitudes, emotional desire, and physical need and attachment influence our thinking every step of the way. This is normal life. Life responds positively, neutrally and negatively to these; usually a mixture.

It is rare to have pure thought that is devoid of these limiting influences. Pure, logical, rational thought is practiced by few, as the vital and physical influences dominate our thinking. Yet when we engage in rational thinking, we come to the best conclusions and have the deepest insights that when acted upon have a power to attract more positive and beneficial results.

Beyond rational, logical thought is silence of the mind, light, intuition, and supramental perception. As we move to these mental heights, we not only experience ever-increasing revelations of knowledge without thinking, but there is a tendency for the knowledge to manifest as something tangible in the physical world.

How then do we make contacts with these higher, spiritual realms of mind and thought? Sri Aurobindo tells us that if we forge a link within, to the deepest depths of our being, our mind rises to the heights of spiritualized mind, absorbing both full, integral knowledge of the object under inquiry, and also evoking a will and power for it to manifest in life.

Sri Karmayogi further argues that it is difficult to arrive at the deepest depths on our own, so he advocates practicing the act of consecration, which is to offer any upcoming or existing matter to the spiritual Force, which not only sets right its conditions, and carries with it vibrations of peace and harmony, but over time widens the inner channel of our being to our deeper selves. Stationed in the depths more often, our mind then tends to open to the wider universal planes, where we garner profound insight, and greater still, revelations of many-sided truth. In other words, we come in direct contact with the object of inquiry, unencumbered by space, time, or mental effort. In addition there is a will and power for that truth and knowledge to manifest as real. E.g. it is suddenly adopted and becomes a practical value of the community, or it becomes a new strategy, or even a new service or physical product adopted by that or another individual, group, or institution.

Another life responding power of thought comes from those same depths of our being; as a subliminal influence. When we are conscious, we perceive subtle, yet important influences percolating up from within, telling us what to do and what not to do. It is an indication that we have made contact with our Inner Guide, which is itself in touch with the cosmic plane of Mind that contains ultimate wisdom and truth. Following these influences also tend to evoke positive life response, as they are based on truth of action or inaction in that moment, out of which come positive life response results.

In addition to subliminal thought waves, there are also intimations from the Heart center, from which arise higher emotions and feelings, such as self-givingness, generosity, gratitude, and goodwill. Like the thoughts of subliminal mind, these are in essence inner responses to outer circumstance that wash over us. If we then take heed of their advice, we tend to attract further good fortune -- for others and ourselves.

There is also the power of human Values, which is also of the mind, which can saturate our thinking and drive our lives forward. They are similar to our attitudes, but of a higher order, more of the mind's capacity to embrace and believe in certain true truths. They can be thought of as emanations of Divine qualities like harmony, oneness, wisdom, knowledge, creativity, beauty, love, delight, timelessness, etc. A directed thought saturated with values, such as honesty, self-reliance, organization, innovation, etc. creates great benefit, especially if it is aligned with outer social and environmental forces. Values have a great power to manifest as sudden good fortune when they are taken to in earnest.

Imagine living in the depths, engaging in constant consecration, with truth emanating from below and above as constant revelation, that is saturated with values, that when acted upon attracts an endless procession of positive conditions. This is the new life of

Consecration that Connects Us to the "Inner Voice"

[Note: This was written in response to the issue of how we can develop the subtle sense that guides us to take right actions that enable life to respond.]

Sri Aurobindo and Karmayogi constantly speak of the Inner Being. There we find the subconscious, the subliminal, and the psychic. They are all subconscious to us.

The subconscious is mostly negative in that it is the source of human pessimism, feeling of the inevitability of disease and death, bad dreams, etc. Yet it can evolve. In fact, both Sri Aurobindo and Mother indicate its transformation is the key to enabling the supramental transformation, particularly at the cellular level as Mother experimented with.

The subliminal sits astride the subconscious and is very positive. It receives positive vibrations from the superconscious (essentially the transcendent Divine). I believe it is the basis for which the subconscious can be transformed.

The Psychic is beyond (or deeper still). It is the evolving soul and is the ultimate personal spark of the spirit within us. It is evolving, hoping to derive the essence of our experience. It has travelled through many lives, including ours in its own evolution.

For the purpose of the "Inner Voice," the positive Subliminal can serve a vital role. It is always sending positive messages to the surface of our being, giving subtle, right Guidance. Our experiences indicate this. It is, as I mentioned, in touch with the universal and transcendent influences (superconscious). It is subtly informing us of what is right and what isn't; of what to do and what not to do. The more we are in touch with it, the better.

We can be more connected with it when our orientation is inner; i.e. in a poise of the depths of our being. How to move to the depths is a profound yogic issue. For we who

are only on the edge of yoga (conscious evolution), constant consecration forges a connection to those depths, including the Subliminal and its positive influences. In other words, the more we consecrate -- open to the spiritual Force, to Mother -- the more we come in touch with the Inner Voice.

So the simple solution to subtle based decision-making -- i.e. "hearing" and acting on the Inner Voice -- is constant consecration. Doing so shifts us away from the surface consciousness to the depths where the inner voice is always at our disposal to guide us. The Psychic Being is the Ultimate Guide -- at each of the mental, vital, and physical levels. It requires great yogic effort for us to penetrate it. Sri Aurobindo succeeded and said it was his greatest discovery.

Thus positive influences come from above -- e.g. intuition and supramental -- as well as below (subliminal and psychic). To be in touch with both strengthens the Inner Voice that can give us the knowledge to act rightly, have life respond, and thereby begin to build a new spirit-based life on earth.

Experiencing the Reality from Within

There is an ultimate Reality. It is beyond our normal conceptions of God. It is timeless, spaceless, immutable, indefinable. It is the Unmanifest as well as the Manifest. It is the Absolute of the West; Brahman of the East.

How can we know this ultimate Reality? Not when we live ordinary lives of the surface. Only when we develop an inner poise and orientation can we begin that journey. From there we can begin to get intimations of this Reality.

As we plunge into the depths within, we become silent witness to the world. Deeper still we come upon our True Self, our personal evolving soul. There we constantly perceive the multiplicity of possibilities unfolding at any moment in time. We always know in which direction to turn, to act; what to avoid; what elements in our being need improvement, uplifting. There we feel connections to the universal and transcendent planes. We also now have direct intuitions and intimations of the forces and truths of the universe which enter our minds without thought.

In that status all conflicts, divisions, and dualities that we experience, such as the apparent incompatibility of Spirit and Matter, or the dual life experience of pleasure and pain, begin to break down.

From that deep poise, the contradictions of life resolve into their natural complementary status. From there we perceive that the inner and the outer are one; that in fact, the entire universe is contained inside ourselves and if we change the inner, the outer will respond in kind.

As a result of these harmonic experiences, we perceive the unity of the manifest and the unmanifest, which is the omnipresent Reality, the ultimate vision and experience of life.

We can begin approach this profound inner status through meditation, deep concentration, consecration of activities (i.e. surrendering all actions to the descending Force), and other methods.

As we make deep inroad into our inner being, we feel the divine presence within and above compelling us to Surrender to it. We perceive our role in the comic scheme of things. We become instruments of the transcendent and universal intent. We begin to offer our very existence to the Higher Purpose.

Overcoming Billions of Error-Filled Perceptions in the World

I walk into a room, and then look around. I notice that there has been a certain movement of things. My mind then comes to a conclusion about what has taken place -- but it proves to be misguided. Likewise, a woman looks outside a window and observes the scene. She then comments that such and such has occurred, when that too proves not to be the case.

We are constantly jumping to such erroneous conclusions. Imagine then a company of hundreds of employees, where thousands of such flawed conclusions are being made every day. Now multiply that by every organization in the world, and you have hundreds of billions, if not trillions of misconceptions born every month. Imagine that over a year, or decades, or centuries! What accumulated ignorance and falsehood!

We live in a world of perpetual ignorance, in which we misperceive things, are therefore led to wrong conclusions, followed by misguided decisions and failed actions. Is there a reason for this? Yes, it is this: The mind looks out on the world and is incapable of seeing the truth of things; of what is really going on. Part of the reason that it fails to perceive the true nature of the current situation, is that it is incapable of knowing how the past has brought about the present conditions, nor where the future course of the event lies. In that way, we miss the wider whole truth of things, only perceiving a very small portion of the event.

This is the case because we observe the world through superficial eyes. We are overwhelmed by the inputs of our five senses -- i.e. of what is seen, heard, felt, etc. -- and miss the true sense of what is playing out. This causes our minds to jump to false conclusions. Mind responding to sense data tends to know only the *surface* reality, not the deeper truth of things. "Sense-oriented mind" takes a snapshot of the present surroundings, missing what has occurred before that led to the current situation, nor comprehending where events are headed. Overwhelmed by sense input, mind is incapable of careful consideration of what is truly playing out, leading to snap judgments that are filled with error.

When we live on the surface of life, we are hypnotized by the inputs of our five senses -- by the dancing lights, images, and sounds around us -- and constantly come to the wrong conclusions. It is from that surface poise and status of mind that we are exceedingly error-prone. However, when we move to a deeper poise within, we are less likely to engage life through sense-mind, and thus are far less swayed by the surface inputs. In that deeper poise, sense impressions are muted; life around us is softer; and therefore we are less likely to jump to hasty conclusions. Instead, we tend to *observe* life, and become a detached *witness* to the situation. This enables a level of mindfulness that allows us to perceive the variety of, the multiplicity of possibilities before us, rather than drawing one hasty conclusion of the surface. As a result, we come to more reasonable judgments, and right decisions that in turn lead to greater success.

If withdrawing from surface living is the first step out of our ignorance, how do we accomplish that? We must redirect our concentration away from surface images, sounds, etc., and discover a modicum of stillness and silence within. In any moment in time, we can observe how we are looking out at life, draw our concentration inwards, still our thoughts, and observe the world from the witness consciousness that emerges. Now we will have the mindfulness to judge any situation more correctly. Now we will be able to perceive the variety of possibilities in the environment, which will enable us to judge the situation from a wider and more penetrating perspective.

In this way, billions and trillions of misjudgments in the world can be avoided, replaced by vastly greater knowledge, accomplishment, and satisfaction. It is in fact our collective evolutionary destiny to move in that very direction.

The Subliminal Influence that Checks Irritation

How often in the course of our days are we irritated by the smallest of things. The average person will allow the irritant to play out in his mind, if not outside himself in his actions. While it is true that we have the ability to control our behavior in these situations, yet we persist and simmer inside.

There does not seem to be an obvious mechanism to catch our sudden irritated outburst -- whether caused by reading something we do not agree with, or when someone makes an offensive comment that does not meet with our approval. The need to respond in a reflexive manner -- whether in our minds, or by shouting out at the TV screen, or by sending an email, or through other forms of crude behavior -- invariably plays out uncontrolled.

But what if there was an *inner* power that could control our irritation. What if we could discover a deeper consciousness, which would establish the poise by which we could widen our perceptions and relationships with life, thereby controlling the need to react to that which strains our nerves?

As we take to this inner orientation, we develop a "witness consciousness" that silently observes the world from within. From these silent depths, our nature is softer, is steady and calm, and is more embracing of the myriad conditions of life. From that poise, we are less likely to react to circumstance; rather we instead embrace all things that pass our way as the natural order of things; that flow towards a logical outcome.

In addition, from this poise, we experience sweet, positive intimations rising from the depths of our being, providing guidance on what to do and what to avoid; constantly reminding us to remain steady and understanding no matter what the prevailing conditions. This then becomes the decisive antidotes to the persistent bothers and irritations we experience in the course of our lives.

In addition, through that right poise and right reaction, we are far more likely to attract instances of sudden good fortune. E.g., by not reacting to a potentially irritating quarrel occurring nearby, the person in line ahead of us suddenly informs us of a very important upcoming event that we will prove very important to us. By not reacting in these situations, we have set in motion events that align with our own interests and intent.

When we discover our deeper nature, our True Selves within, we establish the calm and steady poise by which we become one with life's conditions instead of recoiling from it in irritation and anguish. It is a sign one has made significant progress along the spiritual path.

Inner-Based Decision Making & Problem Solving

Solving Problems in Life; Decision Making

Overcoming Serious Problems in Life

Normally when we are troubled by a major problem in our lives, we ponder the problem deeply, gravitate to the solace and help of others, or if desperate, seek help from the beyond, such as through prayer. When the problems occur we are often startled and taken aback, left helpless and alone, lost without the knowledge and power to overcome

our troubles. Yet our research has revealed that there are a number of ways we *can* overcome our serious problems, and even turn them into great successes.

See Negative Circumstance as Opportunity To Grow

We have already spoken of the power of positive attitude. Positive attitude attracts positive circumstance from life, and can make our existence far more trouble free and joyful. Yet if we encounter a real problem, how can a mere positive attitude help us? Our first observation is that a person with a truly positive attitude sees serious problems not as negative circumstances, but as opportunities and positive ways to learn and grow. A person with such an attitude understands that beneath the difficulties there is something expressing in life and in our own deepest nature, (i.e. our soul) that yearns to be set in the right or a better direction. Because of our limited capacities, wrong past deed, etc. the circumstance and situations we come upon in life can only express as a negatively. Yet at a deeper level we perceive that this negative expression is the most direct way to bring about our further personal growth. Perceiving negative circumstance as positive potential gives us the necessary base of peace and equality to move in the right direction to solve the problems we encounter. With such an attitude one is already well on the way to solving even the most serious problems of life.

Then how can we actually solve the serious problem that life presents? There are two basic approaches. The first is the more dramatic and radical approach, and involves changing yourself. The second is a series of approaches, just as powerful, yet calls for the intrusion of "the beyond."

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Prayer, Concentration, Meditation

For those with a more religious or spiritual bent, one can also engage in prayer or concentration/meditation to dissolve a problem. For example, one who can normally pray at a deep level can expand that effort to a full three consecutive days of prayer. In the end that approach will surely dissolve the problem. Likewise someone who is able to do deep meditation or concentration can follow the same approach. (Again, at some point the intensity of the prayer, meditation, or concentration should match and surpass the intensity of one's feelings and emotions of the problem.)

A woman's mammogram results indicated a dark spot, suggesting potential serious problem (i.e. breast cancer). The next day she was to have a follow-up review of the tests to confirm or reject the hypothesis. She prayed deeply. The next day at the meeting where they were reviewing her x-rays, they noticed that the spots on the x-ray had somehow disappeared! She was then told, of course, that there was no present danger to her health.

Changing One's Corresponding Nature

The most direct, radical, and effective method for dealing with serious or long-term problems is to take any serious problem and relate it to a *corresponding* weakness in your character or capacities. For starters, look deep within yourself and consider which negative attitudes correspond to the problem. Sometimes it is not very obvious because if we knew our bad attitudes we are likely not to have expressed them in the first place! The essential rule is however that there is a matching negative quality in yourself to any outer problem even if you don't think you precipitated the problem in the first place.

The same approach can be taken with your habits, opinions, judgments, personal values, skills, knowledge, and your ability to act. Examine the problem in terms of something wanting or lacking in each of these areas, and discover where a capacity is missing. If you are able to identify the corresponding weakness in yourself to the problem at hand, and are able to reverse that weakness in yourself in some manner, you will not only have the power to reverse the problem, but you may be able to turn that problem into an unthought of greater possibility of achievement.

A woman who was a temp employee at various companies over a ten-year period, decided that she needed to overcome her disdain for some of her co-workers. Suddenly out of the blue she was asked to work full time at the company, her first full time job in a decade, and was even later able to sustain a raise and a better position within the company by continuing to improve herself on this same weakness.

Here's another example of overcoming a negative attitude; in this case overcoming a reluctance to deal with a problem.

A man had developed a serious shoulder and back pain one summer. A few months after the inception of the pain the man began to develop a software program for a company, though the details of the cost were never formally hammered out. He worked on the program for months without an agreement, and still was not sure if the program even worked. When he met with the client, the client suggested that even more work be done on the project, making the situation even more absurd to the programmer. At this point he overcame all his reluctance to confront the situation, including his own weakness and hesitation to clarify the issues at hand, and demanded a formal agreement from the client before any more work would be done. Though the parties could not come to a formal agreement, in his mind the programmer decided to halt any further work on the project. When the programmer returned from the meeting, he suddenly realized that the neck and back pain that he had continuously for six months had completely disappeared.

Of course, this inner-outer correspondence approach assumes that you can identify the corresponding weakness in yourself in the first place. This is a somewhat difficult thing to uncover. (Then, of course, once you have identified the weakness you would need to sincerely act to change that weakness in yourself). For many this approach just might not be possible because we may not have the knowledge, insight, or ability to relate the problems to one or more of our lacking character or capacities. Therefore, a second approach may be required. This approach requires you to utilize one or more *psychological* and *spiritual techniques* to help you untie the knots of your life.

Consecration of History

For example, one approach is to use the higher power that we discussed earlier to invoke a force that can overcome our troubling problem. We call this *the power of consecration* and discuss it in the section called [The Great Secret](#). As it applies to dealing with problems, one can use this power of consecration to dissolve the problem.

The technique we suggest is to set aside some time, sit quietly and try not to be bothered by the problem too much. Steady yourself, and think or feel that you are about to speak with a higher power, what we call "the force." Then narrate or imagine the sequence of events that led to the problem. Finally, with intensity, offer up (i.e. consecrate) the problem to the higher power. Then let go of your thoughts and attachments to the problem, and over the next few days watch for any life response.

Consider this example where a programmer was confronted with a problem that returned from the past.

A software programming company had done a bid for a client in the past, and there has been a real difficulty in securing the work (because of the client's lack of funds,

confusion of direction, etc.) There had been a general strain in the whole process, and the bid was not secured by the programming company.

Surprisingly the programming company was asked back to do another bid for the client six months later. Before the meeting for the new contract occurred the programmer sat in his car and followed the technique of offering the histories. In his mind he narrated the events of the past and offered the difficulties to the higher power. At the meeting that ensued the client immediately gives the programming company the bid, and had the programmer immediately start working on the project at the site. As the work on the project was performed at the site the programmer noticed that everything on the project seemed to be proceeding perfectly, the very opposite of his relationship with the customer in the past.

Consecrating the history of the past is a powerful way to righting a bad situation.

Offering One's Past Responsibilities or Propensities

Here's a another, similar approach. If you know that your past actions have led to the present situation, you can "offer up" your original wrong actions to the higher power, the force, the Divine, so you can dissolve the effect of your past deeds at its roots. Thus, you offer your responsibility of the past to loosen the knots of the problems in the present.

Similarly, if you know specifically what *specific part of your character and makeup* in the past was directly responsible for the problem, you can offer this as well. (This approach has an even deeper and purifying effect on one's being.)

Yet a final method along these lines is that every time the thought and emotions of the problem arises, you simply shift your thoughts and feelings to the higher power. Then at the point where the remembrance and offering to the higher power matches (i.e. substitutes for, the intensity of your feelings and emotions toward the problem itself), the solution is found.

Problem Solving and Life Response

Problem solving involves solving the problems of life -- whether in science, business, politics, interpersonal relationships, or any other facet of existence.

Among them are: what is the nature of matter, why are our profits low, how do we double sales, how can we gain consensus to pass a legislative bill, how can we improve our financial position, how can two communities get along better, how do we regain our stolen goods, how can my children get higher grades, how can our products work better, who was responsible for the transgression, and so forth.

By solving problems I am not referring just to negative circumstance, but the process of understanding and solving any and all of life's questions, issues, and challenges.

Life response on the other hand is the phenomenon where sudden good fortune descends on one from seemingly out of nowhere, normally due to a shift in consciousness within.

How then do these two relate? I.e. how can we evoke the solution to problems through instances of sudden good fortune, thereby overcoming the necessity of serious effort, and the constraints of space, time, and possibility? There must be dynamics in decision making that evoke such results. What are they?

We can begin with two key aspects of the individual human that prevent problem solving: Ego and Ignorance. Ego is what causes us to focus on that which is expedient and suitable to our own personal needs at the expense of others. Ignorance is lack of

knowledge of the whole of any matter, including the multiplicity of parts and the essence of any subject under inquiry.

One conclusion then is that when we overcome Ego, our separate sense, and Ignorance, our lack of knowledge, we enhance problem solving.

Also in the process of overcoming the selfishness of Ego and the part knowledge of Ignorance we attract good fortune. At the point we shed our Ego in the matter and open ourselves to other truths beyond our own, life responds and solves it for us.

But how do we shed Ego and overcome Ignorance? When we develop an inner orientation in life, a spiritual poise of silence and steadiness within, we tend to overcome Ego that separates us from others and life; we open to a wider sphere of existence of truth and knowledge, which in combination creates the perfect environment for problem solving. In fact, at each point we move to a deeper poise, the problem's solution becomes that much clearer. Or it simply descends on us in a flash.

We also come closer to the truth through life long education, including our capacity to understand all of the subtle workings and laws of life.

Then how do we develop an Inner Life that fosters right problem solving? We do that through constant opening to the spiritual Force, to the Divine Mother, which penetrates our being and forges an inner existence where we shed Ego, open to Truth, perceive life's subtle methods, all the while becoming Silent Witness to the multiplicity of truths unfolding around us. From there life's problems are readily understood and resolved.

Another point is that problem solving is directly related to accomplishment. That is, the laws of accomplishment pertain to solving problems. What are they?

Our level of accomplishment is dependent on our level of capacity, skill, knowledge, strength, conviction, organization, drive, will, self-givingness, focus, positive attitude, etc. Accomplishment is further elevated to the infinite, when we apply high personal values like tolerance, openness, freedom, enjoyment, collaboration, cooperation, harmony, truth, justice, etc.

The more we overcome the factors we are missing and the more we apply higher values, the more we accomplish. These same factors enhanced help us solve a problem.

Solving a problem is thus a form of accomplishment. And vice versa.

The more we raise our consciousness in any of these ways relative to our current condition at the time of the problem, the more life responds, and the problems begins to resolve itself, or we are given the sudden revelation of truth that solves it.

Moreover, the Formula for Accomplishment is to perceive that which we want to achieve, develop the will to make it happen, organize the detail, and then make the persevering effort with right attitudes and perfect execution. When we follow that process in trying to solve a problem, we vastly increase the chance of it occurring. Following the process also evokes sudden good fortune, where the solution just appears externally or complete in our minds.

The solution to a problem often comes as flashes of intuition of knowledge solving it in one sudden sweep. Archimedes, Einstein, and Sherlock Holmes were familiar had these revelatory experiences, which helped solved vast problems of existence they encountered. One woman gave up her old way of doing things in the lab, went for a walk, and suddenly had a revelation of the truth of the problem that changed the course of her company and her own life.

Intuition of the Truth is therefore Life Response at the level of Mind to a problem.

But how do we develop this intuitive capacity? The more we go within, the more the Mind goes up into the spiritual realms, where light, intuition, and truth descend on one,

and in our case help or fully solve the problem. Constant opening to the Spirit enables that inner existence that also allows the mind to expand into the universal spheres, and attract intuitions of knowledge that solve the problem.

In summary, life responds and solves problems when we shed Ego, overcome the part knowledge of Ignorance, build up our Capacity, while opening to the Higher Power. At each stage, life will cooperate and bring the solution that much closer. It can even come in an instant.

Supramental Decision Making

There is perhaps nothing more important than the decisions we make. Sri Aurobindo tells us that the best decisions come when we have the greatest knowledge of the conditions.

He indicates that Mind that just views the surface information and facts garnered from the visual and audio sense will make very poor decisions. On the other hand, Mind that is rational and is open to suggestions will gather more of the necessary knowledge to make better decisions.

Yet even these are highly fallible because what we perceive as being rational may not necessarily be the truth, as we have many prejudicial viewpoints. Instead he asks us to come into Identity and Oneness with the Object of Knowledge of that situation.

We can only begin that process through a Silent Mind, which creates silence of thought that enables true rational thinking. Further still are Intuitions of knowledge, where the Truths of the object come into our Mind without having to think at all.

Best of all is supramental perception (Truth consciousness), where we are integrally one with the Knowledge required. Where we not only perceive each necessary part of knowledge, but how each part is related to each other, the Whole, as well as the Essence. It is supreme Knowledge by Identity, which gives us the vast integral knowledge of the situation, conditions, facts, etc. to make perfect decisions that lead to overwhelmingly beneficial outcomes.

Moreover, the deeper we move within, the greater our mind expands to these intuitional and supramental realms of spiritual Mind and Knowledge. And the more we Consecrate and offer the situations of our lives to the Mother, the deeper within our consciousness will originate.

EXAMPLE: A man is a manager of a manufacturing plant. One day he notices that 100 devices have rolled off the assembly line, when 200 are required. He has just seen this visually with his eyes. He then decides to increase the order by 100 in that department. However soon after, he discovers that in fact there were 200 being made, but the machine was stuck so only 100 were visible, and the other 100 were about to roll out complete. The manager has ordered parts for 100 extra unnecessary machines; making a poor and expensive decision. His visual sense led him astray. (surface, sense mind)

The next day the manager sees that the machines are selling well, and therefore decides to increase production by 25 units. He makes this apparently rational decision based on his reasoning power. But on closer examination, he is one who orders very conservatively. The next day when his own boss sees him, he asks him why he ordered such low increase in capacity. He is unhappy with his manager's decision. The manager made a rational decision that was tarnished by his conservative tendencies, wanting attitude concerning work, removing the "rationality" from the decision. (tainted rational mind)

The third day the manager sees 250 units coming off the assembly line and rationally asks others what future production should be increased by. Taking into account all their opinions, he orders a reasonable amount. His boss is pleased, although he still scolds the manager for taking too much time in making his rational decision. (truer rational, logical mind)

On the fourth day, the manager spends some time keeping his mind very still. When a subordinate asks him about what to do in a pressing, problematic situation, the manager is able to keenly and logically think it through, and makes a very solid decision. His mind was so clear in coming to the conclusion he did. When his boss learns of the decision, he is very pleased and commends him. (silent mind)

On the fifth day, another serious problem arises. The manager has kept his mind very still, and then suddenly a large part of the solution to the problem comes to his mind without any thought at all! It just appears there, just as needed. He orders his subordinate to take that action. The next day the boss tells him that he was thrilled with his decisions; as it helped several customers who were in a pinch. Now they will dramatically increase their orders from the company! (intuition; intuitional mind)

On the final day, the manager needs to develop a strategic plan for his department. His mind has been silent, and he has been doing a lot of consecrating; offering work conditions to the Spirit, the Mother. At one point the entire plan just appears in his mind in its various facets. Moreover, each element of the plan has somehow been neatly tied into all the other elements. Plus powerful business values that the company subscribes to are inherently built into major aspects of the plan. This entire knowledge of what to do and from virtually every angle has come to him in a flash without a single thought. It appears to be a miracle of the Mind. His boss gives him the ok to act on the plan. Two weeks later, the company receives an order for a year's worth of supply for old and new products; ten times the size of the order they would normally receive. The customer, the boss, the manager, and his subordinate staff all benefit royally from this tremendous outcome!

Consecration that Connects Us to the "Inner Voice"

[Note: This was written in response to the issue of how we can develop the subtle sense that guides us to take right actions that enable life to respond.]

Sri Aurobindo and Karmayogi constantly speak of the Inner Being. There we find the subconscious, the subliminal, and the psychic. They are all subconscious to us.

The subconscious is mostly negative in that it is the source of human pessimism, feeling of the inevitability of disease and death, bad dreams, etc. Yet it can evolve. In fact, both Sri Aurobindo and Mother indicate its transformation is the key to enabling the supramental transformation, particularly at the cellular level as Mother experimented with.

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The Psychic is beyond (or deeper still). It is the evolving soul and is the ultimate personal spark of the spirit within us. It is evolving, hoping to derive the essence of our experience. It has travelled through many lives, including ours in its own evolution.

For the purpose of the "Inner Voice," the positive Subliminal can serve a vital role. It is always sending positive messages to the surface of our being. Giving subtle, right Guidance. Our experiences indicate this. It is, as I mentioned, in touch with the universal and transcendent influences (superconscious). It is subtly informing us of what

is right and what isn't; of what to do and what not to do. The more we are in touch with it, the better.

We can be more connected with it when our orientation is inner; i.e. in a poise of the depths of our being. How to move to the depths is a profound yogic issue. For we who are only on the edge of yoga (conscious evolution), constant consecration forges a connection to those depths, including the Subliminal and its positive influences. In other words, the more we consecrate -- open to the spiritual Force, to Mother -- the more we come in touch with the Inner Voice.

So the simple solution to subtle based decision-making -- i.e. "hearing" and acting on the Inner Voice -- is constant consecration. Doing so shifts us away from the surface consciousness to the depths where the inner voice is always at our disposal to guide us. The Psychic Being is the Ultimate Guide -- at each of the mental, vital, and physical levels. It requires great yogic effort for us to penetrate it. Sri Aurobindo succeeded and said it was his greatest discovery.

Thus positive influences come from above -- e.g. intuition and supramental -- as well as below (subliminal and psychic). To be in touch with both strengthens the Inner Voice that can give us the knowledge to act rightly, have life respond, and thereby begin to build a new spirit-based life on earth.

Three Levels of Problem Solving: Rationality, Life, and Spirit

When life presents challenges and problems, our understanding of the situation and the choices we make determine the outcome. But what should that choice be based on? On what is rational and reasonable? On what life seems to be indicating through the flow of events? Or something higher, such as the spiritual dimension of life?

Let us say that you are having financial problems. Your debts are higher than your income. For a long time you could get by through borrowing. But when the economy sours, the spread accelerates to the point that you are getting into serious financial difficulty. You then contact several financial advisors, hoping they can lend their advice and financial support. It turns out that one company may offer somewhat better rates than another, so you may be more inclined to move in that direction. This seems like a reasonable and rational course. And yet when the "better" organization's representative calls, it is always at the wrong time. Maybe at that moment you had food stuck in your throat, or you were in the middle of getting dressed, or were about to settle down to dinner with the family. This second, less polished organization however calls at the right time, has just the right attitude, and seems perfectly in sync with the flow of events in your life.

In this episode, you would be wise to choose Life over rationality. Though it is rational to focus on particular mental approaches to your problem, Life is unfolding in ways that supersede what mind thinks. If one learns the subtle ways that life operates, one can know at any moment in time the best direction to take -- including situations involving problems and challenges.

Having said that, there is yet another power available to us that supersedes Life. It is the realm of the Spirit. For example, if we offer a situation or activity to the Higher Power in an act of sincere consecration, Life will respond quickly and positively on our behalf. If you e.g. had presented the financial problem described above to the spiritual Force and intensely offered up a prayer such as "Thy Will be done," life will not only conspire to attract the right advisor, but other positive conditions will present themselves, often from out of nowhere. In this way, the Spirit is able to overcome the exigencies of Life, bringing it under control, and then some.

So the next time a problems or issue arises that warrant your attention, do begin by thinking of reasonable and rational solutions. But also observe the unfoldings of life around you in relationship to that situation, which will present subtle hints and indicators of what to do next, or not to do. When you act based on this knowledge, life is bound to respond favorably. More powerful still is to offer the problem to the Higher Power, which will set in motion a series of events that will simply astound.

Solving Society's Problems through Higher Consciousness

Move to a Higher Level to Resolve a Lower Level Problem

There is a relatively simple method to follow to resolve problems in life: simply move to the next highest level of consciousness. E.g. if a nation is at odds with another -- which is in essence political -- then they should look toward reconciliation through economic means. The political will be smoothed over through economic cooperation. Likewise, if there is economic strife between two nations, they can move toward greater cultural harmony. The economic issue will then take care of itself in the wake of deeper cultural bonds. Thus, the ascending scale in this particular domain is political, economic, cultural, and spiritual. Similar scales can be developed for other collectives -- whether business, government, or education -- providing simple guidance for resolving lower level problems through higher level solutions.

The same fundamental principle applies to individual humans. If we are in conflict with another, say at the vital/emotional level, we should move to a higher level still -- i.e. the mental -- to resolve the conflict or impasse. Shedding conflicting feelings for the greater neutrality of reason creates headway for new understanding and positive opportunities. Similarly, if ideas clash at the mental level, one can rise above our limited point of view and embrace the many-sided view of an open and rational mind. It is a movement from *exclusive* mentality to an all-embracing, rational and reasonable one, taking in all sides. Moreover, by taking this higher mental tact, we tend to experience insight as well as sudden descents of intuitions of truth and knowledge.

There is also a shortcut method to this overall approach. Rather than move to the next highest plane, one can simply take directly to the Spirit. That will overcome all problems at any levels below it -- whether physical, vital/emotional, or mental. When we offer the matter, to the spiritual Force, we will see that new solutions, possibilities, and insights arise out of nowhere, overcoming the problem or difficulty at the lower level. That opening to the Higher Power tends to attract fresh, unexpected, stunning, creative outcomes from out of thin air.

There are many ways to express the spirit, from being calm and still in the face of difficult situations to shifting your position from one of selfishness and assertion to selflessness and self-givingness. At that plane, all problems below it tend to quickly dissipate. Thus, any connection to the spirit -- including inner silence, reduced and soft speech, equality of being in the face of difficulty, self-givingness, seeing all sides of an issue, and opening to the spiritual Force -- will resolve all difficulty in planes below, from mind to vital to body.

Life has evolved from matter to animated, vital life forms to mentality to spirit. Our center is however mostly vital, which is possessive, demanding, egocentric, separative, and exclusive. If we move to mind and spirit, we can overcome all conflicts in the levels below. E.g., our human vital interactions can shed their negative element, and turn harmonious and thoroughly enjoyable.

Also, if we are centered in a deeper poise within, instead of being overwhelmed by the surface occurrences of life, we can at every moment perceive how we can move to the next higher level where life is harmonious as well as miraculously responsive.

Why not then list several areas of your life where there is difficulty, and determine what inner or outer behavior would be a movement to a higher level. If you identify it and then act on it, not only will problems be resolved or dissipate, but you yourself will begin to the next highest level in consciousness, where you will experience greater clarity, focus, energy, success, and joy.

Inner & Outer Strategies to Cope with the World's Problems and Potentials

Life is too complex to be handled through the current ordinary mental functioning of Man. He must rise to a higher form of mind, a *spiritual* mentality to deal with the plethora of problems confronting him. Only then can he grasp all of the issues from its multiplicity of sides, and only then will he have the intuitive capacity to invoke creative, right, and necessary solutions to problems and issues that confront him. E.g., I open to the higher sphere, and the answer to a problem just drops into my mind as illumination or revelation; thereby transcending my own prejudices, limited knowledge, and other personal forms of falsehood, while providing the answer to a pressing problem in the community.

That effort is enabled by an inward movement, to a deeper consciousness that establishes a subtle orientation toward life -- instead of the gross material poise at the surface that we normally have. From that deeper and wider poise, we are able to overcome our ego-sense, i.e. our sense of separateness, enabling us to far more readily make the connection with others, and thereby establishing a greater level of harmony and oneness of purpose. From that wider and more intense confluence, level of integration, and cooperation, more dynamic solutions to the problems of the world are made possible. In addition, that inner orientation also instigates descents of the very intuitions of knowledge that resolve world problems.

If the individual needs to rise to spiritual mind and greater collaboration with others through inner orientation of consciousness to cope with the ever-widening problems of world, then so does society itself -- particularly its *institutions*. If we examine the effectivity of current global social organizations, we will see that they are wholly inadequate to meet the needs of a vast, changing, and ever more complex world. In essence, society's problems are outrunning Man's capacities to cope with them. What is therefore required is the establishment of the *next* level of global institutions. Just as the individual needs to establish a new basis of consciousness to meet this challenge from the individual perspective, so to the institutions of society need to be made more comprehensive and effective. The current institutional framework to deal with the world's problems is wholly inadequate, and in that vacuum, there is an ever-increasing sense of insecurity, chaos, and ineffectivity to deal with the increasing pressure of world circumstance.

One solution that would be of immediate help is the establishment of a *World Army*. Perhaps we can call it a "Rapid Reaction Force" that can easily be deployed to meet the crisis and hot spots that erupt around the world. Deployed to overcome areas of terrorism is one area that comes to mind, but there are many other crisis and circumstances where this force/army can be utilized. This will help establish the fundamental building block of any civilized society -- security. Life cannot function without an essential level of order and harmony. While life is certainly hard pressed to thrive without bare necessities like food and jobs, it cannot function *at all* without security among its people. There is no institution currently serving that purpose; save the exercises and random outburst from power nations like the US, or the weak or not properly organized institutions like NATO. *A centralized, agreed upon global force that can be rapidly deployed to maintain the security of the world is something the world is ready for.* This World Army can readily be established through a modest amount of collaboration and diplomatic effort amongst the nations of the world.

Another global institution certainly worth considering is the development of a *World Parliament* -- which is, in essence, the infrastructure of *world governance*. Humanity is showing signs that it is ready for this development as well. It is becoming increasingly obvious that there is a need for a governing body to provide a level of oversight for the problems of the globe. In addition, that organization can serve to develop and implement plans for rapid economic and social development. It would not only formulate policies for this purpose, but also have the *power* to implement them. This is, in essence, a strategic-oriented and empowered form of world governance that the earth secretly calls out for.

Moving beyond ego and irrational mind, opening to intuitive mind and above, and taking to new global institutions like World Army and World Parliament will fill the gap that exists to resolve the problems and confront the issues of our collective existence. It can fill security gaps, gaps in economic development and poverty, gaps in cultural and social integration, and even gaps in psychological and spiritual well-being. In tandem, these two developments -- from the individual and for the collective -- can enable a far better world, free of most if not all of the current ailments, in record time. It will also enable new possibilities and opportunities now unimagined. This is, by the way, not an invitation to socialism or central domination, but an open and fair system that allows all institutions -- whether education, business, science, etc. -- to achieve their full flowering and potential. It is time to consider these new possibilities for a new, emerging, dynamic world that will elevate the individual to his or her full and ultimate potential.

Beyond this, there is a vision of a spirit-based Divine life on earth. After a while, certain individuals will begin to transcend the old human functioning of ego, desire, brutality, and sense-based thinking to name a few; and develop an inner, spirit-based orientation. Discovering their souls within and rising to these higher realms of spiritualized mind, their very beings will be transformed into a new human functioning. When a number of such individuals appear and then coalesce, it may give rise to the beginnings of new type of human existence -- i.e. a heretofore-unknown New Way of Living. These people will not only have a continuous connection with the transcendent spiritual Reality, and have a deep inner life, but as a result, they will have deep compassion for all around them. Out of their intuitive knowledge will spring forth endless solutions to life's problems.

Some of these individuals can become visionary leaders of society, who see solutions where the current leadership, mired in divisive and prejudiced mind, cannot find them. Open to the ever-more powerful descending spiritual Force, they will have the power to quickly meet and alter all of life's conditions -- even as they envision new possibilities that would have taken society hundreds or even thousands of years to arrive at on its own. This is the new world beyond that awaits us at the crossroads of a New Age now emerging in the 21st century.

Solving the Problems of the World through Spiritualized Mind

Sri Aurobindo, the great Indian spiritual figure of the last century said that the ordinary human mind, though it has served us well, can no longer keep up with the issues and problems of the world. He suggested that we must move our center of consciousness above mind proper, which is limited and tends to subscribe to one truth at the expense of others in any object of inquiry.

What is then above mind? It is *spiritual* Mind, where all truths -- i.e. all sides and shadings of an object of inquiry -- are known. It culminates in the realm of what he calls "Truth Consciousness" -- aka Supermind -- where knowledge of any matter is not only fully known in all its dimensions, but where that individual or collective holding that knowledge has the full power and will to see it through -- i.e. to make it a living reality.

It is the realization of the Truth of a matter, where knowledge and will are fused -- giving one ultimate insight into a matter and infinite power to implement it and thus rapidly affect and improve the conditions of the world around us.

This is a lofty spirit-based goal that will enable the people of the world to deal with all of its problems and concerns -- and then some --, which it is increasingly unable to do now though the limited thinking capacities of ordinary our human mentality. It should be noted that there are levels in between the ordinary current human functioning of mind and this lofty Truth Consciousness alluded to, including -- (1) moving to rational thinking (something still woefully absent in too much of life); (2) silent mind (i.e. right knowledge and insight that comes through stillness of mind); (3) and intuitive mind (where knowledge of a matter simply descends into one thoughts from the universal plane). These are capacities that any individual can learn to acquire in the course of one's life, so that one can meet the pressing conditions of life. E.g., rather than wait for mental discourse on a matter, a revelation of knowledge can simply descend into the mind that can be quickly used to solve a local or world problem. Rather than waiting years or decades for a solution, this profound unthought of insight simply drops into one's mind in a flash. Geniuses in one's field experience this all of the time; whether a Einstein or a Ramanujan or a Sri Aurobindo. This is the ultimate mental efficiency that the ever-increasing problems and issues of the world cry out for.

How then does one enable such supra-thinking capacity? It occurs by developing a deeper consciousness within. By shifting our orientation from the surface of life to an concentrated poise within, marked by stillness of thought and equanimity in the emotions, the individual's mind begins opens to vast universal planes, enabling truth knowledge to pour like rain. Doing so enables him to be filled with vast knowledge, and thereby far more easily resolve the world's pressing problems. In this way, decision-making is made radically more efficient; as we invite the greatest quantity and quality of insight in the shortest period of time with the least effort. This is the approach Sri Aurobindo was looking for when he stated that our current mentality and way of life cannot cope with the ever-accelerating conditions and exigencies of life in the world. That only through man's inner orientation can he develop the right poise that will let infinite knowledge pour into his mind from the heavens, enabling him to cope with the present, while ushering in a vast new future.

Affecting the Problems of the World from Within

When you observe a politician who is clearly in the wrong, it may be wise to hesitate before condemning him, and consider the electorate that put him in power. It is too often *their* falsehood that fails to gain the public's attention. Not realizing that the newly emerged politician is representative of a certain type, or of a certain movement in society is a blind spot of the media and in our public awareness.

When Jimmy Carter ascended to the US presidency in the 1970s, it was not just because of his energy, goodness, and capacities, but because of fresh, new energies emerging from the society -- in this case, from a more enlightened South (after a hundred years of backwards thinking). We see the same in the reverse, where reactionary forces in the society propel like-minded individuals into the public spotlight, including our office holders.

Interestingly, there is another opportunity available to us when we observe the problems of society, or a wanting leader, or the social forces behind him. We can look at these developments through the prism of our own individual selves. I.e., rather than rail at the problematic developments outside ourselves, we can look inside and discover a corresponding wanting element there, reverse it, and watch as conditions outside ourselves suddenly begin moving in our favor. Through this process, warring nations

whose situation we have anguished over suddenly move toward peace; the wanting leader we have railed against suddenly curtails actions harmful to society; an important social or environmental development long-delayed suddenly moves towards fruition; and so forth. It is the power we have to quickly change circumstance outside ourselves from within. It is also an indicator of the profound relationship that exists between all things - individual, social, national, global, universal, and transcendent.

Let's explore our example a little further. Let us say that we would like to see the conflict between two warring countries end. We have also come to see that their differences are rooted in the virulent hate they feel for one another. If we can discover the corresponding "hate" in our own hearts -- whether in the form of a negative emotion, a hostile attitude, or a hardened opinion -- we are likely to see in the days and weeks that follow an unexpected thaw in relations between the two warring parties.

Or, let's say that we are aware of the falsehood of a particular leader, but through introspection, we become aware of our own life-long tendency towards skepticism and cynicism. Well, if we shed these troublesome qualities, we are likely to see big changes in the corresponding elements and individual outside ourselves in the days and weeks ahead. E.g., the divisive leader might unexpectedly reverse his beliefs and adopt programs more to our favor, or there may even suddenly appear justifiable rumblings for his ousting from office, and so forth.

We believe there is no relationship between the outer life and outer inner selves; that these are two distinct and separated worlds. However, that is an illusion, a distortion of our surface consciousness. From a deeper perspective, we see that there is no separation between the outer and our inner condition, that there is a profound oneness between all things in life. Therefore, if we change our status within, then the outer will quickly, if not instantaneously respond in kind. This is what I call the phenomenon of "Life Response." It is happening all of the time, but we miss its subtle workings!

There is also another way to approach the wanting social conditions we observe. It is this: when something in the outer environment disturbs you, simply withdraw *all* emotional attachment and connection to it. As above, soon thereafter, life will move in the direction you favor. The mere act of disassociating and detaching yourself from your intense feelings enables life in the world to reverse, and evoke results that favor your position. It is an experience I have had a number of times throughout the years, as have a number of my friends and colleagues.

The bottom line is this: if you want to change the world, identify and then change the corresponding wanting quality within yourself. Also, withdraw all intense emotion towards the issue, while remaining informed and concerned. By the way, if you are centered in a deeper poise of calm and mental silence, then you will more easily identify such emerging forces in society -- seeing them in their right balance and perspective; and you will know precisely what you have to change within to trigger the life response on the outside. At that point, you will be living a very different sort of existence; one that I call a New Way of Living.

Spiritual Approaches to a Mission to Mars

Several years ago, people at NASA in Pasadena, California were struggling to work out a problem related to the second space mission to Mars. The problem, much to their consternation, was that the parachute for the Lander was not opening properly in their tests. Eventually they solved the problem, the mission launched, and ended with the second touchdown of an American craft on the Red Planet.

In trying to resolve the problem, they of course used their minds to solve a variety of issues. That occurred by (a) continually examining empirical evidence, and (b) by using

the logical and rational capacities of the mind of the typical engineer and scientist. As such, they were more attuned to formulating solutions through the lower sense-based and the somewhat higher logical mind than through the use of inner spiritual approaches that lead to descents of illuminations and intuitions of knowledge. Perhaps certain individuals did receive unexpected revelatory answers to problems. Many certainly took to Spirit in another way, by praying at the time of the launch, for a perfect takeoff, and doing the same just before the craft was about to touch down on Mars after being incommunicado for several nervous minutes. These were certainly moments when individuals involved in the mission took to Faith.

Ninety percent of us do have faith in a Higher Power. It is invoked most often when we are in desperate straits or aspire for an important positive outcome. That is usually as far as we engage Spirit; i.e. we take to the Divine only in times of trial and tribulation. A life dedicated to the *continuous* invocation and utilization of the Spirit is a rare thing indeed. For example, few open themselves to the spiritual Force before beginning a major work or activity, even though doing so not only leads to far more perfect outcomes, but to the sudden onset of miraculous-like results from life.

There is yet another way to take to Spirit -- by bringing Silence into our minds. We can establish an inner poise of quietude and peace through deep concentration, meditation, and other means, the results of which are bound to be great. One common outcome of that approach -- especially if one is engaged in a thoughtful work -- are sudden descents of illuminations of knowledge; even intuitions and revelations of the truth of the object of inquiry. Imagine if the scientists had used this approach. A problem in all its complexity would have been quickly solved, as insights would have simply appeared in that person's mind from out of nowhere. It is a fact of subtle existence that an inner, silent orientation tends to attract sudden descents of truth knowledge from the universal plane of Mind. Through that approach, a multi-month problem -- as was experienced at NASA -- can literally be resolved in a *day*, as answers simply appear in the mind. In addition, if we open to the Spirit before engaging in an activity, the problems is prevented from arising in the first place!

From this analysis, we can see that there are various ways we can take to and utilize Spirit. The most fundamental way -- one we are all familiar with -- is to call the Higher Power when we are presented with great difficulties and challenges in life. That is an expression of Faith in the Spirit. Still for the average person, taking to Faith only occurs on very rare occasions: usually when life becomes extreme. On the other hand, a continuous opening to and utilization of the Spirit -- whether by consecrating acts to the Higher Power, or by taking to Silence, or by being continually Self-giving to others -- is indeed rare. And yet, it is precisely what living a spirit-oriented existence is. It is not only the path that enables the infinite potentials of life to move towards us bringing success in short order, but it is also a life of gentle sweetness, inner serenity, and the utter joy and delight of being.

The people at NASA and elsewhere could have certainly used these approaches to easily overcome issues that pressed on them before this launch, and it can certainly be used by them and others in the future. Fortunately, there is sign of hope in this regard, as the first mission's craft was aptly named "Spirit."

Intuitive Knowledge that Overcomes the Expanding Problems of Society

Often great thinkers or even celebrities are asked their opinion of what is the most pressing problem facing the world. Some will answer that the threat of extinction through environmental degradation, or the conflicts potential and real between different segments or nations of the world is their biggest concern. Others will say it is the polarization between the haves and the have-nots, while other still are concerned about

the destructive influence of technology, or our obsession with material things and the loss of our humanity. Of course, all of these answers are valid and have their place. However, I would like to suggest that there is a more pressing problem; one that is really at the heart of all of the others.

I believe that the greatest problem facing humanity is the differential between the complexity of issues facing the world on the one hand, and the inability of the human consciousness to deal with them. The complexities, difficulties, and possibilities of Man are outrunning and overwhelming the mind's ability to both cope with and resolve them. As a result, we are simply unable to come up with the necessary insights that generate right solutions to the problems and concerns of the world. How do we rectify this?

One answer is that must move beyond our current mental functioning to a higher spirit-based mentality. Though rational thinking is a great step beyond emotional existence and sense-based preoccupation, the knowledge required for a rapidly expanding modern life is too vast for even the clear-thinking rationality of Mind. There is simply not enough "space" in our collective mentality to hold all of the necessary truths that address exponentially-expanding issues in an ever more complex world. It is too much for rational Mind, which struggles to know the many sides and truths of any single issue, let alone the infinite-like possibilities that are exploding on the world scene. Even when it comes to a *single* issue, the mind tends to be exclusive, focusing on one side of the subject at the expense of all others. How can we ever get to the full integral truth this way?

Mind can expand beyond its rational bounds, to enable a *supra*-rationality, where right thoughts, ideas, insights simply appear in the mind through intuitions of knowledge. The necessary understanding of an issue just enters our thoughts as if from out of thin air. In these illuminating and revelatory experiences, we simply pull in the right information needed to address the current object of inquiry. As a result, insights and solutions descend on us rapidly, enabling us to quickly reach the right decisions and take to the right actions. In this way, we are easily to cope with the plethora of issues facing humanity. In fact, through the intuitive mind we are able to outrun them.

Physical Transformation

Astonishing Spiritual Experiences of The Mother

The woman born Mira Alfassa, and know to her followers in India as "The Mother" had perhaps the most extraordinary life of any individual who has ever walked the face of the earth. Her experiences were beyond the fantastic, they were the unfolding of the miraculous.

I was moved to think about her astonishing life as I recalled one of her lesser, but still remarkable experiences. One day well over thirty years ago, she had a vision that there would arise in Asia an array of cities with vast skylines reaching far into the sky. This at a time when hardly a skyscraper appeared beyond the confines of Hong Kong and Tokyo. In her vision, she perceived a set of super-cities with fantastic architecture. Now we see that very thing taking place throughout Asia. In that light she perceived that Asia was about to emerge, which would be the next great step in the evolution of humanity. As envisioned by Sri Aurobindo the next stages of human unity are to be the economic prosperity of India, her emergence as the Guru of the world, followed by the onset of a spirit-based Divine life on earth.

And yet this vision of Mother's was modest compared to the many hundreds of supra-normal experiences she had in the course of her 94 years. For one, she imagined what a future supramentalized human being would look like. Several times, she envisioned a tall, svelte individual, flat in the chest, and devoid of the current mechanisms for breathing, digestion, and procreation. That being was illumined from within, through the radiance of an inner spiritual light. In another instance, she not only envisioned this being, but for a while embodied it herself.

On another occasion, the Mother saw an entirely new aspect of the Divine descent into the earth's atmosphere, ushering in a new cosmic power for the peoples of the world. In that experience, she envisioned that she had taken a golden hammer and knocked down a golden wall, which allowed a new Truth Consciousness and Force to pour into the earth's atmosphere, making its infinite power to change life available to anyone.

Once during the Second World War when she was concerned about the runaway evil power of the Nazis, she appeared before Hitler. He normally would see a white being clad in armor, who would instruct him on what to do. In this episode, The Mother sent her supramental Force and disguised herself in the form of that armored being. It now told Hitler to go and fight in the east in Russia. When he took up that advice and sent his troops there, he opened a second front in the war, which would prove to be his undoing. From that perspective, we could say she used her inner powers to end WWII. Over the years, she also used her inner power to overcome many other world problems, such as when she inwardly halted the invasion of India by the Chinese in the early 1960s.

In addition to working for world change through the subtle planes, the Mother also made the supra-human effort to transform her own being, including her physical body. Often she would experience descents of Light and spiritual Force into the very cells of her being, noticing how they responded with great joy and a desire to go on, i.e. to live indefinitely. In that way, she made some of the first great experiments in bringing about willed, unending life for the physical body; in her case through the power of the supramental power. In essence, throughout her life she made the Herculean inner effort to end the aging process, disease, and death itself from within.

In other remarkable experiences, she would guide the souls of those close to her who were dying to their resting place in the subtle realms; sometimes directing a soul into a new body, such as a very young child. On other occasions, she would describe in detail important moments in her lives in the past, such as her experiences as Catherine of Russia, Elizabeth I, and Hatshepsut of Egypt, amongst others.

In Indian metaphysics, there is the notion of the "avatar"; i.e. one who comes on earth to enable the next stage of evolution for that community or society. Krishna, Buddha, and Jesus were several examples. There were others less recognized, but equally great. The Mother and Sri Aurobindo were a dual-incarnation -- unprecedented in history -- their purpose being to bring about the next stage of human evolution through the power of the Spirit.

Sri Aurobindo focused on connecting to this new-in-the-world power of the Spirit, and tried to draw it down into the earth's atmosphere. The Mother focused on trying to bring it into her own physical body so that it could be transformed into a new type of being beyond the human. The reverberations of their astonishing lives live on today. Whereas Sri Aurobindo is generally recognized as the greatest seer and sage of 20th century India, the Mother is admired as the interface to the great Force and Power that Sri Aurobindo worked to bring down into the earth's atmosphere. Their lives are indeed a great milestone in the history of the world, and the psychological and spiritual evolution of life on earth.

The Mother's personal experiences could fill a hundred volumes. In one set of 13-volumes, called 'The Agenda' you can read about her extraordinary experiences of the last 20 years of her life, as well as her recollection of earlier times.

There you can also discover her plans to build Auroville, the UN-sanctioned world that she envisioned as a place for an experiment in world unity. That vision is a reality today, and continues to thrive in an area near Pondicherry, India.

The Mind of the Cells

Several decades ago, the French author Satprem wrote a book called "*The Mind of the Cells*." It was his interpretation of the experiences of Mira Alfassa -- later known to her followers as "The Mother." In the book, Satprem documents the life long pursuit of The Mother to transform her body in order to permanently overcome pain, disease, and even death itself. Satprem's book was entitled 'The Mind of the Cells' because in the process of experimentation and discovery involving her body, The Mother began to realize that the cells had a consciousness of their own, and if their "perceptions" could be reoriented, they would not decay, and fall into disease, illness, and death.

Today if we look around, we see that science may soon be able to overcome several forms of illness, including heart attack and stroke -- leaving only cancer and other major forms of atrophy to be resolved in the future. It is said that individuals could live well into their hundreds as a result. One pioneering technologist even believes that it may be possible to live to 1000 or more through the wonders of modern science. I for one certainly do not doubt that possibility.

And yet, The Mother's approach to the transformation of the body's capacities was entirely different; and I believe, will prove to be far more effective in the long run. And it is for this reason: the effort she made is in fact the direction that the human body itself is evolving towards. Slowly man's greater consciousness is beginning to have an impact on the cellular matter that makes up our physicals bodies. The Mother's effort was an experiment to speed up the process; to overcome tens of generations of evolutionary change in a single lifetime. Though she succeeded only in part, she identified most of the subtle cellular constraints that need to be overcome.

Her approach was to enable unending life by changing the programming of the cells through the influence of the higher consciousness of the spiritual Force. By opening to the wider power and energy of that Force, the inbuilt programming of the cells, which now subscribes to the inevitability of suffering and decay, gives way to a wider "understanding of possibility", including the belief and faith in its own unending health and immortality.

Even now, we are beginning to see the power we have over the body's illness. We have come to understand that the body often falls ill because a person is unwilling or unable to make a certain psychological change necessary for that individual's personal growth and progress. As a result, the body falls in. If that person, however, crosses over that threshold and makes the necessary life change -- perhaps a change in an attitude, or taking to a new level of psychological strength, or takes a new unprecedented action -- the body can relent and health is restored. This is but one of several insights into the subtle nature of health that others are discovering around the world. Of course, many are aware of the power of the Spirit to heal. Done in the right way, and with the widest understanding of the Spiritual Reality and its various powers, there can be ultimate effectivity through this approach.

It is then only a matter of degree for the tissues and cells *themselves* to become conscious and readjust their programming to believe in their possibility of unending longevity. As our bodies become conscious to their own possibility of unending health

and life, they may evolve themselves and achieve what they have come to perceive. Yes, we can use medicines and genetic engineering to accomplish similar results, but it would not be the more fundamental evolutionary change that The Mother was after. We have not become more mental and spiritual beings because of technology, but as a result of a development in understanding and consciousness.

So while I encourage all scientific developments that try to improve the conditions for the physical body -- even those whose outcome might be unending life through technology -- I believe that it does not address the fundamental issue of our physical existence; how to reverse the functioning of the cells from its current status of disbelief to one of belief in unending health and existence. It is then just a matter of our becoming more conscious at various levels, which extends to the cells of our body, which then shares that wisdom and perception.

When we take up that challenge and learn to utilize the Spirit to alter the mindset and belief systems of our own selves, extending to the Mind of the Cells, then we will be creating the conditions for a permanent end to suffering, illness, decay, disease, and even death itself. It seems to be an inevitable part of our evolutionary destiny.

Overcoming Time and Space

The Ever-Present and Simultaneous Time

A spirit-oriented individual does not dwell on the past, except what can be used of it in the present. Though he may aim to change the future, he is fully absorbed in the present. He applies his full consciousness to the needs of the here and now, without concern about rewards for the future or influences of the past. The individual living in the ever-present is not engaged in needless thinking, or caught up in desire -- focusing only on the demands of the present. Interestingly by living in the Ever-present he knows full the effects of the past on the present, and anticipates the arc of unfolding that will take the current matter to the future. Past, present, and future are thus experienced in the here and now; in the Ever-Present. The result is that one continually experiences a profound sense of well-being.

There is even a state beyond the Ever-Present available to the spirit-oriented individual. It is the experience of "Simultaneous Time." The ancient Indian rishis of the Vedas experienced the timelessness of the infinite Divine away from life. It is one way to relate to Time. Then there is the time that we experience normally, which is a limited perception of reality. To bring the ecstatic, blissful Timelessness of eternity into the unfoldings of Time we move through is to experience Simultaneous Time. In that state where Timelessness and Time meet, we experience instantaneous miraculousness -- i.e. instances of sudden good fortune. There duration of time is overcome, as results come instantly; space is abridged, as the object at a distance is brought down to a single point before us; and the current limited finite reality is replaced by infinite results, in terms of quantity/abundance, quality, etc.

We evoke Simultaneous Time when we move away from the surface to the depths within, culminating with our discovery of our Personal Evolving Soul. It also occurs when we surrender to the Divine Reality in the becomings of our lives. It is a state reserved for those willing to engage in Conscious Evolution -- i.e. Yoga.

Time's Arrow

One of the interesting discoveries I made in analyzing hundreds of cases of Life Response -- i.e. instances of sudden good fortune -- is that Time works quite differently

than our normal conception. For example, let's say that I change my attitude towards someone from hostility to goodwill. When I then open my mailbox, I discover a check for thousands of dollars from a customer who owed me that sum for years. It is simply life responding to my change in consciousness, which put me in alignment with that individual's remittance. It turns out that long ago I had a similar experience, and when I asked my spiritual teacher Sri Karmayogi if the check would have been mailed days before in the past had I not changed my attitude here in the present, he replied that it would *not* have. This indicated that the present is indeed affecting the past!

Our normal view is that there are three divisions of Time -- past, present, and future. But from the spiritual position, there is only one Time that is undivided. If this is so, then events today may be affecting circumstance in the past, just as events in the future are determining the present. For example, if someone decides *not* to shift his attitude to the positive in the future, it might cause me, who was about to pay, to suddenly *not* pay in the present. Again, it is the future effecting the present, just as the present can affect the past. In fact, any period can affect any other.

Interestingly, it is only when we rise in consciousness beyond Mind proper, to intuition, and higher still to a "Truth Consciousness" that we can discern these true movements of Time. From these planes beyond the ordinary functionings and logic of mind, we can begin to see the arrow of time moving in any and all directions. If this is true, if time has these astonishing qualities, then the very foundation of our belief system must come into question, including views of history and science, not to mention Reality itself.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of this vastly expanded view of time is that we have the power to become its Master. Not by travelling in a Time Machine or using other forms of technology as presented in science fiction, but through *shifts in consciousness within*. In fact, science itself has begun to understand the extraordinary ancient Indian principle that Time depends on the consciousness of the observer. For example, most of us have noticed how fast time seems to pass when we have a stimulating conversation. Similarly, science tells us that if one approaches the speed of light, time will slow down or speed up depending on the relative position of the observer. And yet the ancient Indian insight is far more profound, as it suggests that if we elevate our consciousness in a given moment or circumstance, *any and all limitations of time can be overcome*. If e.g. I change a wanting attitude to the positive, and, as a result, attract an opportunity of a lifetime, then I have drawn a future possibility and made it real in the present. What would have taken years to accomplish has instead occurred in an instant. Or to put it another way, the burden of time has been completely eliminated.

It turns out that this inner power to attract something to us thereby cancelling time has also been verified by recent discoveries of science. Its theory of Non-local Connections indicates that if one particle of an atom moves, it can affect another particle of the *same* atom, even if it is on the other side of the universe. Non-local connection not only overcomes the normally perceived limitations of cause and effect, but allows for instantaneousness between objects no matter the distance. Yet another discovery of science -- proven by the latest mathematical calculations measuring and defining the cosmos -- is that the outcome of any event is dependent on the person observing it! Thus, my observation of an event can affect a different outcome for it than if another person observes it, indicating that consciousness determines reality. This is a startling scientific discovery that confounds every individual who contemplates its meaning.

Sri Aurobindo takes this several steps further and says that we can discover an inner dimension within our being, a soul space, from which we are able to overcome every aspect of time in the outer world. At the point that we touch our evolving soul within, we move into a realm where past, present, and future become one single, undifferentiated point. Thus, when we act from that space, life immediately reacts to our intentions. Moving to this Psychic Being within is a step beyond a change in consciousness, such as

a shift in attitude. Rather it is a movement into the *center* of consciousness. There we come in touch with universal and transcendent powers, where gives us access to the greatest time controlling and affecting power in the outer world. From these deepest depths, I am able to change the conditions of life -- past, present and future -- in an instant.

Time's Arrow thus moves in every and all dimensions to the degree we express our consciousness. It reaches its apex and greatest capacity when we discover our evolving Soul within. From there we become masters of the outer life, as any intention originating there is instantly fulfilled.

Becoming the Master of Time

We all live in time -- i.e. the unfolding of moments. When we are gripped by time, it is an indicator that we are living in our lower consciousness. When we become masters of time -- i.e. we are able to control and overcome it -- we are living from a higher level of awareness and power.

Normally, we perceive that time has to run its course. Yet a conscious individual knows that he can control and overcome the duration of time. For example, if I decide to increase my level of organization through greater orderliness and systemization, I gain control of time because I am now in a position to accomplish more quickly. In fact, everything I do to organize myself at a higher level, improve my skills, uplift my wanting attitudes and beliefs, focus on something to accomplish, etc. tends to bring more of time under control. Through such conscious efforts at improvement, time becomes less an enemy but a friend -- as I now live under a greater efficiency in which I produce greater results in a shorter period of time with less effort. Through such efforts, I reduce the time it takes to accomplish, and thereby increase my level of success in life.

And yet if we so choose, we can also *completely* overcome the constraints of time. From out of nowhere, we can *instantly* attract results that would normally have arrived after the to-be-expected lengthier period. It is the cancellation of time expressed through the phenomenon of Life Response -- i.e. sudden good fortune. For example, let's say I want to earn an additional \$100,000 per annum. I then take up an initiative that will bring me that result through hard work and effort -- hoping it will be achieved within six months. Eventually, I may accomplish my goal in that period. And yet if I were to access the right *inner* lever, I can literally attract that result *instantaneously*. E.g. somewhere during my effort to achieve the additional \$100k -- maybe right at the beginning -- I realize that I have had a negative attitude toward a co-worker. When I then overcome that attitude, within 24 hours I receive word of a job offer whose starting salary is double my current \$100K remuneration, thereby achieving my goal nearly instantaneously! In this life response scenario, sudden good fortune has overcome the constraints of time, as I have essentially accomplished future-intended results in the present. Thus, by uplifting our consciousness in a certain way in a given situation, we gain control over life, overcoming the duration of time. It is a miraculous-like power that is available to each of us every minute of the day. It is just a matter of being aware of the possibilities, and making the right, conscious choice in that situation.

Here is another approach to ultimate Time Efficiency. Normally, we live in the present, in the sense that we are preoccupied by what we are doing now. In our normal existence, the past appears ever-receding, and the future a distant dream. And yet if we were to experience life not in the momentary present, but in the *Ever-Present*, we would gain access to the power and knowledge of the past and future to create the time and space negating results in the here and now. Let me further illustrate.

Imagine there is an arc of time that ranges from the past to the present to the future. Normally our mind compartmentalizes these into three divisions of time, not perceiving

that they are really a single continuum of existence that we have complete access to. I.e., from a higher state of consciousness, I can have constant intimations of knowledge of the influences of the past on the present. And from the other side, I can have continuous revelations of future possibilities and its implications on the now. In this way, the past and future is fully incorporated into the present moment; in the current activity I am engaged in. Thus, at any moment in time, I can know all things of the past pertaining to the present, and know how the present will project into the future. In this Ever-Present consciousness, I gain ultimate power over life. It is this life and time power that humans of an inner psychological and spiritual bent will increasingly possess in the future. And yet it is a functioning that we can each live now by elevating our consciousness -- i.e. by overcoming our personal limitations and coming in touch with the spiritual Reality.

Though I have spoken of two powerful approaches for overcoming time -- utilizing the right inner triggers to trigger invoke sudden good fortune, and bringing the knowledge of the past and future into the Ever-Present -- we have not yet considered the nature of time itself.

Imagine that there is no universe -- only an Unmanifest that is immutable, ineffable, timeless, and spaceless Being. Now imagine that there emerges a universe out of this reality, and in it, there is now *extension*. That extension in the manifest universe is what we know as Space. Now, within that still, extended space, *movement* and *change* takes place. I.e. the objects of space move, creating a differential between what was, what is, and what will be. *Time is that measurement or perception of change that occurs through motion within extension.*

Then how does this relate to our own lives? We humans are fully influenced by Space and Time. In fact, we are a product of it. We ordinarily function from a limited consciousness in which we are ruled by the exigencies of Nature, including its slow and difficult methods of progress. However, we can overcome the influence of Nature -- including its unhurried, deliberate unfolding; its slow ticking and marked out moments of time -- and greatly facilitate our progress. How can we do this? One approach is to bring duration under control by using our inherent organizational and psychological powers. E.g., I can plan my future so that it occurs much faster. More particularly, I can organize my disorderly files so I create greater work efficiency that speeds up my level of success in life. And yet it is not until we go *beyond* our normal mental functionings that we can truly overcome the grip of time. How do we do that?

If I live on the surface of life, I will surely be caught up in time. I will tend to be preoccupied by the superficial events occurring around me -- in particular, the visual and auditory sense data that is streaming into and filling up my mind, keeping me from perceiving the big picture, the subtle possibilities unfolding in that moment. As a result, I will be entrapped in those moments of time. However, if I move to a deeper consciousness within, I develop a "witness consciousness" in which I more readily perceive the subtle unfoldings of life, the variety of possibilities around me from which I can make the best, the most conscious choices. With this deep moment-to-moment knowledge, I am far more likely to take to right decisions and actions that produce the most efficient results -- hence abridging time. Interestingly, included in these result will be powerful instances of sudden good fortune, where positive outcomes arrive instantaneously from out of nowhere, overcoming the drawn out unfoldings of time. From that deeper poise, I also have intimations of the past influence on the present, deep insights into present conditions, and intuitions and revelations of future possibilities. I then have an arsenal of insight that enables me to move quickly, and in the right direction, attracting rapid and powerful positive results.

There is one other aspect of time I would like to share with you: that our perception of it depends on the consciousness or plane from which we are perceiving it. The higher the

plane we are in, the quicker time seems to unfold; the lower, the slower. Have you ever sat somewhere with nothing to do -- perhaps waiting for an important client who is very late to a meeting, or you have run out of things to do on the job? In those physical-like scenarios, time seems to slow down, unfolding at a snail's pace. On the other hand, when we are very busy, time seems to fly by. It is particularly true if our minds are engaged. E.g. if you driving a long distance with a friend, and engage in a stimulating conversation, time seems to pass by very swiftly, as if several hours went by in half that time.

In general, time moves slowest when we are in the physical, material consciousness; somewhat faster when we are in our vital, emotional center; and faster still when our minds are fully engaged. For example, I am often amazed at how fast a class I am leading unfolds when I lose myself in the needs and thoughts of my students.

Interestingly, there is a mode of being in which time moves faster still. When we experience Spirit -- either within, or opening to it above -- the drag of time all but disappears. Those who take to deep meditation know very well that after coming out of that state, several hours will have seemed like minutes. It is the experience of the timelessness of pure Being within. Likewise, those who have taken to spiritual technique of "consecration," in which you open to the Spirit before undertaking an act, life tends to quickly come under control, cooperating with you from all quarters. It is the ultimate power of the spiritual Force that overcomes the constraints of time.

Finally, it is worth noting that our moment-to-moment experiences of time originated in the Timelessness of the Infinite consciousness. We miss that timelessness behind the moment because we live in our lower nature. However, when we move to our higher and deeper nature, we feel that timelessness in every moment. We then experience the deep bliss that is inherent in the unfoldings of time.

Beyond Science Fiction to the Truths of Higher Consciousness

Spurred on by America's scientific and technological obsessions, the world experiences films, TV, and novels that include fantastic twists and turns that defy normal views of reality. This artistic media form is collectively known as "science fiction." It expresses as experiences of time travel, multi-dimensions, parallel universes, and other startling shifts and unfoldings that entice the viewer. Though loosely based on true principles of physics and actual mathematical calculations about the workings of the universe, most of what is presented is wholly without fact, as virtually no one has such experiences in real life.

And yet, we *can* experience such dramatic shifts in space-time and inter-dimensionality, but not in the way we normally think of it. There *is* a power that we can access that can overcome barriers of space, time, causality, and reality. It is the power of higher consciousness, and includes our ability to access the Spirit.

For example, before engaging in an act, an individual quiets his mind and opens to the spiritual Force. As a result, a four-year problem that had been dogging him suddenly disappears. Another individual opens to that Higher Power, and as a result, three new projects suddenly spring into action, when just before they were moribund and not expected to begin for years. In this way, limits of time and space are overcome, as the future moves into the present, and what was not there before in space is suddenly created. The fact is that many have had such experiences; as opposed to what science fiction portrays.

We can also experience sudden good fortune through other shifts in consciousness. For example, one man decides to overcome his hostile feelings towards another, and out of nowhere is suddenly promoted to the job of his dreams -- something he was unable to

accomplish in a decade of trying. By shifting from his lower nature to a higher one, he has transcended the local domain of finite possibility and opened to the universal plane where our infinite potential is realized. It is in essence the experience of a "life response," -- i.e. the onset of sudden good fortune, where normal views of space, time, causality, and reality are overcome. It is an experience that each of us can have as often as we want, when we want. This is no science fiction captured in celluloid or paper, but a living truth known and realized by many.

Interestingly science has begun to track this phenomenon at the material/physical level, which it calls "non-local connection." Principles of physics now tell us that two electrons of the same atom can change each other's spin even if they are tens of thousands or even billions of miles apart. This extraordinary association at the subtle material level is but a frontal understanding of something much deeper: that it can occur at the vital, emotional, mental, and spiritual planes as well. That every moment our thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and beliefs move out across the field of life, and align with and attract related condition from the world around us.

Space is extension. Time is movement in extension. When we open to the Force or otherwise raise our consciousness, we overcome extension and its movement. We bring timelessness into time, and spacelessness into space. In that way, we serve as a bridge between the Infinite consciousness and life in the cosmos. We become not only joyful experiencers of the miraculous; not only space-time navigators in the cosmos; but pioneers of the next stage of human evolution.

Timelessness in Time

Have you ever meditated before; say for an hour or longer? Those who have experienced this inner approach to the spirit often claim that it felt as if 10 minutes have gone by when it was in fact an hour. That is the difference between one's experience of time (1 hour) and timelessness (10 minutes). Time is the unfolding of moments in duration. Timelessness is its reverse -- the absence of time; i.e. no time.

One time I was driving along a wide-open highway from Los Banos in the central Valley of California towards the coastal mountains. For half a minute, I experienced what felt like a point in the future on earth where time no longer existed -- though space was still there. Can you imagine such a thing? Was this a prophetic vision of life in some distant time-less future or an experience of timelessness in the Now?

When a human goes into outer space at the speed of light and returns a year later, for him 1 year has passed. But now when he looks around at the earth, dozens or even hundreds of years have passed. The people of his generation are now old or long gone. In one sense, he has experienced timelessness relative to the people who have lived in time.

When I change an attitude, or focus my intention on something, or open to the spiritual Force, something equally astonishing takes place. Sudden good fortune rushes toward me. What would have taken place in the future (if at all), suddenly occurs in the present. Again, the limits of time have been overcome -- replaced with no time, i.e. timelessness. Or to be more accurate, timelessness has occurred within the becomings of time, releasing the infinite potentials of life.

God, the Divine exists in timelessness; Life in the universe is in Time. His aspiration is for us to experience His Timelessness in the details of our lives, i.e. in Time. It is the destiny of life on earth. Perhaps that is what I had a glimpse of on the road from Los Banos nearly a decade ago.

Whatever you raise your consciousness -- whether by meditating, improving your nature, opening to the Spiritual Force, or moving to the depths within to your evolving

soul, you move from the passing plane of Time to the eternal plane of Timelessness where it has entered that Time through the becomings of our lives. It is where time and timelessness meet, and thus where sudden good fortune (i.e. life response) arises. It is the plane of instantaneous miraculousness. Where the finite is replaced by the infinite.

Thoughts on the Nature of Time for the Spiritual Individual

An Introduction to the New Spiritual Perceptions of Time -- We can have a variety of experiences of time, from the normal view, which itself is highly subjective, to the spiritual view, in which time has a radically different perspective -- even very different from the fantastic views described in science and science fiction. The spiritual view of time described by Sri Aurobindo has no precedence in human history. It is where all understanding of time and beyond should begin to understand its ultimate frontiers.

Ordinary vs. Spiritual View of Time -- The normal experience of time is one of limitation and duality. The spiritual view of time is one of infinite oneness and potentiality.

The Limited vs. Elevated Consciousness and the Experience of Time -- The limited consciousness of the average person experiences ignorance, ego, and time. The higher consciousness of the spirit-oriented individual experiences integral knowledge, oneness, and (a) the ever-present and (b) timelessness in time, which produces instantaneous miraculousness.

The Experience of Time that is of the Divine Consciousness -- The Divine consciousness is infinite, and when we experience the ever-present and simultaneous time, we come in touch with that Being and Power. As a result, we can access to the power of Creation and Eternity the Infinite Consciousness.

Conquering Space and Time through Higher Consciousness -- In the higher consciousness we move beyond the normal bounds of Space and Time. They can eventually be conquered, like Ignorance, ego, and limitation.

Methods of Higher Consciousness that Overcome Time -- Higher Consciousness comes by elevating all parts of our nature, moving away from the surface of things to the depths, discovering the evolving Soul within, opening to the spiritual Force, and surrendering to the transcendent Divine. Any such action will tend to overcome the limits of time. It is abridged or cancelled, enabling Instantaneous Miraculousness.

Shifting Our Time Perspective and the Response of Life

The other day I drove to nearby Palo Alto, home of Stanford University and the surrounding wealthy community in the heart of Silicon Valley. My plan that afternoon was to get hands on experience with the iPhone, which had been released the day before. After a wonderful experience using the device, I exited the store and sauntered up lovely University Avenue, a tree-lined street adorned with dozens of shops, ranging from boutiques and cafes to bookstores and technology centers. As I walked up the boulevard, I felt quite happy and relaxed. Adding to the lovely atmosphere was the perfect, cloudless, mild weather that graces the region this time of the year.

In the back of my mind, I thought about the idea of obtaining some form of sweet -- perhaps a candy bar. And yet I was enjoying my slow amble up the avenue too much to want to disturb matters. A few minutes later, I thought about the fact that I had 30 minutes or so remaining in my parking slot, which still gave me enough time to continue my leisurely walk. And so I continued happily on my way.

Then at one point, I realized that though I had walked a ways, I had still not yet found an outlet for the candy bar I was after, which in turn caused slight consternation. It was

at that point that I decided not to waste any more time, and instead focused on finding a store that had the object of my desire. Not a second later, I looked up and saw a large Walgreen's outlet directly in front of me. It was precisely the store I was looking for, since it had the greatest variety of candy in the entire area! I was amazed that as soon as I thought of doing something about my situation, the store immediately appeared in my line of site! In fact, out of dozens of stores in the area, it was the *only* one that my eyes fixed upon when I lifted my head! And so without hesitation, I quickly headed over to the store and found what I was looking for. In fact, I was so excited about the subtle "life response" experience that I just had that I also purchased a small pad and some fancy pencils in order to capture the event that just transpired!

In essence, what happened was that when I changed my perspective about *time*, life instantly responded with sudden good fortune. When I shifted from allowing time to *leisurely* go by to focusing on creating results *as soon as possible*, the store instantly appeared before me. By changing my intention about time -- i.e. to create quick results -- I attracted a result that itself abridged time, as the store suddenly came to my attention.

When we make an effort to focus on, conserve, or condense time, life immediately responds with improvements in its conditions. In the above incident, I consciously tried to narrow time, to focus it, concentrate it, and life instantly moved in my favor, enabling me to obtain the object of my desire. This suggests that there is a profound relationship between our perception of time and our ability to accomplish in life; or, more specifically, our ability to accomplish suddenly and abundantly through the onset of a life response event.

Let me give you another example of this phenomenon. A number of years ago, the Christmas/New Year holiday season was fast approaching, which ordinarily meant that my contract consulting and training work would slow to a trickle. However, this time rather than accepting the social norm that business invariably must decrease during this period, I decided that it should flow like any other time of the year. Immediately after changing my psychological position, I was *flooded* with new work -- completely filling my holiday schedule! Keep in mind that I did not make any outer effort to precipitate this most unexpected turn of events. Life simply responded *on its own* to a change in my attitude. When I shed the old habitual belief, and embraced the idea that work could come at *any* time -- including the imminent holiday season -- life immediately moved in my favor. Or to put it another way, by conquering my own view of time, I opened the portals of possibility, enabling vast results to descend on me in virtually no time at all!

Most of us have perceived the *subjective* nature of time somewhere along the line. Though the clock may tick in regular, fixed intervals, in reality time is a rather subjective experience for us. Sometimes time appears to move quickly, while other times it can seem to last forever. Even modern science -- including Albert Einstein -- has told us that time is relative. For example, one day a friend tells me that she was bored at work, and so time seemed to drag on forever. Another day, she tells me that she was very busy, and so time seemed to just fly by! In this way, our experiences of time seem to depend on the quality of our perceptions and the way we interact with life. Here's another example: have you ever had a wonderful conversation with a person and then realized that several hours had passed by, when it only seemed like minutes? The enjoyment and mental stimulation affected our perception of time. In each of these experiences, the way time unfolds for us depends on our psychological state. When our emotions and thoughts are fully engaged in a work or matter, life seems to move swiftly, but when we are locked in a room with nothing to do, it seems to last forever.

My goal here is not so much to analyze the nature of time, but to show that through our psychological relationship with time, we can attract powerful positive results from the world around us. When I shifted my perspective and tightened my time perspective in

the candy bar incident, life *instantly* responded with positive results. Likewise, when I shifted my time framework by embracing the idea that work could occur during the holiday season, -- expanding my notion of what was productive time -- life also instantly responded, and brought work that filled up that completely filled up that timeslot. We see from such cases that *whenever we shift our time perspective to the positive -- through more focused intent, by aspiring for its maximum use, or by expanding its productive capacity, -- life tends to immediately respond in our favor.*

For example, consider two other aspects of time that we are all familiar with -- punctuality and patience. If, I shift from being habitually *late* to work to being *punctual* - - a decidedly different relationship with time -- life quickly responds to that effort. E.g. out of nowhere, I am suddenly offered a higher paying position, or an email arrives informing me that a long delayed project has suddenly come to fruition. When we change our attitudes about time, time begins to work in our favor, by attracting the infinite possibilities of life into the here and now!

Likewise, if I shift from being *impatient* to being *patient* in a given situation -- another form of "time shift" -- life will also quickly respond. For example, just recently I was on line at the supermarket, and perceived that I was becoming slightly irritable due to the length of the checkout procedure. However, being mindful in that moment, I was able to catch my disturbed feeling, and instead focused on being patient. Hardly a moment later, the woman in front of me bolted out of line when she realized that there were other items she needed to shop for, substantially shortening the line in front of me. In similar situations, I have seen a second bagger suddenly appear on the scene to speed up packing, or a stuck checkout conveyor belt suddenly start moving! In each case, the response from life came after a change in psychological reference -- from being caught in time (i.e. impatience), to moving outside the bounds of time (i.e. patience).

These episodes give further proof that that when we move to a higher plane of consciousness relative to time, we immediately gain the cooperation of life. In fact, the life response themselves come in a form that overcome the limits of time, as they rapidly, even instantaneously descend upon us!

The key to eliciting these powerful results is to be stationed in that place within where we are able to make the right psychological adjustments concerning time. When we shift our center of consciousness from the surface of life to a deeper poise within, we not only become mindful of the possibilities and choices unfolding before us, but we are able to make the right decisions in those moments -- including the right time-related decisions - - that quickly attracts powerful positive results.

There is also something we might call the "final frontier of time". It is where we are able to bring the timeless dimension of life into the time-bound plane we live in -- changing the very nature of our existence. When we move away from our surface preoccupation with the visual and auditory sense data, and discover our deepest poise within -- culminating in discovering our very souls -- we reach a plane where time ceases to function. When we then act from that plane, -- i.e. when we bring the timeless energies into the details of our daily lives -- we become complete masters of the outer life. We have conquered time from within, and through that process, unleash the infinite potentials of life.



THE CHARACTER OF LIFE

Nature vs. Soul's Method of Progress

Nature, Soul, and Human Progress

When the Manifest emerged from the Unmanifest through the willful action of the latter, Life divided into two aspects -- Nature and Soul. (In Indian parlance, Prakriti and Purusha.) Nature is Life's slow and difficult way, and is the normal way humans experience the world. Soul (or spirit) is Life's method of progress through higher consciousness -- producing only positive effects without any negative. (I.e. it is Self-existent.)

Man is dominated by Nature. He evolves along with it slowly and painfully through division and duality, and pleasure and pain. He can however evolve through Soul/Spirit instead, rapidly, with no negative outcomes.

Nature's difficult method was sanctioned by the Divine to allow for the greatest multiplicity of possibility of forms, of forces, of aspects in creation that would allow for the greatest variety of Delight.

When we humans move from Nature to Soul by discovering our highest nature, we experience the Delight for which this life was created. I.e. the Divine willed to extend its static Delight into the dynamic Delight through self-discovery of forms of creation -- i.e. we -- fulfilling the intent of the Infinite.

Nature's vs. Self-Directed Tapas

The Sanskrit word "Tapas" roughly translates as "spiritual discipline." For a yogi, it might involve lengthy meditation to connect with the Spirit. For an individual dedicated to personal growth, it might entail learning to be calm in the face of an abusive boss. The intention in both cases is an evolution of consciousness through inner discipline.

There is also the tapas that life forces us into. It is Nature compelling us to take to a certain inner or outer tact to overcome a limitation and bring about our individual progress. In Jane Austin's *Pride and Prejudice*, Mr. Bennet, the father of five daughters, is forced by life into the discipline of not reacting to his vulgar, loud-mouthed, churlish wife. That tapas was the means of his personal progress in life.

In that way, each of us are compelled by Nature to move forward in consciousness; whether it means standing up to an abusive partner; or being a more understanding manager, when one is not normally disposed that way; or being forced to do things we are reluctant to do. It is the Tapas of Nature forced on us, secretly working in our own best interest, so we can overcome personal limitations, enabling us to grow in consciousness.

While, it is certainly in our best interest to embrace the Tapas requirements of Nature, it is better to *consciously* direct the course of our lives through inner and outer self-

discipline. Conscious Tapas can be taken up at two identifiable levels. The first are those methods that will enable us to accomplish more in life and find basic fulfillment in life. Examples of such disciplines are developing our level of knowledge and skills, raising our level of personal organization, taking to greater psychological strength, and ridding ourselves of wanting attitudes and beliefs.

There is also *spiritual* Tapas, which is mainly for those who have taken to a higher calling in life. Examples of spiritual discipline is moving our center of awareness more inward, practicing non-reaction and remaining absolutely still in the face of difficulty, opening to the spiritual Force, deep meditation and prayer, and many others.

When we practice conscious, self-directed Tapas, we not only evolve our consciousness, and lead more successful and happy lives, but we tend to attract good fortune from the environment. In that way, this form of self-discipline is eminently superior to practicing the Tapas demanded of Nature.

Moving Beyond Contradiction

Progress through Resolution of Contradiction

Life evolves through the contradiction of dual pairs, and their resolution. There are infinite forms in which these dualities take shape. For example, we see contradictions between family members; between spouse; between yourself and the boss; between your desires and the realities of your life; between two nations; between two races; between two parties, political, social, or otherwise; between creeds, ideals, and values; and so forth ad infinitum in all aspects, fields, and domains of life. Life/Nature thus establishes and urges the further progress of each side of the contradiction. Without the conflict between the parties and the ensuing attempt at resolution, life would remain static, or even fall back.

When we are immersed in one of these contradictions, our goal should be to find the higher harmony that resolves it, which will enable our further progress. That normally requires us (or our party or collective) to rise in consciousness; i.e. to discover a higher center of being. That can come about by shedding a corresponding negative attitude, by withdrawing a wanting emotion, by giving up a stale habit, by developing a new understanding, by shifting out of ego, by reaching beyond the chasm that divides, by moving out of selfishness, by taking a new approaches to life, by changing a value or belief, and so forth.

In each situation and circumstance, we need to understand the contradiction (e.g. we are irritated with the behavior of our spouse), as well as what is required to resolve it (e.g. we need to shift our attitude from complaining to accepting). Both sides of the contradiction need to take that approach for optimal result and collective progress. As a result of making that inner and outer effort toward resolution, life quickly cooperates from unexpected quarters. (E.g. as a result of the spouse taking to non-complaining, he attracts a wonderful new development for his wife.) In essence, through our inner and outer efforts to engage a higher center of being, we resolve the conflict, bringing about a higher harmony, which enables a new level of progress.

There is another approach to progress other than Nature's slow and difficult way of contradiction and its resolution. It is the method Soul and Spirit. With this approach, one does not wait on Life, but one self-consciously aspires to improve and take one's self to a higher level; to raise one's consciousness at a particular level. E.g. perceiving through introspection that I can make my attitudes more positive, I make a conscious effort to raise them. Or subscribing to the deep value of respect for others, I turn my company in that direction.

At its highest, this self-conscious, self-directed, self-improving approach of Soul involves the adoption of spiritual qualities such as silence, peace, calm, equality of being,

oneness, wisdom, creativity, love, and self-givingness, to name a few. It can also include opening to the spiritual Force to enable the very best conditions to take shape in our lives.

The method of Soul precludes the intervention of Nature and her difficult dualistic, conflicting, strife-worn, hot and cold ways. This is the path of Conscious Evolution (known as "yoga" in the East), and has so far been the domain of a very few. However, with the increasing emergence of individuality, including true spiritual individuality in the 21st century, this will become far more common. This initiative to progress through inner development of our consciousness will increasingly be the hallmark of the emerging New Age.

Contradictions Between Dual Pairs Enables Further Progress

Life evolves or can evolve through the contradictions of two parties, whether spouse or family members, associates, organizations, nations, etc.

E.g. a man has the quality of feeling that he is not being listened to by others. His wife tends not to listen when she is absorbed in some small pursuit. When the man asks his wife to do something, she does not listen, as she is absorbed elsewhere, causing irritation in the man. He must evolve out of his insecurity; she out of her unresponsiveness. This can only occur through their interaction. Life has put them together to serve this evolutionary purpose.

All life thus evolves or has the potential to evolve through the contradictions of two parties, through these conflicting pairs. Our goal should be to perceive it and then go beyond that contradiction, which we do by overcoming a corresponding limitation in our nature. When we do, we progress and grow. We also evoke sudden good fortune.

From a higher perspective then, the contradiction is really not so, but a *complement* in that it is an opportunity to develop our higher consciousness. I.e., the thing with which we are in conflict is the vehicle by which will overcome a personal limitation, and thereby progress.

Methods of Overcoming Our Contradiction with Others

In this column I have often focused on sage and seer Sri Aurobindo's principle that Life progresses and evolves through our contradictions with others that moves toward a higher harmony. Without such conflict and divisiveness, life would stand still, or even regress. The exception is when we are conscious enough to prevent the contradiction in the first place. The latter is the Way of Soul, and is rare indeed; the former, the slow and difficult method of Nature, which is Life's standard process.

There are a number of approaches to begin to deal with such conflicting problems we have with others:

- The first is to perceive that we are actually in contradiction with another, or with life circumstance, or with ourselves.
- Second, we can perceive how such circumstance has come for our own personal growth, as well as that of the other side.
- Third, we can recognize that the contradictory party is really a complement in disguise; that the other party is potentially or actually aiding in our progress.

Together these approaches aid in our ability to see more clearly the contradictions and conflicts we have in the first.

The question then becomes what can we actually do to resolve the contradiction? Or to put it another way, how can we create the higher harmony that overcomes the conflict, and moves life forward in a positive way?

One approach is to note the principle that anytime you are complaining about another person, you can be sure that they have something equally harsh to criticize about you. If you therefore focus on your own weaknesses instead of theirs, you will progress and good fortune will follow.

For example, you tell the party you are in contradiction with that they are lazy, but they then perceive that you are narrow-minded and disorganized. If instead of complaining about their limitation, you focus and change your own, life will quickly respond in your favor, while loosening the contradiction you had with the other party.

A second approach has a somewhat similar dynamic. It to know that every negative you perceive in another, you actually manifest in some form in yourself. Therefore, if you discover what that is and make an effort to overcome it, good fortune will follow, and the conflict and contradiction with that other party will evaporate.

For example, let's say you think that another person is shiftless, lazy, and doesn't make a serious effort to work. Though you yourself may not be indolent in the same way, it is likely you are in a different way; such as a reluctance to make the effort to keep your things in order, or to keep yourself hygienic and clean. Therefore, if instead of complaining about the other person's deficiency, you focus on your own, not only will you quickly attract positive conditions, but the other apparent lazy individual will suddenly change that behavior on their own! As a result, the contradictions you have with them will break down, establishing a more harmonious relationship. It is a powerful, conscious approach to higher awareness, greater success, and personal progress in life.

Contradictions are Complements

Sri Aurobindo indicates that in the lower consciousness, we see division and conflict everywhere. It is life seen as contradictions. Pleasure and pain, good and bad; positive and negative; my right vs. yours; spirit and matter; and so on forever. In the higher consciousness, these dual pairs are seen not as contradictions, but complements. For example, a man's conflict with his neighbor is a means of evolving both sides. The "conflict" is not only Nature's way of lifting the consciousness of both sides, but enables a more general progress for the world. In that light, evil can be seen as just a great, if not greater a spur as the normal "good" to enable the true Good to increase. Good and evil thus work together to spur progress and evolution. They are thus complements to one another; not contradictions as seen through our lower, surface consciousness.

A good example of this can be seen in the Middle East in the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians. The radical Palestinian groups resort to terrorism and launching rockets at civilian targets, which strike us as abhorrent. And the Israelis live in self-indulgent psychological fear and are mostly insincere in their desire for a Palestinian state. So on they go in never ending rounds of strife, pain, and conflict -- not unlike the Hatfields and McCoys of the Old West.

From a deeper consciousness, we are watching the painful evolution of both sides through the conflict. It is Nature's way to spur progress by the interaction of two opposing sides. On the surface, all we see is contradiction, but from a deeper poise, we see progress; that the two parties are complementary aspects that are each evolving through their interactions. Thus, contradictions are truly complements.

Every time we are in conflict with others, we can see that it is life compelling us to grow and evolve. From our surface view, we tend to express our ego in the situation and

guard our own side. Nature however is telling you that your enemy or conflicting partner is your complement. That he represents something negative inside you. That he has come because of something wanting within that has attracted him. If, however, you rise in consciousness, which is also Nature's intent, then you will understand, change, and move to the next highest state. So will your contradictory, yet truly complementary partner. It is Nature's way of progress.

Who then are you in contradiction with? And how can you see them as a complement aiding in your progress. What do they represent in you, and how can you change that wanting element inside for the better? Nature awaits you progress, evolution, and transformation. But you have to take the first decisive step. It is to recognize the contradiction for what it really is -- a beneficial complement that is key to your personal growth.

Beyond Division and Contradiction to Higher Resolutions in Life

On the surface of life there is endless conflict, strife, and suffering. This is the way our normal consciousness sees the world. It sees through division and contradiction. However, when we move to a deeper consciousness, it reverses. Division becomes Oneness; i.e. those forces that are divided from one another actually share a deeper purpose that binds them in oneness. From that deeper consciousness, we also see that contradictions become complements. I.e. forces that appear in opposition are at a deeper level complementary to one another; even necessary to one another's progress.

This might sound like mere philosophy, but from a deeper perspective, it is the most profound and *practical* of truths. For example, we see two nations at war, or two families quarrelling, or two individuals at loggerheads. At their soul level, where their true selves lie, they are bound in unity. Only their egos, operating at the surface, bind them in division and strife. If they were to instead go deeper within, they would find a *common* interest -- a means of resolving the surface problem through an overriding higher possibility and solution. If we choose to go into the depths, away from ego that separates us, we will find that *higher harmony and resolution* overcomes our division and conflicts.

Likewise, when we move to a deeper consciousness, we see that the conflict we thought we were having with another is really indicating that we share a hidden *complementary* relationship with them. That it is *only* through that relationship with them that we can each can grow and progress to the next emerging level. Since it is only through the interaction with my adversary that my own faults show themselves, that other party is then a complement and agent for my own personal growth! Or, to put it another way; it is only in our mutual conflict that we can bring a wider possibility that will benefit both parties.

Why then do we perceive the division and contradiction, not the oneness and complementary nature of our relationships? It is because of the limitations of our minds --which cannot see the whole truth of any subject, inquiry, or matter, but only the part. And the part Mind sees is often only the part that the ego reinforces. When I am in conflict with another, my Mind only perceives the conflict, which is only a part of a much wider truth, and wholeness of possibilities. Also, the part Mind sees is that part that satisfies the ego. The ego looks out for its own interest, at the expense of the interests of others, the environment -- i.e. of the *whole* truth of things.

This might still sound like philosophy. However, as one moves out of the part-view into the whole truth of any situation -- conflicting or not -- then one begins to perceive the full integral knowledge of the conditions of life in any moment. It will strike us as a Marvel. Also when we come out of our ego, move from selfishness to selflessness and self-givingness, we will break the impasses we have with another party. Division and

contradiction will begin to turn into harmony of purpose, even as we perceive our complementary association. Then new solutions will reveal themselves from all quarters. The limited, finite world steeped in conflict will burst forth with infinite possibilities coming from this new harmonic perspective. We will then together with our once-adversarial partner stand before entirely new possibilities for progress and accomplishment. That discovery will in turn itself release a deep abiding joy within.

Developing Complementarity in Intensifying Relationships

[An associate points out that we may have very positive relations with others, but when the relationship is closer and more intense, it can begin to turn into ill-will. Here was my response:]

Sri Aurobindo posits that all life progresses through Contradictions; or rather their resolution into Higher Harmony. When we come in closer contact with others, our contradictory nature with them is accentuated. The general contradictions turn into very specific ones. My negative rubs with your negative, and does so in many more ways when in closer relation. Anyone who has spousal relationships will have noticed this.

And yet such intensities of contradiction afford perfect opportunities for their resolution. From our side we can find the wanting correspondence, and make the change. (Whether the other person in that particular challenging situation wishes to raise his consciousness on the matter is for them to decide.)

It is said that every outer condition is a reflection of one's inner state. It is also true that every outer situation is an occasion for our progress. In fact, it is just the right conditions to enable that best and fastest progress if we are aware of and move on them.

On another line, as we come closer with others, we can learn to consecrate that much more, which will mean that not only will we avoid the negative contradiction, but the intensity will be maintained for utterly joyful, even blissful interaction with others.

One problem is that we don't make the time, create the "mindspace" to examine the relations as they intensify through closer quarters and relation. We just get sucked into it without ongoing meditation and self-evaluation of conditions. A quieter, deeper ongoing space will certainly help in these intensifying personal relationship situations.

It is of course a perfect opportunity to practice Non-reaction, and Taking the Other Person's perspective. In fact, with such intensities, we can become their Masters!

The goal is Harmony. A Higher Harmony that can come out of the contradiction. And a higher Harmony that can be generated by Her Force.

When we reach the consciousness of the Absolute, of supramental perception, we see the conflicts as not contradictions, but complements, as it affords the best opportunity for our fastest, richest, and most perfect growth. This is for those who have seriously taken to a life of Conscious Evolution (Yoga).

Seeing Beyond the Positive and Negative

Three Life Principles that Demonstrate How the Darkness Serves the Light

We go through life rarely considering if there are fundamental, underlying principles at work that guide its movements, flow, and outcomes. Here I am not referring to the mechanical principles that science has revealed, such as material laws of physics or biology, but the subtle and profound inner laws that determine how life functions. There

are many such hidden principles of existence, and I urge the reader to become familiar with them, as it will not only reveal a profound wisdom about life's workings, but give one access to an infinite-like power over reality.

Here I would like to describe three subtle principles of life that also happen to be closely related.

The first principle is that *our weaknesses are the source of our greatest strength*. Though we have positive capacities that have helped us become who we are today, it is also true that our wanting qualities can be the single lever that catapults us to our ultimate potential. That is, if we identify and overcome a wanting quality, such as a limiting attitude or fixed habit or opinion, then life will quickly respond with good or great fortune, dramatically elevating our level of accomplishment and success. In this way, our weakest qualities become the means of our greatest inner and outer successes.

The second principle, closely related to the first, is that the negatives that occur in our lives are actually positives in disguise. That is, if we examine most peoples' lives, we will see how often ill fortune became the stepping-stone for great change that propelled them forward. From that perspective, the negatives are not negatives at all, but are merely more intense forms of the positive.

For example, World War II, in which 50+ million people died, served to bring about vast positive change for society; through the formation of the United Nations, the EU, global trade, and other forms of international and regional cooperation and integration. Before WWII, there was little harmony amongst the European nations, making it that much easier for the Fascists armies to march across Europe. In the wake of these great negative events, however, came great positive developments for society that may have otherwise taken decades, centuries, or millennia to come about, if at all.

The third and final principle, again closely related to the first two, is that "contradictions are complements." I.e. normally, when we are in conflict with another party, we just see ourselves at odds with them. But from a higher perspective, we see that we are actually *complements* to one another. That the other side is actually the quickest means by which we can rise in consciousness, if only we discover the truths they know so we can develop a new, higher understanding. In fact, it is *only* through that particular party that we can make such progress in life.

E.g., the Palestinians and the Israelis on the surface have a contradictory relationship; they have opposed and fought one another for decades in what can only be described as a blood feud. In the depths however, the Palestinians understand the intransigence of the Israelis, even as the Israelis are aware of a virulent, violent, and irrational side of the Palestinians. Not only does each side know the other side's limitations and weakness -- which each does not see itself -- but "Nature" has conspired to put these two sides together in opposition so that they can work out a higher harmony enabling new understanding and unprecedented progress for both. In that way, each side is the other's most profound teacher, if only they would listen.

Thus, life progresses through the contraction of two parties, who discover the higher harmony beyond their current status.

Life is filled with mystery. It reveals itself however through subtle and profound laws of life. When we rise in consciousness, we can perceive these understated principles. When we develop an inner life of stillness, calm, and spiritual-like insight we become "silent witness" to the world, and thus to the ordinarily hidden truths and principles of life.

Through that status, we are far more able to perceive the ebb and flow of life, the reasons for its sudden changes in direction, the why and the wherefore of cause and effect, giving us the deepest, highest, and most profound perspective of existence.

As a result, we now have the wisdom to act in ways that attract enormous positive results, enabling us to grow as individuals, while becoming the Masters of Life.

Perceiving the Negative in the Right Light

We are on earth experiencing so many wonderful things, and yet there is always this deep aspiration for so much more. However, when life does not work as planned or hoped for, and we are set back, it is disturbing to say the least; even shocking.

The problem is that we have never learned how to deal with such life traumas, and therefore when serious difficulties arise, we are barely able to cope. Yet if we knew the deeper purpose served by these apparent negatives, we would not only be more prepared for them when they arrived, but we would be able to adjust our psyche and behavior to match.

Of course serious problems can come at us from any direction, and at any time; often from where we least expect it, which makes us very vulnerable to the vicissitudes of life. And yet if we were to develop our higher consciousness, we would immediately see behind the surface difficulty; perceive what life is trying to teach us, instead of merely reacting to it and feeling like its victim.

When we navigate these serious obstacles from our highest perspective, we realize that they are often the most powerful means of our growth and progress; that they provide us with the essential lessons that enable us to evolve as individuals; enabling us to become more conscious and whole.

Unfortunately, we are not taught this perspective along the way. As a result when problems present themselves in all their fury, we lose our balance, and are deposited on the rocky shores of existence. Yet if we aspire to develop that higher consciousness, including knowledge of the subtle workings and purpose of life, we would more easily adjust to the difficult twists and turns when they occur. This in turn leads to right inner attitudes as well as right outer behavior that together tend to prevent the negatives from occurring in the first place. It is life responding and protecting us, generated by our higher consciousness view of the nature of Reality.

This lucky blockage of the negative and the sudden attraction of the positive occurs most often when we connect to our deeper self, culminating in our evolving Soul within, which guides us in the right direction. It also occurs when we open to the spiritual Force, which consistently sets right the conditions of life around us.

As a result of these spiritual practices, we have startling experiences that loosen our old world view. We instead have a glimpse of a new type of existence, where the negative serves a purpose, even as we are able to dramatically reduce its frequency in our lives.

Seeing the Marvel of Existence

In the first of 56 chapters of his metaphysical opus *The Life Divine*, Sri Aurobindo suggests something profound. He indicates that everything we encounter in life -- positive *and* negative, pleasurable *and* painful, good *and* evil -- serves the greater Good that is unfolding. He indicates that such dual pairs, which on the surface seem to be in contradiction, are really complements to one another -- necessary for the upward, progressive movement of each. In that way, every difficulty and problem that comes our way serves us just as well as positives circumstance -- perhaps more so. Moreover, that vision of things, that ability to perceive meaning and utility in everything we encounter, from the macro to the micro, from the positive to the negative is to see the Marvel of Existence.

Let me illustrate this principle with several examples from literature. In Victor Hugo's masterpiece *Les Miserable*, a fundamentally good man Jean Valjean has escaped prison and is being pursued by an extremely dedicated, almost fanatical police officer named Javert. Along the way, Valjean raises a beautiful adopted daughter Cosette who falls in love with a young man named Marius, who eventually joins a people's fighting force barricading themselves against the reactionary government. At one point, the older, magnanimous Valjean gets involved in the battle himself, and in a startling, ironic moment saves Marius' life. Interestingly, Valjean never tells him what he had done. In addition, Valjean and Marius over time are at odds with one another because the elder does not want to relinquish his beloved daughter to the young man. In fact, now that Valjean senses that he is losing Cosette to Marius, life begins to all lose meaning, and so he begins to wither away. But then one day near the end of Valjean's life, the evil Innkeeper Thenardier -- who once raised Cosette in squalor and did many appalling things along the way -- reveals to Marius that Valjean was in fact the one who saved his life. Stunned by Thenardier revelations, Marius and Cosette rush to Valjean's deathbed and console him, thanking him for a lifetime of self-givingness. In essence, *a very bad person has come forward and unwittingly helped resolve a knot between two good people*, -- enabling reconciliation between Marius and Valjean, and the return of Cosette's deep love and affection for Valjean, something he so desperately longed for. And so after a lifetime of kindness and generosity, Jean Valjean dies a very happy man.

It is said that great literature reveals the deepest truth of life. The principle that not just the good, but the negative and evil too serve the greater Good is also evident in Jane Austin's *Pride and Prejudice*. For example, at one critical point in the story, one of the five Bennet sisters, the wild, rambunctious Lydia, has eloped with the scoundrel Wickham, threatening the Bennet family with scandal and social ostracism. The elopement also threatens to ruin the relationship between the very wealthy Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet.

Now soon after the elopement ends with the marriage of Lydia and Wickham, Lydia foolishly blurts out that Darcy was the one who settled the accounts of her husband, resolving the situation. Lydia was instructed not to reveal this information. When Eliza hears this, she is thunderstruck because she now realizes how wrong she has been about Darcy. She saw him and arrogant and prideful, but instead, she now sees his very noble character. As a result, she falls in love with him, he proposes (again), and they marry. *Without the verbal blunder from the negative Lydia, the marvelous outcome would never have occurred*. I.e. Darcy and Eliza may not have fallen in love, married, found deep happiness, and thereby bring great wealth and social prestige to the Bennet family. That is the power the negative and false serve in manifesting the greater Good.

There is one other example of this principle in the novel. Late in the story, the aristocratic, wealthy, yet reactionary Lady Catherine tries to meddle in the relationship between Darcy and Eliza. When she does, it backfires on her, paving the way for the marriage of Darcy and Eliza. What happened was that when Lady Catherine got wind of the budding relationship, she stormed in the Bennet home, met with Eliza, and insisted that the relationship cease. Eliza of course refused. Most importantly however, when Lady Catherine returned home, Darcy learned of the meeting between his aunt and Eliza and realized from the discussion that Eliza had not ruled out a romance and marriage between him. Startled that this was the case, Darcy then went ahead and met Eliza, who then accepted his second proposal of marriage. In other words, *without Lady Catherine's negative intervention, the entire resolution of the story would not have come about!* Her harmful attempt to block their relationship had the opposite effect of spurring them to come together.

Once again, we see how falsehood and evil play critical roles in movements of progress and greater accomplishment. It is to perceive that every thing -- good or bad, positive

or negative, pleasurable or painful, -- serves a purpose in the great unfolding. It is an ultimate perspective and vision of life. It is to see the Marvel of Existence.

The Greater the Opposition, the Greater the Opportunity, Progress

Life has a character, just like we humans. It expresses through any number of laws -- whether overt or subtle. One particular principle is that progress in life occurs through our contradiction and conflict with others and circumstance. It is only through these adversarial relationships that each party can make a breakthrough in consciousness and thereby progress. In particular, when we find the higher harmony beyond the contradiction, then each side moves forward. Otherwise, life remains in standstill or even goes backwards. If we look closely, we will see this dynamic everywhere -- in our own lives and in the world around us. It is Nature's secret method.

A closely related principle is that the greater the opposition we encounter in life, the greater the opportunity for us to rise and progress. We can observe this law in real life or in the world of literature and film.

For example, in Jane Austin's *Pride and Prejudice* there is a great scandal midway through the story when one of the Bennet sisters elopes with a scoundrel, threatening to ruin the family, both socially and financially. And yet the final outcome of that particular episode was that three of the five Bennet daughters find love, are married to attractive husbands, and come into enormous sums of money. Thus, a family once teetering on the edge of financial ruin comes into staggering good fortune. In essence, the intensity of the opposition that life brought through the elopement set in motion conditions that enabled the three marriages to occur. Because circumstance was so intensely negative, individuals reacted in such a way that caused them to come together in ways that would not have otherwise occurred.

A more recent and non-fictional version involves the case of Apple CEO Steve Jobs. In the 1980's he was tossed out of the company he founded by the board of directors for going in a direction that the company foolishly thought was reckless. Though he went through dark moments in the years that followed, he rose to the challenge, took up a number of creative initiatives, including the founding of the companies Next and Pixar, and was eventually rehired back at Apple along with the many assets he had developed while in exile. As a result, Apple, which was on the verge of bankruptcy when Jobs returned, increased its revenues by an astounding 10 times in the decade and a half that followed (on its way to many times more), making it the most powerful corporate turnaround in US history, and catapulting Apple to become a four-time in a row Fortune magazine the most admired company in the world.

In other words, intense opposition and difficulty provided Jobs with the "initiative" to strike back and take things to a new level. Adversarial conditions gave him the strength, fortitude, and determination to push his way forward and create conditions for his former company that no one would ever have imagined. Not only that, but it resulted in products that had a profound impact on the nature of society -- including the iPod, iPhone, and iPad, etc., whose sales have boomed around the world.

If you examine your own life, you will likely see this same dynamic at work; that the greatest difficulty you encountered -- whether an outer opposition or an inner demon, was the force that enabled your greatest success. Or to put it another way, the greater the outer resistance, conflict, contradiction to our aspirations and goals, the greater the possibility for achievement and growth; i.e. the higher we can rise.

We can actually go a step further and philosophically say that the negatives we encounter are actually positives in disguise. Or better still that those negatives are

simply more intense forms of the positive; providing the energy, force, and push that compels us to rise much higher.

Having said this, there is an alternate approach to progress. We can rise in consciousness and act in ways that tend to attract the positive and avoid opposition. In that way, we rise from peak to ever-higher peak of the positive. In order to do that, we will need to overcome our limitations, utilize the spiritual Force that is there to set right life's conditions, and live a life of increasingly conscious behavior. In that way, there is an intensity -- a positive intensity -- that compels us to move forward. It is not opposition, but energy and joy that drives us to the next level. This is no longer Nature's Way, but that of Spirit and Soul.

Greater Intensity of the Positive through Its Opposite

We hope for the very best of circumstance to come our way, avoiding the negative. And yet life progresses, evolves through the interplay of the positive and the negative. Without the negative, the intensity of more and greater positive circumstance cannot be generated.

We can see this in terms of life, love, and knowledge; and their opposites of death, hate, and ignorance. Living, loving, and understanding are things to aspire for, but they are normally enhanced through their opposite experience, death, cruelty, and ignorance. Let's say that I am trying to discover the truth of a matter, but then realize that what I have discovered is utterly false. As a result, now I have more interest, intensity, and drive to get at the truth. Thus, my ignorance drove me to greater knowledge. In the same way human cruelty and unlove creates the push for greater, more lasting love, and death itself creates the urge for immortality in life.

This is the present condition of progress in life: a movement to the opposite in order to move the positive forward to a greater degree. This is the way of Nature -- known as "Prakriti" in Sanskrit or the flow of normal life in the universe. But is that the only way to greater intensity of knowledge, love, life, and delight? No it is not. We can progress in another way that is beyond the slow and difficult method of Nature. It is the way of Consciousness -- also known as Spirit or Soul. When we take to it in greater measure, we generate the intensity that takes knowledge, love, life, delight, and creativity to their higher status. We move there without experiencing their opposite.

It is our choice: progress through opposites or through higher consciousness. The universe stands back and accepts either decision.

There's No Success Like Failure

The Baby Boomer's poet laureate Bob Dylan came up with the following elliptical line in one of his earlier songs. "There's no success like failure, and failure's no success at all." Whether understood by the author, there are several profound truths buried in that remark, one of which is that we profit as much from failure as success. It can even be the key to our next level of accomplishment in life.

In a recent edition of the New York Times, they detail the rather remarkable series of events around former employees of the PayPal online payment company. It seems that after the successful firm was sold to EBay, the (now very rich) former colleagues remained in close touch. What is remarkable is that often when the former colleagues would come together, they would hatch new business ventures from seemingly out of nowhere, and, due to their past experience, the undertaking would invariably be well-funded and successful.

The most notable venture of former PayPal employees was the formation of the YouTube video-sharing Internet site, which was sold to Google, and parlayed into nearly half a billion dollars windfall for each of the two founders. YouTube had yet to generate any profits and had only 60 employees when it was sold, making the two exceedingly wealthy. Well, it turns out that this group of former PayPal employees have kept in close touch, and combinations of those individuals have collaborated to develop a stream of new Internet companies. In one instance, several former colleagues got together for a birthday celebration at the Ferry Building in San Francisco, only to develop a business plan for a new undertaking right on the spot! In yet another get together, several former PayPal colleagues hatched another scheme while running along the city's Embarcadero waterfront. Potential billion dollar companies continue to spring forth from the minds of these Idea-hatchers, who shared a common bond during their time at PayPal.

Where then is the failure that generated success in these scenarios? We know that many entrepreneurs in Silicon Valley have failed on the first attempt at success, only to bring about stunning achievement the second time around. Well it turns out that the former PayPal employees who parlayed huge sums and went on to collaborate with one another, establishing a plethora of new companies, struggled mightily at their old firm. In fact, in its fledgling years not only did the company lose money, but at one point computer hackers were breaking into their systems and stealing the very money that its users were transacting! Add the fact that competitors were everywhere, it only seemed a matter of time before they would fail. However, they somehow were able to keep it together, work their ways through the many difficult problems, learned a great deal from the experience, and formed a very tight social network when they left the company after it was sold. The shared knowledge they acquired in difficult times, and the close bond of friendship that developed while trying to tackle immense problems, were the foundation stones that enabled them to successfully launch successful second-round Internet ventures. The emergence of YouTube was the most notable example of using the knowledge that comes through failure or near-failure to create ultimate success in a new venture.

"There is no success like failure," says the poet. In Silicon Valley, this has become a mantra of sorts -- a human value that people subscribe to. "If we fail, so what; we are young, we now have more experience, we have insight into the next big thing, we can see through any difficulty. Besides venture capital is plentiful, and so this time we will do it right." With such attitudes, how can they not succeed in this very fertile technological environment?

For the rest of us, failure is indeed a bitter pill to accept; after all, who likes to experience bad luck, and who believes that he will easily get a second and third chance to succeed. It takes a lot of energy and enormously positive attitudes to prevail when we have been struck down by life's exigencies. This is especially true for those of us who are outside the prolific environment of a Silicon Valley.

On the other hand, the *enlightened* individual is more like these Silicon Valley purveyors, but more so. For the spiritual seeker knows that the darkness serves the light; that failure is a greater spur to success than ordinary success. That the negative is just a *more intense* form of the positive. He perceives these truths to such a degree that through an inner poise of calm and quietude, he is unmoved by difficulty, failure, and darkness. In this way, he takes on the spiritual poise of "detachment" and "equality," which essentially translates as being fully engaged in life, but not attached to circumstances and rewards.

At a further stage of inward spiritual progress, the aspirant sees that the negative is, in fact, a great *spur* to an *even-greater* emerging positive -- enabling him to embrace, perhaps even "enjoy" the negative as much as the positive; knowing that it will build a

foundation for uncharted higher level of success. Ironically, in this and other ways, the *inward*-centric spiritual individual becomes the ultimate Master of the *outer* material life.

The Divine Sanctions Progress through Darkness or Light

Perhaps the main philosophical conundrum facing man is the question of why the Divine allows evil in the world. If He is the ultimate Good, how can He sanction such darkness? It is Man's anguished cry in the dark.

At the end of WWII, the world was left in shambles. The war seemed so futile, without much purpose. Yet there *was* a purpose, other than defeating an evil enemy. From the highest perspective, the reason for WWII was to enable the further evolution of life on earth. It was the quickest means by which we could take a further step towards human unity. The United Nations, the EU, the Euro, the global economy, the WTO, the World Wide Web (WWW), and the untold other economic, political, and social agreements amongst nations and continents are all the bi-product of WWII. Without the horror of the war and the need to compensate for all that was wrong or missing in the world, it might have taken centuries, if ever to have brought about these harmonic institutions and developments.

From a metaphysical standpoint, we can say that the Divine sanctions those methods that bring the greatest progress in the shortest period of time. Whether that progress comes through Ignorance, Falsehood, or Evil, the Divine endorses that method. It is same in our own individual lives. What brings the greatest change for us, the Higher Power supports -- whether it comes about through suffering, illness, or tragedy. The Divine knows that in their wake will come the greatest progress, and hence the quickest and most formidable movement towards the Good.

Does this mean that all progress has to be through suffering? Not at all. The Divine also sanctions evolution through higher consciousness. Europe and the world did not have the higher consciousness to evolve collectively before WWII. So she did so through conflict and suffering. As individuals, we progress through torment because we do not have the consciousness to evolve through more positive, harmonic means. Yet if we developed our higher nature, we can progress without the dark, conflicting element. If we continually improve our character, overcome our limitations, find a deeper center, and open to the spirit we will foster constant progress without the need for the negative side.

This then is the challenge before us: to progress and evolve through higher consciousness, or through the suffering and conflict. For the Divine, both are acceptable means of moving forward. The choice is ours.

The Utility of Evil as Expressed in Mythology and Reality

In the mythologies of the world, we generally see the play of good and evil. E.g. in the Indian spiritual epic The Mahabharata, we see the conflict between two sides, some of whom are close relatives of one another. One of the sides, the one considered "good," is advised through the Wisdom of the current avatar [one who brings evolutionary change to the world] Krishna. In the West, there are also ancient, as well as modern mythologies, two of which involve the adventures of science fiction space travel. They are 'Star Trek,' generally produced for a more mature audience, and 'Star Wars,' written for youth. Here too good and evil are at play. Then, of course, there is the reality of life itself that the mythologies represent. In WWII, we saw that reality, including the conflict between good and evil.

Here, however, I would like to change the course of thinking about good and evil with several bold statements, one of which is that perhaps the greatest power to bring about Good in the world is through evil. I.e. evil is an even greater power for bringing about the true Good than the actions of the ordinary good, i.e. the good side that we perceive and appreciate in life. Why is this the case? It is because the result of evil's negative action *speeds up* and *intensifies* further progress of the world, enabling the truer Good to further emerge in all its integrality and fullness.

Consider the mythology of Star Trek. The Federation of planets is essentially the good, and the Romulan Empire, (or the Borg) are the bad. Yet, if we watch closely, we will see that the good is often fractured; i.e. its members are not yet fully in harmony with one another. That side only moves to greater coordination, cooperation, and integration of intent and action after the mischief of the dark side has run its course. It is only then that the good side -- the Federation -- moves towards greater solidification and unity.

This modern mythology is of course a reflection of the real truths of life. As the Nazis rose in power during the years leading up to WWII, there was no united force to confront them -- so the fascists flourished. In fact, it was the selfishness amongst the good nations leading up to the war -- expressed by the stock crash, the Great Depression, and the fall of the Weimer Republic in Germany; all, by the way, facilitated by financial greed -- that set the stage for the rise of the German nation that turned to evil. With the lack of harmony of the "good" side, the dark side flourished. Finally, the good side came together and overcame the enemy, creating a modicum of further harmony and integration amongst themselves and the defeated nations. The United Nations then became the one great attempt to establish a formal institution to unify the world, especially in light of the darkness that preceded it. Likewise, the European Union (EU) is an attempt to insure the common purposefulness of the individual nations of that continent to avoid repeating such catastrophes as war, financial ruin, and cultural disharmony. It may have taken *hundreds*, even *thousands* of years for such progress to have occurred amongst the nations on its own if evil had not spurred it on. In the end, we see that evil speeds up the process of integration and unity. Thus, we need to perceive the value of evil in the evolutionary process -- even as we seek to overcome it.

Modern mythology, as well as ancient ones like the Iliad and Odyssey, and especially those with vast spiritual insight like the Mahabharata, serve to show the subtle processes of change and progress for the nations and people of the earth.

Similar changes are of course occurring right now in the world around us. All we need to do is look around to see that same dynamic at work now; that the various dark sides pressure life into further harmony and integration, and unity. A broad open mind, influenced by spiritual knowledge and insight will be a great aid in pursuing these insights. Then of course, we will be able to develop the right strategies that integrate these many-sided truths. Naturally, these same movements of good, evil, and the true Good are unfolding in our own individual lives. To see them we need to look within.

Embracing the All

Accepting All and Every Thing

Normally we are happy to pursue those things that please us, avoiding as much as possible those activities that we believe will bring less pleasure, or even pain. And yet the truth is that if at every moment we fully embrace what life puts before us -- pleasurable or otherwise -- life will instantly respond in our favor.

Over the years, I have experienced this phenomenon countless times, both at the macro and micro level. Here is a modest incident that demonstrates this principle in action.

After a successful day of instruction at a local college on the other side of the bay, I unfortunately left my computer power cord behind. Without it, my battery could supply only a few more hours of power, which meant I would soon be without a computer -- a potential disaster in my case. It also turns out that driving over and retrieving the cord would be very time-consuming, made doubly so by the fact that a renowned bridge linking the two areas was now out of service! I therefore contacted a staffer at the college and asked her to hunt down and mail the power cord to me ASAP. She agreed and indicated that it would likely arrive the next day. Since she was a busy person, and because of several other concerns I had, there were doubts in my mind that it would arrive so quickly. Still I hoped for the best.

The next day, as expected, my computer ceased functioning when the battery drained. As a result, I decided to head over to the local library to use one of their computers. This was a facility I have used on occasion for over two decades. However, when I called the offices beforehand, I learned that the library had permanently closed down! I then realized this was because the town was were about to open a huge, modern facility a few blocks away. Therefore, I decided to go head out to a nearby town to use their state-of-the-art library. Just before leaving, I asked my roommate to look out for the overnight package that contained my power cord.

I then walked out of my home and towards my car, but then suddenly shifted direction, realizing that the mail sometimes arrives early on the weekend, and I should retrieve that first. When I walked over to the box, I did not know if the mail had arrived; but when I opened the latch, there was the day's mail. I then brought it back to my home, notifying my friend that I was still on my way out to the library in the next town. But just as I was about to head out again, I saw a FedEx truck parked right in front of my home! I thought, "That must be the power cord delivery!" I then looked to my left and there was the delivery person looking for our entranceway. He then found the door and handed me the overnight package. I could now resume all of my critical computer functions. A not so small disaster was averted.

I immediately understood that I had evoked this response from life because I had taken care of every detail required in that situation. Rather than skirt one issue or another, I paid close attention to the flow of things, and fulfilled every demand of life, whether pleasurable or not; whether perceived as positive or negative.

When we embrace life and all of its demands, it tends to flow in our favor. When we fight it, or accept one part but not another, we separate ourselves from its underlying natural flow, making things difficult, if not downright impossible.

Embracing life is to accept that each and everything is necessary for the right outcome of events. It is to perceive the Marvel of existence; that each and every thing plays a role in the unfolding and progress of life. Embracing life also enables us to align with the very best of conditions, as luck swiftly moves in our direction. Or, in this case, literally to our doorstep!

How the Spiritual Aspirant Can Embrace Social Existence

[A reader asks: "The typical spiritual follower who is part of a family and who has work responsibilities and who interacts with people in the society all the time is vulnerable to all physical, vital and mental influences that curtail and restrict the freedom of his soul. Where is he to get the strength to maintain his cocoon guaranteeing his freedom and bliss if he cannot isolate himself and has to mix with society all the time?"]

It is true that we can separate ourselves from life, but the wider view is that the Reality includes All, positive and negative, and we have an opportunity to learn from all that life has put before us. To have the vision of the Reality is to see the utility of the positive

and negative in the process of moving life forward. It is there in spades in the social arena – whether in work, family, or other endeavors.

By embracing that multiplicity of experience of the Social milieu, we can broaden our being in every dimension.

By embracing the All, we attract more harmony, truth, peace, goodness, creativity, power, love, and delight for ourselves and the collectives we function in.

That acceptance, embracing, and openness towards the ALL makes also us more receptive to the Force, attracting miraculous like results for ourselves and collectives we partake in.

In this way, ALL of Life can be viewed as a field of Opportunity and Adventure.

At every point there is a negative in the social context, we can view it as a means of the positive. We can devise strategies to move that process forward, or be patient enough for it to occur on its own.

To the degree, we embrace the Totality, the more the social conditions will improve themselves.

In this way, Higher Life is heightened through apparent Lower Life that is in one sense really not so, but part of the ALL that is the Reality.

Also, in this wider field of social life there is a greater scope for Self-givingness, and therefore Energizing and Blissful existence.

Of course we should not be naïve. We must be vigilant towards those individuals and social conditions that are determined to divert or harm. Even there we can apply the right inner strategies to turn things to the positive.

We are not Avatar-like beings like Karmayogi, who need to withdraw from life to practice deep spiritual discipline. We are barely one or two steps beyond the normal human individual.

For we devotees, the world is our field, which we have the opportunity to raise up and ennoble, turning ordinary life into Divine Life.

The Pantheon of the Indian Gods and Beyond

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Perceiving Life's Subtle Signs

Vast Accomplishment by Following the Flow of Life

Watch life closely, there is a marvelous flow to its movements -- in particular, to the unfolding of events. To be in touch with that unfolding is to experience the Marvel. When we are in our higher consciousness, we recognize this flow in all its wonder. When we are in a lower state, we miss this miracle.

If a computer operating system requires an online upgrade, we initially balk and anguish at the fact, as it blocks us from following the normal routine we are attached to. But when we are in a higher, more mindful and sensitive state, we recognize its need, release our distress, and take up the necessary activities and actions that life is now pointing to. Then when we return to the fresh, new things that had to unfold, we see how necessary it was in the larger scheme of things.

In addition, each substitute task we are asked to undertake -- such as cleaning the kitchen while the OS installs on the computer -- will produce important results. It may even attract an instance of sudden good fortune. E.g., while cleaning, a friend you haven't heard from in years suddenly contacts you with excellent news.

Lao Tzu wrote the Tao de Ching. It concerns itself with the true Flow of life, the unfolding of events that we can recognize and partake it at any moment in time. When we are in touch with that flow, it unfolds like a miracle, as we know precisely in which direction to turn, and as a result are constantly securing life's cooperation. When we are inwardly anchored from a silent poise, we are more conscious of the subtle needs of our surroundings. That enables us to know which direction to turn, which allows us to make right decisions that lead to perfect outcomes. From that poise of silent mindfulness, we engender vast success, which tends to take shape through incidents of sudden good fortune. This continuous luck flows in our direction, and in return we ourselves contribute to and augment the Flow of Life.

Reading Life's Subtle (and Not So Subtle) Signs

As we carry on our lives, do we ever stop to consider what it is we truly believe in; i.e. where we place our faith in our pursuit of personal happiness and fulfillment? Let's consider a gradation of possibility.

At each moment, life is presenting itself in all of its aspects. Moreover, we have opportunity to perceive any and all of its subtle and not so subtle shadings. How can we do that?

Sri Aurobindo tells us in *The Life Divine* that if we develop an inner orientation, stationed in the subliminal or even psychic (soul) being, we develop a more harmonic relationship with life around us, and as a result are able to detect its varied conditions and subtle signs. In addition, through our detection of the truth of those circumstance, we are able to make the right decisions that attract the most fortuitous outcomes.

An example of this dynamic occurred the other day, though it occurred from the negative side. Let me explain.

It was around 2:15 PM and I thought I had some extra time to visit a department store before going to my 3:00 PM eye doctor appointment. When I then entered the clothing outlet, I headed over to the men's department to see if they had any shirts I might purchase. After I picked one out, I headed over to the checkout line to make my payment. However, the line was backed up, with a number of people ahead of me. One inclination on my part was to view this as a bad sign because (1) I could be late to my doctor meeting, and (2) that it was a subtle sign of some other problem to come. E.g. perhaps I was making a mistake in purchasing the shirt because it might not fit, or get severely wrinkled on first washing. Another part of me was inclined to just remain quiet and see what happens. It turns out, I took the latter approach.

Though I had the opportunity to consecrate the matter, i.e. offer it to the spiritual Force for maximum positive results, I did not have the wherewithal to engage in that act. Instead, I simply walked to at the back of the line, and waited my turn.

Well it quickly became obvious that the line was moving very slowly despite the availability of ten checkout counters. When I finally moved toward the beginning of the line, a series of ludicrous events began to take place.

You see, there were now two parties ahead of me. When the party at the front of the line was summoned to go to the next cashier, she missed the signal, as she was speaking enthusiastically on her cell phone. The party behind her therefore went ahead to the cashier. When the lady on the cell phone got wind of this, she began to fume. In addition, the couple that had gone before her were having great difficulty getting checked out because they did not speak English very well. Moreover, over to the right, a cashier who could have served the woman with the cell phone had suddenly bolted off somewhere. Now the lady with the cell phone was really fuming.

Though she was finally served, the couple with the language problem who had earlier gone around her, were continuing to run into problems. As I carefully observed them (perhaps not the best things to do), they still labored to be checked out. When they finally completed their transactions, I went to that checkout stand. However, when I arrived there, the cashier could not enter her password into the system, as she was a trainee at the store! Her manager was trying to help her type in the right code. When she finally logged in, she had trouble scanning the shirt I picked out. From there, it got even worse.

At one point I somewhat bluntly spoke up to the trainee and overseeing manager, and told them that I would like to leave the store without making the purchase, which is in

fact what I did. I then proceeded to my eye appointment and deeply consecrated that event for several reasons I won't enjoy here. The appointment turned out very well. (ep)

This was obviously an extreme example of the signs of life. In this case, very negative; or at least negative from my own perspective given the conditions I perceived around me. This was a very easy one to call. Interestingly however, when one is centered in the depths, in a Witness Consciousness, silently observing life, one can perceive even the most subtle signs of life, enabling one to make the right decisions, take to the right attitude, etc. In fact, you could say when one has developed the subtle sense of life around us, nothing is all that subtle, as we perceive every sign in a dramatic way. Each clue becomes enhanced in our consciousness, whereas the average person would hardly notice it at all.

Life has a Character, and it is constantly presenting itself to us. What is needed from our side is how to read those visible or invisible, i.e. subtle signs. The first line of insight is to properly translate what our senses are telling us. But that alone is hardly enough, and must go much further, as we need to relate to the unseen inner conditions presenting themselves at the time. For example, in the episode above, one needed to consider the unseen issue of whether I would make my appointment on time. Another is whether I actually needed to purchase another shirt, considering its utility and expense. Another would have been to know the conditions of the store in terms of service, new staffing, general business at that time, etc.

Thus from an inner poise, we can read the signs in terms of a multitude of dimensions. Some are at the level of what our senses perceive, including the visual and auditory. Others are environmental, circumstantial, and at the decision level of the mind. Fortunately, from an inner poise, we have more of the intuitive sense of things, as the wide variety of conditions and influences at play enter our minds as thought waves from out of nowhere. In this way, the subtle signs are not just what the senses perceive as the actualities, but include all of the influences at all planes of being at play in the episode. And from this multi-sided intuitive view, we can make decisions that are the correct ones for those circumstance, which in turn evoke their own positive results.

In addition to developing the intuitive sense through an inner orientation rather than mere surface orientation and observation, it is also very helpful to understand certain fundamental principles of life that will help us behave in ways that will enable life to work on our behalf. It is here that Sri Karmayogi and other have provided a wealth of insight. E.g. we know that impatient will evoke negative response, so why not be calm in those situations (which tends to evoke sudden positive response). Similarly, stilling the mind will have a similar effect, as will opening to the Spirit, which tends to instantly set right life's circumstance; in terms of time, space, general atmosphere, goodwill, etc.

From another perspective we see that it is important to maintain our connection with the "Field." Through inner poise, one tends to be more fully Present in the current moment, maintaining an acute and keen sense of awareness of the unfoldings around us. That ability to be One with the field is ultimately determined by our capacity to be fully absorbed in the present moment; i.e. the Eternal Now.

Then how does one maintain that inner poise that does not lose touch with the Field; that is open to the knowledge of the actualities and possibilities that comes through an intuitive sense?

Karmayogi says that constant consecration forges the inner link for us. Over time, we simply move into that Subliminal poise on its own. Through constant consecration over several years, we simply fall into that inner calm that serenely looks out onto the world, and perceives the Truths unfolding, spontaneously and without thought. Intuitions of the actualities at all planes simply enters the mind, and one has the knowledge of which way

to behave and act. As a result, life fully cooperates with every inner movement we make.

The Ticket

Being open to and following a subtle sign and its indication will get you directly to the solution to that problem or opportunity. This is not the way life is currently practiced. We instead go through an ordeal -- involving elongated space, time, and sequence -- to arrive at the end goal. The first is the supramental, truth consciousness approach; the latter the human way which we can learn to discard.

Example: a man got a ticket for what he thought was parking on a street allowed only for the local community. He was going to pay the ticket, which required a check to be sent in for a substantial amount. He had actually gotten the ticket after taking a pleasant walk in a park, and also stopping at McDonald's for some coffee. He was surprised and disappointed when he walked up to the car and saw the ticket.

Now 10 days later and about to mail in the payment, he noticed on the citation that the officer who wrote the ticket was named Officer MacDonald! He then went to his friend to show him the "coincidence," seeing it as both humorous and significant. The friend was amused as well.

However, when she further examined the citation, she discovered that it was NOT a parking ticket at all, but one having to do with the registration of the car. Moreover, if proof of registration was provided, the citation amount would be dramatically reduced. As a result, the man now followed this path, by providing registration documentation; and the much smaller amount was forwarded to the required party.

In other words, as a result of perceiving the subtle sign of the officer's name being MacDonald, an entirely different course was taken, saving money, time, and effort. By acceding to the subtle sign life was providing, much trouble was avoided.

Life is changing. It is my belief that humanity will increasingly develop the consciousness to perceive such subtle indicators, giving us a vast power over space, time, sequence, and effort.

On the other hand, if we consecrate such activities in the first place, then these sorts of problems will tend not to arise at all, as life conditions will automatically be set right.

Signs Along the Way

Today I brought in my car for a bi-annual oil change. When I arrived, the person in front of me had lost his wallet and was frantically searching for it. The fact that he was before me, I found significant, but how?

I then had some lunch at McDonald's. I then returned, but before I retrieved my car, I went into a Long's Drugs to purchase some fruit and nuts for my salads. I saw two different products next to one another. Both were marked 2 for \$4. When I went to pay for it, the checkout person said that the one I selected was not on sale. I know it was because it was marked so. In fact, both the products were marked so. The cashier then spoke to a stocking employee who ran it through her handheld computer and it indicated it was not on sale. It was clear then the big label next to the product I purchased indicating 2 for \$4 should not have been there. I informed the cashier on the way out that the item was marked wrong, after she gave me my money back. (I did not buy the item.)

When I went to pick up my car, I was surprised that they charged \$79 instead of \$29 for the oil change. I asked why. He said it was due to the fact that I agreed to synthetic oil. I assumed synthetic was the lower grade and thus \$29, but I was misinformed! I forgot that the last time I was there I purchased the higher grade, i.e. synthetic oil for the oil change. So he was right. He saw my past transaction and assumed I would understand. I just didn't remember, however. I then told them they should explain clearly the difference each time we purchase it, for after all we only come twice a year. (I was making a practical suggestion, yet somehow an anguished one.)

At each point, I saw the connection to the other events. To the man who was there with the wallet before me when I checked in to get the oil change one hour earlier; to the problem with the purchase of fruit and nuts for my salad five minutes earlier. And also the fact that the day before I went through precisely the same situation at another location when I went to purchase a candy bar. I.e. marked as cheaper, but not in the computer as such!

As I walked out of the Quality Tune-up, I felt emotion, yet I tried to keep calm. I was relaxed soon after. In the past, I would have been three times as mad as I was after making the \$79 payment for the oil change. Now I have the mental knowledge of the flow of life to get too riled up. Besides, I took responsibility for everything under the assumption that the outer is a reflection to the outer.

I started to write up this entire affair. Within one minute, I got a call for a potentially very lucrative business arrangement involving project management. My reasonably rational approach to the situation attracted. I held back blaming, and the response came. The energy could have been dissipated, but it still remained. A phone call of an old business associate suddenly came out of the blue with a great opportunity.

PS Consecration (i.e. offering the matter to the Spirit beforehand) and inner status of living in the depths and therefore calm could have eliminated all of the problems to begin with, indicating the scope of my further growth.

Update to the story: Just a few hours after this story occurred, I looked in one of my kitchen closets and found a bag of nuts/fruits that my roommate had just purchased! It was the only new thing in the closet!

Fully Engaging the Acts of Life

There are hundreds, even thousands of acts we engage in the course of the day. Though each requires a certain amount of time and effort to perform, from a millisecond to hours, we tend to move out of balance with it and its needs. Often that has to do with our inability to give the act the proper level of attention; the compulsions and influences of our lower vital/emotional being; and the tendency to move out of alignment with the Present by being overly influenced by the push and pull of the past and future.

And yet if we develop a subtle sense and observe closely, we will see exactly how long each act should take, how much of our attention is required, the patience or determination necessary, and the meticulousness needed to produce a perfectly positive outcome.

E.g. as you engage the act of washing the dishes, you sense if you are giving it your proper attention; whether you are rushing it in the name of some future action you wish to get to; etc.

Now your mind stands back for an instant and senses how long that act should take; what level of your attention is required; what degree of patience is demanded, etc. As a result, you reengage the act and move forward with the right rhythm, creating a result

that is nearly perfect. Moreover, the actions that follow it tend to flow harmoniously from that point forward.

Through the smallest act, you have discovered the rhythms of the universe, which you have now moved into perfect alignment with.

The Infinite from the Finite

How the Small Opens the Portals of the Infinite

In any given moment, there are large and small acts related to a significant event. E.g. at the time of a medical emergency, there is not only the suffering party and the rescue operation, but the unobserved arrival of a supervisor, a nurse ordering a batch of medicine, and an elderly patient joking in his wheel chair. Thus, there are closely related as well as seemingly unrelated, disparate activities occurring simultaneously. And yet in such circumstance, every and all events are in fact deeply interconnected, no matter how unimportant and distantly related they seem to be. And any one of them -- even the smallest, the most innocuous, and contrary -- can determine the final outcome. To be sensitive to this process is to have a vision of the life's true workings, which gives one a staggering power to control the world around us. Here is an example that illustrates this point.

The TV series *Numb3rs* (pronounced "Numbers") is a crime show whose outcomes are determined by the strategies of a genius mathematician, Charlie Eppes. In one particular episode, we see how the small and absurd determine the final outcome. In Los Angeles, a bus is hijacked and a nefarious gang holds passengers for ransom. Charlie's brother, FBI captain Don Eppes works with his staff to solve the looming catastrophe. Don's energies are completely focused on saving lives, as he interacts by phone with the evil ringleader who is aboard the bus. Meanwhile, Don's math genius brother Charlie is as usual helping on the case through his brilliant analysis intuitively derived.

There is an added subplot to the story; this one involving the father of Charlie and Don - Alan Eppes -- as well as Charlie's good friend, theoretical physicist Larry Fleinhardt. It turns out that earlier the entire group had agreed to form a think tank, and at this point, father Alan and physicist Larry are debating -- actually *arguing* -- over its future direction. One aspires to start the project with the practical, the other the theoretical. In fact, they carry out this mental debate in front of the very preoccupied Charlie and Don, completely oblivious to the dangerous situation. At one point, they even implore Charlie to solve the dilemma for them. As we watch their comic-like callousness, we can only shake our heads. This dynamic repeats throughout the episode, adding to the tension of the already dangerous situation.

Then circumstance turn grave when the abductors threaten to kill each hostage one by one. And yet Alan and Larry persist in their seemingly ridiculous request that Charlie solve their problem. How can they be so oblivious! This time however, rather than tell them that they have to settle their squabbles on their own, Charlie is struck by something in their debate. He is shaken by the fact that Alan and Larry seemed to be locked in a 'paradox,' and that the hostage situation he and Don are involved in has a similar dynamic. As a result, Charlie now understands that everything he and Don assumed about the case is faulty. When the two brothers act on this hunch, they discover that the bus abduction was actually a hoax: that they were in fact chasing the wrong bus, and that the real hostages and villains were aboard a *stationary* bus in a warehouse! As a result, they are now able to move in on the villains and save the hostages.

As we see, in this case, the small and the innocuous solved the case. That which seemed unimportant and irritating was the means by which the greater problem was resolved. Because Charlie opened his mind and paid attention to the small -- no matter how silly and absurd -- he garnered the clue that enabled him to solve the case.

In every situation in life, every element that presents itself serves a purpose. Thus, the smallest thing -- even that which seems *negative and opposed* to our intent -- can be a means for its final resolution. In that way, we cannot deny or be irritated by anything -- for the smallest of the small can provide an opening to the infinite.

If this is the case, how can we become more mindful of the variety of elements, movements, and activities in a given circumstance? It all comes down to our level of consciousness. It takes an open mind and acute sensitivity to perceive the utility of each act in relation to the whole of any event. That in turn depends on a still and silent mind, as well as a calm and steady disposition. Think Sherlock Holmes. And through that keen, mindful, multi-sided perception, one becomes aware of the role of the smallest act in the outcome of a situation, problem, or event. To perceive this many-sided whole, rather than the obvious one or two parts is a spiritual quality known as "integral knowledge."

Indian spiritual philosophy tells us the infinite can arise out of anything -- whether the large or the infinitesimally small. To the infinite Consciousness and Being, there is no distinction between the two. Thus, the innocuous and silly, the trivial and trite, and the negative and hostile also serve as instruments for progress and change. If we can learn to perceive this dynamic in our daily lives, then we will have a glimpse of the Marvel of existence.

Predecessor and Beginning Indicators

Preventing Life from Repeating Negatively

Life has a character just like you and I. It expresses through subtle laws. One principle is that life tends to repeat; and will go on doing so until there is a higher understanding. A corollary is that every event that occurs is indicated beforehand through another event. And there are absolutely no exceptions to this rule.

Though life can repeat negatively (and we see the predecessor of such an event), we fortunately have the inner power to prevent its repetition -- avoiding painful, difficult iterations now and in the future. We do that by perceiving the trends in our own lives, and deciding in our hearts and minds that it will not occur again, which will have the effect of negating the negatives. Another approach is to understand the negative repetition and predecessor and offer it to the Divine. Then it too will not only cease to repeat in the short run, but the wanting behavior can be permanently removed from our being, while evoking startling positive outcomes in the process.

Let's examine a practical occurrence of these two interrelated principles -- repetition and predecessor events -- through a negative situation in a work of fiction. Then we'll examine how an understanding and access to Spirit not only cancelled a repeating, predecessor-inducing negative, but elicited staggering positive outcomes, including a fundamental change in a friend's nature.

In the recent (2010) British Masterpiece Classic series *Downton Abbey*, we observe a kitchen staff working in the basement of a great estate, preparing meals for the owners and dignitaries who gather there in the British countryside. In this particular incident, the main cook has been asked by the Lady of the manor if she can prepare a different desert for an upcoming important dinner. Shockingly, the cook cries out in anguish that she won't do that, offering the excuse that she doesn't have the time. Everyone in the

kitchen is taken aback by her outrageous behavior. This incident is in essence the foundation for potential future negative circumstance.

Now the day of the great dinner arrives. As they the staff about to serve the main course, the cook stumbles, trays go flying, and the cooked chickens for the dinner are rolling around on the unclean floor! The kitchen staff, including the cook, stands aghast at what has taken place. This is in essence a repetition of the first episode where the cook angrily reacted when asked to prepare a different desert. Life waited until this critical moment of serving to the guests for the iteration and repetition to occur.

Time passes that evening and the moment has come for the desert to be served. After it is set down before each person gathered around the great dining table, the main invited guest and dignitary lifts his spoon to have a taste, but then spits it out as it is utterly foul. The host of the abbey then warns all gathered there to refrain from eating the desert. It turns out that the cook had accidentally put salt on the strawberries instead of sugar! It was an outrageous faux pas that was extremely embarrassing to the hosts, who pride themselves in perfection in all matters, including culinary affairs.

Once again, this is a repetition of an earlier act along the very same line. The salt on the desert was a repeat of the previous spilling of the chickens on the floor, which was itself a repetition of the cook's anguish when asked to prepare a different desert. Now that the ACTUAL original, non-changed desert has been served, it turns into a fiasco!

That is precisely how life works. It tends to repeats the same vibration, circumstance, unfolding over and over. It can happen positively, neutrally, or negatively. Negatively it only ceases when there is a change in understanding on the part of the individual or party of what is amiss -- such as an awareness of one's wanting quality that precipitated the repeating outcomes.

As mentioned earlier, we can also perceive this particular triple negative outcome in terms of another life principle: that everything that occurs in life is indicated beforehand. In this case, we need to see events in reverse order. In the story, the outrage of the salty desert was indicated by the previous accident of the felled chickens, which was itself indicated by the earlier agitation of the cook who was unwilling to create the substitute desert in the first place. In this way, every event we experience in life has been indicated beforehand. And, there are absolutely no exceptions to this rule!

The question then arises: what can we do to influence such outcomes, especially if they occur negatively?

In the case of the life repeats principle, we can exercise our powers of observation and perceive when it occurs in our own lives. From there we can move toward understanding its cause, which will have the life power to prevent its repetition. For example, a friend of mine, -- after many hints from others -- finally realized that he was always late to dinner meetings and related functions. (In fact, I witnessed this tendency repeatedly over the course of three decades.) As a result of my friend's new understanding, not only was he not late at our luncheon meeting, but he arrived several minutes early; in fact before I did! Apparently, at some level, he was able to overcome that wanting quality through his own self-knowledge, decision, and action. Thus, the repetition had finally come to an end.

Another way to combat repetition of the negative is to use a spiritual technique; which is to offer the entire matter to the spiritual Force, and then wait for It to act. That's precisely the method I practiced at that same luncheon meeting with the friend who was always late. Before I walked into the restaurant, I thought about how he had been tardy every time we met in the past. I then sat quietly, concentrated myself within, and offered that entire past history (as well as upcoming lunch meeting) to the Divine. As I mentioned earlier, when I walked into that meeting, I was stunned to discover that he was already there, thereby breaking the cycle after thirty years.

But there was much more, as a startling set of events unfolded. First of all, he was sitting on the opposite side from where we normally dined; a first after our many get together there. In addition, he was sitting at the other side of the table, looking outward to the front, another first. Now I perceived a set of physical reversals due to my consecrated effort.

However, then friend then proceeded to hypnotize me with an amazing story of a two week ordeal he had just gone through where he was caught in a blizzard on New York City. There he managed to get around in places he was unfamiliar with, with all public services shut down, while traversing three hospitals where members of his family were suddenly laid up. But even more startling was the fact that it all occurred in my old neighborhood where I was raised, on the other side of the country, which I had not visited in over 30 years!

But what was most startling of all was the fact that because of this great ordeal, he had made the inner commitment to embark on a new writing career, of which this two-week episode was an illustration of a wider social issue he would address. I was startled to hear about this sudden change in his life's direction.

In other words, by understanding from my side the history of the repeating problem, aspiring that it cease in the upcoming lunch meeting, and offering the entire matter to the Divine Mother, a thirty year pattern had come to an end, while evoking a startling set of circumstance that were nothing less than a miracle. Thus, from both our sides, we had overcome life's repeating pattern in its negative form. He through his self-knowledge; myself through concentration and the power of the Spirit.

It also demonstrated once more the power we have to redirect the course of our lives from within. From a relatively small matter and issue, we together evoked a stunning powerful set of circumstance, indicating that the infinite can emerge from the smallest finite.

The overall approach then to avoiding repetition can be stated this way: Each time we experience a negative outcome in our lives, we can try to understand its inner cause, aspire for its cessation, and act in the right way. That way we will avoid its repetition in the future. If we also offer that wanting capacity in ourselves or others to the Divine Force, not only will the difficulty cease to repeat (and the predecessor cycle overcome), but astonishing positive results will follow.

Insuring Splendid Outcomes by Tracing Its Beginnings

Spiritual sage Sri Karmayogi tells us that the ultimate outcomes of a project, work, circumstance, etc. can be seen at the very beginning. At the outset of a related chain of conditions there are acts that are indicators of the final outcome of that life flow, whether a project in a business, a home purchase, even a marriage.

Mother's Service Society researchers have traced many instances of this startling phenomenon. E.g. in *Pride and Prejudice* Mrs. Bennet announced at the very beginning the arrival of two young, handsome, very rich, eligible bachelors, which is in fact what happens at the very end, when they marry two of her own daughters, sending her middle class family to the heights of wealth and social status.

What good are such perceptions? It can help you anticipate, if not predict the future (the final outcome). A crime investigator, or a doctor, or a businessperson with that subtle sense can make decisions and take actions that abridge space and time through that knowledge; by either moving in the opposite direction of a negative event up front in that chain, or reinforcing any positives that arose at the outset. Developing a Subtle Sense to see that will facilitate the process; i.e. paying attention to the flow of life; as

will an ability to make the correspondence between the outer conditions and one's own attitudes, motives, beliefs, decisions and actions.

Thus through this startling phenomenon of Life, you can become Its complete Master.

Here are some examples of the phenomenon from the negative side:

-When Nixon and Kennedy vied for the presidency in 1960, it was extremely close and contentious, with Kennedy winning by a hair. Kennedy was later assassinated, ending his administration. What happened at the start was an indicator of the final outcome.

-Bush Jr. won the presidency by an extremely small amount after an overwhelmingly contentious dispute in Florida settled by the Supreme Court. It appeared that his side did all to block the truth from emerging. His administration ended in near disaster for the country and the world.

-In the Russian Revolution, a group of serious-minded thinkers ended up resorting to slaughter of the aristocracy it wished to replace, which culminated in years of rule by the devil-like Stalin who had 30 million shot to death. Events at the outset indicated an outcome that was to come.

-Arnold Schwarzenegger's self-serving ascent to the governorship of California by cleverly taking advantage of a negative situation was a precedent of how he would later leave the state in financial tatters.

-One man I know was desperately trying to meet some people in a suburb of Los Angeles for a crucial meeting. He ended up getting utterly lost in a maze of suburban streets. Though he would later find the place and create a business relationship that would last several years, that undertaking ended in bankruptcy. (Had he opened to the spiritual Force to cancel the negative there and then, he might have overcome the disastrous eventuality.)

-An individual was desperately trying to get some sun tan lotion before taking a cruise on a tiny riverboat in Sacramento, California. His effort was intense and confused, though he and his friend managed to get on board just a moment before the little boat embarked. Twenty minutes into the trip a super, modern speedboat zoomed by, nearly cutting the boat in half. What happens at the outset indicated the thing to come. (Had he caught his emotions and remained steady, he never would have attracted the near disaster.)

Sri Karmayogi indicates that if you want perfect success at the end, trace its path to its earliest beginnings. All those events will be of the same character; with the same motive, attitude, opinion, etc. of the individual precipitating them. Once identified, withdraw the negatives that created the wanting outcomes at the start and presently, and reinforce the positive ones. Life will respond overwhelmingly in your favor.

You can also make that change at the very beginning, by catching the smallest or largest negative that appears. You can readily identify these by seeing the correspondence between the inner you and the outer conditions. Taking this approach at the outset will change the course of life relative to those circumstances. It's a way of insuring perfection in the outcome; avoiding considerable effort and the meanderings of life. In other words, it creates the greatest efficiency of space and time.

Finally it is also worth noting *positive* outcomes that occur at the start -- such as workers being always on time, the firm passing quota the first week, much smoother running of machines, passing deadlines earlier than anticipated, and so forth. Whatever their nature, they too are indicators of our own individual consciousness and/or that of the collective. Identifying and reinforcing them at the beginning as well as along the way will ensure the final outcome is great, far exceeding our initial aspirations and projections.

Consecrating to the Spiritual Force at all critical junctures and in all details in any of these scenarios will insure the workings of Luck, guaranteeing extraordinary outcomes, enabling the Infinite to replace the finite.

A further illustration from Ramesh Kumar:

Recently I got an offer from Indian Railways to strengthen certain old bridges. I was so excited to get such an offer, as such specialized job normally will only be given to already registered established contractors. Initially, they offered three bridges as trial.

I went to site inspection and thoroughly inspected the first two bridges. By that time, it was 4:00 pm and the bridge was around 250 kms from Chennai. I planned to reach Chennai the same night, though it was not necessary. As I was thinking about that, one of the two persons from Railways who accompanied me, reflected my mood and said, the third bridge which is about 50 kms away is similar to this. But another person said "no - better you look at it. You are like a Doctor and you should be aware that no two patients are similar". As the former view fitted my mood, I took that and returned to Chennai without visiting the third bridge. After a few days, I got order for the three bridges and started the work.

Everything went smoothly on the first two bridges and I was very happy about the profits I was making out of it. I even proudly tweeted about this achievement, so that all other my links also know about this, because it was very difficult to enter as a Vendor in Railways now-a-days without corrupt practices. After 10 days or so, we started the work for the third bridge, and there came the thud.

The bridge was in worse condition than expected, and it started sucking all the profits I made on the other two bridges. The road had to be blocked for more than the planned days, and as it was in a main high way, the pressures from all departments concerned started affecting my morale to the point that I vowed not to do a public sector job again. I panicked when I crossed the breakeven point (no loss, no gain) and started incurring loss on the project. The way it was going, I expected there to be a heavy loss.

That is the point I ran to the Mother and started "past consecration." As Karmayogi says the key lies in 10 or 15 minutes of conversations, happenings, atmosphere, emotion, etc. I started analyzing that. The first 10 minutes or so was fine, and only when I thought of returning to Chennai - just for comfort of sleeping in my house - in my bedroom that things went awry. There is no other reason. At that point only one person reflected my mood and said not to visit the third bridge. But the other person tried to raise my consciousness by saying that - I am an experienced person, and I should see all before taking on the job. But alas I preferred the comfort zone, knowing very well that life won't give opportunities within it. I tried to avoid physical work of going 50 kms which attracted the problem at the physical, vital and mental level, only to arrive at the knowledge that we should act from the highest wisdom or the highest professional knowledge we have.

Having realized that, I consecrated everything and vowed not to stay in comfort zone thereafter. As a remedy, I took the tool of "taking responsibility". I informed our Operation Manager to do the job with all necessary inputs as promised in our quote and not to try to save money by any sort of compromise; even if it was going to incur a heavy loss.

After a few days, the site was visited by the authorities and one of the senior engineers saw it and asked me whether I incurred any loss on the bridge. I said 'yes'. He said - "Yes I can see from the quantity of the materials used. I can help you within my powers to give you a 10% increase in contract value as unforeseen expenses and raise the bill accordingly".

This led me exactly to the breakeven point with a sigh of relief.

The Phenomenon of 'Life Response'

On the Nature of Luck

Luck is really just another name for "life response," i.e. good fortune suddenly or rapidly descending on an individual from seemingly out of nowhere. Thus, luck, life response, good fortune, attraction are different names for the same phenomenon.

Moreover, Luck is not a haphazard and random phenomenon, but follows identifiable patterns and principles of life. It is also a subject that has been addressed throughout history -- from the ancient scriptures of the *Upanishads* to modern works like *The Secret*.

Then what is the cause of Luck? It is due to a shift in one's consciousness to a higher plane in a moment or circumstance. And that outcome is rooted in the principle of "inner-outer correspondence." It states that life outside ourselves is a reflection of our inner condition. Therefore, if we raise our consciousness in some manner, life quickly responds in kind, as we move in alignment with corresponding positive conditions.

Luck therefore is not what happens serendipitously, coincidentally, randomly, or per chance; but is rather a product of our inner condition in a given moment in time, or over a longer period.

(By the way, this also works in the reverse. When there is a lower or lessening of one's consciousness, we attract ill-fortune -- i.e. we become unlucky.)

Then what about astrology? Can it foresee our Luck, our future fortune? It is true that astrology does have a vast predictive power, especially in its purer forms. And yet we cannot recommend it as a method for future guidance. Rather, we should depend on our own capacity to raise our consciousness and being. We can do so by utilizing subtle methods -- such as practicing non-reaction in the face of intense circumstance, shedding a wanting attitude about others or life, by deeply focusing our intention to accomplish a thing, by being self-giving to others instead of being selfish, and by continually opening to the spiritual Force. Taking up any of these approaches will quickly evoke powerful instances of Luck, no matter what the astrological tables indicate. In essence, our inner psychological and spiritual capacity to raise our consciousness cancels the karma that astrology depends on.

Then what about people who are said to have special power to evoke Luck? Well, it is true that we are each born into this world with different levels of consciousness (knowledge, skill capacity, character, energy, etc.). Some individuals are even said to have an old or ripe soul, while others are known to have a child soul. Natively, the former attract Luck, while the latter have the potential to do so.

Also, those who develop a steady will to develop themselves, inwardly and outwardly, tend to attract good fortune; i.e. evoke Luck into their lives. This is the path or progress open to each and every one of us.

Then there are certain individuals who have a great destiny; who are linked to universal vibrations, and their actions -- psychological and physical -- evoke powerful response from life. Winston Churchill and Bill Gates come to mind.

Finally, there are individuals who have given themselves to a spiritual life, and become instrument of the Divine Grace, evoking super-Luck for themselves and the world. Sri Aurobindo is one example. Through His profound inner, spirit-oriented action he

attracted the end of World War II, and then Indian independence on his birthday. Such individuals come to change the world, are vessels of a Higher Will, bringing Luck to the entire world. They are known as "avatars" in some quarters, as they are instruments of evolution of that time and place.

One other interesting aspect of Luck is that it occasionally happens in waves as one goes through what one considers a "lucky period." What would account for this dynamic? It must be because our consciousness has risen to a critical level and tipping point relative to circumstance, which concentrates and releases a great amount of energy, which attracts a plethora of good fortune from a number of quarters. Tracking, measuring, and understanding such bursts of luck/good fortune would make a fascinating study, and would help us evoke waves of Luck of our own.

Finally, we should note that the formation of the universe is itself the ultimate expression of Luck. The Divine concentrated Its Intent and sought/seeks to extend its own Delight, enabling a universe of infinitely variable forms to express that Delight. It is the ultimate stroke of Luck, as life in cosmos emerged with the infinite potential to embody the Divine aspects of Truth, Oneness, Creativity, Beauty, Delight, and Love.

Likewise, we too can follow that same process in our own lives, and evoke good or great fortune. I.e. we can engage in the Process of Creation and Accomplishment in all its aspects -- from envisioning a thing; to organizing the details; to executing it with determination, high skills, and right attitudes; all the while opening to the spiritual Force. That will in turn evoke ultimate Luck for ourselves, as life cooperates from all quarters, fulfilling our heart's desire, and then some.

Attitude, Aspiration, Decision, Action: Four Determinates that Evoke Great Response from Life

One quality I have noticed about evoking a great or life changing life response is that one or more of four General Determinates are usually at work; often involving all of them working in tandem. They are a shift away from a negative Attitude, an Aspiration/Intention to go in a new direction, the Decision/Commitment to make it so, and the physical Action to execute it, to make it real. As a result, of embracing these aspects, life responds overwhelmingly.

In the one incident when I returned from wandering around the world and came to accept work that was offered me, attracting the biggest response of my life, I realized the fallacy of my Attitude, set a new direction (Aspiration/Intention) as a result, made the firm Decision to take up the opportunity and work, and executed it as Action by returning to California and working in a lumber yard that I was invited to. As a result, shortly after I met the people who would shape the course of my life.

In another experience (which is described in my Life Response book) I was asked by my boss to work weekends in my sales position but I refused. However, then I examined my Attitude and changed it, focused my Aspiration/Intention on coming in that weekend, made a firm Decision and Commitment to do so, and then took the physical Action to actually come into the store that weekend to make it real. When I did, I attracted the biggest sale of my life by far, ushering me into a 30 year computer-related career. Once again it involved the determinates of Attitude, Aspiration/Intention, Decision, and Action.

I have seen this dynamic repeatedly over the years for evoking startling life response. We can even see it in literature. In Jane Austin's 'Pride and Prejudice' it is precisely what Darcy does, following the path of those four determinates, and as a result attracts the woman of his dreams, Elizabeth Bennet. It begins with the realization that he can't

have her unless he changes his attitude of pride. He does that and then follows the other determinates, which leads to Elizabeth's unexpected confession of love for him.

The four general determinates unfolding this way can be seen as the movement from out of Ignorance to Knowledge. We start with the wrong or limiting understanding, feeling, attitude, habit, etc. -- which we can put under the general category of Attitude. Then we realize how that attitude is wrong and change it. As a result, we see the world in a new light, which focuses our Aspiration/Intention of what we need to do. But that doesn't guarantee we'll do it. We do it by making a firm Decision and Commitment to make it happen. But that is ordinarily still not enough as an Action is required in the field of physical life, which now has the capacity to evoke the startling response.

It often begins with the Attitude change because our feelings and beliefs are so interconnected with life events and life energies. As soon as that Attitude changes, those energies move out into the field of life looking for corresponding elements that return to us in the form of vast response. The Aspiration/Intention, Decision, and Action then follow and fulfill this dynamic.

We have even seen that by merely making a Decision one can evoke the startling response; i.e. without even taking any physical action! In rarer cases still, the life turnaround occurs simply by changing the Attitude alone. In other words, whatever the intensity required of moving from Ignorance to Knowledge for that particular person for that condition and incident will evoke the powerful positive response.

There is also of course the ability to have the goal in mind from the outset and then follow its process to fruition. That is powerful too, ultimately so, but most people do not have that inner capacity to follow that process. In essence, they haven't that knowledge, though it can be learned. If they do, such as following a 30 day process of focused goal to strategies to execution to realization, it will ordinarily lead to a powerful response, especially if consecrated at all steps along the way. On the other hand, often it will not work because the life energies are not right and something more is needed: usually a change or adjustment in attitude, or an intensity of desire for the result, or greater clarity or focus one is not able to muster. Sometimes taking an initiative in the wrong situation or context will also leave one frustrated.)

There are obviously infinite variations for evoking the response. We each can choose our entry point: through the Four Determinates or subsets, through a formal process of goals setting and realization, etc.

Perhaps the most powerful way to evoke success is to consider a possibility, intensely want it, offer it to Mother, do everything one can to make it real, even a token effort, and see it suddenly move forward to fruition. This is the spiritual method of accomplishment. It can also begin as contrition for a wrong attitude or behavior in the past that is affecting our present that is offered to the Divine, the Mother, and then She simply opens the Path for us to move forward for its realization and our ultimate success. There is no faster way to evoke the infinite potentials of life from the current finite!

Spiritual Approaches to Life Response

There are hundreds of human qualities that express at the physical, vital, and mental level; often centrally in one, though with a slight shading of another. E.g. attitudes are vital, but they have a slight mental aspect to them. Personal values and beliefs are predominantly mental, but also have a vital component in that there is a willful aspect.

If traits of human consciousness express positively and negatively, then we can take inventory of all of them, and determine where we are lacking. If we then make the

sincere effort to strengthen the positive or overcome negative, we grow as individuals; plus it is highly likely that life will quickly respond in our favor to our efforts.

We also see several general wanting propensities in our nature. For one, many of our negative traits at the physical, vital, and mental level have at their root human Ego. It is the self-absorption and separateness of our being that has at its very root the fact that we identify with our own separate bodies and self at the expense of others. The ego expresses as different levels, corresponding to the dimensions of our being -- physical vital, and mental. For example, the need to dominate another is an expression of the physical ego. Hate and anger are expressions of the vital ego that has been bruised.

Many negative human traits are due to another overriding factor; our essential Ignorance born of creation. Our Ignorance has its roots in the unconsciousness and non-knowledge of our physical body, which is an expression of the dumb, material matter that it is based on. Stupidity, ignorance, falsehood, folly, error-proneness, poor decision making capacity, et al are examples of these.

In conclusion, the human individual is made up of hundreds if not thousands of traits that express positively and negatively. They are expressions of Divine Will that seeks multiplicity of expression in the universe to allow for infinite diversity, and therefore infinite variety of consciousness and bliss as each of us discover our Higher Nature.

Subconscious Presentation of Life Response that Can Be Conscious

"Life Response" is a startling phenomenon in which an instance of sudden good fortune is precipitated by taking to a higher level of consciousness, such as shedding a negative attitude, or having a focused aspiration to accomplish something, or engaging in an act of self-givingness. Life quickly responds to such reversals of consciousness and quickly returns the favor to that individual in the form of a life response event. It is miraculous thing to experience.

One interesting aspect of life response is that it is occurring all the time, but we do not have the subtle sense to perceive it. I.e. when good fortune happens to us, we aren't aware of the shift in consciousness on our part that precipitated it. While true in real life, we also see this dynamic at work in works of literature and film. Instances of life response are constantly being presented there by the author in these stories, but we don't recognize the effect, let alone the inner cause.

Another interesting point is that though the writer readily presents life response incidents in his work, he is unaware that he is demonstrating this miraculous-like phenomenon. Then how does it come to be written? The answer is that it comes from the author's subconscious. While the author has a conscious sense of the flow of events and character movements, the inner truths and subtle life principles of life he has revealed are *subconscious* to him.

Then where does the subconscious knowledge come from? It is there in his inner being, in a buried knowledge passed on through generations that the writer subconsciously taps onto. It is also there in the atmosphere of life that the author becomes an instrument of.

It turns out that all great writers present life response in one form or another, as they are more attuned to the intricacies of human relationships and character, even as they are unconscious and unaware of the subtle life principles at work. For example, if you watch closely, you will notice a startling array of life response incidents in the works of Jane Austin; particularly in her great novel *Pride and Prejudice*. There if one pays close attention one can easily trace the change in consciousness that precipitate sudden good fortune for an individual. E.g. when heroine Eliza Bennett gives up her hostile feelings towards Darcy when visiting his enormous Pemberley estate, he immediately appears

out of nowhere (when he wasn't expected for weeks), which has the effect of kindling their romance, directly leading to their great happiness and marriage. Life has responded in her favor to her shift away from hostility to greater understanding, appreciation, and good-will. There are at least two dozen major life response incidents, and dozens of minor ones that I and my colleagues have traced in the story.

As I mentioned, it is there in all the great authors' works -- from Shakespeare's plays, to Valmiki epic *Mahabharata*. It is even there in the most mundane and banal soap operas, or in more serious tv and film fare. Here is an example:

The other day a friend and I were watching the TV series *The Good Wife*. At one point I asked her to temporarily pause the on-demand presentation. I then turned to her and mentioned that one of the three principles in the law firm in the show had just made a decisive shift in attitude, and as a result somewhere soon life would respond in her favor. When we resumed watching the episode that is precisely what happened soon after.

Which brings up an interesting question: what if an author or writer was *conscious* of the phenomenon of Life Response, and had the capacity to subtly show how the inner behavior of the characters precipitated sudden good fortune in the outer events? How would that work out?

It turns out that an associate of mine Garry Jacobs has written a fascinating work of fiction called *The Book*. It is in essence a 500 page mystery-story that is filled with the most profound secrets of the workings of life. Included in it throughout is the phenomenon of Life Response. Not only do the characters experience sudden good fortune in a variety of astonishing ways, but several of them become aware of their ability to evoke it, which they do on a regular basis!

Garry has thus written a novel that not only includes a plethora of life response, which is a result of his conscious awareness of the phenomenon, but also has his characters aware of its workings. This is so because Garry has studied the phenomenon from all angles for thirty five years, and is able to incorporate it in a spiritual-oriented adventure story of unprecedented depth and power.

Likewise, each of us can become aware of instances of life response in our own lives. Better still, we can come to understand the changes in consciousness on our part that precipitate these startling outcomes. Best of all, we can constantly be aware of, and then consciously make the effort to raise level our consciousness relative to given circumstance -- e.g. by practicing non-reaction to another's intensity, by holding back from expressing our thoughts (silent will), by opening to the spiritual Force before engaging in actions, etc. -- which will quickly evoke luck from life.

In that way, not only are we conscious of the life response phenomenon itself, but use it to attract a continuous stream of good fortune into our lives.

The Many Methods of Attraction Beyond 'The Secret'

There are many ways to attract results to us. To follow The Secret's method is one way. Visualize, Ask, Let the Universe take over. It works perhaps 25% of the time. We have discovered many of the reasons why it fails. Often our negative attitudes -- towards others, life, work etc. -- prevent us from being receptive to what the universe can give us. Also being overly attached to the result can prevent its attraction. There are a number of other reasons we have documented.

There are dozens of laws of Life Response that determines the power to attract in any situation. The Secret knows but the basics; has a limited understanding, though still powerful compared to our normal human approach. Sri Karmayogi has explained dozens

if not hundreds of laws of life response. When he is given the details of a situation, he has the encyclopedic knowledge of attraction in his mind and therefore knows exactly what inner behavior will attract the result. Results are then 90%. The Secret is 25% and then only doing it exactly as prescribed. Most don't, so it has a 10% success rate.

Consecration is in a way all approaches in one, and is the most powerful way to attract one's aspirations in life. If you explain the issue, opportunity, or problem to the Mother, offer it to Her for Her help, and then say "Thy Will Be Done, Not My Will" good things almost always take place. Life responds, often overwhelmingly and in very short order.

Even there one is limited to one's receptivity, which is the product of our attitudes, opinions, and beliefs. Still the result is 80% or more guaranteed; as the Force that is very strong in the atmosphere, Her Force, has this power.

The Secret is an important step into the attraction and response space, but only a first step. The Laws of Life Response and knowing which ones to apply is a step far beyond, and gives one great power to become the Master of Life.

Consecration is the most powerful method, but also there is the power of Silence, of Silent Will, of Non-reaction, of Taking Another's viewpoint, of shifting out of Ego, of Self-givingness, of making a decision instead of inaction, having the deep aspiration for something to come about, Forgetting, and many others. The more one practices these, the more one becomes the master of each, applying the right one in the right situation.

The Inner Moves the Outer: Spirit, Aspiration, Attitudes, Values

[A reader in response to the notion that the "the Inner moves the Outer," commented that "the outer can also inspire the Inner!"]

Yes, very much so, but that is not the spiritual view. The spiritual view is that from within, the Inner, one can change the world. E.g. I can connect to an inner power that can end the Cold War, which was precisely what happened when individuals opened to the power of the Divine Mother in the late 1980s.

From within, one attracts all that one wants to achieve, also known as The Secret, mimicking the method of the Divine who created a universe from within Itself. Etc. Etc. This knowledge and its practical applications by tens of thousands of people around the world who have had astonishing, miraculous-like experiences along these lines is the proof of the INNER power of Attraction. We can bring about such results without moving a muscle; as life simply and comes to us in response to our focused aspirations. Hence, "the Inner Moves the outer." The same applies to a change from a negative to a positive attitude. As soon as we make that switch, positive circumstance appear at our doorstep from out of nowhere.

This is the new view of life that is available to us. If you can grasp that – that one's aspiration and the spiritual force used in tandem can instantaneously move life without any outer effort - you will see the infinite-like power that is at your disposal; that you can use today; that will allow you to quickly evoke the infinite from the finite.

As for the outer inspiring the Inner, that is certainly true. For example, I see what a certain individual has accomplished and I am therefore inspired by it. Their outer has influenced my inner. But that person's inspiration came from WITHIN themselves, from their personal and social Values - whether a Gandhi unshackling India from British rule or a Steve Jobs at Apple bringing about powerful technology that is simple to use for the masses. They spring from their INNER Values.

We cannot be inspired to achieve like them unless we too have those same or related values within ourselves. Otherwise, we are mere admirers and observers. Or if we act, we act without a belief-oriented foundation, producing limited results.

Thus, all real and significant change comes from within, whether using the spiritual Force or the various manifestations of spirit, or that which originates and springs from our personal and social values or higher attitudes. The former is Spiritual, the latter of the Mind. Both have the power to bring about startling success in ways that overcome the limits of space and time, and what we conceive of as humanly possible.

Building Up Your Consciousness at the Physical Level

Q: There are so many ways we can improve our consciousness. Where should one begin?

A: One approach is to consider the four planes of which we are a part – physical, vital, mental, and spiritual – and begin with the most fundamental – i.e. physical.

Among the ways you can raise your consciousness at the physical level (and thereby evoke sudden good fortune as a result) are:

-Make sure your living and work spaces are as clean and orderly as possible. This is #1! This is often suggested first by Karmayogi. (Life responds instantaneously to efforts to upgrade here.)

-Eliminate waste of any sort. Make maximum use of resources (money, items, etc.), and do not waste anything. Make use of the tiniest amounts still available. (Life brings more of that or other resources from seemingly out of nowhere as a result.)

-Energetically engage in all of your physical duties and responsibilities. (Life conditions tend to become more positive everywhere around you.)

-Make the full effort wherever possible; avoiding laziness and sloth. (Life tends to take over the effort and brings a vast positive result.)

-Give the necessary and right attention to devices that need cleaning and upkeep, whether cars or machine, computer, etc. (They start functioning better or attract positive conditions for their use.)

-Speak as few words as possible, and in a low soft voice. (This attracts harmony, success, and more money.)

-Make sure you have created a foundation in your life in terms of earning power; taking care of all forms (e.g. government-related); insure that financial accounts are up to date, etc. (Financial stability is the foundation of personal and spiritual growth.)

-Do not squander your energies on those things that deplete it – like alcohol, drugs, tobacco, and other forms of indulgences. (Depletion of energies attract theft, loss, reductions in finances, etc.)

-Make sure you are eating right, getting right amount of exercise and sleep, etc. to solidify your physical energies. Common sense of course! (Not doing so causes life to move out of balance, attracting all manner of unexpected ailments and illnesses.)

-Try to engage in small or larger physical acts – like brushing your teeth or taking out the garbage or exercising -- in less of a habitual way, but in a fresh, more dynamic way. (New possibilities and perceptions arise out of nowhere.)

-Consecrate every physical-related activity for maximum effect. (Life's conditions are set right, and new opportunities or possibilities emerge.)

These are some of the items at the physical level. At the vital level there are much more, because it includes your attitude, especially your negative ones, which has a hundred dimensions. We'll talk about that another time. Meanwhile, you may have plenty to do at the physical level! And be prepared for life to respond!

Synchronicity and Parallelism

Focusing on Something Attracts More of It Instantaneously

Life is subtle, but we miss the profound connections that it is constantly presenting to us in the course of our day. One dimension of that subtlety is that life is always responding to the things we are focused on with additional related information from seemingly out of nowhere.

E.g. in the communication program Skype, the names of ongoing friends who have come online for the program pop-up in a corner of my screen, even when the program is not open. I only have about a dozen Skype contacts, so the pop-up does not occur very often. Moreover, most of these people whose names pop-up I have not been in direct contact with for a long while, and had no plans to contact them for now.

Meanwhile throughout the day I work in various other software programs on the computer. Well it turns out that as soon as I enter some information in these other programs and really focus on that task, a person instantly pops in Skype up who is very closely related to the very specific work I am currently engaged in! They have no idea I am doing this work. It just spontaneously occurs on its own.

E.g. I enter the Excel application for the first time in a long time and out of the blue my friend who I have not spoken to in months suddenly pops up in Skype for the first time in a long time. I then realize that this individual was very much interested in learning Excel from me. Hence I attract them at that very moment.

Or I am focusing on the importance of business values as I develop a PowerPoint presentation, and the person who wrote eloquently on the subject many years ago suddenly appears as a Skype pop-up in the lower right corner of my screen instantaneous to my having the biggest inspiration of the day on that subject. No one else pops up but him during this time.

This extraordinary subtle synchronous dynamic happens with an instantaneous precision, down to the second, and occurs perhaps 10 times a day. (And that includes only the times I am conscious enough to realize it.)

It shows that all is connected in space and time; that we have powerful relationships with certain people, ideas, events that interconnect and are associative in the non-material world. This subtle dimension of life that most of us miss completely is often referred to as "synchronicity" in popular parlance. It is in fact a particular form of synchronicity that we refer to as "parallelism."

Life bringing more information to the things we are currently focused on -- in the form of Skype pop-ups from the exact related person; sudden out of the blue phone calls from such a person; related content in newspapers, magazines and in the news related to the topic focused on; etc. -- are very common experiences of those who have the inner wherewithal and vision to perceive them.

Obama – Solyndra – Solar City

If we look deep enough we will find synchronicities, also called "parallelisms" everywhere in life, which are linked phenomenon that on the surface don't seem to have anything in common, yet are really deeply connected. With a little effort, we can see this phenomenon at work every day. E.g. here is one I noticed today.

Five years ago US President Obama took up an initiative to support the growth of alternate energy in America. Part of that initiative was to fund several up and coming

wind and solar companies with big cash infusions. One of them was a company named "Solyndra." Unfortunately after a great start and mass infusion of funds by the US government, the company failed. It closed its doors in Silicon Valley, and the giant facility has remained empty since then. Detractors lambasted the president for this effort, as they were always ready to debunk his efforts. Even support from his own party was withdrawn after the apparent Solyndra fiasco.

Yet in the years that followed something very opposite occurred as a boom in alternative energy occurred amongst the emerging startups in the Valley, far surpassing all expectations. In fact, Obama's initiative seems to have turned on an entire new segment in Silicon Valley, with expanding innovation and jobs. Still gratitude for his efforts was shortcoming.

Five years later – i.e. today – President Obama appeared in Silicon Valley (San Francisco Bay Area in California) to discuss the important issue of cyber-security. He had made the concerted effort to come out to SV to inform business of the common threat they share with government in overcoming cyber-crime, from within the county and without.

Well as it turned out that not an hour or two after completing his remarks, it was announced from that the empty former Solyndra facility has now been taken over by another company Solar City, a very successful solar energy company in the Valley. It was in essence the final vindication of the Obama initiative, cancelling the last traces of failure in the president's efforts. To me this revelation was a startling "coincidence" coming just after Obama made his intense plea for companies in the Valley to cooperate with him on this thorny security issue. These two events, seemingly separate and apart, with little to do with one another on the surface were at a deeper level aligned in space and time, as they both together served multiple purposes in Life.

If we focus our attention and closely examine events around us, we will begin to observe all manner of synchronicities and parallelism occurring. We only have to identify the subtle correlation between these seemingly unrelated events. Once you perceive one such correlation, more will appear before your eyes. Eg you think of a singer and instantly his voice appears on the PA, though you haven't heard his voice in that location in two decades. Or you discuss with someone a person you had met decades ago, and within ten seconds someone walks by who looks exactly like that individual. And so on and so forth for any and all circumstance you come in contact with.



THE REALITY, & THEORY OF CREATION

The Reality (Brahman)

Realizing the Reality (Brahman) In Our Lives

One of the greatest of all questions is What is Life? Another is What is God? A third is What is my purpose in the world? Indian metaphysics answers all of these questions through the ultimate conception and principle of existence, known as Brahman. It is also referred to as The Absolute in the West. Let us call it "the Reality." Let's also consider a more modern evolutionary view of It as expounded by the Indian seer and sage Sri Aurobindo, and the contemporary, multi-dimensional spiritual genius Sri Karmayogi.

The human mind can easily conceive of the realm of *matter* which we live in. It can also conceive of the realm of *spirit*; even the possibility that this universe of forms emerged from it. What it cannot readily do is think of their *oneness, unity, and integration*; in particular, that the universe is a form of spirit; and that spirit extends and fulfills itself in creation. This integral fusion of spirit and matter -- i.e. of the Unmanifest and the Manifest, of the Transcendent and the Immanent -- is the ultimate conception of existence afforded to us. It is the Reality.

The Reality includes and yet is beyond God the creator, as well as the transcendent Divine Spirit. It also embraces every and all things in creation; in this universe of forms, including us. The Reality is a startling conception that supersedes all notions of existence ever devised by man. It is in that way the ultimate Reality, Brahman, the Absolute. And yet it is something we can realize in our own lives.

Interestingly, America has in many ways realized the Reality in the realm of matter. It has perceived the infinite possibilities of material existence and has brought much of it to the surface of life. This suggests that we can realize, bring out the infinity of the Reality at any plane -- from vital to mental to spiritual. It is a vast opportunity that lies before us.

But then where is this Reality, this infinite possibility in these varying planes of existence? The answer is that it is buried deep down in an essential Essence. When Man rises in consciousness at that plane, we bring that essence to the fore in infinite variation. Whereas the US has brought the Reality, Brahman to the surface at the material level, we have yet to devise the ultimate emotional and social possibilities at the vital plane; or the most profound and wide reaching mental conceptions of existence at the mental plane. That infinity awaits those who can draw it out, who are able to unlock and bring to the surface, thereby enabling life to fulfill its ultimate potential.

And yet we cannot realize the Reality and its potentiality through the vehicle that is our ordinary Mind. Our normal mental functioning cannot perceive the inherent oneness, unity, and integration of spirit and matter; the Unmanifest and the Unmanifest; the Creator and the Creation. It sees them as separate aspects, not as integral, complementary partners and parts of a Whole. As a result, we cannot perceive the

essence that exists at any plane -- whether material, vital, and mental levels -- not draw out its spirit to bring about its infinite potential in life.

However, when we move to higher mind, including its spiritual aspects as intuition and revelations of thought -- of knowledge perceived directly without the hard churning of thinking -- we begin to perceive the Reality; i.e. have a direct Vision of the unity of spirit and matter, and a perception of the infinite possibility in the plane we are focused on. It is at that point that we can begin to draw out the Infinite from the Finite through myriads of higher feelings, deeper and more profound emotions, and connections at the vital level; and penetrating insights, revelatory principles, and deep human values at the mental level.

But we can only have a vision of the Reality and bring out its essences when we move our center of awareness away from the surface of life, and develop a deeper poise within. The more we orient our lives inward in silence and stillness, the more our mind opens to perceive the integral oneness and unity of spirit and matter; and therefore perceive new ways to bring out the infinite possibilities locked into every aspect of our lives. Through such a "witness consciousness", we not only glimpse the Reality, but more readily become instruments for extracting the Essence that opens life to its ultimate possibilities. Then we become conduits and instruments for infinite progress, in life, and a leader of the evolution and transformation of life on earth.

Experiencing the Reality from Within

There is an ultimate Reality. It is beyond our normal conceptions of God. It is timeless, spaceless, immutable, indefinable. It is the Unmanifest as well as the Manifest. It is the Absolute of the West; Brahman of the East.

How can we know this ultimate Reality? Not when we live ordinary lives of the surface. Only when we develop an inner poise and orientation can we begin that journey. From there we can begin to get intimations of this Reality.

As we plunge into the depths within, we become silent witness to the world. Deeper still we come upon our True Self, our personal evolving soul. There we constantly perceive the multiplicity of possibilities unfolding at any moment in time. We always know in which direction to turn, to act; what to avoid; what elements in our being need improvement, uplifting. There we feel connections to the universal and transcendent planes. We also now have direct intuitions and intimations of the forces and truths of the universe which enter our minds without thought.

In that status all conflicts, divisions, and dualities that we experience, such as the apparent incompatibility of Spirit and Matter, or the dual life experience of pleasure and pain, begin to break down.

From that deep poise, the contradictions of life resolve into their natural complementary status. From there we perceive that the inner and the outer are one; that in fact, the entire universe is contained inside ourselves and if we change the inner, the outer will respond in kind.

As a result of these harmonic experiences, we perceive the unity of the manifest and the unmanifest, which is the omnipresent Reality, the ultimate vision and experience of life.

We can begin approach this profound inner status through meditation, deep concentration, consecration of activities (i.e. surrendering all actions to the descending Force), and other methods.

As we make deep inroad into our inner being, we feel the divine presence within and above compelling us to Surrender to it. We perceive our role in the comic scheme of

things. We become instruments of the transcendent and universal intent. We begin to offer our very existence to the Higher Purpose.

First Glimpse of the Omnipresent Reality

There is an ultimate Reality that surrounds us; that we are a part of. It permeates matter, life, and mind. It is there in the hidden realms, in the universal plane, and in the transcendent Divine. The Reality is the essence of all these things. It is actually those things themselves; we, God, and the universe. Moreover, everything in this Reality is inexorably united and one. Everything, every plane, every force and being are unified within themselves and to each other. It is the Divine plan, method, and unfolding.

But how do we feel this ultimate conception of Existence? It is one thing to know that we are part of this Great All, it is another to truly perceive it, experience it, be awed, enriched, overwhelmed, and fulfilled by the fact.

In the physical/material consciousness we ordinarily live in, we perceive nothing of this wonder, splendor, power of existence. We are immune from it there. However, sometimes we have small experiences, sense subtle workings and unfoldings that suggest a correlation, interrelation of something wondrous; something beyond this world, yet within it; within us. At the subtle level of life, beyond the material, we have intimations of the Reality. And yet it is only reflective, a side glance, a transitory glimpse of the Wonder.

Beyond the gross/material and subtle, there is the causal experience. It is here that we can begin to truly perceive the omnipresent Reality; that which permeates all existence. It is here that we move into identity with the Reality, Brahman, the Absolute. We have intimations of the Wonder. It is there not only in our thoughts, but in our subtle perceptions of life. It is also there in extraordinary momentary feelings and emotions, even in our nerves. At that point, we sense, we feel, we know bound up with something Greater, even as we realize that this permeating Presence is right here, within us, around us, in the essence of all things. It is even there in the most superficial, surface of life.

When we conceive, perceive, and realize the Reality in our own lives, we have the greatest of all human experiences; that of the Infinite Divine expressing in all planes, beings, and things. Everywhere we look, we feel the Reality in its essence, in its progressive unfolding. We feel that we are part of a totality that is Infinite, Conscious, and Divine. At that point, we experience an inextricable Oneness with everyone and all things. Through that experience, we blend in, melt into the Reality that we are part of, even as we gaze out ecstatically on Its creation.

Our Illusory View of Reality

For our entire lives we have been looking in the mirror, thinking that is what we look like. But that is actually a reverse view, what is called a "mirror-image." That is an example of a physical distortion of reality. Then there is the psychological distortion, where we think we are a certain way, but others see us quite differently; in terms of our nature and character.

Then of course there is our entire conception of reality itself, which we think is one way, but is far different and more comprehensive than we think. We can only garner that view by developing a much deeper and higher consciousness. Our view of existence is therefore in many if not most ways illusory, while the true nature of the Reality in all its infinite facets is really real.

Eg Mr. Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice* has at the start a view of life that is of privilege, class, and sense of superiority. He is immersed in this life and existence. Then he meets Eliza, and discovers that love is a side of reality he never perceived before. It is a new dimension of existence.

Likewise, the people around us have different views of reality that we do not have, and we are surprised when we learn a new aspect from one of them or from life. There are actually hundreds, thousands, infinite sides to existence, but we only perceive one, our own. It is as if we believe bread is the only food that exists, and continue to eat it, not knowing that there are infinite types of foods and tastes.

When we rise in consciousness, we experience more "tastes," progressively adopting additional perceptions of existence from among the infinite variations. When we reach the peak, it is called Universal Consciousness, as we perceive and embrace all aspects of being. Supermind is beyond that still. It sees the multiple even infinite sides and aspects of existence in integral unity. It is the very opposite of our extremely narrow, separative view of life, of our single side, therefore mostly illusory perception of existence.

The Profoundest Friendship with the All of Life

To be a true friend with someone, we accept all that they are. Likewise, to be friends with Life is to accept all that Life is. How can we do that?

First, it is helpful to have the Knowledge of what the totality of Existence is. Sri Aurobindo indicates that it is the omnipresent Reality, Brahman, the All. This is Life in its truest sense. It is not just the living universe that we dwell in and experience. It is the All that manifests at various planes from Spirit to Matter; from Being to Becoming; from the Unmanifest to the Manifest; from the Negative to the Positive; from the Smallest to the Largest; etc. It is All and Everything; one continuous, omnipresent Existence, expressing in every conceivable way. This is Life in its truest sense.

Sri Aurobindo indicates that from the view of Supermind one can know this All, this (extended, true) Life. As a result of experiencing and embracing this All, we perceive the utility of everything, and thus we accept everything that comes our way. By accepting, even embracing the All of this true Existence/ Life, we become a friend and Partner with it in the truest sense.

As a result of seeing life this way, we garner great insight into Life's workings. By embracing and seeing the utility of all things, we can look directly into the unfoldings of life, do the right things, and attract powerful positive results. We also become instruments of a cosmic unfolding, and are able to aid in the Divine Intent through the details of daily existence. Perceiving that All plays a role in progress and evolution, we become true partner, friend, and collaborator with Life. From that poise, we have the knowledge and power, the insight and will to do and accomplish unbelievable things.

We can look outside us to perceive the nature and utility of the All, as well as inside our own individual being. We perceive that all that is occurring outside and within ourselves -- good or bad, pleasurable or painful, great and small, etc. -- is a part of the great All, the reality, and serves a purpose in the unfolding and progress of life.

How to achieve this ultimate perception and connection with Existence, with Life?

Constant opening to the Mother's Force causes our mind to expand, and thereby perceive the true nature and utility of the Reality, the All. Consecration opens the mind to intuition and supramental perception, where we become one with the object of things; including the true nature of Existence that is the All. We perceive all things in this Extended Life as necessary, and all as integrally Unified and One.

Manifesting the Spiritual Aspects of the Creator in Creation

It is difficult for the average person, or for that matter any individual to reconcile Spirit and Matter, or as we tend to look at it, the Creator and the Creation. We think of the former as divine in nature, and the latter as a lesser formulation, though it is very real to us. And yet in my view, it was/is the Intent of the Divine to extend Itself and all its spiritual attributes into new forms that make up creation, including us. Thus, life in the universe is in essence *new forms* of the Spirit, of the Creator that have the potential to express the Divine's spiritual aspects -- including Silence, Oneness, Knowledge, Creativity, Truth, Beauty, Love, Bliss, Timelessness, and Infinity.

It was in fact to enable these higher spiritual qualities in a *multiplicity* and *variety* of forms of Its own Force that the Creator has manifest the inanimate and inanimate, visible and invisible forms in creation. So that these spiritual aspects could formulate in infinite variation -- through life's energy, matter, animus, and mentality -- the Divine manifest Its own Force into these forms. In that sense, we are the Divine incarnate; forces, forms and beings who seek to have the potential to bring the divinity buried within ourselves and in the world around us to the surface.

An obvious question then raises itself. If the Divine intent was to extend Its divinity and spiritual qualities into new forms of itself through energy, matter, animated life, and mentality which we embody, why does this not seem to be the case in life in the universe? There is after all so much suffering and pain, darkness and negativity mixed in with the pleasure and joy, light and harmony in the world. One answer is that from the perspective of the divine consciousness and Reality itself, life IS in fact perfect in its current status. When we perceive things from the Spirit or Creator's point of view, we perceive that all things -- including positive and negative, pleasurable and painful, great and small -- are all necessary to the unfolding that is moving from limitation, ignorance, and falsehood to perfection and infinite possibility. Thus, all and everything -- even darkness and evil -- are contributing to the forward movement of evolution of life in the universe; whose ultimate goal is the manifestation of spiritual aspects of Oneness, Truth, Knowledge, Creativity, Beauty, Love, Delight, Timelessness, and Infinity in the detail of life and of our own individual lives.

But then one might ask, why didn't the Creator create everything perfect to begin with; i.e. have all the forms of Its Force manifest these spiritual attributes in the first place? Why couldn't each and every thing and individual be perfectly still silent, knowledgeable and living in full truth, in harmony and one with all things, be infinitely creative, experience endless delight, feel deep, unbinding love, and living beyond the bounds of time, space, and limitation. The answer is actually straightforward. In order to create the greatest diversity of manifestation of these spiritual attributes, the greatest variation and multiplicity of forms of Its Force was required. For life to express these spiritual aspects in all its possibilities and potentials, the Creator allowed for all manner of forces and forms in life, including that which is positive *and* negative, good *and* evil, pleasurable and pain filled, knowledgeable and ignorant and, and so forth. Through the mutual unfolding of these dual pairs, the greatest diversity of forces and forms could unfold in creation; therefore the greatest diversity and possibility of manifesting the spiritual aspects of the Divine in the particulars of life.

Thus, from the perspective of the Divine Reality, behind all existence, all that is unfolding in life is perfectly as it should be; even as it continues to evolve from its lower status to an increasingly higher one. What Sri Aurobindo and Sri Karmayogi call "The Marvel of Existence," is to see how everything -- great or small, positive and negative, good and evil, pleasure or pain-filled -- serve the unfolding of an ever increasing, progressive adoption of the divine Reality's spiritual attributes in creation.

The Marvel then is to perceive how each thing that we encounter plays a role in this progressive unfolding. Nothing is wasted, or to be excluded, or deemed unnecessary or even harmful in this universal movement. Even in its negative state, every thing is on its way to its positive status. It is in fact the vital means by which life progresses and brings out more of the spiritual attributes of the Infinite Divine.

Theory of Creation

The Process of Creation, Involution, and Evolution

On the 197th birthday of Charles Darwin, individuals are trying to reconcile his ideas with that of the Spirit. So far, all parties -- sectarian and scientific -- seem very far from understanding the true nature of the fundamental issue he addressed: evolution.

With that in mind, let's consider one definition of evolution: Evolution takes place for any entity when it organizes itself at a higher level. Here are several examples:

When a *business* develops a strategic plan to grow, organizes and then executes it, the firm has followed a process for it to progress. Likewise, when I as an *individual* plan out what I want to become, organize the details, and then carry it out, I too can rapidly progress. If the organization or individual succeeds in not just going a bit higher, but to a new level or plane of existence, there is not only progress, but evolution.

These examples suggest that there is a common process by which accomplishment and creation takes place. It consists of a conception of that which we want to become, the organization of the details of that vision, and its execution. Moreover, when it is carried out with determined effort, skill, and right attitude, our aspiration/intention quickly comes about, which is progress for that entity.

When that process is practiced to perfection, not only is progress produced -- which is in essence more of what we currently have, along with a certain degree of elevation of consciousness -- but we are taken to an entirely new level or plane of our existence, which is the very definition of evolution.

Even *the Spiritual reality* in creating a universe from its Divine source, followed this same essential approach: i.e. it conceived that which it wished to create -- a universe -- and it organized and made it occur through powers of infinite consciousness that turned its Conscious Force into unseen subtle Energy that became the basis of all forms that would emerge in creation. In other words, it evolved itself further by becoming a manifest universe.

If we are to understand evolution, we need to understand this single essential process of creation that entails a movement from vision to organization to manifestation. Even when a primitive being or an animal evolves, there is some higher quality that is being organized, that is moving from its current level of being to a higher order. We can see this in the film *2001: A Space Odyssey*, where at one point an ape vaguely perceives that a bone it has found can be used as a tool for defending itself, tries it out, and then uses it to gain superiority over rival clans. It is in essence the organization of a perception into a living reality. Evolution is then a product of the organization of consciousness -- whether it consciously, subconsciously, or unconsciously takes place.

There is another dimension to the evolutionary process. It is that the higher levels of progress, development, and evolution that entities move towards and attain is *already involved in their being as potential*. Just as a tree emerges from a seed in which all of its material existence is more or less predetermined, so too there is an involved capacity inherent in every form to bring about the next stage or phase of its being. For example, when the most primitive life forms emerged from matter, that capacity was already

there involved as real potential in the essence of that physical form. Likewise, if I wish to become more intuitively aware -- a higher formation of mentality -- that capacity is already there involved as potential in my current mental framework. It is there in the seed of my being as potential. There is a real seed of possibility hidden in its essence, not just an imaginary one that somehow can be fulfilled.

Thus, not only is there one universal process of creation that moves from stages of vision to organization to manifestation, i.e. through a movement of higher consciousness, but the stages we can evolve to are already there embedded in our being as seed and essence of potentiality. This is the case because in the creation of the cosmos from a Divine Source, those infinitely higher planes of being were there before the universe even existed, and in creation were then embedded, hidden, involved in the forms that emerged, including us. E.g., a plane of Mind existed before the universe came to be in the involutory process and descent from Spirit to matter. Then after creation, higher life forms emerged from matter, and developed a mentality with the capacity to think. That occurred because the original Cosmic Plane of Mind is involved in matter and life forms, which emerges through the development of our mentality.

Thus, we can say that the evolutionary process is able to occur because the involutory process has created these potentialities in the very fiber of our being. The planes that emerge from us were already involved in us as a seed in subtle form.

In summary, through the process of creation -- i.e. vision, organization, and execution - - all life progresses. If the change is truly significant, -- i.e. there is a dramatic change in consciousness, bringing about a movement to an entirely new level or plane of existence -- then there is also evolution. And yet the seeds of our evolution and change, including all the planes above it, are already there involved, hidden in our being in potential, waiting to come out.

Whether we choose to progress and evolve is a matter of our own choice. If we consciously follow the process of creation, seeking to move to a higher level, we not only accelerate our own growth and progress, but we participate in the evolution of Man.

How Infinite Variety Emerges in the Universe

How can we explain the infinite variety we experience in the universe at all levels -- physical (forms), vital (life movements), and mental (thoughts and ideas)?

Sri Aurobindo speaks of the Real Ideas and Cosmic Determinates that come out of Sat-chit-ananda. For our understanding, it comes to us as spiritual aspects of Peace, Knowledge, Goodness, Creativity, Love, Delight, Timelessness, Infinity, and others.

Further still, it breaks down into a plethora of Values that are various combinations of the spiritual aspects. E.g. Tolerance can be said to be a combination of Beingness (allowing things to be) and Goodness. These are then powers of life available to us. These Values then comes to us through our thoughts, our emotions, such as attitudes, which can fall to the right or wrong side.

These Real Ideas of the Infinite Divine are further diffused into infinite forms down to matter. We would then have to bring in the conscious Force (Chit) and its eventuality (Energy) to account for these.

How these all work together Sri Aurobindo and Karmayogi have explained in thousands of pages.

How solid matter comes out of Sat (being) and Chit (conscious Force), the issue Ashokan Sir raised, is a more particular one. We can say that a fourth power, Supermind turns the conscious Force into cosmic Mind and then into Energy, which is the basis of Life. When the Energy moves, it further breaks down into infinite variations of forms in

the universe. It keeps breaking down to variations at the atomic level. It may go further still to quantum levels beyond. Life in the universe is enabled from out of the Life plane, which is Energy itself.

Up through that point is the Involution. Now the Evolution begins: Matter to Animated Life to Mentality and upward through increasingly conscious forms. (Actually it begins at the point Energy is formed, i.e. the Life plane is enabled from out of the Conscious Force and the Cosmic Mind.)

This soup of existence unfolds through the Process of Creation. We can follow it in our own lives to create an infinite variety of results. It is the same process of Real Idea of Mind with a conception of the universe that is activated through Will (which is the Force and Energy) that ends in manifestation in Matter.

The Social Development process is the same. The pioneer individual conceives of the next stage of development, expressing the subconscious will of the society, which gets organized and actuated through the world's involvement and cooperation. Infinite variety results. Today you see it everywhere in the emergence of Technology. Tomorrow it will happen though deep insights into the true nature of how life functions; including subtle laws like Life Response and Karmayogi's principles of Acts. (The Secret is a first, limited, global view of it.)

Beyond that is Supramentalization of the world at all planes of existence and the emergence of a Divine Life on earth in all its forms. The next to last chapter of *The Life Divine* ("The Gnostic Being") describes the infinite variety of this new existence.

Along the way we adopt the spiritual aspects versions of Real Ideas -- Being, Peace, Love, etc. -- through values. Karmayogi says the universe (actually the Cosmic realms) as Values. Now we apply our values to the details of the life, energizing all ideas, life movements, and physical forms. Infinite variety comes out. The Real Ideas of the Infinite Divine emerge infinitely in creation. Out of these Ideas, which is in one sense Nothing, comes Everything, in endless variety.

We also have all of Karmayogi's techniques - from Non-Reaction to Self-Givingness, which are more Direct spiritual expressions of the spiritual aspects that are the comic determinates and Real Ideas. E.g. Non-Reaction is of Being. Self-Givingness is of a combination of Truth, Goodness, Harmony, and Love. Etc. Etc.

How we partake in this Potential is up to us. It is our choice: Human Choice. Constant opening to the Supramental Force via Mother is the one tool that easily evokes the Infinite (and all its potential variations as described above) from the current Finite. Her Force is the same Force, Shakti out of which Real Ideas of Possibility became the details of the universe.

Perhaps most startling of all is the fact we have that same infinite-creating power at our disposal.

Knower Knowing the Known, Lover Loving the Beloved in Involution and Evolution

The Infinite consciousness took its first step toward creation through the emergence of Sat-chit-ananda (Pure Existence, Conscious-Force, Delight.) Supermind is a further development that enabled a universe to arise out of the Intention of Satchitananda. Space and Time emerged when objects were formulated that subjects could apprehend. Let's examine this dynamic more closely.

In Satchitananda, there are Real Ideas in potential. Supermind begins the process of making them real in creation. Let's take one of the central Real Ideas/Determinants; that of Knowledge. (There are others like Love, Beauty, Delight, etc.)

In *comprehending* Supermind, Knowledge is a Real Idea comprehended as a potential entity, but not yet real in creation; not something that can be perceived. In *apprehending* Supermind, knowledge is made real in space and time. How is that accomplished? The undivided entity of Knowledge divides into subject and object. Now a Knower (subject) can Know the Knowledge (object).

And yet in that division made real by Supermind, subject and object are still One in essence. It is because in the consciousness of Supermind the knower fully knows the known, the knowledge. Thus in terms of the Knowledge the subject and object are integrally One. (It is equivalent to my perfectly knowing the thing under consideration, and from all angle and aspects. I am One with it; in Identity with it.)

However, in the Involution, as the somewhat lesser cosmic Mind descends from Supermind, a knower at that plane no longer fully and integrally knows the known. Thus the thing known is not in identity with every other thing as in Supermind. As the Involution (descent) continues to Energy and then Matter, the knowledge is progressively lost. There is no knowledge (object) to be known (by a subject). All that is left is raw Force without the Consciousness of Knowledge. In essence, the Conscious-Force (chit of Sat-chit-ananda) at the Source has lost its Consciousness (here as knowledge), leaving only Force of form divided down at the atomic level which is matter. Matter is fully inconscient, without knowledge, thus no subject-object at all.

But now at the point where the Involutionary process completes, the Evolution begins. Thus, out of knowledge-less Matter come Life and then Life Forms in the universe. In the lower creatures, a modicum of sensation exists, and then the tiniest bit of knowledge emerges. Knowledge objects of thinking occur. There is thus a reforming of knower knowing the known (subject perceiving the object), but it is a very limited knowledge. It is basically a knowledge that is Ignorance. Thus in Man, the knower knows the known in a limited sense because his Mind cannot know the integral truth of a thing; only a very limited part, as he is dominated by his lower nature, creating an exclusive knowledge.

However, as Man develops his higher consciousness, the knower and the known – subject and object – come closer in Identity when it comes to Knowledge. As Man moves beyond rational mind up the scale to Silent, Illumined, Intuitive, Over, and then Supermind (Truth Consciousness), he perceives the object of inquiry in total. He moves into integral identity with it. In essence, the Knower now Knows the Known in integral perfection. He has thus in the Evolution risen up the planes of existence to Apprehending Supermind that established Knowledge as a Knower integrally Knowing the Known in space and time that emerged in the first place in the Involution.

This same dynamic holds true not only for Knowledge, but for other Real Ideas/Cosmic Determinates issuing from Satchitananda -- including Peace, Goodness, Beauty, Love Delight, Timelessness, and Infinity. For example, in comprehending Supermind, a lover can love the beloved in total in space and time. (This is a power/force that is there before creation of forms, including we in the universe.) Then, in the decent of involution to matter as described earlier, that breaks down; but then in the movement back up in the evolution, it is reestablished. Thus, True Love occurs when the Lover Loves the Beloved in total without expectation or demand. The lover is now in complete identity, oneness, and rapture with the beloved.

Self-Conception, Self-Limitation, Self-Absorption in the Creation Process

Sri Aurobindo in his metaphysical opus 'The Life Divine' references three connected principles of creation: Self-Conception, Self-Limitation, and Self-Absorption. Let's examine them, and then relate it to our own lives.

In the process of Creation from an Infinite Consciousness, the Being conceived that which it wished to become in a manifest universe. These "Real Idea" were divine attributes such as Peace, Truth, Knowledge, Delight, and Love. This is the principle of Self-Conception in action.

To manifest the Real Ideas in a created universe, the Being extended Itself and evolved a new plane which Sri Aurobindo realized and called "Supermind" (or Truth Consciousness). Supermind first comprehended the Self-Conceptive Real Ideas of the Infinite Consciousness, and then through its Apprehending power divided them into triune entities. E.g. Knowledge became Knower – Knowing – Knowledge. I.e. the knower knows the knowledge. It is a subject apprehending an object. Apprehending Supermind followed this process for all the Real Ideas; including. Lover Loves the Beloved. It is in essence a self-limiting movement from non-division to division.

As a result of this process, Space and Time were born, and the Divine values entered creation, seeking their manifestation in the coming evolution. This entire process was one of taking a Whole of possibilities and dividing it into parts of realization. The parts were a delimitation of the One. Hence this entire process is known as "Self-Limitation," the second great principle in the Involutionary process. It sets the stage and enables a universe of infinite possibilities and their evolution in consciousness.

The third principle in this dynamic of creation is Self-Absorption. In the involutionary process from Spirit to Matter, the Being increasingly lost its Consciousness to the point where the matter that emerged from energy was devoid of all Conscious Being, Force, and Delight. And yet this was the Intention of the Infinite; to lose its consciousness, as it made its way from Spirit to Matter.

But why would the Infinite increasingly hide its consciousness on the way to creation beginning with Matter?

It is for the purpose of Delight. When the unconscious forms in creation (including us), discover their higher Nature, they experience a DYNAMIC Delight that is superior the static Delight of the Infinite Being. Also by losing its consciousness, its wholeness, its oneness, things break apart infinitely, down to the atomic level in matter, which enables infinite variety, multiplicity, possibility in the evolution upward, as now everything is included -- the unconscious and the conscious, the good and the bad; the large and the small; the pleasurable and the painful. As a result, each thing amidst an infinity of forces and forms can experience the dynamic joy and delight of discovery.

In addition, there is the possibility of each form shedding its ignorance and separateness from the whole and discovering its Oneness with life and all other things. In fact, this is the Evolutionary process we are living out today. In this process, the Self-absorption, the negation of the Consciousness in our being is reversed, and the higher nature the Divine intended for us in life emerges. The Real Ideas of Peace Truth, Knowledge, Goodness Delight Love, Timelessness, and Infinity of the Being are increasingly manifest in our lives and in the life of the world.

Hence this principle of Self-Absorption of consciousness in the involutionary process is linked to its principle of Self-Limitation, which is in turn related to the original Self-Conception. That is, the Infinite consciousness self-conceives Real Ideas of possibility to manifest in a universe (Self-Conception). Supermind then delimits the Conscious-Force in order to divide things into infinite variation of forms (Self-Limitation). And then the Consciousness is fully absorbed, hidden beginning with infinitely divided matter to enable the forms that emerge, including us to eventually discover our higher nature and experience Delight in creation (Self-Absorption).

By the way, we follow that same process when we try to rise in our own lives; when we try accomplish at a higher level. That is, we conceive what we wish to become (self-conception). We self-limit ourselves to that particular effort from amongst all things we

could do (self-limitation). And we self-absorb ourselves fully in that effort, forgetting all other matters (self-absorption). The result is the manifestation of our Intent; and infinitely so!

The Divine's Power of Creation that is Available to Us

There are many properties of the Divine Reality. One is its poise as silent Witness of its creation. Others are its poise of supreme Love, ultimate Delight, infinite Wisdom, and Oneness and Unity of being. Another aspect of the Divine is its capacity to Create. Out of a conscious Decision of an Infinite Reality emerged a universe of Forms. Out of nothingness came an entire cosmos, demonstrating the Divine's infinite capacity to create.

What I would like to bring out here is that as forms of the body of the Divine, we have that same infinite capacity to create in our own lives as that of the Infinite Reality. We too have the ability to envision something unprecedented in our future and follow a process so that it manifests just as we intended. Just as the universe emerged from the Real Ideas of an Infinite consciousness, so too our heart's desire can be realized through an conception and idea originating in our minds.

I am not simply suggesting that we have the power to create, but we have the power to create *perfect* outcomes that come about instantaneously or *very rapidly* -- overcoming normally perceived limits of what is possible, and how cause and effect unfold. If we envision what we want, have the deep aspiration and will for it to come about, organize it in its details, carry it out in a timely manner with consummate skill and the very best of attitudes, and bring the spiritual Force to bear, we will evoke sudden good fortune that will descend on us like a miracle.

In this way, the process by which a universe of forms emerged from the Supreme is also available to us in our own lives. We are therefore also the Ishwara, the divine Creator in potential. We here in the body of God are capable of doing the same as He. In the end, that might be the greatest gift that the Supreme has endowed us with.

Creation for the Creator, the Individual, Society, and an Organization

There is essentially one process of growth, accomplishment, and creation in the cosmos. It begins with a vision and aspiration, continues with a decision, and unfolds through organization and action, culminating in a result. This process occurs for the divine Spirit, for the individual human, for society, and for a business or organization.

Creation of the Universe -- From an Omnipresent Spiritual Reality emerged the divine Will to create a universe of forms. Through a process of creation, a Conscious *Force* emerged from a spiritual Existent that formulated into an essential *Energy* out of which the forms of the universe, including we humans, emerged. The process was Vision, Aspiration, Decision, Organization, and Manifestation. The universe and all its forms were/are created through these stages of the process.

Creation for the Individual -- We follow that same process when we create as individuals. We have a vision and aspiration for something to come about. We make the firm decision to accomplish it. We organize the details. And we carry it out through a determined, persevering effort, blended with higher attitudes and personal values. The result, like the Spirit, are powerful positive results, which readily occur through sudden instances of good fortune.

Creation for the Society -- Accomplishment and development occurs similarly for society. Normally, a pioneer individual has a vision and aspires to accomplish something for the collective. That aspiration is organized into its details, and an effort is made to carry it

out. If the society not only accepts the vision, but collaborates with of the pioneer then a new progress is made for that people. Again, vision, aspiration, organization and effort are melded with acceptance and collaboration to create a powerful progress for society.

Creation for a Business/Organization -- A business or other organization accomplishes and grows in a similar fashion. It does this through a strategic plan. In that plan, there is a vision of what it aspires to accomplish, including the business values it subscribes to. It organizes the details into specific strategies and plans of action, and carries it out in a timely manner. As a result, the company rapidly accomplishes what it set out to do, and does so in overwhelming fashion if the process is followed closely and in great detail.

We can also view this process in terms of an energy flow. I.e. the vision, aspiration, and decision organizes the available energy into a *Force*, which through organization of the details becomes a *Power* that when executed through a determined persevering effort manifests as overwhelming *Results*. When the process is followed diligently, life responds positively; often from the most unexpected quarters, as the energies move out and align with the very best conditions.

The question then is how can we follow this same process in our own lives to bring about ultimate success, accomplishment, and delight.

Aligning Ourselves with the Cosmic Intent, Fostering Progress in the World

The Divine expresses Its intention through Real Ideas It seeks to manifest in the world. Among them are spiritual qualities including *Peace, Harmony, Timelessness, Infinity, Knowledge, Power, Creativity, Goodness, Delight, and Love*. We can collaborate with that unfolding, by opening ourselves to the Divine Intent and discovering how we can practically implement these cosmic values in our lives. Doing so, we directly participate in the progress and evolution of life on earth.

For example, the Internet is an embodiment of several of these spiritual-like qualities. I.e. it brings greater *knowledge* to the world; it does so instantly (*overcoming time, hence timelessness*); it creates powerful connection between individuals (*harmony*); and so forth. Those who conceived, developed, and continue to develop the Internet are subconsciously in touch with universal forces and movements that seek to manifest the Real Ideas of the Infinite Divine in the world.

Of course, each one of us is capable of doing the same. Though it is not easy to express these spiritual determinants directly, we can instead look within and determine what our most cherished *beliefs and personal values* are. Values are after all the direct descendants and of these spiritual qualities. For example, the value of "global cooperation and collaboration" is a combination of the spiritual values of harmony, peace, and power. Thus, if we can find a practical way to further these values, such as engaging in a particular project or work, we become instruments of the progress of Spirit in life.

What is critical is our receptivity to the possibilities by discovering it around us. If we are curious enough to perceive new values awakening in the world; if we also discover how to practically apply them in a meaningful work, then we become instruments for great positive change.

For example, one individual believed that the world was moving towards a new spiritual age based on the teachings of a great sage and seer, and then sought to find out how he could apply this vision and spiritual value in a practical way. Over time, he managed to discover several outlets for his talents and beliefs -- one in writing, the other in business -- that played a role in furthering these values for a considerable number of individuals.

In that way, each of us can look within and determine our deepest personal values in life, and then find a means to implement them. When we discover that outlet, and put all of our energies into that work, we will not only uncover our deepest purpose in life, not only become a means of great benefit to others, but also become instruments of the Divine Intent that seek to manifest certain spiritual qualities in the world.

Application of Satchitananda in Our Lives

Here are a few basics of Satchitananda and its practical application in our lives:

Statement: There is only one Reality, Brahman. Sat-Chit-Ananda (Existence, Conscious-Force, Delight) are three of Its planes in the realm of the Unmanifest. Matter, Life, and Mind are three planes of Brahman that appear in the Manifest universe. Each are different shadings of the same one, omnipresent Reality.

Application: Everything in life is part of the Reality; matter and spirit, good and bad, positive and negative; pleasure and pain. Each thing serves a purpose in life, and we should not diminish any of them, such as the small in deference to the large, as each thing plays a vital part in the Play of Life.

And yet we also know that Mother's Force negates the negative side permanently, making Brahman in the universe more fully Positive.

Statement: From out of Satchitananda came the universe. It emerged from the Conscious Force, Chit, though its intention was generated from Real Ideas of Sat. It was executed by Supermind.

Application: We conceive and execute in the same way. We have "real ideas" of possibilities of what we want to become, and then execute the ones we want by garnering and harnessing our energies, which produce real results in the material world. It is the Process of Creation. In miniature, it is Sri Karmayogi's "Complete Act."

Statement: Satchitananda, i.e. Existence/Being, Conscious-Force, Delight are Involved in creation, including its forms, losing Itself for Its own divine purpose; yet is ready to reemerge on the surface in the planes of life when we bring to bear our higher consciousness. It is there in matter, life, and mind, waiting for Its release in the universe we live in.

Application: Everything around us, people, things, life, has spirit, consciousness, and force embedded in it. We bring that out by raising our consciousness. When we change our nature; when we open to Her Force, we bring the involved, hidden, embedded Being, Consciousness, and Force to the surface, so that it is fully available and manifest in life. We bring it out of mind to enable ultimate knowledge and awareness, out of our vital being and interaction with others to make life infinitely successful and dynamic, and out of matter, including our physical bodies, so that we have ultimately elastic and permanent material forms to carry life forward. We thus partake in the process that began with the Divine intent of involving Satchitananda by re-evolving it through our high behavior and action. The result is the great satisfaction that comes with discovery, which is Delight.

Statement: Satchitananda is where we came from, and where we are going.

Application: if we know the source of our being, it is easier to conceive of our own life's purpose. In Satchitananda, we see the cause and purpose of existence in the universe. E.g. infinite variations of Forms, Consciousness, and Delight in creation. Now we can determine what we want to become in our own lives. Satchitananda wanted to become the universe and did so; thought it still seeks its Divinization. What do we want to become?

Ultimately, we can become an instrument of bringing Satchitananda back into life through our rise in consciousness, and by opening to Her Force. We can do that in the details of our lives, including the work we do, and how we carry on our lives. Thus, by referencing Satchitananda and its purpose, we too can find deep meaning in our lives, making them real in the details of life within and around us.

Statement: Satchitananda and all its attributes can be experienced by all forms in creation.

Application: Imagine feeling the peace, calm, and presence of the Being (Sat); the high consciousness, force, energy, and power of Chit; and the utter happiness, joy, delight of Ananda. Life would be an astonishment.

All of the spiritual principles of existence have their origins in Satchitananda, including Peace, Oneness, Truth, Goodness, Power, Beauty, Love, Delight, timelessness, and Infinity. We can bring all of these qualities into our lives by raising our higher consciousness; by increasingly opening to Mother.

We should also keep in mind that the values we subscribe are actually practical variations of these spiritual aspects, these cosmic determinates and qualities, and also have Satchitananda as their source. We know that the universe has come to us as values. Let us use them in the details of our lives, and see its enormous energizing benefit.

Statement: Satchitananda is where Mother is born; in the Shakti originating in Conscious Force.

Application: This will help us place Mother and Her Force in the scheme of things. It will help us understand how mighty She is, as She is there at the source of Creation in Chit.

Ascent and Integration in the Evolutionary Process

Normally when we think about evolution, we imagine a straight line of progress. E.g. in the evolution of the cosmos first we perceive that there was matter, which then evolved animated objects and life forms, and further evolved a mental intelligence culminated in the mind of man. Matter, animated life, and mentality seem to have developed in a linear fashion, with each plane exceeding the previous one.

However, evolution does not merely follow a strict ascending path, but rather allows for *reintegration* of any progress made back into the lesser planes from which it came. E.g. society evolved from a physical state of life in which people were focused on survival, evolved to vital state in which we were able to have a greater degree fulfillment, human interaction, and association, and evolved further still to a modern mental-based existence based on rational thought, a preponderance of laws, theories, ideals, and knowledge. On closer examination however we see that this highest of mental stages, this rational approach to life, began more 2000 than years ago in ancient Greece, and only in the periods that followed was actually integrated into the day-to-day lives of society.

History reveals that the Romans took the rational thinking ideals of the Greeks, and began to apply it throughout the civilizations it oversaw; using the power of rational and conceptual thought to develop law, rules, and other forms to organize society. After the dormant Dark Ages, the Renaissance appeared where conceptual ideas were applied to art, creativity, beauty, and scientific progress. Rational thought and ideas continued to spring forth through the various social movements that followed, including the Reformation, the Enlightenment, the birth of democracy, and others. Today too we continue this integration into of rational thought and pure thinking into our practical lives that the Greeks introduced to the world so very long ago. In this way, the 2000-year-old

ascent to a new level of consciousness and evolution through rational, conceptual, and pure thinking of the Greeks, has taken until today to be integrated throughout all elements of society. Thus, the vast *ascent* of an evolutionary idea was followed by a vast *descent* of integration into the details of life.

We see this same movement of ascent and integration (i.e. descent) in our own lives when we consciously set upon to make personal progress. First, we have a vision of what we want to become. This is the idea that we want to realize and bring about. However, the idea gains power to become a living reality only when it is integrated into the details of our lives; i.e. when we develop the strategies and take actions to make that vision come about. E.g. if I develop the idea that I want to increase my income to \$100,000 per year, I need to come up with several strategies to make it come about -- such as developing new ways to increase my customer base, and learning new skills to be a more effective salesperson. Then I develop even more specific time-bound actions steps to implement my strategies. When I carry these out the details with a determined and persevering effort, bringing to bear positive attitudes, my vision becomes a living reality. Again, the vision -- which like evolution in society is itself a new progressive movement in my life -- is fulfilled when it is integrated into the details of my life, enabling it to come true. At the point that the integration of the idea is complete, the realization of the goal -- in this case to earn \$100,000 per year -- comes about. *The ascent that was my vision becomes a living reality through the descent of integration of the details.*

Progress is a never-ending possibility. It comes about through vision, energy, capacity, and organization. But the process of progress -- and its two more powerful siblings, evolution and transformation -- take place through a double movement; of ascendance

Aligning Ourselves with the Cosmic Intention

At any moment, there is a higher, Divine intention at work. It is flowing from that transcendent reality to the universal plane and on through us at the individual level. It flows in endless forms, factors, and variations. It has the potential to realize itself through our inner and outer actions, provided we are aware of and open to it.

The problem is that we are normally focused on what our limited self and ego dictates, than any urge to fulfill the higher intent of an Infinite consciousness. However, if we align with that cosmic aspiration, force, and unfolding, we can bring staggering positive result to the world, while accomplishing in ways we would never have imagined.

The Bhagavad Gita indicates that a person interested in a spirit-oriented existence should do one's work as service, not to aggrandize one's ego and exclusively for personal gain. At a deeper level still, Krishna indicates that one can surrender and become an instrument for the Divine intent. Sri Aurobindo goes further still and describes the nature of that cosmic aspiration. He indicates that there are Real Ideas originating in and flowing from an infinite, conscious Being, which aspires for their realization in the cosmos. Moreover, the individual human has the capacity at any moment to open to and latch onto these inner and outer movements, and be an instrument for their realization in life.

How then can we partake in this cosmic process in a practical way? At various point, we can pause to consider where we are going, and ask ourselves this question: Are we doing what the universe seems to be indicating for us, or are we caught up in selfish motives and desires. If we know what that Higher Purpose is, then we are well on our way to becoming an instruments of Its cosmic Intent, while living an unprecedented, marvelous, spirit-oriented practical existence. If we don't have that direct connection, we can offer up a powerful prayer such as, "Oh Divine spirit, let Your will be done in my

life." Then when we carry out our work, that higher power will guide us in the right direction each step of the way.

Whichever approach you take, life will unfold like a Marvel. As a result, not only will you be able to fulfill your deepest aspirations, not only will you constantly grow as a person, not only will you be an instrument for evolutionary change, but you will have brought a portion of the Transcendent Will into being in the world.

Reason for Physical and Psychological Suffering in Creation

[A reader asks: "The nature of life for most people (except the spiritual ones) is suffering. People suffer from pain and disease and loss of near ones and disabilities of old age. What is the meaning of all this and how should we, the so-called non-spirituals, deal with this?"]

The simple answer is that suffering is due to lack of consciousness. Mental suffering is due to confusion, lack of knowledge, misinformation, etc. Emotional suffering is due to ego, need and desire unfulfilled, etc. Physical suffering is due to the inelasticity of the body. These lacking forms of consciousness in these various parts of our being are inherent in our human makeup.

The same sort of mental, vital, and physical unconsciousness and therefore suffering exists in society. Poverty, war, hypocrisy, environmental threats, and the limiting attitudes and values of the culture we are born into are examples. We as individuals are susceptible to these limitations as well, adding to our suffering.

To overcome suffering in life we have to change our nature. We have to overcome our Ignorance and come to Knowledge and Awareness. Emotionally we need to move to calm and peace within, and give up our ego movements, reversing them to self-givingness, thereby establishing harmony with others and with life. It takes a life of inner discipline to achieve these lofty spiritual goals. It is made easier by coming in contact with the spiritual dimension of life, either within (the evolving Soul) or around us (the Force).

Likewise, society -- including various collectives, like the family, the nation, the culture, etc. -- needs to make commensurate change.

However, to know the real reason for Suffering, we need understand the reason for creation itself -- i.e. the Purpose of Life.

According to Sri Aurobindo Man was created a divided, Ignorant, suffering-prone being. That is because the Divine wished to create the widest variety of possibility so that its own spiritual attributes, including Its Bliss/Delight could manifest in forms of Itself in infinitely variable ways. To enable the widest variety and multiplicity, it withdrew its own consciousness in the creation process, allowing for ignorance, suffering, evil, and pain.

We can trace this process in the Evolution. At the point of inert physical matter's appearance in the universe, virtually all consciousness is gone. Out of that material Nescience, evolved increasingly conscious forms, including the plant and animal, culminating in we humans. That accounts for why we are born divided, Ignorant of the Truth of existence; prone to pain, suffering, and death. In essence, we mirror the limits of Matter itself in our physical, sensational, vital/emotional, psychological, and mental makeup.

Thus, the positive and negatives, the good and the evil, the pleasurable and the painful were part of the process of creation; even sanctioned by the Divine in order for the widest variation of forces and forms to come about, each of which could discover its higher nature, and thereby have its own unique, dynamic experience of Delight.

Man's limitation of being can be seen in his *mental* makeup, which has only a partial understanding of things, and is error prone. He is also suffering *psychologically and emotionally* because he has wants, needs, has urges that vibrate back and forth between fulfillment and failure. Not only is he Ignorant mentally, and suffers vitally/emotionally, but he is subject to *physical* disease and death. Again, it is because he has inherited the limitations, the unconsciousness, the Nescience of Matter in his physical body, which does not have capacity and consciousness to endure; to overcome decay and death.

There is also the necessity of death and suffering to allow for the fresh, new birth of forms. In other words, *death is a process of Life that enables renewal of substance*. When the energy cannot be maintained in the current form, it leaves that entity and enters a new form. We see that in the plant, the animal, and the human kingdoms. Thus, suffering is due to the incapacity to maintain the form and the energy that animates and sustains it.

How then can Man overcome his physical, vital, and mental suffering that is an inherent part of his nature; that even the Divine has sanctioned to enable infinitely variable forms that can discover their Higher Nature and experience Delight?

When man perceives *the Truth of existence*, he tends not to suffer mentally and psychologically. Mental Ignorance is overcome by developing Integral Knowledge of the Truth of life. How does he attain that? Man sees only a fragment and part of existence, not the totality. Thus he misjudges reality, sees it wrongly, which causes mental suffering and Ignorance, leading to faulty decisions and failed actions. Moreover, he does not know who he is, his purpose in life, his relation to the universe, the parts of his being, etc. However, when he moves beyond the surface consciousness to a deeper poise, his mind expands, and he begins to understand the Truths of life. He sees that *all serves a purpose*, and thus his mental being moves from division to unity, from falsehood to truth, and from Ignorance to integral Knowledge, enabling all suffering through the mind to be overcome.

Similarly, when he gives up ego movements, selfishness, blind attachments, and demanding the fulfillment of his needs and desires, his *vital/emotional being* evolves out of its current limitations. His vital/emotional being then becomes calm, still, open, flexible; and his heart opens to life and the world.

With his mental and vital limitations overcome, 75% of Man's suffering is gone.

Then only the physical limitations remain. Even that can be overcome through an effort of consciousness. For example, Sri Aurobindo's partner, The Mother, spent a great deal of her last 30 years trying to discover the formula that overcomes pain, illness, and death. She began to succeed, as she was able to call the spiritual Force into her cells, which began to change their programming, whereby they gave up in their own belief in the inevitability of their decay and death. She was a pioneer in this regard, and has opened the doorway to vast possibilities for future inner experiments.

Likewise, the animal suffers because it has less consciousness even than man. And yet too that form is going through an evolution of consciousness, in which case his death sets the stage for new life. It can come through rebirth of its being into a higher being. That is similar to the human evolving soul which takes birth in an individual to gather sustenance in its Journey through time. When that form cannot provide the answers it needs, the form withdraws, and the Soul then takes on a new form in its quest for knowledge and fulfillment.

So suffering is a product of the Divine's intent to create infinite variety of forces and forms, so that they may discover in infinitely variable ways the truths of existence, enabling infinitely variable, dynamic Delight, which is even beyond the static Delight of the Infinite that is the source of all things. Suffering is thus a product of the

unconsciousness that the Supreme allowed for, beginning with the near unconsciousness, nescience of matter in the universe.

Finding our way out of suffering through higher consciousness is what the Infinite consciousness asks of us. When we do that -- by overcoming our limited nature -- mental, psychological, and vital/emotional suffering will come to end. Our Ignorance will cease, as will our divided nature. Our emotional pain will terminate, replaced by peace and harmony with life. Our physical suffering will cease, leading to a new physical existence of unending health and longevity, culminating in immortality.

From another perspective, suffering and death are processes of Life to enable new life. When we learn to overcome that process, we can overcome illness, decay, and death, replacing it with perfect health and endless life, culminating in physical immortality. We can thus make an effort of consciousness to overcome our lower nature; plus we can open ourselves to the spiritual Force that is there in the atmosphere, which together will transmute our divided, ignorant nature into one of Harmony, Oneness, Peace, Knowledge, Wisdom, Goodness, Creativity, Love, and Delight.

The Nature of Energy

Form and Energy

We observe the forms of life around us and wonder where their origin and source of power lies. It comes from energy. Moreover, there is a fascinating relationship between the forms and the energy behind it.

Energy is the source and basis of all forms, whether physical forms of rocks or humans, or mental forms such as concepts and ideas. Forms however tend to break down. However, the energy behind them does not go away. Rather it reformulates into new forms. For example, when a form of government, such as monarchy, breaks down, the energy behind it does not wither, but reformulates itself into a new form, such as democracy.

When things die -- whether anachronistic forms of social influence like aristocracy, or the physical human body -- that form is unable to hold its energy. It thus seeks corresponding new forms to inhabit, such as a new social order or a new form of life; even a new human body. In the 1960s the global Hippy movement was born in the San Francisco area. It sparkled like a comet across the sky changing the world, and just as suddenly died out. But then the energy behind morphed a new form with the rise of Silicon Valley, the personal computer, the Internet, and the Smartphone, all in that very same area. Their influence is untold, approaching infinity.

Sri Aurobindo in his metaphysical opus 'The Life Divine' tells us that energy is the source of all things, all life seen and unseen in the universe. He says that there is a constant, dynamic energy in the cosmos that takes subtle or gross form -- whether a physical body or object, a plant or animal, or an idea or insight. This common energy flowing subtly and invisibly through the universe has as its source a spiritual Conscious-Force of the one Infinite Consciousness.

Though we are a product of that universal force, energy is not a static entity. For example, we humans can increase it at any time -- whether it is physical, vital/emotional, mental, or spiritual energy. Increasing any of these will give us not only a greater power to accomplish, but a greater zest for life. If this is so, then what can we do to increase our energy? There are a number of practical approaches.

One is to increase our level of aspiration in life. The more intense our aspiration to achieve a goal, the more our will is engaged, and thus the greater energy released. Another way to maintain and build our energies is to maintain a positive attitude.

Whereas negative attitudes tend to deplete our energies, even evoking instances of sudden ill fortune, positive ones -- whether towards others, one's self, one's work, or life -- tend to have the opposite effect.

Thus, the more we increase our energy, the more likely the forms that relate to our being will maintain themselves and avoid breaking down. If we lose physical, vital, or mental energy, those corresponding forms tend to wither. E.g. our body decays, our will depletes, and our understanding diminishes.

In the end, energy is the source of all accomplishment. It is energy that created, is creating the universe from a divine, Infinite consciousness. Likewise it is energy that also enables us to create and achieve in life. The greater the consciousness, the greater the energy -- physical, vital, mental, and spiritual -- and thus the greater sustainability of the forms of our being and our capacity to thrive.

Reemergence of Conscious-Force in Life

Off the Hawaiian Islands we see new life emerging in a confluence of molten fire, water, and air. New formations of rock follow in its wake. According to scientists, this is how life first emerged in the world. Not only did matter emerge this way, but the first life forms emerged from matter simply due to the release of chemical variations and associations. In other words, evolution occurred through a material process. I.e. higher forms of consciousness took shape from fire to rock to primitive life forms evolved through chemical and biological processes. This is the traditional mechanistic and material scientific view of things.

And yet the truth is just the opposite! It was consciousness that compelled fire and plasma and air, etc. to form into matter; and from matter to primitive life forms; and from them into plants, animals and humans. It was/is an involved consciousness that compelled matter and life forward, not the other way around.

If this is true, then what enabled this dynamic in the first place?

Sri Aurobindo says that from out of the Being, the original, Spiritual Reality and Existence emerged a "Conscious Force." In order to manifest an infinite variations of forms in the Creation process, the Being hid itself, its own Conscious Force to allow for positive and negative, good and bad, pain and pleasure, knowledge and ignorance; i.e. all opposites and all formations in between. As a result, a less conscious entity that we know as Energy emerged in the yet unformed Cosmos.

And yet the Consciousness was still contained in that Energy, but it was/is involved, absorbed, hidden from view. There was Force in that Energy, but it was divorced from its Consciousness. The Consciousness was/is still there, hidden in the heart of Energy, as a kind of seed waiting for it -- and therefore higher formations of existence -- to come out.

When the Energy then moved, coagulated, etc., the involved Consciousness further emerged from its involved depths, enabling the energy to now formulate into matter. Life forms then emerged from matter, and mentality emerged from life forms. Now the Conscious-Force in the world, in us is enabling Spirit to emerge from mind and life, which means that the original Being and Its Conscious-Force is now reemerging in creation, and through infinite variation and possibility of human experience.

But what compels the Conscious-Force in things to come out of its slumber and take on new, higher formations?

For one, when the Conscious-Force perceives that the form is organized at the current plane, it seeks to evolve another, higher plane. In addition, a compulsion from On High compels the Conscious-Force to come out. This occurs because the Divine Being wishes

to manifests its Real Ideas, its spiritual properties – including Peace, Oneness, Knowledge, Truth, Goodness, Power, Delight, Love, Timelessness, and Infinity -- in the infinite variation of forms in creation. Or to put it another way, a Transcendent Consciousness is compelling the Conscious-Force to further emerge in an infinite variation so that all forms can have the Joy of discovery of their higher nature.

Science which sees consciousness emerging in a straight line from a starting point of matter does not understand that the workings of the involved Conscious Force and the compulsion from the Divine Being is what is driving the emergence of consciousness in the first place; is what is behind the evolutionary process. They do not understand that the Conscious-Force is increasingly reemerging from its slumber, as it was that Conscious Force that compelled life to emerge and for evolution to take shape in the first place.

Sri Aurobindo's Vision and Spiritual Life

Divine Life on Earth

**A new light is dawning on the world.
Wake up and unite to receive and welcome it.**
(The Mother)

Sri Aurobindo, the Indian sage and seer, said that humans may not be the final rung on the evolutionary scale. That we might witness the emergence of a new species, one that is above and beyond the present human race as we know it. Sri Aurobindo believed that if we could make the ascent to overcome our limiting nature, if we could further rediscover the hidden spirit in life, if we could come in contact and open ourselves to the spiritual Force, then we can change life as we know it. He invited us to take a journey on a path from our current human functioning to a vastly different superfunctioning that opens the doors to infinite accomplishment, success, and happiness in life.

Sri Aurobindo's view of society and the emergence of a spirit-oriented future existence can be explained as follows:

Beyond the physical-based social life of early man (marked by survival, fear, subservience, etc.), the vital-based social life of the past five hundred years (emerging through trade, travel, discovery, adventure, and the fulfillment of the individual needs, wants, and desires), and the currently emerging mental-based age (indicated by freedom, individuality, democracy, education, rationality, technology, and the common man) is the possibility of the emergence of a spirit-based age and collective existence.

In this highest form of social or collective life, the domination of the ordinary mind -- of surface preoccupation, of partial knowledge, as well as the lower physical and vital life is replaced with a mind and life dominated by the spirit.

Thus, the first necessity for the emergence of an evolutionary divinized life on earth is the realization amongst a good number of individuals of the Spirit, the divine reality above and within one's self.

The divinized or gnostic being lives a spiritual existence in an integral way; integral in his own being, and integral and one with the world around him. He has integrated and elevated the physical, vital/emotional, and mental planes of his existence to its greatest heights and fulfillment by finding the spirit within himself and applying and elevating these planes of life with the spiritual. He also discovers that the spirit is everywhere in the world and in every other person, eliminating the separation between himself and life, and himself and others around him. In other words, he is whole and integrated individually and universally.

"To be in the being of all and to include all in one's being, to be conscious of the consciousness of all, to be integrated in force with the universal force, to carry all action and experience in oneself and feel it as one's own action and experience, to feel all selves as one's own self, to feel all delight of being as one's own delight of being is a necessary condition of the integral divine living." --Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*

In addition to integrating the planes and sublevels of one's being (individualization), and becoming one with others and the world around is (universalization), the individuals who will be the harbingers of this divine life will also be united with the transcendent Divine. These individuals will have found the transcendent spirit within, the spiritual force, God, the Divine in the cosmos, and feel, know, act with complete reference to its divine force, power, knowledge, and bliss.

In this context a number of individuals, integrated individually, universally, and transcendentally, can work together, near or apart, aware or unaware of one another, to create a new common life, superior to the present individual and common existence. A critical mass of such "gnostic individuals" could create the foundation of a new social life and order; a divine life on earth.

Then what of this divine life? What would its focus, attributes, and tendencies be? For one there would be an inescapable law of unity, mutuality, and harmony.

"...a greater identity of being and consciousness between individual and individual unified in their spiritual substance, feeling themselves to be self and self of one self-existence, acting in a greater unitarian force of knowledge, a greater power of being. There must be an inner and direct mutual knowledge, based upon a consciousness of oneness and identity, a consciousness of each other's being, thought, feeling, inner and outer movements" -- Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*

The current vital and mental constructions of life would be replaced by gnostic individuals who live beyond the vicissitudes of human thought and the push and pull of the forces of Nature. Humanity in the current age does not have the depth of inner knowledge to understand the infinite forces that are involved in the emerging world, (e.g. what can create the greater good of the community). His limiting mind-sense and the limiting mind-sense of the collective hasn't the integral vision and knowledge and force of action to deal with the evolving society. We have created a civilization, which has become too big for our limited mental capacities and understanding and our limiting ego, which narrows the truth to our own needs and desires. The current unfolding and limited blossoming of life on earth is bound by the limiting vital animal and passion nature, and the narrow opening to the full truth which is the human mind.

A life of unity, mutuality, and harmony alone, emerging from individuals who are in integral relationship with themselves, others, and the transcendent spirit, can deal with the overwhelming needs of the collective life. Science, economic development, democracy, religion, and other institutions and ideas and ideals are alone incapable of addressing the evolutionary needs of the emerging collective life. If the gnostic beings help establish this integral, unifying gnostic consciousness on earth, it would provide a far greater power and knowledge than mental man has for understanding and acting on the needs of the emerging collective.

Thus, it is likely that much that is normal in human life would likely disappear. Mental ideals, systems, would dissolve as a new harmony is created founded on a much wider basis of inner knowledge. Political strife would disappear in a divine atmosphere of unity. Life and body would not completely preoccupy us as it does now in our current existence. A great diversity and freedom of self-expression, based on a spiritual core of being, would emerge. The one rule of this divine life would be the self-expression of the spirit, of the divine, in all aspects of life.

"..an existence without the reactions of success and frustration, vital joy and grief, peril and passion, pleasure and pain, the vicissitudes and uncertainties of fate and struggle and battle and endeavor, a joy of novelty and surprise and creation projecting itself into the unknown ... The gnostic manifestation of life would be more full and fruitful and its interest more vivid than the creative interest of the Ignorance; it would be a greater and happier constant miracle." --Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*

Sri Aurobindo's View of Existence

Sri Aurobindo's teachings begin with the assertion that Man is not the final rung of creation. Rather he is a transitional being on the way to developing a Supernature. He can attain that through an effort of personal growth, evolution, and transformation. That can be accomplished by turning within and discovering his Inner Being, culminating in his evolving Soul; and opening to and surrendering to the Supramental Truth Consciousness and Force above (through the Divine Mother). By making that effort, he overcomes his Ignorance born of creation, attains integral Knowledge, and embodies Peace, Oneness, Wisdom, Goodness, Power, Beauty, Love, Delight, Timelessness, and Infinity in his being.

Sri Aurobindo also explains the nature of Reality, as well as the process by which the universe emerged from a Divine Source.

He tells us that the Reality, Brahman is that which permeates all existence, including the Unmanifest and the Manifest, all planes of being from Spirit to Matter, and every aspect and detail of life. In other words it is the All, the one omnipresent Reality that expresses in infinite variation and shadings, yet remains undivided, integrally interconnected, and One. Moreover, we can perceive this Marvel of existence by rising to a higher consciousness, which will allow us to see beyond the divisions, contradictions, and strife of life, and into the utility and oneness of all things encountered.

Sri Aurobindo also explains how the universe as we know it came to be, and where it is headed. He tells us that there is a dual movement in the unfolding of the unmanifest Reality into manifest existence: an *Involution* of consciousness, as well as an *Evolution* of consciousness. The Involution is the process by which the Infinite Divine intends and creates a universe of forms out of its own Conscious-Force. The ineffable, immutable Brahman takes its first step into reality as Sat-Chit-Ananda (Existence/Being, Conscious-Force, and Delight), which further extends to Supermind, which in turn shapes the Conscious-Force into forces and forms of real idea, which leads further to subjectivity, objectivity, space, time, cosmic mind, energy, and finally matter.

On the other hand, the *Evolution* is the progressive movement back upward from Matter to Life/Energy to Mind to Supermind and Spirit. It is a subconscious or conscious self-compulsion to rise to higher levels of consciousness, while also fulfilling the Intent of the Infinite Divine. At this point in the evolution, the evolutionary process is brought about primarily by the elevation of consciousness of we individual humans.

Evolution can also be viewed as the process by which the Conscious-Force that is hidden, involved in forces and forms in the Involutionary process is reenergized, and thus reemerges compelling new aspects and planes of being to unfold in life; including within our own human makeup.

In sum, Involution is the process by which the universe came to be, and Evolution is process of its becoming and progress. The Involution and the Evolution together -- as well as complementarities of the Unmanifest and Manifest, the Being and the Becoming, the One and the Many, etc. -- are contained in the underlying Reality that is the All of existence.

Interestingly, the resulting Matter that emerges through the Involutionary process originating from a Divine Source begins as dumb, unconscious physical substance. That is so because the Infinite Being withdrew its Consciousness from the Conscious-Force in the involutionary process in order to create the greatest multiplicity, variation, and possibility of forces and forms in creation for the purpose of the most varied experience and discovery, and hence Delight. As a result, the human inherits the limitations of that process, including the limits of matter in our physical makeup (unconsciousness), a divided vita/emotional nature (of pleasure and pain, positive and negative experience, etc.), a limited mentality (part knowledge, ignorance), as well as an inability to perceive his hidden spiritual nature.

To overcome the multi-faceted limitations of our being -- including weakness, strife, difficulty, conflict, contradiction, ignorance, falsehood, evil, pain, decay, and death -- we must undergo a process of growth, evolution, and transformation. Doing so will enable us to rise from our limited nature to a divine-like supernature. By connecting to our evolving Soul (Psychic Being) within, and by surrendering to the Spiritual Force above, the individual not only uplifts, purifies, and perfects his own nature, but become an instrument of Evolution; a vehicle by which the Intent of the Infinite Divine is fulfilled in life.

To aid him in this difficult endeavor, we are asked to surrender all aspects of our being and the details of our lives to the Divine Mother, who personifies the Supramental truth consciousness and Power; the same force that rendered a universe of forces, space, time, mind, energy, forces, and forms in the involutionary process. Through this two-pronged approach, our being evolves at all planes – physical, vital, psychological, mental, and spiritual. By following this process to its logical conclusion, we are able to realize a supernature, becoming a gnostic/supramental being filled with the Spirit, and one with others and all aspects of life.

When enough individuals attain that status, there can be the beginnings of a new life for humanity; a new super-conscious and harmonious collective existence, culminating in a Divine Life on Earth.

Parallel to the development of the consciousness of individuals, we see society itself evolving through various stages and higher formations -- through increasing cooperation, collaboration, harmony, oneness, and unity; and therefore decreasing ego, strife, suffering, poverty, ill-will, conflict, war, etc. among the people and nations of the world. The result can be the emergence of a new global consciousness, and a new age for humanity.

As individuals, collectives, society rise in this manner, they become instruments of the Universal Will, which itself is the vehicle for implementing the intent of the Transcendent Divine, which is to manifest all of Its spiritual qualities -- silence, peace, harmony, oneness, truth, knowledge, wisdom, goodness, beauty, creativity, love, timelessness, and infinity -- in the details of an ever-evolving Life in the cosmos.

Background to Writing My Book on 'The Life Divine'

Though I had read the book several times before, in 1999 Garry Jacobs held a small weekend seminar I attended at his home in Napa, California on the subject of 'The Life Divine' by Sri Aurobindo. I began then and there to understand the contents of the great spiritual tome in new, unimagined ways. And so around seven years ago I plunged into the book in earnest, carefully gathering the most salient point of each chapter.

A few years after that I embarked on writing my own chapter-by-chapter analysis of Life Divine, working on it in my spare time, mostly during the Christmas and New Year's season when there was some quiet time.

Along the way I read Garry's wonderful book 'Lectures on Life Divine,' which was a more advanced version of the fine presentations he gave in the late 90s. Then in the years that followed I regularly reviewed Karmayogi's online notes on Life Divine and Pride and Prejudice, and occasionally dropped in on Garry's nightly online discussions of that content with a small group of devotees. In recent years I listened to Garry's monthly lectures on each chapter that he continues to present till this day, and regularly perused Karmayogi's accompanying vast, detailed notes. I also went through and gathered important statements related to Life Divine from Garry's great novel The Book for more clues into Sri Aurobindo's vast, cosmic work.

And so after all these years I finally finished a first solid draft of the book 'An Analysis of Sri Aurobindo's The Life Divine.' It happened yesterday.

My book is now approaching 500 pages, though I know it could easily be double that if I were to delve into many of the other principles Appa has revealed from His book, or even if I were to flesh out the ones I have already addressed. It is an on-going project and work that I hope to enhance over time.

Secretly, the book was actually written for myself, so I could understand the concepts more clearly, and hopefully at some point apply them in my life. If others read the book, so much the better, but I didn't have any great expectations in that regard.

It turns out that I also had a wonderful little life response related to this subject. Yesterday, on the very day I felt the first draft was complete, I received a call from a friend who I had not spoken to in a while, but who surprised me at the outset of the conversation with his remark that he has been utterly thrilled by his first reading of The Life Divine. Rather than talk about his family, his new business, etc. he was just bursting with enthusiasm about his experiences reading the book.

It was naturally a startling response for me having just finished my first full draft after all those years just a few hours earlier. It was doubly remarkable because this individual hadn't shown any inclination to read any of Mother's or Bhagavan's works. And yet on that same day of completing the book, someone called to narrate their thrilling first

The Supramental Beyond The Universal

The Gods and great sages of the ages including recent times reached in full or part the Universal plane and consciousness, garnering full truth in their own particular domain; enabling peace, harmony, truth, wisdom, goodness, love, delight, etc. to various degrees. However, there is a higher plane still, Supermind, which not only has the cosmic perception and perspective like the Universal, but also accesses a Force and Power, a divine Shakti that when evoked instantly or very rapidly changes the conditions of life.

Thus Supermind, also known as Truth Consciousness, is an ultimate plane where integral knowledge is fused with a propensity for that truth to instantly manifest as real in the world.

When we connect to the Mother, we access that supramental plane, enabling instantaneous miraculousness of any and all of the spiritual qualities. They simply appear in our lives as real. And that also extends outward in terms of accomplishment, success, and the overcoming of space and time of objects, as the current finite becomes the infinite.

That is why Sri Aurobindo and the Mother rejected the Universal plane of the Gods and the sages rose to as the object and final destination of their spiritual journey. In 1958, that Supramental power fully descended on earth; and its power has been increasing

ever since. Moreover, that power is available to us all of the time, meaning we can evoke the miraculous at a moment's notice.

The Supramental power and Shakti of the Mother is the plane we can access, helping make real the next age of Man beyond the current Mental stage to the Supra-mental, ushering in a Divine Life on Earth.

Sri Aurobindo's 'The Life Divine': The Ultimate Adventure of Consciousness & Joy

Over the millennia, great religious and spiritual works have emerged to remind humanity of life's deepest purpose and meaning. The Bible, the Koran, the Upanishads, the Gita, and others have served to show us the spiritual nature and potential of existence. More recently works from Darwin, Einstein and others have tried to explain the nature and unfolding of life from a scientific point of view, reflecting the vast expansion at the physical plane in the material age that we are now passing through.

However, time marches on, and new understandings of life's mysteries reveal themselves. Some of these newer works of psychological and spiritual wisdom attempt to synthesize the old with the new. Then there are the *definitive* works that mark a profound new understanding in the world, ushering in a new age of humanity, in which a new synthesis is developed, embracing and then going beyond all previous knowledge and understanding. Such a work is Sri Aurobindo's epic metaphysical tome on the meaning and development of life in the cosmos, 'The Life Divine.'

In 56 chapters, he has explained the unexplainable, synthesizing the old and the new -- i.e. the ancient spiritual and modern evolutionary views -- and then going far beyond a mere synthesis. In this work, he explains in vast detail the nature of the Spiritual reality, the process by which the universe came to be from that Divine Source, the evolutionary unfolding of life in the cosmos and on earth, the purpose and destiny of human existence, a detailed account of the nature of our human makeup, our individual evolutionary potential and purpose, the methods to achieve that purpose, and so forth. He even describes the nature of our *future* evolutionary existence -- both as individuals and as a society. No work in human history has ever had such a cosmic scope, nor fulfilled that intention; and that is simply because that many-sided, integral knowledge of the nature of cosmic existence was never known before; until now.

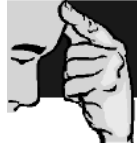
'The Life Divine' is not an easy work to comprehend because it is explaining cosmic realities and future possibilities that are in no way common to our daily experience. In addition, the book brings forth these cosmic insights through a rather dense philosophical and metaphysical style. That is so because Sri Aurobindo explores every spiritual truth in great detail and depth, considering every nuance and possibility in his arguments that allows him to come to logical ultimate truths about life in the universe.

How was he able to do this; how was he able to come to these conclusions? Aside from examining the deepest mysteries from virtually every conceivable side, it is a fact that he actually *experienced and realized* these realities in his own life. Some say that he had to *become* the Divine in order to reveal the Divine's purpose and secrets -- and perhaps that is really the case. Still, for us to grasp what seems on the surface to be the ungraspable and ineffable, it would be helpful if someone were able to predigest the essence of this vast, epochal work for those of us just setting out on the path.

Fortunately, several pioneer individuals have sifted through the work to make it digestible for those inspired to learn and acquire this greatest of all universal knowledge. For one, Garry Jacobs, a member of Mother's Service Society, has studied the work for several decades; and at one point did a lecture tour across several continents to present his practical approach to understanding the master's work. The result is "Lecture's on Sri

Aurobindo's 'The Life Divine,' in which Mr. Jacobs not only presents the wisdom of Sri Aurobindo, but shows how we can practically apply this knowledge in our daily lives.

Anyone seeking the answers to the major questions of life, as well as the levers that will enable ultimate achievement and joy would be served well by reading Mr. Jacobs' brilliant summation. That person would then have the basic framework to tackle 'The Life Divine' itself, where the deepest truths of life will more easily reveal themselves. If you decide, at that point you can then begin to live the ultimate adventure -- the adventure of consciousness and joy.



SOCIETY'S GROWTH

Historical Evolution of Humanity

Four Stages of Society's Evolution

George Lucas, the famed movie director and writer of Star Wars series, was being interviewed by Bill Moyers. Both noted the great progress humanity had made since its inception. Moyers noted that if humanity started out at a 0, we were now at a 5 rating after all of these years of evolution, and were on our way to flower as a full 10. Lucas responded with "no, actually our potential is a million."

We will then begin our discussion of the keys to society's growth and success by discussing the stages that society has passed through on its way to its current social condition. By reviewing these stages, it will help us understand where we've been, where we are today, and where we may be headed. This knowledge can then aid any person doing work related to social development (in economics, politics, sociology, education, science, planning, etc.), hopefully enabling deeper insights and perspectives in projects and initiatives one is working on.

Our first major conclusion of our research on the course of social evolution is this: Society has developed through three overlapping stages -- physical, vital, and mental. Over the course of tens of thousands of years humanity has evolved from a society mainly concerned with the *physical* realities, such as our survival, a life of fear and threat from without, and the need for complete deference to authority; to a stage in which our individual *vital* needs and wants, including our desire to interact with others and expand and trade, come into their own; to the present emerging *mental* stage where understanding, knowledge, peace, freedom, democracy, the fulfillment and empowerment of the individual, the emergence of fast, complex organizations, and the extraordinary power of thought to shape our world for endless progress emerges. Beyond that is the spiritual stage of social evolution where mind is more fully developed to allow multi-sided awareness of truth, instead of the current limited capacity of mind, and where one connects with the spiritual Force that enable the ultimate flowering and transformation of life.

Let's then examine each of these stages.

Physical Stage

When humans first evolved on earth say 100,000 years ago, and in particular over the last 10,000 years, individuals were mostly focused on their very *survival* and existence; everything else was secondary. The atmosphere was one of physical and psychological

insecurity. Threats were perceived everywhere -- from threats in nature to threats from other tribes or collectives.

In this *physical stage*, people's social awareness was limited to the tribe. To think and act outside of the tribe and tradition was considered treasonous. In other words, humans had a very limited sense of their own selves. They were beyond to the concerns and authority of the collective.

Vital Stage

Over time society, the collective, overcame these threats from nature, from the outside. Plus, they began to develop better cohesion and unity within the collectives they were a part of. We began to master the basic productive operations of life, and we gained control of the physical forces around us. This enabled the emergence of a new *vital* human. Another way of saying this is that humanity organized themselves at a higher level in the physical stage, enabling a more expansive *vital stage*.

So what is this vital age? In this stage, we see a willingness of people to engage others not of their own tribe or collective. We begin to see the beginnings of trade with other tribes, more interaction with others. This leads to the desire for more travel and exploration to expand trade and resources. Gradually there is an awakening that the individual can improve his own lot, and that he does not have to only focus on the concerns and needs of the collective.

In this vital stage, there is a broadening of the social interactions, of interchange with others. We could now begin to focus on our own individual self-interests. We could become prosperous and enjoy life. There was thus a vast expansion of *vitality* in the vital stage.

Where the physical stage of life was the culmination of an evolution that began 100,000 or so years ago, and formed more fully around 10,000 years ago, the vital stage has only been there around 500 years, roughly corresponding to the Renaissance and the centuries of exploration and discovery. In the last 100 years, and in particular the last 50, there has been the rapid emergence of the next stage of human development; the *mental stage*.

Mental Stage

The first thing that we notice about the mental stage is that society begins to value the vast amount of accumulated knowledge of the past. In the modern era, this *knowledge base* of the past began to be organized, codified, and then disseminated to the population. Information that was formerly unfocused and scattered is now distributed through systems of training and education. That in turn energizes individuals to further advancement in work, their careers. And then that in turn accelerates people's achievement in life, which we can see expressed in the vast developments in science, communications, and technology of recent years.

Then through that rapidly expanding technology base, through exposure to the vast knowledge base presented in media, in the Internet, people become even *more* aware of what can be achieved. They become aware of possibilities for achievement; and see that others are doing it. That in turn leads to an era of ever-rising *expectations*; people want and demand more in their own lives.

It's actually been going on for centuries. Freedom and democracy are unstoppable forces that have emerged in the last century or two. These are products of the rationality of the mental age; an acknowledgement of the needs for these essential values in life. Now

that same freedom is extending further as we each as individuals become aware of our ability to fulfill our individual dreams, our own self-fulfillment and human potential.

So in this emerging mental stage that we have now begun to enter, with its possibilities of freedom, initiative, and *self-determinism*, we are very far from the *determinism* of the physical stage, where we deferred to the collective will to survive.

The quantification and dispersion of accumulated knowledge, the qualitative improvements in life in areas such as education and social benefits, the demand and ability to fulfill one's potential, the awareness and concern for the plight of others, the demand of the individual to be involved in the decisions of the collective, and the emerging political and social freedom are some of the indicators of the mental stage of social evolution.

Spiritual Stage

Then there is a *spiritual* stage beyond the mental. That is obviously further out. As we begin to emerge through the mental stage, we perceive that even the power of mind cannot be the ultimate salvation for humanity; for after all the faculties of mind as we have said are decidedly limited. So there begins to develop a longing for a unity of awareness and perception that mind cannot hold; an openness to *greater* truths, greater insights, spiritual knowledge and vision. To an understanding that our individual will, the collective will, and the Divine will are all bound together.

At some point individuals who have experienced the inner life of the spirit, who have begun to transform themselves to a higher physical, vital, and physical existence, who have experience the spirit in action in life, who have felt and opened themselves to a greater spiritual power to effect life, become the harbingers of a new collective life, a new divine life on earth. This is the vision that Sri Aurobindo envisioned beyond the mental stage that we are only just emerging into just now.

Integrating the Progressive Forces of Society & the Individual

Society has moved forward over the millennia due to key developments and values, including the advent of freedom, the opening to democracy, the application of reason, the implementation of practical organization, mass production, and technology; even the experience of spirit in life. Each of these great values developed in isolation; in different places, times, and eras. And yet now all of these and many others have the potential to be experienced by anyone now in the world, which if adopted globally would produce a tidal wave of new consciousness and force that would revolutionize life on earth. Imagine if every society took up these progressive values in earnest, so that they could be experienced by every person, in every situation, all of the time. Further imagine these developments and values integrated with one another. That would energize and expands the potentials of life for the individual and society to infinity.

Let me provide some context for this argument with some history of these progressive social forces and energies. (I thank Karmayogi for his penetrating analysis here as expressed in his volume 'Spiritual Opulence'.)

If we scan the epochal past, we will see that Nature has progressed on many fronts. In Her unfolding, she has gone from one place to another to reveal the progressive values and energies of society. For example, in the 17th century, England unleashed democracy for the world, though its ancient roots were in Greece two thousand years earlier. Likewise, the French Revolution opened the door to freedom for the world's peoples. A century later, we witnessed in America the development of practical organization, mass production, and technology. Going back further, we see that at the level of the mind,

Greece unleashed the power of reason; and thousands of years before that the India Rishis discovered en masse the omnipresent Divine Reality behind all existence.

And yet the progenitors of each of these progressive movements were unable to maintain leadership in the areas they championed, preventing their integral adaptation by the remainder of the world. For example, long ago, the Rishis of India realized Spirit, but could not apply it to daily life, and so realization of the spiritual Reality and Being remained dormant in the world. Likewise, Greece, which gave birth to logic and reason, collapsed quickly within two centuries as evolutionary leader in that domain. Similarly, England, which was the mother of democracy and bravely fought two wars to save the world, has recently become ossified and crusted over because of its limited physical and material consciousness. Then there was the French, who brought forth freedom out of Revolution, but who in the intervening years turned to wine, women, and song, leaving its original inspiration behind. Finally, there is America, which has given us practical organization, mass production, wealth expansion, technology, and individuality, but is finding it difficult, like the English, to break out of its material orientation, unable to come to grips with higher psychological and spiritual values of life.

In other words, though Nature has evolved many progressive forms over the millennia, the nations and regions that gave birth to them have failed to sustain them, which have left huge gaps for their full realization in society. And yet these forces can be taken up by all others, even coalesced and integrated, which would energize society to no end. Imagine a society where freedom, democracy, organizational capacity, material prosperity, reason, technology, and the spirit all work together as an integrated force and power in life. It would revolutionize the world. Though that is in fact what is occurring through Nature's slow and difficult method, we can speed up that process dramatically by consciously and collectively perceiving, implementing, and integrating these powerful forces in our lives. For example, imagine a community that at once reverses itself and takes to democracy, freedom, and individuality, while adopting the latest technologies and adopting spiritual techniques to overcome space and time. In a decade's time, it can make the progress of a thousand years. That power is available to every collective who consciously draws from it.

But there is more. It is not just *world* energies and movements that can be adopted to radically accelerate human progress, but there are *individual* powers of consciousness that we can adopt to do the same. For example, we can each identify and uplift our own individual capacities, our skills and knowledge, and our personal values, even as we overcome our limiting attitude, our fixed habits and our wanting opinions and beliefs. As these values and powers of consciousness are adopted, we create a tidal wave of power that will dramatically alter the course of our lives.

Beyond these practical powers of human character, there are *spiritual* capacities that create ultimate consciousness, and therefore ultimate capacity for accomplishment and fulfillment. These include our ability to be silent and still in all situations, which puts us in the right flow of things; our opening and utilization of the spiritual Force that is descending into the earth's atmosphere, which sets right every conditions of life we apply it to; our taking to higher levels of self-givingness, which generates goodwill, affection, sweetness, and harmony, while evoking positive response from life for all parties; and otherwise generate movements of oneness, truth, wisdom, creativity, love, beauty, delight, timelessness, and infinity by connecting to the spirit within or above.

As society recognizes the great social powers and energies that have been unleashed in the world -- including freedom, individuality, democracy, reason, organization, technology -- and consciously makes it practically available to all, life will move from its current status of limitation and finiteness to one of realization of its infinite potential.

Moreover, the degree that we individuals evolve our knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and spiritual attributes, we will bring that same infinity and infinite fulfillment into our own lives.

However, together -- these great world energies and values, and the great power we can unleash through our higher consciousness -- will unleash a torrent of transformative power that will make our current existence and achievements pale in comparison.

Evolution of Consciousness in Our Times

A New World Emerging

There is a new world emerging from the old. There is a new consciousness being born on earth that has never existed before. People are en masse becoming aware of the subtle unfoldings of life. Many are coming to understand the phenomena of "Life Response" and "The Secret." They express the fact that we can instantly change the conditions of life around ourselves from within. E.g., you change an attitude, or aspire for something intensely, and then within days, hours, minutes, even seconds good fortune arrives on its own.

This is being accompanied by another movement: the psychological development of the individual. As we become more self-aware, as we shed out negative propensities, as we embrace higher human values, we begin to change and evolve our nature.

Then there are the pioneers who are opening to the spiritual Force, which brings the conditions of life under control, while evoking results that are dynamically creative and unprecedented in quality.

All of these are steps on the road to the spiritual awakening of humanity. It is the promise of a New World emerging from the old.

Levels of Collective Change in Consciousness in the World

Is there a collective movement in higher consciousness under way?

Undoubtedly, we are in a new age where a new consciousness is emerging. It is happening in ways that for the average person are too subtle to be perceived. Even for the conscious person, it is happening in ways that are beyond the spiritual traditions or even the New Age movements. That is why Sri Aurobindo's perceptions of this new world are so helpful, because he lays out the general parameters so clearly. Karmayogi has extended this knowledge into the major fields of life.

If it is a collective movement, it is certainly not a conscious one. That is why I listed out several of the outer manifestations of collective change, because it can be more readily seen there. For example, people are speaking about the environment with one very strong, even loud voice. It is a great development, but only the most surface form of collective unity. It addresses the purely physical plane of existence. When humanity address the psychological issues -- i.e. the fulfillment of the individual, the encouragement of his full potential, the overcoming of all problems that impede his progress, etc. -- then there would be real collective progress. In other words, we would be collectively sharing the need to embrace the deepest of human values.

Environmentalism addresses physical values of cleanliness, security, etc.; not the deeper psychological values, let alone spiritual values. Still it is a significant step.

Spiritual values of Harmony, Unity, Oneness, Love, Wisdom, Delight, Timelessness, Infinity, Peace, et al are the deep beliefs that would be embraced for a true spiritual evolution. That is an evolutionary leap beyond; though it can infiltrate earlier forms of collective progress.

We can also see evolution along a spectrum from political to economic to cultural to spiritual unity. We are well under way towards economic unity, with the others hardly addressed.

It is in outer events/unfoldings that we can see the inner appreciation of values. The Internet is a perfect example, as it embraces the deeper aspirations of man. The common man does not see the deeper values that the Internet represents.

Perceptions of deep human values at the collective level would be a great sign that human evolution is on its way, and is being shared, communicated, and embraced. It would be a great step in human evolution.

Of course, the overcoming of ego, ignorance, exclusiveness, possessiveness, separateness, et al; plus the purification at the physical, vital, mental, and spiritual levels of the person are the essential steps of progress for the individual. They would readily contribute to the general collective movement forward; to the progressive evolution of humanity.

Rapid Evolution of Society in Recent Decades

Normally when we think of the term "evolution," images of how humans emerged from the plant to the ape come to mind. Yet evolution is also occurring in the present, though few have tried to map it out. It is occurring predominantly through human evolution, which can be seen at the level of the individual, or at the level of society, or at the point they intersect. Interestingly, evolution is speeding up in the last several decades. Some have even suggested that evolution is moving into a phase of exponential growth. Consider the events of the last two decades, indicating the evolution taking place in society:

- The Cold War has come to an end, ending bi polar conflict that threatened to end the world, opening the door to more integrative, collective developments in the world.
- The European Union has taken shape, creating a model for forms of political unity in the future.
- Asia has risen out of its moribund state, bringing entire new cultures into the forefront.
- A global view of the earth and environment has emerged, which is a kind of collective world "religion."
- A new world of possibility has opened up with the emergence of the computer, telecommunication devices, and especially the Internet.
- The education of humanity is radically accelerating, contributing to vast new knowledge and insight.
- Man is becoming more aware of other cultures and spiritual traditions.
- Man is becoming more mental, rational, and open to a variety of perspectives.

- We are moving from the rise of the Common Man to the rise of the True Individual, who is able to express his true individuality, not determined by the view of the herd.
- Increasingly it is the era of Rising Expectations where everyone expects their fair share in this world.
- We see individuals all over the world taking to personal growth and new forms of spiritual identity.

From these developments, it is not too difficult to envision further steps towards Inner Fulfillment and World Unity, including deeper associations between nations and cultures, the development of a World Parliament, the movement from economic to political to cultural to spiritual integration, the emergence of new insights into the nature of spirit and spiritual progress for the individual, and endless other possibilities. We are just at the very beginning in the next stage of human evolution, just as startling a change from what we are now as the human was from the ape.

Man at the Center of Life

The world economic system is undergoing a severe shock. It was caused to a large degree by Man's ignorance and greed. Though its vast expansion and success has been rooted in the infinity that comes from individual freedom, it was tripped up by missing human values that could make the system Whole. Because the Human Being has not been at the center of our economic system, only the Part could express, which invariably breeds failure.

Freedom and collaboration are human values. They represent Beingness and Oneness of the Spirit functioning in creation. One without the other cannot succeed. Freedom is fulfilled through collaboration, and vice versa. Without their integral union, there is only a Part and therefore failure. Thus, Communism came to an inglorious end, and Capitalism is going through its current upheavals. Nature in Her evolutionary wisdom seeks to move from the Part and create the new, the dynamic, and the Whole.

Human values are not however limited to freedom and collaboration. They are endless. There is also truth, knowledge, tolerance, compassion, love, beauty, delight, and a hundred others. Our economic system has been primarily focused on material values alone -- not the psychological, including the fulfillment of the individual. When we shift our consciousness and put the Human Being at the center of life, then upheaval and convulsion will be reduced, and life will progress smoothly, harmoniously, and infinitely.

Seeing through the Fog of Social Change to a Human Centered World

[A reader wondered how is all the talk of reaching higher consciousness relevant, when the tiny individual is just a cog in the machine of businesses and bureaucracies.]

At the heart of the hippy revolution of the 60s and 70s was this central issue you have raised. How can we find more meaning than the mindless work we are given; and the aimlessness and pointlessness of society we are born into? One way we can phrase it in current times is "how can we create a Human centered economics or way of living."

The consciousness of the society in that sense is behind the aspiration of the individual; or the many individuals who are seeking something more or more meaningful in life. It has not caught up. Even Marx asked this essential question; and still we have not given an adequate answer.

The mindless, money centered material existence is gradually giving way. First the Soviet system had to crumble, and now the Capitalist system is falling apart, or evolving into something different -- beyond our fixation with money, materialism, and empiricism; and toward higher human values; placing the individual human at the center of life. All the crisis of late -- financial, environmental, resource-related, etc. -- are signs along the way. They are signs of the crumbling of the Old, and the adopting of the New.

Sri Aurobindo addressed the issue of the evolution of the society, including the need to take on higher personal and social values, culminating in spiritual ones.

The Internet gives a promise of a human centered existence, as it enables collaboration and commonality of values. We are doing just that in these communications. New worlds and realms of connection are being created. That is because the society subconsciously wants to connect in ways that the current organizations, systems, etc. of the world are not able to.

Life, or rather society's psychological progress in that sense is speeding up rapidly. We are evolving much more quickly than we realize. Even at this social level. We just don't see it yet; don't have that yet in any perspective.

For the man who is working as a cog, it seems hopeless. But for those who understand, who know the way out, who can marshal human values to create this new life, from their perspective, things are moving fast. The mental man, in the higher sense of being wedded to rationality and high values is slowly moving to the fore, and the sense-oriented, physical mentality focused only on physical things, materialism, money, possession, empiricism, et al is beginning to relent. We can do our best by raising our own individual consciousness, while collaborating in meaningful ways to make our society better. We can do this at whatever level we wish to be involved, from the macro to the micro.

Everything is moving forward; individual consciousness and social consciousness are both on the rise. It's just a little difficult to see in this immense and amorphous Fog of Change.

Overcoming the Ego of the World

Freedom has spread around the world. Economic prosperity, despite the financial pain of the present, continues its rapid march across the planet with the goal of including all. In the new world environment, increasingly every person has the ability to become anything he chooses. The frontiers of what we can become and the ways in which we can be fulfilled are becoming limitless.

And yet within that freedom lurks a central falsehood. There is ego at the center of the world, as each grouping or collective -- whether nation, community, business, or family - pulls in its own direction, at the expense of the "Other." For example, in America, virtually every news report is presented in terms of how its *own* citizens are impacted. If ten Americans perish, it is devastating. If it is thousands perish in another country or region, the story may be buried deep inside the local newspaper. It is wrought selfishness at the heart of Man. When millions die of AIDS, Malaria, and other diseases in Africa and elsewhere, and we in another region turn away saying, "What can we do," it is callousness of the worst kind.

Of course, such self-centeredness and insensitivity does not apply to the US alone, for nearly every nation has the same provincial attitude. For example, before WWII, each European nation pulled in its own direction, creating a vacuum that fascism gladly filled.

As a result, more than sixty million died. It is an example of the ego of individual nations that opens the door to extreme negative consequences. Similarly, a financial crisis has risen today because earlier on the individual nations would not collaborate on a global monitoring system for such transactions. In fact, it was hardly a thought in their minds, as each nation sought to gain the upper hand in the name of speculative gain. Because the ego asserted in each case, Nature pushed back and smacked the world with a cathartic like crises. It could have been much worse.

There is a Divine aspiration for ever-increasing harmony in the world. It secretly knows that humanity is capable of transmuting its ego into ever-increasing forms of cooperation, collaboration, unity, and oneness. It perceives that we can only fulfill our human potential when we shed our selfishness, self-indulgence, and self-aggrandizement, and perceive the needs of those outside our immediate family, community, region, or nation. It is a movement that connects us to the heart and soul of Others.

We can begin to overcome the selfishness and ego that lurks in the heart of every collective by making a psychological shift. We need to stand back from things, quietly scan the world, and understand where we as a collective are relative to others. From that vantage point, we become cognizant of the outer social milieu and conditions, and therefore more readily reach across the gap that divides us. Making that small psychological adjustment to connect with the Other is a sign of growth and maturity of that collective. For example, as one of the managers of 'District A,' I can move to a wider consciousness and think deeply about the issues and concerns that we and surrounding districts share. Perceiving the reality this way, I am more likely to see things from the other collective's perspective, establishing conditions for greater cooperation, collaboration, and integration. This approach can be taken for any group we are part of or have influence over -- from family head to global leader.

In addition to this psychological change from "below," institutional changes can be adhered to from "above" that also forge greater harmony amongst the collectives; that also, in effect, break the ego of the World. For example, a World Parliament could be established to negotiate ever-increasing, ever more complex problems that can no longer be solved at the national or local level. Issues of the environment, poverty, economics, education, etc. can be rapidly discussed, agreed upon, and implemented to bring practical results to the world. Similarly, a global financial institution, such as a World Fed, could be established to set standards and monitor monetary transactions throughout the globe. The recent financial crisis showed the extreme need for such an institution, as money flowed among global institutions without the most basic controls, standards, and values. It too would keep the World Ego in check from above.

Likewise, one could imagine a Global Rapid Reaction Force or World Army to solve compelling security problems that cannot be left alone to single nations like the US, nor regional alliances like NATO, which tend to act in their own self-interest. For the world to live in harmony, a more neutral, all-encompassing security institution should be put in place so society can get on with the business of economic, social, and cultural integration. This too would help keep the World Ego in check.

Finally, eliminating all nuclear weapons and dealings in soft arms is another important tact for creating greater stability and world harmony. This is increasingly necessary as other nations seek to expand their arsenals in the vacuum of US-Russian inaction on substantial nuclear arms reduction. It is important to keep in mind that if we fail to take such action, life will turn on us with all its fury. We see that our inability to develop a global financial regulatory institution "attracted" the financial meltdown, beginning with greed and speculation of the US real estate market. In the same way, nuclear arms are

bound to spread and be used if we fail to come to substantial agreements on their reduction. (Certainly, others, including rogue-nations, will be compelled pursue that path without such an agreement.)

In sum, the world is changing rapidly, and global solutions that the local domain cannot solve are increasingly in demand. Cooperative change from above can control the narcissistic Ego of the collectives of the World, while harnessing world power for social progress and evolution. And yet this movement must also occur from the other direction. Each collective, from family to nation, must stand back and see the world for what it is, i.e. from all viewpoints, and thus clearly perceive the utility of cooperation and collaboration. Better still is to see that we are all parts of a whole, and cannot progress when we think only of ourselves. That the needs of the Other are essential to our own success, accomplishment, and delight. Best of all is to take pleasure in the success of the collectives outside our own. It is a spiritual position of the Soul that sees the world through the eyes of another, sincerely aspiring for their happiness and success. It is the most conscious and powerful way to bring about progress in the world.

Humanity has made great progress in the last hundred years, and especially the last thirty. Man has become more mental, shedding much of his physical consciousness and animality. Slowly his mind is opening to wider vistas, embracing the variety of truths about any matter, not just those that one is comfortable with or are self-serving. Education, Internet, and Media push us in that direction -- making us more aware of global conditions and possibilities; breaking down the mental barriers we have erected that support our selfish concerns and interests.

Still the knot of the Ego of the World is wrapped tightly. It strangles minds, preventing openness and tolerance; blocking our ability to see multiple truths beyond our own. That knot must be loosened for Man to progress without the threat of danger; without the inevitable travail and suffering. That can only occur if the collectives of humanity looks out through a wider lens, perceiving the needs of Others as inextricably linked to their own. At that point, we begin to shed the Ego of the World, opening the door to a New Age of common interest, shared accomplishment, and deep fulfillment in life.

Individuality, Change Makers, Pioneers

Individuality and Society

Individuality and Social Development

The following are various points showing the relationship between the expression of one's individuality and the impact on society's development:

- Individuals breaking away from traditional roles -- e.g. seeking education instead of following the family's lower form of work, such as farming -- enabled greater knowledge, opened up pursuits in various field of life, allowed for greater mobility, personal fulfillment, as well as provided greater economic and cultural success for society.
- Individuals deciding to work for one's self, i.e. to be entrepreneurial, led to vast business expansion and opening to new industries. E.g. in *Seabiscuit* Charles decides not to be a mere spoke in a wheel and instead move away and form his own

business, which eventually leads to him being a founder of the entire automobile industry.

- Individuals taking to areas of work not explored before, such as those who broke away from the mainframe computer tradition and developed the personal computer, opened up vast power for society, including vastly greater organization, productivity, and knowledge.
- Individuals deciding to move to different locals instead of remaining where they were, not only enabled greater personal freedom (from the limits of family and small town mentality), but opened up greater career opportunities.
- Individuals deciding not to accept arranged marriages and marry for love changed the dynamic of romantic relationships throughout the world, leading to greater fulfillment and happiness amongst the population.
- Women expressing their individuality by freeing themselves from traditional roles not only led to their greater personal fulfillment through career, but expanded the work force, enriched it with women's perspective, and otherwise added energy and prosperity of society.
- *Mona Lisa Smile* realistically depicts the process of social development, with regard to the transition of American women from social character to social individuality, led by a true, psychologically developed individual Katherine Watson.
- *Erin Brockovich* showed little concern for conventional behavior, while adding a personal touch that helped secure the largest environmental settlement of its kind in history.
- [These are individuals taking to new personal values over older, traditional ones.]
- In *Pride and Prejudice*, Darcy, a wealthy aristocrat seeks inner change instead of mere outer fulfillment, shows his individuality of character, which enables him to find true love, bridge the gap of his class to a lower one, and generally allow for change without extreme stress, violence, or destruction.
- In *Pride and Prejudice*, Eliza does not readily conform to the wishes and standards of Lady Catherine, when she visits her at Rosings. That same expression of individuality will be that which attracts Darcy. (The light in her eyes is a reflection of that individuality.) As a result, she attracts his hand in marriage, bringing social change not only for her family, but for the collectives involved. I.e. due to a person's individuality, harmony is created between classes, higher cultural values are able to flow from the higher to lower class, new energies flow from the lower to the upper, prosperity is more distributed amongst the classes; classes themselves are flattened into a greater heterogeneousness, and so forth.
- Kennedy showed his individuality by seeking a "different way" in solving the Cuban Missile Crisis comes up with a solution that resolves the dire situation, sparing humanity's destruction.
- Gorbachev single-handedly pursuing a new course for his nation through perestroika and glasnost enabled the complete collapse of a dying government system, opening a new, better one, while saving the world from the threat of nuclear exchange with the end of the Cold War.
- Churchill pursuing full engagement against the fascists, when the society around him was lethargic in this pursuit, helped galvanize the society to pursue a war it won and thereby overcome the continents and the world's ruinations through oppression.
- Buddha broke away from his wealthy, aristocratic family to pursue the truth of suffering in the world, changing the course of religious and spiritual history, and the benefits derived from it.

- In *House of Elliot* Grace's single-minded, individualistic pursuit to bring stylish clothes to the masses enabled the middle classes to develop a degree of style and culture unavailable before.
- Evie and Bea in *House of Elliot* breaking away from traditional family roles, not only served as a role model for other women, but opened up new forms of style for the lower classes, and better relations with its workers.
- Ted Turner unconventionally believed news could be broadcast on TV 24 hours a day, enabling the founding of CNN, giving the world access to visual global information and events in an instant. E.g., it had a great impact in helping the bringing down of the Berlin Wall and thus the end of the Cold War.
- Fred Smith believed in possibility of overnight delivery of mail for businesses throughout the US, founding FedEx, changing the nature of business -- in particular its speed, timeliness -- forever.
- Pioneers are "individuals" who awaken and spur on society. E.g. Luther, Gorbachev, Churchill, Gandhi. Spiritual individuals too, like Jesus, Buddha, Sri Aurobindo, and Karmayogi.
- Sri Aurobindo expresses his Individuality by not pursuing independence for India through outer means, but through "inner action." He envisioned the result in the subtle plane, which then manifest in the outer one through his inner power, evolving that society to new freedom and possibility.
- Bill Wilson broke with the tradition of drunks being mere outcasts, and saw a new way of rehabilitating them through group discussions, leading to his founding of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA).
- Rhonda Byrne dares to be different by gathering experts in the area together (rather than relying on her own knowledge) to create the film and book *The Secret*, opening up many in the world to having a new view of the nature of reality.
- **Most of the Change Makers listed at Human Science took to individuality and had vast impacts on society (from Galileo to Gorbachev to Steve Jobs).**
- Steve Jobs envisioned things that were hardly in sight -- like the personal computer, the graphic user interface, -- when others were going about the tradition in the computer field. As a result, the personal computer was established, changing the organization of society. (The Homebrew Computer Club did the same when it gathered to champion a personal computer, thereby expressing the "individuality of the collective".)
- The conscientious objector not only was able to abstain from military service for what they perceived as good cause, but paved the way for the military to be more tolerant of different points of view amongst its constituents, and ushered in society overall ability to question a government's military objectives and actions.
- **Many of the most influential individuals in history were self-motivated, self-reliant, thought for themselves, were undeterred by the herd view, others' opinions; had disregard for tradition, convention, procedures, moral and social codes.**
- Persons who take to individuality often are risk takers; risking doing what they believe is right, best, despite what others believe. Thus, individuality and various facets of strength are often together.
- Individuality can express at various planes; e.g. mentally to explain new ideas; vitally to explore new methods, techniques, technologies, forms of trade, business, etc.; physically to scale mountain heights and explore the depths, be a military hero, and other physical feats.

- Individuality can also express in a continuum from outward through physical action to inward such as a pioneer thinker. The brave soldier who wins the battle through his act on one extreme, and the spiritual pioneer who dares to explore new way of consciousness from within at the other.
- The Mother was a spiritual individual who dared to undertake the transformation of her physical being through the action of the Force on her cells, an unprecedented undertaking in history.
- Individuals often are immune to being condemned or ostracized. They have a certain thick skin that is oblivious to social condemnation. Bill Gates was never really bothered about being considered to be and look like a nerd.
- The individual takes his psychological cues from within. He or she is fiercely committed to an inner vision, despite outer obstacles.
- Individuality expresses in various ways:
 - By pursuing a new field
 - By changing the rules in an existing field
 - By addressing an emergency or pressing problem
 - By championing a new cause
 - By looking at things in an entirely new way
 - By seeing things differently than the collective
 - By envisioning a new future
 - By trying to solve an intractable problem or issue never addressed before
 - By connecting various influences to see a new direction
 - By exploring what has not been previously explored
 - By challenging prevailing wisdom
 - By intuitive a possibility never before thought of
- **Each of these expressions of individuality open a new opportunity, create a new reality for society.**
- Each major progress in society can be correlated to major effort of individuality of an individual or collective.
- We can also work backwards and indicate every major social change (or social development) and trace it back to not only a person's or collective effort, but how they thought and acted through their individuality.
- There were at least a dozen major changes in the 60s, which can be traced to pioneers who expressed their individuality.
- In the award-winning TV series 'Mad Men,' we even see the origins of the social changes of the 60s in the conservative, 50s-type lifestyles of the Madison Avenue advertising executives.
- It is hard to know who are the true originals of the beat and hippy movements, as we mainly observed as a collective movement. But there was certain original true individuals. This would then be true of other major social developments in history. To find the true individual, you have to dig deep. The individuals we often identify in modern times are the obvious ones who have a dramatic presence on the scene. But there are true individuals much deeper down.
- An example is my aunt Mary Enig, who almost single-handedly pioneered the global anti transfat movement, through hardly anyone has heard of her. In her case, she was happy to remain anonymous, instead focusing on her pioneering research. She often spoke of "the establishment" of the big food processing companies who used

butter substitutes like margarine in an attempt to cut down on cholesterol for the public, but who in fact were creating vast transfat ingredients that harmed the public from the other direction. I have never seen such lifetime dedication and vigilance in her pursuit -- i.e. individuality -, which goes on until this very day.

- Sometimes great persons expressing individuality create benefit that foster further individuality for all others in society.
- Luther's individualistic action to confront the church enabled more individualistic religious worship. (It also fostered democracy, which tends to support individuality.)
- Steve Jobs practiced individuality by "thinking different," creating groundbreaking products that fostered greater individuality for those who used them. (My first Mac sale was to a cartoonist who walked in the store with an outrageous t-shirt on, indicating how he would use the groundbreaking Paint program available on the computer.)
- The society fosters individuality as a result of certain people expressing their individuality that created these new social conditions.
- The Neanderthals never progressed because their society was one of convention and non-change. It died out. Societies that express individuality, progress, as the human did who flourished in the wake of the Neanderthals' eventual failure.
- Richard Florida's books on the creatively savvy cities that flourish in America tell us that they do so because these municipalities encourage creativity and individuality.
- **Collectives that encourage individuality create individuals who make the society further develop, progress, and evolve.** Thus, individuality and collective social progress work in both directions.

Individuality: Creating Something Out of Nothing

The human mind is very much affected by other minds. We tend to think what others think; and create along the lines others have created. Individuality is to break out of this mode; to think differently and manifest what has not existed before. In fact, individuality is to think and create something out of nothing, which may be the process of creation itself.

A businessperson may look around and try to expand her markets by following standard procedures and methods devised by the business community over the last 100 years. She may follow a business plan to a tee, and if she does, she will likely build a solid and successful business.

Another individual however examines the marketing schemes of that industry and is not satisfied with current approaches. She scans the market, contemplates the issues deeply, and comes up with new, unprecedented methods to reach the customer. She then wins over others on the board and has it incorporated into a new strategic plan. The company then implements these unusual, even radical approaches to the marketplace. Several months later, through the grapevine it is learned that certain salespeople are connecting with prospective customer in unusual ways. Not long after, orders start coming in from reps who adopted the approaches; first as a trickle; then as a steady stream; finally as torrent. At the end of the year, the company is astonished to discover that these usual, unprecedented marketing approaches have become the dominant way sales are being won. Plus, each sale is found to be of a higher order; in terms of size, net profit, and satisfied customers.

In this scenario, this marketing executive has expressed her individuality, creating unprecedented schemes that lead to unprecedented success. In essence, these

approaches were not there before, but through a mental process were created out of nothing. A new idea had manifested a new reality. This ability to create something out of nothing is in fact the ultimate act of individuality.

While it is true that steady, hard work has enabled much success in the world, it is also true that those who have envisioned what has not been there before have had an inordinate, far greater effect. Whether an Einstein or Niels Bohr in science, or a Steve Jobs in business and technology, or a Martin Luther in religion, each looked around, examined current conditions in their domain, moved within to contemplate the situation, and then came to new understanding that matured into a vision of possibility. Motivated to act, the result was they created that which was not there before; in essence, something out of nothing. This is the hallmark of the individual -- whether the dynamic entrepreneur, the great imaginative author of fiction, or the creative thinker.

We can thus begin to perceive a process occurring here; a logical unfolding of individuality. It begins within, in a human mind that has the curiosity to look around and examine this world, and from there engage in a creative, mental exercise using logic and reason in which new possibilities take shape. Out of those ideas emerge yet greater insight, and from there comes flashes of light ("Eureka, I've got it!" said Archimedes) and beyond that pure intuition in which unprecedented possibilities reveal themselves. $E=mc^2$, Einstein's formula of material life, is of that type.

In this process, newly-conceived possibilities suddenly become real, even as society is stunned and stupefied by the result. Where there were never such things in the past, there is a new reality that has seemingly sprung out of nothing, like a vast field of flowers suddenly blooming in a once barren, sandy desert. Where did it all come from? Why did society suddenly change before our eyes? The answer is that it came from a creative mind that was fiercely individual, who looked at the world and conceived of a new one from within.

The Ultimate Basis for the Emergence of the True Individual

The 20th century has been hailed as that of the Common Man. Things that were once only available only to kings -- e.g. education, health care, and a certain level of wealth and abundance -- was now readily available to many if not all. That movement continues to spread around the world until this day.

And yet the new 21st century may be known for something even more significant -- the emergence of the True Individual. What is this era about? It is a time where every person on earth is given the opportunity to express his true individuality, the full flowering of his personality, enabling a true psychological and spiritual fulfillment in life.

This is a huge step beyond the benefits of the era of the Common Man. It is a new epoch of social evolution, where people can express their true unique capacities beyond the influence and determination of the herd. Each person can express who they truly are and fulfill that possibility in all dimensions of their lives. The person who can live this way will be the True Individual of the New Age.

And yet the full flowering of a True Individual occurs when we come to realize our true essence and purpose; when we penetrate the surface consciousness and make contact with our True Selves, our evolving Soul within. When we come in contact with this psychic entity, we begin to sense who we truly are, what our purpose is in life, and therefore desire to express it in the details of our lives. From that poise, we express our truest individuality, as our very purpose for being becomes the source and driving point of all of our values, understanding, aspirations, decisions, and actions in life.

Becoming a True Individual, driven by who we believe we are, beyond the bounds of the influence of the mass is one level; becoming a True Spiritual Individual, where our purpose is to serve a higher purpose, our Soul-purpose is a higher level still. The first is primary to live a life of achievement, success, creativity, and happiness; the latter a form of conscious evolution, to elevate all parts of our being to be the instrument of the spirit in life. In the former, we are driven by our own values that are beyond the accepted norm of the collective; in the latter, we are driven by spiritual values that permeate the universe and beyond like Oneness, Harmony, Truth, Goodness, Self-givingness, Love, Delight, Timelessness, and Infinity.

While we can perceive of our ability to express our true selves, there are other movements in life that are making this possible. Because we are educated, we are gaining a vast knowledge, while perceiving an array of possibilities of what we can become. Because of the Internet, we are empowered to realize that which we wish to become. Because the society itself is becoming more conscious, it is beginning to make efforts to support the full flowering of each individual human. Because we are evolving from vital to rational and then intuitive mental beings, we are coming in touch with subtle truths and profound insights about who we are and the workings of life. Because the spiritual Force is descending into the earth's atmosphere, we have the ability to realize our deepest aspirations and true values and beliefs.

As we move away from the surface of life and establish a deeper poise within, as we learn the astonishing, subtle laws of life, as we are able to move life outside ourselves from within such as through the "power of attraction", as we discover the spiritual Power at our disposal, as we connect to the transcendent spiritual Reality above and find our true Soul selves within, as we move from ego and selfishness to connection and self-givingness, we increasingly express our individuality, while experiences profound, inner fulfillment.

This is the astonishing possibility that awaits the 21st century. To find ultimate freedom and purpose within, and express it creatively, dynamically, and powerfully on the surface of our lives. Each person expressing their highly individual take on existence, enabling infinite variation and forms of insight and accomplishment, leading to myriad forms of self-discovery, which bring about an infinite variety of experiences of Joy and Delight.

The emergence of the True Psychological and Spiritual Individual will be the hallmark of the new humanity; yet another indicator of the emergence of A New Way of Living.

Tending the True Self that Fosters Individuality

Individuality begins at the point where we psychologically and outwardly express who we truly are. Moreover, those who are truly conscious of their own uniqueness will more readily bring it to the surface, creating real benefit for themselves and the world at large. Finally, the society that fosters that indwelling true self and individuality of the person will create a multiplying effect of ever-increasing creativity and accomplishment in the world.

In the recent powerful Indian film 'Like Stars on Earth (Every Child is Special),' we see this latter dynamic in action. There a young boy with dyslexia becomes an outcast from his peers and the school system. And yet one progressive teacher steps forward, sees beyond the surface and into the depths of the child, fostering his individuality as a painter with a genius-like artistic temperament. This, it turns out is the complete opposite of the mass education system that operates on a hierarchical structure, with

the teacher all knowing; departing knowledge to a strained or reluctant classroom of children. A better system would therefore be the opposite; where the teacher begins by discovering the true essence, spirit, and aspirations of each child, drawing it out, which allows it to flow and expand through a process of self-discovery. This approach not only energizes the child to no end, but turns learning into a joyful experience.

This approach to education -- and indeed to life itself -- suggests that there really is an essence and true self of each person. That somehow we are here to express our True Individuality, which not only expresses through our own creative, individualistic path, but has a unique influence and impact on the world. Some go a step further and see true individuality as our "spirit," our spiritual essence; even our evolving soul that has a mission and purpose trying to express through the unique capacities and potentiality of the person it inhabits.

In sum, the person who becomes consciously aware of his or her true self will facilitate the expression of his or her individuality, thereby accelerating the process of personal accomplishment and growth for themselves and the world. Moreover, social organizations where facilitators like teachers and leaders bring out the true essence and potential of individuals will foster an ever expanding community of entrepreneurs, creative artists, and free thinkers. One could even imagine a society where the number of geniuses expands a thousand-fold through this dynamic. In fact, one Indian school taking this approach advertised its goal as "every child a genius."

Albert Einstein, Leonardo D Vinci and others were not only infinitely creative individuals expressing their individuality, but had a conscious or semi-conscious sense of their essence and purpose. We too can come to know our true selves and purpose; our inner mission, by looking deep within, which will release powerful energies that will become a springboard for infinite realization and accomplishment in life.

Making an Impact on the World

Making an Impact on the World

Blink and *Tipping Point* author Malcolm Gladwell indicates in his new book *Outliers* that those who have reached the pinnacles of success have done so because they were born at a particular time when vast opportunities presented themselves. He points out how Bill Gates and Steve Jobs, who are of the same generation, rose to the heights as new, emerging technologies began to appear in the computer and electronics fields. They were thus a product of their times. Gladwell also points out that it is those who actually *seized* emerging opportunities were the ones who climbed the pinnacles of success. For after all, millions are part of any given generation, yet it is only those who catch the emerging wave who are able to ride it to the top. Gladwell also suggests that local influences also helped forge their place in the history of their times. E.g., Bill Gates had access to a computer system as a young teen, something others were not fortunate to have had. Thus, the confluence of generational and local opportunity, plus the ability to seize the moment propelled these individuals to greatness in their fields.

At the Human Science project, a collaborative undertaking of members of Mother's Service Society (Pondicherry, India), Growth Online, and others, we address a multitude of emerging issues in the world, including the Character of Life, the Evolution of Society, the Nature of Money, and others. One other division of the site focuses on an understanding of the factors that enable individuals to change the world. We call this area 'Change Makers', and there I have begun to document the factors that have enabled noted individuals throughout history -- such as Elizabeth I, Martin Luther, Winston Churchill, Michael Gorbachev, Bill Gates, and Steve Jobs -- to rise to the pinnacles of success, vastly influencing society. There are the to-be-expected

determinants of such great accomplishment, such as energy, intention, focus, drive, will, personal values, organization, determination, psychological strength, skills and knowledge, and right attitude. Also included are several factors addressed by Gladwell's *Outliers*, including generational possibilities, the current social support system for the individual, and most noteworthy, the ability to latch on to a great opportunity, enabling one to catch the emerging wave of society.

At the Change Makers section of Human Science, we also address other, less understood, more *subtle* forces that propel individuals to the top of their field and affecting society around them. These inner behaviors express through instances of "life response," i.e. sudden good fortune. For example, one individual in a given situation is able to control his emotions when his integrity is falsely attacked, which causes sudden positive developments to move in his direction. Another person reverses a cherished (false) belief, which again sets in motion positive events that conspire to take him to the top of his field. These subtle inner behavioral changes attract just those circumstances that give that person the opportunity and energy to rise to the society-influencing heights. Thus, it is not merely the obvious conditions that catapult one to the stars, but subtle changes of consciousness within.

How then can you practically benefit from these ideas? Are you interested in moving to the top of your field or having a major impact on the world around you? If so, then why not examine the variety of factors that enable it to happen. Look for several key determinants that you are deficient in, and then make a concerted effort to upgrade in those areas. As a result, life's circumstance will suddenly turn positive in ways you would never have imagined. Then you too can become a true Change Maker in your field and make a great impact on the world.

Pioneer Individuals

The Pioneer who Expresses the Subconscious Urge of Society

When an innovative individual captures the imagination of the world, we believe it is his genius alone that has brought about a contribution to society. Little do we realize that this pioneer individual is actually expressing the subconscious will of that society. By subconscious, I mean that the society wishes something along those lines to come about, but it is not yet conscious of the fact. The pioneer captures that subtle energy wave inside as an intuitive vision that he manifests through his product, service, insights, skill, etc.

Society is evolving. It is constantly seeking new avenues for that growth. It is growing materially, psychologically, mentally, even spiritually. A child of that age looks out at what is possible in the world, and perceives an opportunity for improvement along this life scale. He then goes out and creates his invention, or issues forth a new theory, etc. and the world around him perks up, lifting that object or idea to the masses. It does so because subconsciously the community was already predisposed to it. Now however that subtle social intention has coagulated into something tangible through that individual's efforts. The possibility gets further organized, it hits a critical mass, and it is then fully embraced by all facets of society.

Let me provide several examples that will illustrate:

The Internet -- Man is mental -- or at least he is moving in that direction -- as he begins to shed his lower nature and embrace rationality, which is the perception and acceptance of the many-sided truth of things. As that movement toward rational

mentality has matured, he is ready to be filled with the knowledge of the world, including organizing mechanisms that can provide, distribute that knowledge. That organization has come to us as the Internet. I.e., man who is organizing his consciousness by embracing the multiplicity of truth, now subconsciously yearns for a mechanism to serve its purpose. The Internet comes along and fulfills that yearning. The pioneer individuals who saw opportunities to deliver it -- such as Berners-Lee's World Wide Web -- are expressing the subconscious will of society for an ultimate tool to organize and distribute the multiplicity of knowledge it is now ready to embrace.

Overnight Shipping -- The world is moving faster and faster. In that process, it has begun to fall over itself. Society subconsciously wants to move forward in a more harmonious manner. Because the society is becoming mentally aware, it yearns for tools to organize this rapid speed up of life. A pioneering individual Fred Smith comes forward and advocates a seemingly irrational way of organizing express packaging. It is the overnight approach. You bring all the packages to one point and then redistribute for one-day delivery. On the surface, the world doubts it can be achieved, yet as pioneer he does not listen to the doubting herd and pushes forward. Through vision, will, and perseverance, an organization -- Federal Express -- takes shape, enabling the businessperson, or any other individual or organization to maintain harmony and efficiency in a sped up world. In fact, it enables even greater success.

'The Secret' -- Life has evolved on earth materially, particularly in the West, and increasingly in the East. Inwardly -- i.e. emotionally, psychologically and spiritually -- it has made far less progress. It has exhausted the materialistic, mechanistic view of how life unfolds, and subconsciously yearns for a deeper understanding. From time to time -- as in the Hippy era -- there is a breakout of a new understanding, and then it closes up. Rhonda Byrne now circa 2007 steps forward and creates a DVD and book 'The Secret,' which shows us how we can instantaneously attract the object of our desire. It is based on a cosmic principle known as "The Power of Intention." Other books, like 'The Miraculous Phenomenon of Life Response,' by this author, go many steps beyond, showing us an entire new way of living based on perceptions of the subtle workings of life.

Pioneers have once again forged a new possibility; one that has been there lurking below the conscious layers of society. He or she captures the wave, which appears to that individual as a vision or opportunity, and runs with it. If it is not too in advance of or radical for the society -- it is embraced fully through organizations that become the means of its mass distribution. Now that the global community is exposed to this new reality, it uses it for own benefit, which in turn enables its further progress, releasing new subconscious possibilities. The society then "awaits" the next pioneer to take up the quest to bring about what it subconsciously yearns for.

There is something even beyond this dynamic. Behind the collective aspiration is a universal, cosmic Intent that aspires for earth's progress. Its Desire is fulfilled in society through the effort of pioneering individuals. In that way, the individual, the collective, and the Divine power behind work hand in hand for progress and evolution in the cosmos.

Society's Reactions to the Efforts of the Pioneer Individual

Society progresses through the pioneering efforts of certain individuals. That individual takes up the conscious or subconscious will of that society, and then embraces the new way, enabling it to spread throughout the collective.

Sometimes the society attempts to destroy the emerging new influence, idea, product, etc. that the pioneer brings, especially if it is out of step with what is commonly accepted. The church attempted to destroy Galileo for his heliocentric view of the universe, and the reactionary forces in ancient Greece forced Socrates to take to Hemlock poison. In later times, of course, what they brought to bear, and who they were as personalities were acknowledged as great.

One way they destroy an emerging pioneer is through the chink in his or her armor, such as a psychological defect or some other weakness. Jesus brought pioneer Love to the world, but the Romans destroyed him too because he did not have the spiritual strength that would have avoided persecution. Hamlet brought a new evolutionary urge of the Mind on the social collective, but the society too tried to destroy him because of limitations in his vital/emotional being. The same perhaps could be said of a Kennedy, a Clinton, and many others.

When one brings a new insight or evolutionary urge into the world, one must be prepared for the hostile reaction. It is the mischief of the dark side that opposes the light. If one has the strength, and the purity of consciousness, the hostility can be overcome. Such hostility comes when the change is vast or radical and is decidedly out of step with the society. Sometimes it is concomitant with society, poses no threat, and is still very helpful, such as those efforts of a Henry Ford or a Bill Gates that brought further developments in the areas of economic and organizational change. In these cases, they are swept up and adopted in full by the society, who are fully ready to move forward in that direction.

When we take to a decided change, we need to measure the forces around us who seek to help us or bring us down. We must also be aware of our own weaknesses, for it is through that point that the world will test us. Even if we are trying to be our own personal pioneer by moving to the next level of success in life, we also have to be aware of the mischief of the darkness and limitation that resides within our own selves.

Still taking to the new, especially rising the next evolutionary wave of society, though an idea or a product or service, etc. is open to everyone at any level in the 21st century.

Values in Society

Silicon Valley Values Attract Overwhelmingly

I was driving through nearby Silicon Valley, and noticed once again that on weekends it is like a ghost town. And yet even on weekdays, when there are nearly a million workers busily creating the technological future, there is still a general quietude in the area. Where there was once the quiet of miles of fruit trees in a lovely, fertile valley, now there is the concentrated quietude of humans busily absorbed in their pioneering work.

There is also a modesty about the surroundings, including the architecture in the Valley. Buildings are low slung and attract no attention, and hardly noticeable from the surrounding highways. In fact, the whole of Silicon Valley is hardly visible. Where is it? people often ask when they drive by. It is hidden away in quiet, tree-lined campuses.

In addition, one notices that the general tone in the Valley is quite self-effacing. For example, Intel is so modest a company that they barely have a sign indicating their world headquarters. From the highway, one needs to strain to see their little electric moniker that is almost completely blocked from view. And yet they are rolling in cash. Combining modesty and super quantum technology can have that effect.

Then there is Cisco who have a huge home campus, the biggest in the Valley, with 50+ large, new buildings, of which I have worked at several. There is a similar intense quietude in that company as well. In the hallways, you rarely hear loud voices. Its facilities are impeccably clean and orderly, yet the firm allows for considerable individual freedom and initiative. And like a number of vastly successful SV companies, they don't quite know what to do with their horde of cash; \$30B, without hardly any debt. It must be the product of their subtle work ethics and values.

Also, in Silicon Valley there are virtually no billboards near the campuses. In fact, throughout the San Francisco Bay Area such giant outdoor ads are scorned. Likewise, crass, material values are generally frowned upon throughout the region. Instead, values of innovation, experimentation, and individuality are advocated and also realized in many firms and organizations in the area. It is probably the key to their enormous success.

On this particular weekend afternoon, I went off the beaten path a bit and drove up to Apple, who are somewhat secluded from the rest of the Valley. Their corporate headquarters campus is very modest for a \$50 Billion company. But what of their internal values? As MSS' Garry Jacobs has pointed out, they practice a kind of Silent Will by not revealing their products until the last minute, which in turn attract seekers of their wares like crazy. A frenzy-like anticipation builds up in response to that "willful silence."

It is not just the consumers who take to this corporate Pied Piper, for the press is also attracted to their secrecy like flies, wondering what Apple will produce next. When new products arrive, there are lines of buyers in 250 cities worldwide, some up to a quarter mile long. It is marketing by Stealth and Silence.

In general, there is little ostentation in Silicon Valley. The founders of many of the companies were modest people; usually scientific types. Gaudiness and ostentation has always been frowned on; i.e. SILENTLY frowned upon, even as the culture encourages innovation and individuality. Also, their success and values attract the most talented people from around the world in a never-ending stream. Many are attracted to the opportunity to express their individuality and to make a mark in the world. Great financial reward, though aspired for is more often than not a secondary consideration, though that is precisely what they attract.

As I passed by Apple, I became acutely aware that there is a tremendous Efficiency in the company. Time and space are kept to absolute minimums. We see that Apple makes very few products and yet succeeds with them enormously. There is great precision in the products, as so much is condensed into small packages. This is the efficiency of Space.

In addition, their deadlines and release dates are also so precise. Everything is synchronized down to the smallest detail at the precise minute; from projects they are working on to their marketing campaigns to their worldwide broadcast presentations around the world. This is their efficiency of Time.

In sum, Space and Time are dramatically reduced, as tiny products with startling precision and intelligence are produced within perfectly calculated timeframes. It shows the great power of Mind that can move to timelessness and spacelessness, mimicking the Divine Source of all things.

This was the single great personal revelation I had on that weekend drive.

Individuality and Collaboration

Perhaps the most interesting rivalry in the business world over the last generation has been the competitive battle between Apple and Microsoft. The twists and turns that these two companies have gone through are legend -- as have been the experiences and action of their leaders, Steve Jobs and Bill Gates. One interesting way to look at their success is to examine some essence, quality, and core value that was critical to their accomplishment.

On the Apple side, it has been the ability to express people's individuality through breakthrough technology. From the very beginning, Apple has seen itself as a company doing battle with the establishment, embodied in the perceived IBM-centric world of hierarchy and conformity. With breakthrough, easy to use, people-oriented products, Apple has aimed to break down these barriers, allowing the individual to express his capacities in full. This ability to bring out human individuality is one of the hallmarks of Apple's values, drive, and success. The result has been products that have revolutionized the computer world, and indeed the world at large.

In the years I have observed Microsoft's success, an almost opposite quality, essence, and value stands out. It is an extraordinary ability to collaborate with its partners and users. Microsoft at every stage has sought to open itself to creating relationships with hardware vendors, corporations, and users in order to extend its technology into the wider sphere. When Microsoft developed its original DOS personal computer operating system, it encouraged dozens of PC manufacturer to use it. That more open-ended model continued with the release of Windows and then Windows Mobile. Likewise, any developer who has worked with the company knows how they have bent over backwards to forge relationships with partners, while expanding Microsoft's market. The result has been a 90% market share in PC operating systems, creating a company that is a virtual money making machine.

These same two factors -- individuality and collaboration -- are central dynamics of life itself. On the one hand, there is the need to express one's self and individuality in life, even as there is the necessity to cooperate with others. This is a central dynamic that is perpetually working itself out in society. For example, in America, individuality is there everywhere, almost in the extreme; and yet its collaborative capacities -- i.e. its ability to work for the common good, and to cooperate with a collective of nations -- is often sorely lacking. If the US embraced collaboration as much as individuality, it would almost certainly maintain its role of evolutionary leader of the world. In Asia, we see more of the other side, where collaboration is at the forefront, and true individuality is too often missing. That too is working itself out.

Of course, each alone -- individuality or collaboration -- is limited; but a part, not the whole of what is necessary for human progress. However, working in tandem, these two dynamics are fully capable of harnessing the best of society, and releasing the infinite potentials of life.

Movement Toward World Unity

Negative Events Forge the Unity of Nations

Life has a character, which expresses in a myriad of subtle ways, and is captured in a variety of astonishing-like principles and laws. One principle (that can only be readily understood from a higher mental or spiritual point of view) is that everything that occurs in life is essential for its progress, including the good and the bad, as well as the great and the small.

Another closely related subtle law of life is that the negatives that occur are actually positives in disguise, as they are often the single instrument of great progress for the individual or collective, often exceeding the benefit that comes from a particular good.

In *The Lord of the Rings* we see how the "bad," represented by the evil kingdom of Mordor, becomes the very force that compels the races to come together for short term as well as long-term benefit. I.e. Life compels them to cooperate and combine their efforts to overcome a common evil enemy, and through that process, they establish a long-term closeness, commonality, and unity that never existed before.

In the story, kingdoms that mocked and chided one another in the past are compelled to work together to combat their evil foe in the present. Each are forced to give up their ego, their sense of separateness, their particular limiting attitudes toward one another in order to forge a common force that not only prevails over the enemy, but establishes a deeper, long-term bond among them. Left to its own devices, such an outcome might have taken centuries, millennia, or never at all to come about.

This is the same dynamic that occurred in the real world in WWII, where the individual nations of Europe were compelled by the malevolent German enemy to give up their individual egos to work together to secure the victory. In the wake of that monumental effort that produced so much suffering, the United Nations was formed, as was the European Union -- two transcendent historical developments that ushered in the next phase of human unity. Again, it might have taken centuries, millennia, if ever for these profound developments to have occurred.

That very same dynamic unfolds in the film *Avatar*, where the nations of Pandora, separate and reluctant to integrate and unite, are compelled to come together to combat a common enemy, forging a closeness of relationship that never existed before. Without the hostile forces, the negative, this overwhelming positive might not have ever come about.

One question that arises from this perspective is why does the negative have to happen to these good people in the first place. If they are on the good side of things, why should they suffer? Is it just the pure evil of the adversary, or is it something on their part as well?

The negative occurs to the "good" parties because of their previous and current unconsciousness -- whether the peoples of Middle Earth, Europe, or Pandora -- which attracts severe negative conditions. Because of the limitations in their attitudes towards fellow peoples; because of their self-admiration in their own selves and way of life; because of their persistent reluctance and unwillingness to cooperate; and because of their false, selfish actions of the past, they attract negative circumstances in the form of the dark forces trying to destroy them.

However, in each case they are able to overcome the adversary by bridging the gap between them, overcoming their selfishness, and binding together to forge a level of cooperation and harmony never known before to defeat the enemy.

Nature's Way then is to progress through difficulty and pain; through the contradictions and strife between parties. Often it occurs between two parties where one is mostly in the wrong and the other is partially so. And yet without the negative side, there can be no further progress for the more positive side, just as the positive side compels the negative to give up its limitations.

One question that remains is whether there is another way out of this process, this difficult method of Nature. The answer is that when we rise in consciousness, we can develop a level of awareness and make conscious decisions that can preempt the negative from coming about in the first place. That is, we are so positive in our outlook that we do not attract the shadow of the negative against us. Then we progress and evolve not through Nature's way of contradiction and conflict, but through the way of Soul.

The Infinite Power of Harmony

There are a number of expressions of the Spirit in life. Silence, Being-ness, Truth, Wisdom, Timelessness, Infinity, Goodness, Love, Beauty, and Delight are several. Perhaps the most essential and basic is Harmony, whose higher expression is Oneness and Unity of being. For the Infinite consciousness, every and all things are interlocked in an essential Harmony and Oneness. And yet out of that essential Unity, a universe of infinitely diverse forms was created, including we humans. It is the same in our own individual and collective lives. When we bring greater harmony to bear through our relationship with others and the world, we generate a vast creative power for accomplishment for ourselves and others.

Take modern day Europe, where the Euro has suddenly become the world's strongest currency. That's the case because several nations came together to forge a financial alliance: in essence, a collaborative movement of harmony. That harmonic effort has produced a financial instrument that has garnered the greatest respect and purchasing power in the world. It is the power that harmony generates that has propelled the Euro to its lofty position.

On the other hand, across the channel, the British have been unwilling to participate in the Euro, putting its own purchasing power at risk. Even the mighty US currency has fallen behind the Euro. Subconsciously perceiving the power of collaboration and cooperation (two practical expressions of harmony) now the Asian financial community is considering a currency of its own. If they adopt it, it will likely generate a (further) boon for that region as well. This suggests that a *global* currency would create infinite-like financial and economic well-being for the world, since it would issue from a higher harmony that integrates all nations.

Wherever harmony is created, energy and power is released. When the colonies of the US came together over 200 years ago, it resulted in the greatest economic, political, and military power in world history. But it is not only nations that gain power when disparate elements come together. So do other collectives -- including institutions, businesses, and communities, down to the individual family. The more harmony created among their parts and people, the greater the power and results generated.

Harmony intensifies the positive bonds between people and things, focusing energy and releasing power for accomplishment. We can see this in macro events like nations forming, but also in micro events such as our daily work experiences. For example, we have all participated in meetings over the course of our careers. When most successful, it is often because a deeper connection and bond was created among the staff -- e.g. through mutual respect, by genuinely focusing on the contributions of others, and via

collaborative decisions for future action. When we come out of these meetings, our energy skyrockets and our work efforts produce impressive results. In essence, the harmonic movement has created a new burst of collective energy now shared by each participant -- enabling individual and collective achievement. Interestingly that success often comes about through instances of sudden good fortune.

Similarly, any two individuals are capable of creating this sort a harmonic bond. For example, greater harmony in romantic relationships can produce the deepest form of love between partners. Each lover's willingness to forget him or herself, adoring the other for its own sake can generate a tidal wave of romantic energy resulting in an intense bond and affection that can last a lifetime.

The opposite of harmony is each party moving in its own direction, focusing on its own interests at the expense of the needs of the "Other," attracting negative conditions. For example, when the fascist juggernaut began to move across Europe at the outset of WWII, the "good" nations were unable to collaborate in any coherent way. That lack of harmony strengthened the enemy, who were then able to run roughshod across the continent. It was only the extreme collaboration and bravery of the British people, and the cooperative effort of the US and Europe that saved the world from that greatest of all evils.

The question is then how can we be in that state of consciousness that would allow us to be more connected and One with life around use. The answer is that the more we live in the deeper parts of our being, rather than the surface of life, the greater will be our affinity, connection, and harmony with our surroundings, including the people we interact with.

But how do we move to that silent state, that witness consciousness that would enable to us feel more connected with the world and others? We can begin to build that new inner status by constantly opening ourselves to the spiritual Force. When we offer and consecrate upcoming activities in our lives, offering that act to the Higher Power, not only are the conditions of life quickly set right, but we develop an ever-wider opening to our deeper Self. As we come to know those profound Silent and Still parts within, we experience an ever-increasing bond with things outside ourselves, including the situations we encounter and the people we interact with. As a result of these harmonic experiences, we not only generate a vast power for success, but deep inner joy and fulfillment.

This being the case, why not ask yourself this: In what areas of my life can I create greater harmony? If you determine what that is and then make a sincere effort to bring it about, you will not only generate a vast power for accomplishment, but you will experience deep, inner fulfillment, as the separation between yourself and life will melt away into a blissful Oneness.

The Current Financial Crisis and World Unity

The financial crisis the world is going through is also an indication that greater human coordination, cooperation, and unity amongst the nations is under way. Each major crisis humanity goes through, such as WWII, is followed by a level of greater harmony that wasn't there before. E.g., NATO, UN, WTC, IMF, ASEAN, etc. are all harmony-creating social institutions that came about as a result of the calamity of World War II. Without such crises, it may have taken hundreds of years for such organizations of human cooperation to have emerged -- if ever.

As we now see in 2009, the Europeans are once more going through this dynamic via the current world financial debacle. Sixty years ago after WWII, the European Union began to emerge as an economic and quasi-political unifying organization. However, current circumstance is forcing that institution of greater harmony to forge even closer ties and bonds. As the pundits have pointed out, currently there is no real coordinating system within the EU framework to cope with and resolve the financial crisis, as each country pulls in its own direction (an echo of what those nations did previous to WWII, enabling the rise of the fascist juggernaut). But current events are forcing the EU to forge closer ties to resolve the issues, which will further solidify EU economic, political, social, and cultural bonds longer term.

Thus, we see how life, i.e. Nature, works. She creates difficult situations, such as a great war or a great financial crisis, to enable greater cooperation, coordination, and integration among the members. It is through this process that ever-greater harmony and unity is established in the world -- whether amongst the nations of the EU, the states of the USA, the countries of Asia, or the total collective of the world. It is this slow and difficult method of Nature -- "Prakriti" in Indian parlance -- that we arrive at ever-greater levels of human collaboration and harmony. It is through this process that we arrive at our ultimate collective destiny -- human unity.

Thus, we see that the negatives we perceive -- such as the current financial crisis -- can actually be seen as a positive in disguise: a difficulty that is in reality a vast opportunity for human progress, evolution, and transformation.

Human Unity and the Global Financial Crisis

Aside from focusing on the methods that will precipitate individual evolution and transformation, Sri Aurobindo was equally concerned with the social evolution of life on earth. In fact, they each played off one another. In practical terms, he recognized a social process unfolding amongst the nations of the world that resulted in ever-increasing world unity. That collective movement echoed transformational developments of the individual human that together would usher in what he called a "Divine Life on earth."

At the collective level, these developments occur in fits and starts because man is not conscious enough to bring about change through positive means alone. The negative is often the greatest spur to change, and in that sense can be thought of as a great positive in disguise. For example, in the wake of the devastation of WWII, many new organizations and associations were developed to prevent the reoccurrence of that tragedy -- the UN, NATO, and the Marshall Plan being several amongst many. It was also subconsciously a movement toward human unity concentrated into a few years that without the negative that preceded it might have taken centuries or even millennia to occur. As we see, the negative can be a vast spur of positive developments in life.

And so recently, when I watched two interviews on the US TV show Charlie Rose, I was reminded of this fact. First, former Secretary of State and global strategic thinker Henry Kissinger pointed out that the current financial crisis can be seen as a positive in that the major nations of the world -- including the US, the EU, Russia, China, India, and others -- are gradually forced to work together to solve ever-increasingly complex global issues. Separate, they are doomed, but together they have a great power to affect vast, new collective change, mimicking the period following WWII. In that sense, he was surprisingly optimistic, considering the current situation, indicating that he had a higher vision of things. He, in essence, semi-consciously perceived new openings in civilization's march toward global unification.

Immediately after, Michael Porter was interviewed in which he stated that the US has never had a strategic vision of how to improve itself, and that the current global financial crisis was forcing it to work collaboratively and centrally to resolve its national problems. Instead of the piecemeal and reactive approach to development, external conditions were forcing the US to confront what she has been unwilling to do till now at the economic and social level. Thus, the US was now finally ripe for a holistic, integrative, and comprehensive strategic economic plan.

The host Charlie Rose then commented how both Kissinger and Porter had come to the same conclusions in their two interviews. That the global economic crisis was forcing dynamic change upon the world. I noticed the very same thing as I watched the two interviews broadcast consecutively. And when Charlie expressed this thought, it made me happy because it reaffirmed a lifelong dedication to Sri Aurobindo's vision of an ever-increasing unity amongst the nations and peoples of the world. That unity in fact reflects an evolutionary urge toward higher consciousness through personal and spiritual growth, which are themselves harbingers of what Sri Aurobindo calls a Divine Life on Earth.

Solving the World's Problems through World Parliament

Recently, statesman Henry Kissinger proclaimed that the problems of the world are so great that they can only be solved at the *global* level. He explained that when the citizens of a nation ask its leader to solve incessant national problems, that leader throws up his hands, proclaiming that they do not know what to do, that it is beyond them, that it can only be solved at a global level. This was Kissinger's message: that ever-increasing local problems can only be solved globally.

And yet in recent years we have heard of and seen the opposite; that the key to resolving global problems must be done *locally*. For example, the environmental movement has been successful because it took root locally, expanded out, and then gained traction at the wider national and international, i.e. global, levels. Surely, environmentalism began in part by the efforts of the much-maligned hippies, the boomers, and their descendants from the 1970s onward. Then the society as a whole embraced it, as we see when householders throughout the world separate the recycled from the non-recyclable trash. Even leaders, business, and the nations themselves are speaking out as if they invented the concept! They were merely followers of movements that began locally and spread globally.

Thus, even as Kissinger has made his plea of top down approach to solving national problems globally, we know that the very movements that advocated the solution to many of the current problems of the world through this global means came from visionaries and pioneers at the local level. The process of unfolding is often the same. The advocacy of the local is at first ignored or rejected by the global, reaches a tipping point (usually because of difficult situations), and then it moves into the mass where the leaders claim its origin, ignoring its true roots. It is a great irony of progress.

To return to Kissinger's urging, how then do we resolve local problems globally? For one we need the institutions in place with *power* to implement them. Few of these exist now. The United Nations has served a great purpose, but it has no power to legislate changes in the world. Besides, it is an undemocratic institution due to its insistence on allowing the Veto power that enables a single nation to cancel the will of the majority, even the overwhelming 90% majority. How can they be a vehicle for fair change when they cater to the powerful?

This suggests that something *more effective*, with more *power* needs to be set in place. That overall solution is *world governance*, and the specific organization can take shape

as a *World Parliament*. Such an institution would have the power to legislate and solve the problems at the global level, which will in return also resolve the local problems that could not be settled by an individual nation's leaders.

The Indian sage and seer Sri Aurobindo has spoken of the evolution of society that has taken place in the course of history. That movement is not only an upward movement of progress, but is secretly a movement toward *world unity*. More precisely, it is actually *unity in diversity*. I.e. greatest diversity of cultures and viewpoints that work together to bring among harmonic outcomes that affect all members including the whole itself. Through this great diversity, more creative insight is brought to bear to create the most dynamic solution to the world's problems. A World Parliament can be the instrument to solve local problems globally, and all problems of the whole of the world through the infinite diversity of solutions provided by its members.

There has been a steady movement toward world unity; one that has in fact accelerated in the last fifty years. As nations give up their ego (i.e. their sense of separateness) and embrace the needs and concerns of other nations, world unity takes place. As wealth spreads around the world, and cultural influences move out from the source nations to other nations, the possibility of world unity takes shape. As common purpose is necessitated by events and circumstance, the need for and the pressure that brings about world unity in diversity accelerates.

The environmental movement is the most obvious example of this phenomenon. This is not only a compulsion of Nature that is forcing us to deal with a problem that affects our common environment, the earth, globe, but is also Nature's secret way of bringing us closer together, to creating more world unity -- i.e. to create Oneness. It is an outer pressure put upon us that we are reacting to avoid potential catastrophe, but it is secretly a pressure to advance the course of our human destiny of Oneness.

Microcosm of the Coming Social and Cultural Unity of the World

Los Angeles is a vast city of suburbs that seems without end. Not only does the landscape of houses appear endless -- fulfilling the "American Dream" of home ownership -- but the multiplicity of ethnic cultures from around the world makes it a melting pot in the extreme.

Recently I flew down from the San Francisco area to Los Angeles to meet with a client who provided employees for a massive condominium construction project near the ocean. The evening before the meeting, I ventured out of my hotel to find some dinner, crossed the wide boulevard, and came upon one of the ubiquitous "strip malls" in the area. Amidst a plethora of small retail businesses, at first I discovered a typical (for the US) Italian restaurant on the corner of the mall. However, next to it I was surprised to find a Peruvian restaurant, something I had never seen in the States before. Next to it I then saw a Vietnamese eatery, and next to that a Pakistani/Indian establishment. It seemed that in this small nook of Los Angeles, the world had gathered in close proximity, creating a kind of culinary United Nations. A similar scene is repeated hundreds if not thousands of times in venues throughout the region.

Below the radar of our awareness, the world is slowly but surely moving towards human unity. It has been a slow and irregular process, but it has accelerated in the last fifty years, even more so in the last ten. The unity of humanity occurs, in essence, when the multiplicity the cultures are able to come together, interact, and establish an integral bond, a certain level of vital affection, and ultimately a commonality of deep purpose.

It is important to point out that such unity expresses across a spectrum of depth that ranges from the material to the ethereal; from the mundane to the sublime. At the most basic level, human unity begins when there is *political* cooperation within and among the nations of the earth. Unity then moves to a somewhat higher plane through the *economic* integration of nations and peoples. It then makes a vast leap through the *social* and *cultural*, and culminates in the *psychological* and even the *spiritual* unity. To be honest, we are barely passing through the first stage, as nations still struggle to live in political harmony, though we are also making considerable progress of late in the second stage of economic integration. We have yet to make any substantial inroads into the social and psychological integration, as we each live in our separate worlds, each oblivious to the depths of one another's cultures.

If we examine life closely, we see that the smallest entity can be a microcosm of something much greater. For example, the atom and the electrons that spin around it are a microcosm of our solar system, even the universe itself. In that sense, the single nation of the US is a microcosm of the entire world. Gathered there are most if not all of the ethnic cultures, who are trying to work out a certain level of cooperation, even harmony of purpose. The US is in essence a microcosm of how the peoples of the world (the nations, the cultures, religions, world-views etc.) are trying to move beyond their differences, and enjoin and integrate their vast cultural and social resources. It seems that the symbolic experiment in America is so far working -- which is a harbinger of what is in store one day for the entire world.

The frontiers of social, cultural, and spiritual integration require a vast psychological shift in Man. On the other hand, for there to be this great inner transition amongst the races, cultures, ethnicities, et al, there needs to be a solid *material* foundation and basis. Physical/material stability and security must always precede the psychological to create a sustainable social environment. Practically speaking for the world that translates as *economic* stability and prosperity. The reason that the immigrant races/ethnicities get along in the US is that there is the sense that there is continuous economic opportunity and prosperity available. Without it, the basic cooperation that exists amongst the races would fall apart.

It is interesting to note that the US is also beginning to work out the *social* and *cultural* unity of the world's races on its own turf. E.g., people of all ethnic persuasions come to a wide swath of meeting places, such as the ethnic restaurants in this strip mall of Southern California, and by interacting in business offices, in schools, and so forth. There, as elsewhere, we see the first glimmers of social and cultural unity. The ability to sample the world's foods in a social setting provides not only the material foundation to explore other cultures, but provides a degree of psychological identity with that people - - enabling further social, cultural, and spiritual awareness, harmony, and integration. These developments are important milestones, flags along the way that mark critical stages in the emerging unity of the world. These are in turn the first glimmers of what Sri Aurobindo heralded for the future when he spoke of the possibility of a Divine Life on earth.

Emerging World Unity Amidst the Chaos (2006)

On the surface, it seems like the world is going to hell in a hand basket. Actually, such disturbances are indicators that we are accelerating towards greater World Unity.

The threat of the annihilation of the entire world was eliminated for the most part by the end of the Cold War. This was a vast leap for humanity. When Gorbachev disengaged the failing system from within without bloodshed, he took the world across a precarious

and great threshold. Now the other, smaller problems of the world have reared their heads, hidden from view in the shadow of potential global annihilation. There are many difficulties to be solved: with poverty, disease, terrorism, resources, and environmental degradation being the most noticeable. Even conflicts on these fronts indicate that through the resolution of these issues the world will further progress, develop, and unify.

Of note, the problems of the Arab world and Africa have seen ignored for decades, if not centuries -- particularly in the umbra of the Cold War. It is the most obviously unorganized part of the global system; of life on earth. With the end of Cold War hostilities, they can finally be addressed, and with it will come not only greater economic stability, but greater political, social, and cultural harmony and integration amongst the peoples of the world.

We must first understand that this is the Hour of the Unexpected. All unknowns can become know; and the seeming impossibilities can become infinite-like possibilities. In other words, what we perceive as huge roadblocks to progress are actually a vast opportunities in disguise.

One hundred years ago, the Europeans laughed at America, at her crudeness and backwardness, and now she is the most prosperous nation in the world. Likewise, for 100 years, the West ignored and snickered at India and China, and now these emerging nations are rapidly moving toward prosperity and vast global influence, something thought of to be utterly preposterous only a few generations ago. The fact of the billions living in those countries -- once perceived as an economic obstacle to human progress -- is now perceived as a vast opportunity. Interestingly, we see a leading edge of creating thinking and innovation emerging there; in ways that may even exceed the West. What would life be if a billion geniuses emerged from the East? The earlier impossibility would turn into a never-thought-of-before infinite-like reality.

At a higher level, we see that the Force of Nature is pushing the world towards further evolution. It takes shape in many forms: from economic to cultural to spiritual. We are in the times of economic integration. Secretly however there is a movement afoot toward human unity, of which economic cooperation and harmony is but an initial steps. Political, social, and cultural harmony are further stages. Though it will take decades if not centuries for it to occur, that movement is surely under way.

One great question is whether the movement toward Human Unity will occur *consciously*, where we use our higher values to create that future, or through the slow and difficult path of Nature, which is through contradiction, conflict, and strife. For example, there was vast progress after WWII, with the establishment of the UN, the EU, and many other global-unifying institutions. It is an example of progress that comes in the wake of destruction. On the other hand, the Internet, also a global unifying power, came out of the positive aspirations of society for a higher order of organization and success to knowledge. Which path we take will depend on the level of conscious awareness we bring to bear, as a people, and as individuals partaking in the world.

One critical determinant of Human Unity will be how the degree we take to rationality and clear thinking; as opposed to our attachments to limited points of view, superstition, and falsehood. Education will obviously play a great role here. As a result of a more rational humanity, there will invariably be movements towards higher social and cultural values. As human values such as tolerance, true individuality, and collective action ascend in the world, the people will naturally move into closer economic, social, and cultural integration and unity. Such movements will be mirrored by events and

circumstance at the highest level, as the yearning towards oneness of individuals will reflect at the level of the human collective. Again, the Internet serves as an example.

As a result of greater rationality and more deeply shared human values, there will also be corresponding evolutionary movements in the way Knowledge is accessed through the human mind. In the future, we will see increasing capacities to perceive complex truths directly through silence, intuition, and revelation. This will increasingly reveal the deeper meaning and purposes of life, including that of the spiritual dimension. Through these new states of consciousness and awareness, a Soul movement will begin underfoot for humanity, where we increasingly feel deep connections and bonds with others, including a profound association, unity, and oneness. All of these together then will reflect at the macro level as ever-accelerating movements of Human Unity.

The Emerging Spirituality in Society

Evolution of Spirituality

The Evolution of Spirit in India

100,000 years ago, Man emerged from the savannahs of Africa and entered two land masses; the Middle East and Europe (the "western wave"), and that of the East, including India and China. The western wave out of Africa took to religion, while the Eastern wave were drawn toward spirituality. The Western wave of religion eventually shed some of its falsehood, evolved into rationality, democracy, freedom, individuality, science, technology, and the modern material world as we see in Europe, the USA, and emerging elsewhere. The Eastern wave developed culture, emotion, and the Spirit. Of course, each of the two developed some of the capacities of the other -- e.g. religion developed in India, and there were strains of spirituality in the West.

My goal here is to trace the Eastern movement that enabled the flowering of Spirit. It appears to have originated in the period of the naturalistic life of the Vedas in India. There people connected to the Spirit through the natural forces of the physical world. In the stone, in elemental and environmental forces, individuals felt a connection to an ultimate spiritual Reality. Life was physical then and their connection to that Reality expressed through physical forms of nature, as well as through the worship of Gods. Mind and higher emotions had not yet developed to interfere with their pure Divine reverence through physical means. Still, it was a great development in the spiritual history of man -- unprecedented until that time.

And yet people perceived that life was full of suffering in life, pain, falsehood, negativity, and evil. Since these issues were raised in the subconscious of society, the avatar -- i.e. one who furthers the evolution -- Buddha came along in India and took to a very different path. He abandoned the aspiration and search for an ultimate Reality, indicating that it could not be known, and instead focused on the causes of evil and suffering in earth. Through a process of enlightenment, he came to see that if we move out of ego, all such negativity ceases. By meditating and reaching the timeless, spaceless Void, one realizes the state of Nirvana, where ego, separation, and desire ceases, which, in turn, eliminates suffering in one's lifetime. It was a profound insight and another great development in the history of the Spirit.

Over time Mind developed, and there resumed the attempt to commune with the ultimate Spiritual reality through this newly evolved faculty. As a result, the period of

the Upanishads was ushered in. During that time there was a group of individuals who had a deep urge to connect with and experience the Supreme -- i.e. the ultimate transcendent Reality. They began to perceive that Reality in three aspects; (1) as *Existence* -- i.e. as pure Spiritual Being; (2) as a *Consciousness* that had become aware of its own Existence, and as a result generated a *Force* that became the energy out of which the universe would emerge; (3) and as Delight, taking infinite pleasure in being conscious of Its own Existence. (This is expressed by the three attributes of Sat-Chit-Ananda; i.e. Existence, Consciousness-Force, Delight.)

This is roughly equivalent to the fact that I exist as an individual; I am conscious of my existence -- which in turn energizes me; and I delight in being conscious of who I am. These ecstatic devotees -- known as the Rishis -- had the spontaneous experience of the Spirit. They perceived the Ultimate Reality and how that spiritual Being was emerging into the becomings of life. That Life was just another form and manifestation of that Reality. Thus, they perceived for the first time the integration of Spirit and Matter; they had a vision of this ultimate, integral Reality, which they called "Brahman." In effect, the Rishis of that time had become the greatest spiritual aspirants of the ancient world.

Though they ecstatically experienced the Spirit by communing with the transcendent Reality, it was left to the Bhagavad-Gita to address aspects the Rishis had not considered. While Rishis were more focused on pure *transcendence* and connection to the spiritual Reality, the Gita addressed the specific methods that would enable an individual to spiritually *progress* -- i.e. grow, evolve, and be transformed. By connecting to the Soul within, one not only begins the process of change out of our lower nature -- e.g. controlling negative behaviors, taking to higher emotions, sensing a oneness with others, etc. -- but one comes in touch with the same transcendent Reality that the Rishis experienced earlier.

Now there was a path of individual progress through Soul, opening the way to the transcendent spiritual Reality. Our ultimate purpose then was to find our individual Soul, discover and surrender to the Supreme, and carry out and fulfill the Divine Intent on earth. Through service of works, true knowledge of the ways of life, and surrender to the Supreme and Its Intent, one not only evolves, but fulfills one's ultimate purpose on earth. These are several of the lessons offered by the avatar Krishna to the warrior Arjuna at the battle of Kurukshetra, as explained in the Gita.

And yet, it has been left to modern India, in particular, through the spiritual insights of Vivekananda and further still to the great sage and seer Sri Aurobindo to present the world the wider and all-encompassing spiritual picture. Drawing on the Rishis' ecstatic spiritual experience as captured in the Upanishads, as well as the Gita's methods of yogic progress, Sri Aurobindo put it all in an *evolutionary* context.

He offered the world a wider knowledge of the creation process and unfolding of the universe, even as he was able to trace and project the course of human progress and its ultimate spiritual destiny. He described the *involution* of life -- i.e. how the universe came about from a Divine source -- and the *evolution* of life from matter to spirit through individual transformation, culminating in a Divine life on earth.

Sri Aurobindo also traced the cause of Ignorance back to the involution of Spirit, showed the way back to Integral Knowledge through Soul connection and surrender to the descending spiritual Force that would aid in the individual's transformation. In this way, he provided a more integral view of the Spirit, embracing the evolutionary principles of modern life.

The Evolutionary Aspect of Spirit in India

In an earlier entry, I discussed the great contribution of the ancient Vedic worshippers of the Divine Reality through natural forces, as well as the later more-mental Rishis who collectively melted into that Reality, though apart from life. These were the great spiritual voyagers seeking connection with the Divine, both individually and collectively. I then followed that up with a discussion of Buddha, who confronted the issues of suffering and impermanence in life that the ancient Indian Vedics were less concerned about, as they were immersed in transcendence and blissful experience. In the end, Buddha discovered a void, a place of emptiness -- Nirvana -- from which he could escape from the trappings of life, including the desire and attachment that is the root cause of all suffering.

And yet the spiritual search continued in India, as many returned to the ancient Vedic tradition, looking this time not for transcendence apart from life, but a way to link spirit and life together. And so in the Bhagavad Gita, warrior prince Arjuna is directed by Lord Krishna to find wholeness in his being by connecting to the transcendent Divine and yet performing all his duties and works for Its sake. In this way, spirit and life activity are melded together. In addition, by recognizing that the same transcendent Being is there in one's own Soul, one has the method of integrating self with spirit, enabling wholeness in one's own being. This was a revolution in spiritual insight and experience, just as Buddha's was for his time.

Now in the modern era, there is a desire to go further -- to not only integrate life and spirit, but to see it in a progressive, evolutionary context. Embracing the ancient Vedantic and Gita influence, seer and sage Sri Aurobindo described the evolutionary process by which the universe emerged from a Divine Source, as well as how we can progressively develop our own higher nature leading to a supernature. He has taken the message of earlier ancient wisdom and given it an upward arc that is supported by the modern scientific and philosophical influences of the West.

Besides revealing the universal process of creation, Sri Aurobindo adds two powerful dimensions to the spiritual story. First, he speaks not only of a soul, but of an Evolving soul that uses the experiences of the person it inhabits through successive births on its journey for fulfillment. When we come in touch with that "psychic being" within, we begin the process of personal evolution and transformation. Second, Sri Aurobindo speaks of an ultimate power in the universe: a Supramental Consciousness and Force that not only enabled a universe to emerge from an Infinite, Divine Source, but is a power that can aide in the transmutation of our nature and set right all condition of life.

Through these internal and external powers, we engage in a clearly delineated evolutionary process, which helps us evolve a supernature, which in turn can set the stage for the emergence of a new type of spirit-oriented human existence, a divine life on earth.

The Evolutionary Spirituality that is Now Emerging

Europeans look out on the world and are proud of their rich heritage, even as they are oblivious to the deep culture and spiritual insights of the East. Currently the Europeans observe the sudden dramatic emergence of Americans, and the rise of the Eastern economic powers, and semi-consciously begin to question their long-held belief that they above all others have been the civilizing force of history. Likewise, the Americans look out at the emerging East, and wonder what is in store from these titanic economic and cultural powers, just at a time she thought she was the unstoppable cultural and economic leader in the world.

From our current perch in history, we can trace the march of progress of civilization. As we know, it began in Africa, and then essentially moved in two directions -- to the East, where spirit and culture was born, and north to the Middle East, where religion was born. From out of the religion wing eventually emerged the rational thought and democracy of Greece, its practical application through the rules and organizational structures of the Roman Empire; the culture of the Renaissance and Enlightenment; and the economic expansion of the British Empire, which continues today through the material and cultural influence of the America dynamo. The Middle East and Africa meanwhile have remained poor and neglected. Through tragedy and suffering, the world now seeks to resolve the stagnant problems of the troubled areas. Meanwhile, the profound ancient wisdom of the East has remained unknown to a good part of the world -- even buried in its essence in its founding country, India.

Why then has the profoundest understanding of the spirit ever known, that of ancient India, remained dormant and unknown? The simple answer is that civilization was not ready for the ancient wisdom of the Vedas, the Upanishads, and of the Rishis who intensely communed with the Divine Reality up to 7,000 years ago. Civilization had to first evolve through several stages before she was ready to this greatest of all spiritual knowledge and experiences to be broadcast and adopted by the rest of the world. In addition, the ancient spiritual realizations themselves had to evolve.

Though great beyond measure, the spiritual realizations of the ancient Rishis were in one sense a static one. I.e. though the spiritual seekers had found a direct connection to the Divine reality, that blissful liberation took place *outside* of life; not within it. Thus, a new, more comprehensive spiritual realization and knowledge was necessary if it were to spread far and wide -- one that combined their deep realizations with the aspiration of modern Man.

Fortunately, in the first half of the 20th century, one individual, the Indian sage and seer Sri Aurobindo had those very realizations and spiritual perceptions, as he was able to integrate that profoundest of ancient wisdom with modern evolutionary understanding. By showing how spirit is not just a liberating element that one can dissolve into to discover ultimate happiness and bliss, but that it can be brought into the details of life, in order to elevate and perfect it, Sri Aurobindo made the great synthesis between the spiritual wisdom of the past and the evolutionary aspirations of a modern society.

Thus, after a 7000-year sleep, the great spiritual wisdom of India has begun to take on a new tone and direction, allowing a more dynamic East, and a materially exhausted West to embrace it. In essence, Nature has waited these millennia so that the world could first make the necessary evolutionary progress -- emotionally, psychologically, and mentally -- before it could embrace this new, dynamic evolutionary view of the spirit. Now that a solid base of material prosperity has been established in the world, now that Nature's course has passed beyond the ages of oppression by church and king, now that she has discovered democracy, developed a modicum of culture, and has begun to nurture true individuality, the peoples of the world seem ready to embrace the evolutionary spiritual teachings and realizations of sages like Sri Aurobindo and others in the emerging New Age.

Spiritual Evolution in Consciousness

The Integral View of Spirit and Life Emerging in the World

The source teachings of the great religions of the world are available to each of us without having to follow that teacher exclusively. Jesus brought Love to the world, but we can follow the path of true Self-givingness without following Christianity. We can perceive that attachment, possessiveness, ignorance, and ego are essential causes of suffering, something Buddha professed, without having to follow the religion that arose after his passing. We can surrender to the True Self within and the Divine Reality above in the activities of life without having to follow Krishna who professed that profound teaching in his time and are several of the central precepts of Hinduism. We can embrace the fact that evolution is constantly occurring in life without exclusively becoming proponents of the works and principles of Darwin.

Thus in the modern era, we can take the *integral* approach to understanding the nature of the Reality. E.g., new spiritual teachers and evolutionary thinkers are taking the wisdom of the past and putting it into a modern context -- creating more dynamic, integral insights into the nature of existence. Because we have made great advances in our mentality in the past hundred years or so, we are able to perceive the variety of truths from all time and traditions, as well as new, modern insights, and integrate them in new holistic and uniquely perceptive integral views of Reality.

That is one reason that the current era is often referred to as 'The New Age.' It is a dynamic period in which we are able to develop a fresh, new perspective of existence, including the knowledge gleaned from multiple cultures; the various paths of wisdoms from a variety of traditions; the vast array of material, psychological, and spiritual insights from around the world; and meld them into a comprehensive view of existence. Interestingly, it includes new, unprecedented insight into the true nature, flow, and workings of life. For example, the recent interest in the principle of the Law of Attraction and the phenomenon of Life Response are merely the first wave of insights into how higher levels of consciousness can evoke instances of sudden good fortune. Of course, such laws and phenomena are not new at all -- as they were expressed in ancient traditions, such as the Indian Vedas and Upanishads thousands of years ago -- yet they are now being integrated into a modern context, giving them added dynamism and power.

The Indian sage and seer Sri Aurobindo drew on most if not all of the great spiritual precepts to come with an integral view that harmonizes such perceived dualities as spirit and matter, science and faith, and evolution and determination. Writing from the deepest poise of intuitive, spiritualized mind, he had the vision of the integral view of existence. He then formulated an evolutionary, spiritual philosophy that was unprecedented in human history. He also had all of the essential experiences of the past masters and the ancient wisdom, and in a spontaneous expression of spiritual insight, developed his dynamic, unprecedented integral view of existence. He would then go on to describe a future humanity in which we would transcend our current human functioning, ushering in a new, divine life on earth.

There are many signs that we are moving towards this new integral view of life. We see nations forging closer political and economic ties and alliances; we see the embracing of one another's cultures; we see the communications of a plethora of beliefs and spiritual teachings over the Internet; we see a society more open to new ideas that go beyond

one's traditional culture. This cross-pollination of wisdom and personal experience is enriching the world and every individual in it.

While many focus on the technological means of communicating the wisdom, the all-important knowledge itself is formulating into a new, integral, evolutionary, consciousness-oriented view of life. It is surely a sign of humanity's progress -- which I believe is in fact a New Awakening. It is also an expression of Sri Aurobindo's great precept of "Unity in Diversity;" that as we move towards ever-greater levels of human unity, we absorb an ever-expanding diversity of views and precepts about the nature of existence. As a result, an integral view of life begins to emerge that is infinitely profound, comprehensive, and dynamic.

New Planetary Change in Consciousness

Question: Will there be a vast spiritual shift on our planet, a new consciousness emerging on earth in 2012, as some have predicted?

Certainly, there is a progressive movement taking place of higher consciousness, of evolution, even spiritual evolution gradually over time. It is possible that there will be a spiritual shift on the planet as some have suggested for 2012, or for any year for that matter.

In the 1960s, there was the greatest spiritual alignment in history as the Force descended into the earth's atmosphere. Hardly anyone noticed, yet many were affected, particularly the Hippies. (They too did not know it.)

Movements of spirit are normally inward, unseen, subtle. These are realms unperceived in man. Does it break out on the surface? The Hippies was definitely a breakout. The Force was so powerful, and the instruments of the people so limited that for every step forward the Hippies made there was a step backwards. (They could not hold the force despite their profoundly new perceptions in the world.) Then it all disappeared as if they never existed. The environmental movements, the computer, and the Internet are just a few of their legacies.

Whether there will be another such breakout (itself due to inner spiritual changes in the cosmic realms) remains to be seen.

The interest in 'The Secret' is to me the most powerful development I have seen along these lines. It is 75% of what Life Response is. It knows the effect well (i.e. the response that comes), though it is lacking in the integral view of the cause. The Secret's approach is to achieve a goal. Life response is more than that, being a comprehensive view of a new way to live our lives. An evolutionary leap. The Secret/Life response and its offshoots have the potential to change the course of spiritual history. It is a step in the stages of yoga I outlined in the previous entry.

To return to the original question. We cannot know for sure if such a spiritual breakout will occur in society. As the sage says, "Ours is not to predict, but to anticipate." Yet anything and everything is possible. As Sri Aurobindo said: "It is the Hour of the Unexpected."

The New Spirituality of Direct Experience

Beyond the Avatar to Personal Realization of the Many

The avatar comes to bring new spiritual insights to the world or region that was not there before in order to bring progress for the society. Jesus taught a new level of universal and divine Love that had not existed before. Buddha for the first time addressed the issue of suffering, death, and impermanence head on, and devised a way out. Krishna presented anew the nature of the Soul and how it can be a conduit to the experience of the Divine Reality. Sri Aurobindo and the Mother came recently to usher in the new age of human progress through conscious evolution, culminating in a Divine Life on earth.

And yet, we cannot just wait around for great personalities to forge the path of our future. We must do it ourselves. It is after all the age of spiritual *experience and realization*, not that of merely following the avatar in the form of religious worship.

The 20th century was the age of the common man, where the average person secured rights once reserved for monarchs and kings. The 21st century is that of the True Individual, where we become anything we set our minds to -- unfettered by the opinions of the others and the culture we belong to. It is also the age of the True Spiritual Individual, where the person takes his cues from his inner being and soul, moving through life armed with the deepest and most profound of practical and cosmic insights. He in turn is able to become the true spiritual pioneer; perfecting, uplifting, and divinizing life around him, ushering in a new age of human progress.

In the new age, there are fewer and fewer great spiritual personalities. Instead, the realization moves down into the populace where there is an explosion of spiritual realization amongst a considerable number of individuals. The realization of spirit reverses from top down influence to bottom up experience. There is less following, and more becoming, allowing for sustained personal realization. It is a decentralized movement that will lead us to the next stage of human evolution on earth.

Sri Aurobindo's Multi-Faceted Dream

The great seer and sage Sri Aurobindo imagined five steps that would usher in the evolution and transformation of humanity, enabling what he called a Divine Life on earth. The first was the emergence of Asia into prosperity and cultural influence. That has surely begun, especially in the past decade or so. Her influence upon the thought of the world is bound to grow by leaps and bounds in the years to come.

The second was the prosperity and emergence of India. That too is well under way. For until she attains economic wellbeing, she cannot ascend to her rightful role as the spiritual Guru of the world -- another of the five steps Sri Aurobindo dreamed of.

Another mighty step towards a spirit-base Divine life on earth is the emergence of Human Unity, which is presaged by world alliances, culminating in world governance. The European Union (EU) is perhaps the first step in that direction in that it creates an alliance and unity of closely aligned nations. In the EU, disparate cultures are aligned to create a single entity that unifies all of them. Even the states that make up the USA is not really such an alliance. In the USA, the coming together of the individual states actually provided them with an identity, whereas in the EU the identify of each nation is nearly fully formed, and yet they are slowly willing to unify for a higher meaning and purpose.

Other such regional unifying alliances, along with a World Parliament and perhaps a world army would be further steps in the march towards the Unity of Nations and the Unity of the World.

There is also a spiritual component to Sri Aurobindo's vision. One is for India and one for the individuals of the earth. For India, she can rediscover the great spiritual wisdom of the ancient Rishis -- perhaps the greatest spiritual knowledge and experience ever known to Man -- and apply it to the economic, social, and cultural life of her people. In that way, India can become a living experiment of the power of the spirit. If she succeeds, she can take her rightful place as the Guru of the World.

Finally, disparate individuals around the world can begin to come to know the spirit in their own individual lives; discovering it within in the depths of their being by opening to and surrendering to the descending Force above, and then applying it in the details of their lives. In that process, such individuals will invariably transform all aspects of their being -- mental, psychological, vital/emotional, and physical -- and develop capacities to quickly attract good fortune from the world around. When a cadre of such new-type humans emerge in the world -- especially when they have made what Sri Aurobindo calls the ultimate "Supramental change," where the descending Force and Truth Consciousness has permeated and transformed all aspects of their being -- then they will create the fifth and final condition for a divine life on earth to come about.

The emergence of Asia, the prosperity of India, the movements towards World Unity, the spiritual emergence of India and Her ascent to become the Guru of the world, and the full blossoming of transformed spirit-oriented individuals are the intervening steps that can usher in a Divine Life on Earth and fulfill Sri Aurobindo's multi-faceted dream for humanity.

Chopra, Tolle, and the Emerging Integral Spirituality

Today we see ever-increasing cross-pollination of ideas moving across a variety fields, enhancing each of them and creating new possibilities and vistas for the individual and society. This movement also occurs in the realm of the practical application of spirit in daily life. Older, fixed, traditional, hard-line religious views of God are being cast aside by the educated and disaffected, and are being replaced by deeper truth about the nature of life and Spirit, and how those insights can be practically used by the average person.

Two popular thinkers who have captured this synthetic, integral view are Deepak Chopra, who carries forward the ancient wisdom of India, and Eckhart Tolle, who has synthesized the Buddhist tenets with the teachings of more modern Indian sages.

In addition to a scientific bent, Deepak Chopra's teachings are deeply rooted in the Indian spiritual tradition of Vedanta. In essence, he says that if we move our reference to a deeper poise within -- through meditation, concentration, prayer or other methods - - we raise our consciousness and thereby open to a universal realm where we experience intuitions of knowledge, vast creativity, life synchronicities, profound oneness, love, communion with the transcendent being, and deep joy and delight in being alive.

Eckhart Tolle's teachings emphasize the ways we can become truly mindful and alive by keeping ourselves focused on the moment at hand. He tells us that there are factors that distract us from the present experience of life -- including preoccupation with the past, desire for something in the future, allures of the outer life, and the negative influence of the human ego. In particular, Tolle indicates that it is the feeding of our ego

that is the source of inner and outer conflict, which in effect deflects us from the needs of the Now.

I find it interesting that Chopra expresses his affection for Tolle's spiritual bestseller 'The Power of Now' on the book's front cover. It is Tolle's mindfulness of the present and the serenity and stillness that follow that can be seen as providing the foundation for the profound consciousness experiences described by Chopra. By being rooted in the present moment (which parallels being stationed in the stillness of inner self), one is able to open to the non-local, universal domain where one experiences intuition, love, creativity, synchronicity, attraction, oneness, transcendence, and blissful delight.

These two teachings along with the Power of Attraction as described by the book 'The Secret'-- i.e. the capacity to quickly attract the object of our desire -- have begun to coalesce into a modern, dynamic, practical method of applying Spirit in life. Together they begin to form an integral view of the nature of consciousness and our infinite human potential.

Interestingly, this integral approach to personal and spiritual fulfillment has precedence; for the Indian sage and seer Sri Aurobindo has combined and integrated these modern approaches into an all-encompassing teaching. After embracing and extending the profound Vedantic view and that of the Eternal Now, he adds to the mix a Spiritual Force that is descending into the earth's atmosphere that we can open that instantly resolves problems, rights the conditions of life, and brings about instant good fortune. Being the Force that created the universe, we can use that power to evolve all parts of our being, enabling the evolution and transformation of our nature. Sri Aurobindo then concludes that we will begin to see the arrival of a number of spiritualized individuals, who will usher in a new stage of humanity, culminating in what he calls a "Divine Life on Earth." Through this integral, evolutionary process, he has devised a method for humanity to come out of its Ignorance and suffering, and fulfill its infinite potential.

The Pantheon of the Indian Gods and Beyond

We can perceive three essential aspects and movements of life: things are created anew; they are protected and preserved; and they cease to be when their consciousness can no longer sustain themselves. These three aspects of existence are represented by the three primal deities of the Indian pantheon; the God Brahma is responsible for creation, creating anew; Vishnu preserves and protects what exists; and Siva destroys that which is no longer needed.

For example, when a Hindu family goes into a temple, they may seek the birth of a child by worshiping the representation of Brahma; the good health of an existing child through Vishnu; and ridding themselves of wrong attitude and ignorance through Siva. Because these powers are alive in the hearts and minds of the worshipers, it energizes these Gods, who have do in fact have power to bestow their gifts. This is far different than the Greek Gods, which have long been dormant.

And yet today worshiping such ancient deities and primal forces are being overpassed for direct spiritual experience by each individual person. The new way in these times of increasing freedom and individuality is to have direct experience of the Spirit in its varied forms -- from the soul within to the transcendent reality without.

In India this approach was actually advocated long ago by Lord Krishna (an incarnation of Vishnu) as narrated in the Bhagavad Gita. There he instructed the great warrior Arjuna that what matters most in life is connecting to and perceiving the Divine Reality. Through that personal spiritual experience, one comes to know the great truths of life,

including the right handling of one's own inner and outer battles. In that regard, Arjuna succeeded royally, winning the battle at Kurekshetra against evil enemies that were of his own blood. His direct spiritual experience of the Divine, not simply praying to a God or deity, fostered his success.

This approach has taken another leap forward in modern times through the teachings of seer and sage Sri Aurobindo, who through a complex and powerful metaphysics and yoga (method of conscious transformation) has married the spiritual wisdom of ancient India to the profound modern truth of evolution. When we overcome our limited nature, discover our true selves, connect with our evolving soul within, and open to the spiritual Force in the atmosphere, we evolve ourselves, and become pioneers for a new humanity.

Though the Gods, representing profound ancient truths, were once worth worshiping, we can now become true spiritual individuals by personally experiencing the spirit in all its dimensions. Peace, harmony, wisdom, overcoming time and space, creativity, beauty, love, and deep delight are all qualities we can realize in our daily lives. This is our destiny in the 21st century; to become true spiritual individuals who can embody spirit in any of its aspects, each in our own unique way.

The Spiritual Force Available in the World

The Availability of the Force and the Next Stage of Human Evolution

Just as there are great events in history, there are great events in *spiritual* history. The most well-known are marked by the coming of great spiritual personalities. They usually arrive on the scene when society needs to make a decided progress, even evolution. E.g., Jesus brought a new level of Love into the world at a time when that aspect of life was subconsciously desired by the community. Likewise, Buddha revealed the cause of suffering in life, and showed the way out of it, when that was required by that society. Similarly, Krishna revealed the divinity that resided in our souls, and the transcendent spiritual reality that we can embrace in the details of our lives when that society was ready for that progress.

Since "spiritual history" does not stop, such revelations of divine personalities continue in the modern era. Recently two such personalities arrived in India at the same time in the form of Sri Aurobindo and his partner The Mother. The former is considered the greatest spiritual figure of the last hundred years in the East, in that not only did he introduce the world to an evolutionary spiritual view of life, but participated in bringing down a new spiritual Force into the earth's atmosphere.

Therefore, now when one opens to the Divine, there is a greater power of effectivity in life than had ever existed before. In the past only the greatest of spiritual personalities could bring down spiritual powers into life, such as Oneness, Love, Truth, Beauty, Infinity, Bliss, etc. Now that power is available to anyone -- as that Force has penetrated fully into the atmosphere of the earth. Any person at any time can open to it, and elicit instances of sudden good fortune. Events around one's life will begin to appear miraculous-like, as the Force tends to attract vast results in no time at all. E.g. oppressive neighbor will suddenly move away; lost jewelry will suddenly be found; financial distress will quickly be overcome; income opportunities will appear out of nowhere; solutions to confounding problems will suddenly reveal itself, a threat to a country's border will suddenly evaporate, persistent power outages will permanently cease, and so forth.

One only has to open to that Force before engaging in any act, and sudden good fortune will come one's way. One has only to offer any problem or difficulty one has in life to that Force, and it will quickly evaporate and resolve it. One has only to offer one's aspiration for accomplishment to the Power, and it will be achieved in relatively little time; and in most unexpected ways. Even if one has little faith, the Force will still move the life around one's self if one makes the slightest effort to open oneself to its Power because it is now so active in the earth's atmosphere.

That Force and Power is ultimately there to usher in the next evolutionary stage for humanity. In the last fifty years, we have begun to see the emergence of rational mentality in Man. And yet despite that benefit, it is still a limited capacity, requiring a higher spiritualized dimension for life to unfold with its maximum potential. Through the Force, we can truly begin to see the power of the Spirit to move life around us, even as we have begun to see how rational and insightful mind has brought great awareness and change to humanity in recent decades. Now we are ready to move forward, from mental man to the Spiritual Individual; one who continually draws on the Force to bring about instantaneous miraculousness in our lives.

The Hippies and The Force

There is a new book on the market -- 'What the Dormouse Said' by John Markoff -- that attempts to explain the relationship between the use of drugs by the hippies in the 60s and the emergence of computer revolution. When I sent a note about it to certain friends, they responded by revisiting their drug experiences, glorifying in its power to evoke intensity. I responded by saying that the hippies were indeed responsible for the emerging personal computer industry, but that it was not due to the influence of drugs, which was a *distortion* of consciousness, but to the *deep values* advocated by the hippies.

If this is the case, i.e. if they brought with them the profoundest of new values, a new worldview and consciousness, a new definition of freedom, etc., why didn't the movement -- actually it was more than a movement, it was a large chunk of the baby boom generation -- sustain itself?

Let's look at it from the metaphysical point of view. There is a spiritual Force descending on the earth. It is the evolutionary Truth Consciousness of the Divine. As it leans down on the earth, it does so with great pressure. The hippies who were ripe for such things were directly under its positive influence. However, their consciousness was not wide enough to hold the Force, and therefore it began to express in a distorted fashion -- i.e. through their distorted behaviors. Focused in the lower vital consciousness, the Force manifests as creativity, wonder, new vision, new possibility, but when the vital is not strong and pure the action of the Force can express in distorted ways -- through the super-intensity of the drug experience, through sexual indulgence, and in other ways. Had the Hippies developed an inner basis of calm and equality, the Force could have penetrated their being without the negative side effects.

As a result of the distortions, the Hippy generation could not survive. Add to it the fact that there were no organizations formed in society to channel their energies, the movement simply evaporated. After half a decade, it was absorbed and diffused by society, vanishing quietly like the last bubbles on a calm sea. Still they left an astounding array of change -- perhaps unmatched, at least in possibility and potentiality, since the Renaissance of 500 years ago. Hundreds of years of influence were condensed into half a decade.

For example, former hippy Tom Peters' management books advocating freedom and values in the workplace would revolutionize the business environment. In science, hippy-influenced thinkers like Fritjof Capra in books like "The Turning Point" would sanction the astounding, mind-bending new discoveries of physics. More generally the hippies would have an vast impact on society, bringing about the birth of the environmental movement, the New Age spiritual movement, a fuller blossoming of the woman's movement, the spreading of civil and human rights values around the world, the birth of the computer revolution, the emergence of the Internet, the spreading of global harmony and unity, and many others that are still unfolding today. Its influence appears endless, and continues to vibrate and influence a variety of fields of life today.

Let me conclude with this. The Force is more powerful than ever in the earth's atmosphere. You can feel it tangibly if you open yourself a little to its influence. It is there around you. From a poise of calm, we can aspire for its influence in our lives, and it will turn anything we do into miraculous result. If we call the spiritual Force into any activity we are about to embark on, that work will unfold magnificently; it will be truly a miraculous-like wonder. New possibilities will reveal themselves suddenly from out of nowhere, and from the most unexpected quarters. The sudden, positive opening in life will be eye opening, astounding, intense -- something that the hippies of the 60s would certainly appreciate!

The Spiritual Aspirant's Role in Society

Personal & Spiritual Growth of the Individual and the Evolution of Society

Each generation knows something the previous one does not. It is that generation's genius. Those of a living older generation who look forward into what's coming, what's unfolding in the new will catch the wave and ride it to the future. They will be refreshed, filled with energy like the newer generation.

Heart centered business is one slowly emerging trend of recent generations. It is a movement that really began in earnest with the book 'In Search of Excellence' in the 1980s when freedom of the individual in the workplace became all the rage. Then personal and business Values began to take center stage. One of those values is caring for the employees, which in perhaps the key one. When that value matures into a higher order, management feels deep empathy for its staff, as well as to customers. It expands further when that harmonic feeling goes out to society; not just in one's own locale, but to increasingly wider collectives.

All the while soul to soul connections by individuals increasingly develop; with empathy, harmony, and oneness the product. New worlds take shape from such harmonic tendencies. Naturally, we are merely at the beginning of such deeper human processes.

Personal and Spiritual Growth is about the raising of consciousness and empowerment of the individual, who then can reach out to others, empowering them. This process starts through realization of one's deeper being, builds on it through the development of one's character, nature, levels of awareness, degree of successes, and fulfillments. It also spreads to those around us.

Eventually the people at the top follow this process too, and then there is an equally powerful movement afoot; up and down, from within and without, from the one to one, one to many, and the many to the many. Global consciousness is raised, like the sea rising in high tide.

The universal unfolding starts from within the individual. But it also requires us to respond well to the waves of change from without.

There are movements for improvement that emerge from society, though they are subconscious to them. We as true individuals become the Pioneers who make what is subconscious conscious and real. Computers, smartphones, etc. was the result of subconscious will of society for knowledge and power at one's fingertips. Pioneers like Gates, Jobs, Google founders, Branson, et al identified it and realized it for the collective. Then it spreads throughout society.

We can make this entire process more conscious. Through concentrated personal and spiritual growth, we institutionalize being Pioneers, as we are in touch with the deepest aspect of ourselves and the world.

In that way, each of us can become a genius in our particular domain or field, radiating out possibilities and realizations for the rest of the world to embrace.

How the Spiritual Aspirant Can Embrace Social Existence

[A reader asks: "The typical spiritual follower who is part of a family and who has work responsibilities and who interacts with people in the society all the time is vulnerable to all physical, vital and mental influences that curtail and restrict the freedom of his soul. Where is he to get the strength to maintain his cocoon guaranteeing his freedom and bliss if he cannot isolate himself and has to mix with society all the time?"]

It is true that we can separate ourselves from life, but the wider view is that the Reality includes All, positive and negative, and we have an opportunity to learn from all that life has put before us. To have the vision of the Reality is to see the utility of the positive and negative in the process of moving life forward. It is there in spades in the social arena – whether in work, family, or other endeavors.

By embracing that multiplicity of experience of the Social milieu, we can broaden our being in every dimension.

By embracing the All, we attract more harmony, truth, peace, goodness, creativity, power, love, and delight for ourselves and the collectives we function in.

That acceptance, embracing, and openness towards the ALL makes also us more receptive to the Force, attracting miraculous like results for ourselves and collectives we partake in.

In this way, ALL of Life can be viewed as a field of Opportunity and Adventure.

At every point there is a negative in the social context, we can view it as a means of the positive. We can devise strategies to move that process forward, or be patient enough for it to occur on its own.

To the degree, we embrace the Totality, the more the social conditions will improve themselves.

In this way, Higher Life is heightened through apparent Lower Life that is in one sense really not so, but part of the ALL that is the Reality.

Also, in this wider field of social life there is a greater scope for Self-givingness, and therefore Energizing and Blissful existence.

Of course we should not be naïve. We must be vigilant towards those individuals and social conditions that are determined to divert or harm. Even there we can apply the right inner strategies to turn things to the positive.

We are not Avatar-like beings like Karmayogi, who need to withdraw from life to practice deep spiritual discipline. We are barely one or two steps beyond the normal human individual.

For we devotees, the world is our field, which we have the opportunity to raise up and ennoble, turning ordinary life into Divine Life.

Spiritual Capacity to Change History, World Events

Changing History from Within

When the British were forced to retreat from the German onslaught at Dunkirk, the situation looked grave indeed. Exposed out in the open, the troops were in danger of being annihilated by the German Air Force and Navy. But one day in the middle of it all, a fog suddenly moved in providing the English soldiers with cover so they could make it back to their homeland. England was saved and the course of WWII was reversed.

Thousands of miles away Sri Aurobindo, the Indian seer and sage had worked to evoke that fog through a movement of consciousness. During the same period, his spiritual partner known as The Mother had similarly sent a vibration to the ruler of Germany to attack Russia, creating a dual front in the war that eventually weakened the German war effort and led to their eventual defeat.

There are individuals who have inner power to shape events in the world, thereby altering the course of history. Interestingly, each of us has this power in relation to the collectives that we are part of or associated with. Through movements of higher consciousness, we can change the weather, cancel a dire energy crisis, or change the fortune of an organization on the verge of collapse. Normally we would need to (a) have a keen interest in the matter, (b) understand it in its myriad of details, and (c) offer the matter arduously to the spiritual Force. The result will be the sudden, dramatic appearance of a resolution of the problem. Often it comes in forms that leave one completely dazed.

In India there is an organization called The Mother's Service Society. Two of its objectives have been to foster global economic development and bring about world peace; both as a means to foster ever-increasing world harmony and unity. To that end, it formed the International Commission on Peace and Food (ICPF) in the mid-1980s. One of its central tenets was to bring about the end of the Cold War. It was the belief of the founders that overcoming the threat of nuclear annihilation would dramatically enhance their ultimate goal of human unity and the psychological and spiritual evolution of life on earth.

After putting together a prestigious list of members that included two wives of renowned world leaders, they planned their first plenary meeting in Trieste, Italy. As it turned out, the day one of the primary founding commission members travelled to this first gathering from California to Trieste, the Berlin Wall began to fall, ostensibly ending the Cold War.

The founder members of MSS (Mother's Service Society) and the ICPF commission had the deepest aspiration for a change in the collective condition of society. Through an inner movement -- the aspiration and the opening of the situation to the spiritual Force, supplemented by an outer one, the commission itself -- a vast change in the world took shape. Like Sri Aurobindo and The Mother's inner actions, several members of an obscure think tank in India and its worldly commission had changed the course of

history. It is an indicator of the infinite power we have to affect the conditions of the world from within.

Spiritual Mind Emerging in Society

The Coming Super-Rationality of 21st Century Man

The issue of whether a computer can match the current level of thought of a human being is an intriguing one, yet only touches a fraction of our potential to know and secure knowledge in life.

The real question is not whether a computer can match say 100% what humans are now capable of thinking, but whether through elevation of human consciousness we human beings are capable of knowing and cognizing at 10, 100, or even 1000 times greater the level we do now. This is the real Knowledge Revolution that awaits the world.

It may in fact take 50 to 300 years to reach this capacity, as we move from our productive but narrow focused human logic, which is exclusive, partial, and limited, to higher forms of perception through illumination, intuition, and revelation of knowledge; where we garner the truth of any matter from all sides in a flash. This is an example of a new evolution in human functioning that goes far beyond our current capacity to think and know, let alone the very limited capability of a computer/machine, which merely mimics the current limitations of the mind.

Einstein demonstrated this capacity to instantly know the entirety of a matter for a few seconds when the material formula of life -- $E=mc^2$ -- was revealed to him, changing the world forever. Each of us is capable of opening to that universal Mind power not just for a moment, but ongoing throughout our day, creating 10, 100 or 1000 times greater understanding of any object of inquiry. This is the radical revolution of human perception that awaits us. It is a movement beyond the local domain of limited mental reason to the non-local domain of infinite capacity to perceive every and all sides of a matter or issue in an instant. Though it may strike some as science fiction, this capacity is a living reality, particularly for those who have learned to expand their consciousness beyond the limits of human logic, to spiritualized mind and beyond.

Consider these scenarios:

- A research project you are working on that you expect will take a month to complete is finished in two days when you suddenly know the answer to that project's most compelling problem in a flash.
- An email arrives in your inbox with the complete, multi-sided explanation of an issue that you have been grappling with from one partial angle, reducing your workload from 2 weeks to 2 hours.
- You garner an understanding of a subtle working of life regarding a matter, and as a result, you make the right decision that quickly attracts astonishing results, shortening your effort from months to hours.

These are but a few examples of the future-knowing capacity of humanity; surpassing our current ability by leaps and bounds. It is not merely to use reason to know a thing, but to move into complete identity with its many-sided truth, its totality, and its essence in the blink of an eye. Sounds super-natural? Actually, it is *supra-mental*, and an indicator of the next stage of human evolution.

Overcoming Society's Problems

Preemptive Problem Solving

Overcoming Society's Problems by Changing Our Human Nature

In the news, it was reported how several individuals escaped a fire in their apartment by leaping from their window. The camera caught it, allowing it to be seen through the media by anyone around the world. As we watched the escape, we marveled how they were able to overcome life's ultimate challenge. Of course, when the video was over, we moved on and resumed our other interests. Little did we think that on that very day thousands of people around the world had also escaped with their lives from fires at their residence, place of work, or public facility. Likewise, few would think that every day thousands were dying in wars around the world; that thousands were dying of starvation and malnutrition, thousands of AIDS, and thousands more of other diseases. Even in America, thousands die every month from traffic fatalities. All we are capable of thinking of was that one event, as we are hypnotized by the inputs of our senses, and don't engage our thought processes to think wider than that moment.

If we do think about the wider issues, we will can also come to see that all of these tragedies are completely avoidable, provided there is a will to overcome them. There is also another perspective; that such suffering can never really end -- for it will continually spring up in *endless new forms* -- until *man himself* changes; until he evolves a higher nature that would prevent such things from arising in the first place.

Like others, the Indian sage and seer Sri Aurobindo spent his whole life devising a way for Man to emerge from his suffering by evolving his consciousness. When Man has understood his own limitations of being, and makes the concerted effort to overcome it, he takes an important step toward its growth and evolution. When he also discovers his higher nature directly by moving from irrationality to rationality, and by discovering and infusing the spirit into life -- including its various aspects, such as peace, silence, harmony, unity, delight, beauty, power, love, and wisdom -- then there will emerge a supra-human consciousness that will never tolerate such ills of society, and will tend to live lives that produce only positive outcomes.

Humanity just now is very far from that point. And yet we must also recognize that we have come a long way. Man now is becoming more conscious of his own limited nature - his hateful or destructive tendencies, his distorted attitudes and opinions, his mindless passions, his hopeless ignorance; even as he embraces the power of rational living. He is even becoming aware of the spiritual dimension of life, and how an inner-directed existence enables an outer life that tends to produce outcomes of utility, harmony, and endless good fortune, while avoiding the harmful effects.

When we see a negative event on the news, we should remember that it is our "fallen nature" that is the root cause of all problems of Man. However, if we evolve ourselves to our higher nature, not only will the larger tragedies of life begin to disappear, but we will open ourselves to a level of dynamism, possibility, and joy in society that we would never have ever dreamed possible.

Preemptive Problem Solving in the New World

Life divides into Nature and Soul. It is mostly the workings of Nature that we experience in our daily lives. It's way of progress is slow, difficult, and painful. On the other hand, Soul -- i.e. higher consciousness; of the Spirit -- is experienced far less.

The Tsunami of Asia, hurricane Katrina in the US, and 9/11 are movements of Nature; as is war, disease, and various forms of conflict, hardship, and tragedy. The world unfortunately often progresses through this torturous method. In particular, it tends to deal with problems only *after* tragedy has run its course. We are forced to follow Nature's way of progress, because humanity was reluctant to solve these problems in the first place. Nature has stepped in and rid the world of its reluctance, its unwillingness, its inertia, its lack of cooperation, its lack of action, through its difficult methods.

This however is the old way. We need not progress only through pain, difficulty, and tragedy. We can avoid it by being *proactive*. By exercising our mind and having the courage to see what is before us, and then act on it is the better, the more conscious way. It is the way of Soul; avoiding Nature's difficult path of contradiction, conflict, and pain.

The lesson of Tsunami, Katrina, and other tragic circumstances are that we can no longer wait for such tragedies to unfold to solve problems. We must reverse course, and become preemptive; using the power of rational mind to see the true conditions, and have the courage and will power to act to change them. This is the way of Soul, the new form of progress that awaits humanity, replacing the difficult ways of Nature.

Society and the Character of Life

Gulf of Mexico Catastrophe and the Character of Life

Like an individual, life has a character. It expresses according to subtle and profound principles, which few of us ever perceive. The Character of Life can present itself in the most significant event or in the smallest of acts. However, if we look deeply into life's circumstance, we can begin to unravel its mysteries, and determine the inner and outer forces that produce the outcomes we witness. This can be most easily done by examining the great events in the world.

The great environmental catastrophe in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010 demonstrates several subtle principles that make up life's character. Here, I would like to touch on a few.

Regressive Forces in Times of Progress -- One principle of life is that when a progressive force is emerging in society, there are reactionary forces pulling in the opposite direction. They invariably meet with frustration, failure, or calamity. With the world seeing the great benefit of nurturing the environment, particularly through new, sustainable, renewable energy sources, the coal, oil, and similar industries have been pulling in the opposite direction. The oil catastrophe in the gulf is a reflection of a mindset that is going out of favor.

The disaster came to overcome this false belief; to bring to light this false view. With the terrible damage that oil has done to the environment those beliefs will be replaced with a higher truth.

Object of Anger Has Roots in Corresponding Deficiency -- When people are very angry about a thing, you can be sure they had a hand in creating or otherwise enabling it. A

good example are the people along the US shoreline of the Gulf of Mexico who are being inundated by oil, wreaking havoc on their sensitive environment, even though they have done everything for the last 50 years to support the continued use of that nature-unfriendly resource.

That same principle applies to every one of us. Each time we are upset about something, we will discover one or several corresponding qualities that made that situation possible. It can be due to lack of psychological strength, poor decision, obliviousness, hostile attitude, and any other of a vast array of unconscious causes. Reversing it will quickly bring good fortune to our person.

Insincerity that Attracts the Negative -- Another principle demonstrating the Character of Life is that what is occurring on the outside is a reflection of what is inside. BP, the English oil company that first found significant oil in the Middle East nearly 100 years ago has recently made a limited commitment to renewal energy sources, like solar and wind. Though BP engaged in an advertising campaign of going "Beyond Petroleum" (as in BP), the amount of money she invested in this area was still rather slim. Therefore, her pronouncements and her actions were at odds, indicating a certain level of insincerity. Life responds to that insincerity with negative circumstance coming to the perpetrator, which was what happened in the case of BP.

Likewise, we have seen that BP has had a very lax environmental safety record. On a number of occasions, it had cut back on safety in order to save on money and resources. Though she advocated environmentally friendly course, she herself was not practicing what she preached in the safety area of her current endeavors.

Life Tests the Commitment of One's Opening -- You might say, well BP did more than any other oil company in this regard, as few of the others were dedicated to an environmentally safe future, opting to remain with oil. And yet life has a funny way of saying "prove it." I.e., if you are so environmentally friendly as you claim, let's see if you are prepared to handle a gigantic oil spill. The events will surely force you to further alter your mindset to the positive. Since BP had a positive opening, life elects to determine the sincerity of that belief and corresponding initiative.

Hostile Social Forces at Work -- We could say that the positive opening in BP allowed all of the negative that all the oil companies represent to "pour through" that situation. Perhaps they were even hostile to her positive course, and though their hostility created a collective negative vibration, which enabled the rupture that led to the environmental disaster.

Historical Legacy -- There are events and circumstance from the past that can come back to haunt one in the present. It is known as the Law of Karma in the East, and "what you sow is what you reap" in the West. BP has had questionable relations with oil ever since she first made the first major discovery of it in the Middle East nearly a century ago. It would be worth studying this further; e.g. the benefit that came to her in the aftermath of the ascendancy of the Shah of Iran who was put in power after a democratically elected government was ousted by the oil hungry West in the 1950s. There are likely many other circumstances from the distant past that have come home to roost in the present through this environmental tragedy.

Negatives are Positive in Disguise, Driving Progress -- It is a great irony of life that the greatest progress occurs through the most difficult of situations. We see that though there is great suffering in the Gulf of Mexico region due to the oil spill, the event can be a great catalyst for altering society's view of this regressive form of energy. Often it takes a disaster to move things forward.

These are but several of the principles at work in this historical event. Like any event, we see only the surface causality; not the inner, subtle forces that create life's

outcomes. To know these one must understand the Character of Life, an infant science currently known only by a few. If perceived by humanity, it would create a new richness that would catapult society to an infinitely higher level of knowledge and understanding, giving us a vast power over life. It would be another important indicator that Man is evolving and becoming a New Person, and that the Spirit, in its myriad forms, is fully entering the world.

Incongruities and Dualities of History that Defy Normal Thinking

There are many incongruities and dualities of history that show false or evil men acting good, and good men acting foolishly. It defies the mind, which likes to have a single view of things -- including the main characters and events of history. Mind that is flexible, rational, and spiritualized *can* however embrace the many sides simultaneously. Here are some examples of incongruities and dualities of people in history:

- Stalin helped save his country and Europe from the onslaught of Nazism, even as he had 30 million of his own countrymen shot (as expression of his own extreme paranoia).
- Hitler marched across Europe, perpetrating the greatest evil in history, which ironically helped bring about the unification of Europe very soon thereafter, an outcome that might have taken centuries if ever to have come about.
- Saddam Hussein brutalized his people and neighbors, even as he was the chief leader advocating non-religious governance in the Middle East, whose opposite is now one source of its scourge.
- Gandhi brought independence to India through non-violence, even though his action delayed the exit of the British, which enabled the partition of the country, leading to the death of millions, and bringing about two nuclear foes across the border from one another.
- Nixon, who brutalized nations of the world including Vietnam, and sought to oppress forces of freedom and progress in his own country, went to China and helped open up that land to modernity.
- Churchill saved the world from fascism, even as he advocated the imperial power of the Empire, which collapsed in the wake of WWII.
- Gorbachev saved the world from nuclear annihilation by ending the Cold War from within without a single casualty -- an event unprecedented in world history -- and yet he is eminently unpopular in his own country!
- The British who are genteel, are extremely dignified, and demonstrate culture on the surface have been diplomatically insincere to the extreme for the last 100 years.

There is Truth in life, which expresses not through a single side of an issue or matter, but includes all aspects that make up its Whole. To perceive all sides of an issue or personality is to open to the wider, truer truth of things. Being ideological or intellectual is to engage the primacy of the lower aspects of mind, which sees only a part not the Whole, believing that single part to be the Whole of the truth. This is the case of our ignorance.

True Rationality on the other hand, has an integral vision of the many-sided details of the whole of the truth of any matter. It even sees each detail relative to the Whole. This is, in essence, the expression of a *spiritualized* mind -- i.e. the ability to perceive all truths of an object that resides in the universal plane of Mind. To see history, an event,

or even the circumstances of our own lives from the many-sided integral truth of things is to become a true Rational Individual that has a spiritual quality.

We can begin to develop the capacity to absorb the many-sided truth of things (and the perception of the Whole which they reflect) when we move to a deeper consciousness within. From that deeper status, we are able to perceive the multiplicity of truths unfolding around us, rather than the surface truths we perceive or the limiting attitudes and habits we are attached to. From that deeper poise of calm and silent mind, of "witness consciousness" to the unfoldings of life, we have greater access to integral understanding, insight, knowledge, and truth, as we are more in touch with the multiplicity and integrality of that truth that is here behind at the level of the universal plane of Mind.

In this way, we can begin to perceive history in its integral truth, from which we can derive universal principles of life that we can readily learn from in our own times. Through such integral insight, we can accelerate progress in our times by a factor of ten or more. We can even take to decisions that can attract the "instantaneous miraculousness" of life response -- i.e. of the onset of sudden good fortune.

The Evolution of Nations

Overcoming National Ego

From Nationalistic Ego to Internationalism

An individual grows when he takes inventory of his own limitations, identifies several deficiencies, and makes a concerted effort to overcome them in life. There is no more admirable exercise taken in an individual's life. It is sometimes known as "personal growth"; and if it is great, it can even blossom into personal evolution.

Individual nations are in many ways like the individual, and likewise have the potential to identify wanting qualities, and overcome them. It is happening for all nations to a degree, whether consciously or unconsciously. The best of nations bravely identify their weakest part and make a full effort to overcome them. Otherwise, they overcome them through Nature's way, which is of conflict, pain, and suffering. In the mental age we have entered, the ability to *consciously* determine our futures is the way of Soul, overcoming the slow and painful way of Nature, which has essentially been the way of the past.

One way an individual progress is by overcoming his own ego. He sees that he is not separate from others, and the world, and therefore works in ways that are not only in his own best interest, but of the world -- i.e. the people, the institutions -- around him. Nations also have that capacity; i.e. to see themselves not merely as distinct entities apart from everything else, but as part of an emerging collective of nations. While it is best to become a True Individual People, with unique concerns and interests, with a unique culture, it is not wise to exercise that nation's ego at the expense of the other nations of the world. Practically speaking, the ego of a nation expresses as nationalism, over the more positive internationalism that is emerging in the world. It is a sure sign of future difficulty, if not extreme pain and conflict.

When the Germans marched across Europe before WWII, nations were unable to cooperate to halt that movement. Each nation pulled in its own direction, asserting its own nationalistic identity; in other words, their ego. As a result, cooperation was not

gained to halt the march of the ruthless Nazis, who were able to sweep across Europe, until they had no other choice but to join together to stop the Evil. In the meantime, over 50 million died because individual nations asserted their nationalistic ego over their efforts of international cooperation.

The world is moving towards international cooperation, as expressed in the United Nations, in the various world alliances, and in the European Union. We also see that same energy expressed through *economic* globalism, which is slowly moving towards the even higher *social* and *cultural* globalism. These are indicator of a gradual movement toward World Unity, which is our ultimate economic, political, social, cultural, and even spiritual destiny. When nations express their nationalism over the movement of internationalism, they are acting counter to the tide of evolutionary history.

The Evolution of USA

Will America Continue as the Evolutionary Leader?

America has become the leader of the world -- particularly in the area of the economy and through its military power. Her status as "evolutionary leader" came about because she took to freedom, individuality, organization, mass production, and waves of immigrant population, to name a few. Every individual also had the knowledge of how to recreate Europe in the new virgin land. Thus, America enabled the infinite to emerge out of the physical plane; producing endless material well-being, becoming a model for the rest of the world.

Now the world is catching up, particularly in Asia. New interests are emerging in the world. Will the US continue to be the world evolutionary leader in this new environment? She will have to take to several steps to maintain that status, otherwise some other nation(s) will take up the mantle. First, she needs to overcome her reactionary, conservative tendencies that go back 150 years. Second, she needs to go beyond the material to the psychological, mental, and spiritual view of the world -- holding the individual as sacred and supporting him every way possible. Third, she needs to join the world community as an equal, cooperative partner, not as a renegade looking out for her own self-interests. The era of go-it-alone power has come to an end. World collaboration is the order of the day.

If America moves in these directions, she will maintain her status as the evolutionary leader, and play the central guiding role in society's further progress and evolution.

The test of her collaborative effort will come in two areas: how she takes up the issue of the environment, and whether she radically reduces her nuclear weaponry. If she is to maintain her mantle of evolutionary leader, she will need to move in the right direction on these two issues at least. If she fails, the baton will be passed on elsewhere; to those can lead the world through its next stage of ever-increasing human unity and integration.

The Promise of a Divided America

400 years ago, newly arrived settlers came to this continent and met with a virgin land consisting of endless forests and lush valleys. And yet, the waves of immigrants who came were able to quickly tame the land. Seeking to replicate Europe in the new homeland, the settlers knew what had to be done. They also they had the life skills of a hundred European generations. The only challenge was how fast and efficiently they could do it.

And so, the immigrant population developed the means to make that happen -- later known as *mass production*. The people were not only able to organize and develop all of the necessities for life on the new continent, but within 100 years were able to produce them for nearly *everyone* in the burgeoning population. This centuries-long movement peaked with Henry Ford's production line facilities used to build the Model T automobile for the common man.

Waves of immigrant population from a variety of lands, the knowledge of the European homeland in the minds of the settlers, and taking to mass production and organization are several of the keys to the enormous prosperity that came to America. So was the drive and energy of the people motivated by new freedoms unavailable in their previous homelands. Individuality arose in place of the oppression, the greater conformity, and the hierarchical structure of Europe. By the 20th century, America, once ridiculed by Europeans as an outpost of savages, had matched and then surpassed economically and materially all of Europe. The old world's cynicism and arrogance was left behind in the dust by a new pioneer society that continues to thrive until this day.

Then there is the other side of the coin. Somewhere along the line, mostly in the last 100 years, a negative conservative strain has entered the body politic and the population of the United States. Where it issues from and what harmful purpose it serves remains to be determined. But its negative affect on the society is well known -- from the Civil War support of slavery in the South; to a reluctance amongst the hinterland peoples to fight German and Japanese fascism that put the nation at great risk; to the support of a war against the Vietnamese people, who were seeking independence from their colonial masters. Worse still, is their antagonism towards virtually every positive value that has come into society, from the rise of woman, to the rise of new, more sophisticated cultural values.

It has its roots mostly in non-urban areas, on the fringes of suburbia where it meets the countryside -- where issues forth an endless stream of ignorance and false knowledge. It originates in a barely-educated ignorant, superstitious rural white population, which in turn creates a blowback to a conservative middle class. Though the rural areas express reasonable concerns about safety and security, and demonstrate kindness toward one another, it is a veneer, which breaks down quickly when these simple people are confronted by the realities of a changing world. This conservative element then reemerges, seeking by-gone eras, unable to embrace the challenges of a modern world. As a result, they become reactionary and anachronistic. Even their religion turns from providing spiritual sustenance and moral direction to a certain narrow-mindedness, a conformity of belief, and eventually radical reactionary political and social points of view.

There is another problem in American society, perhaps more ominous. It can be stated as its "physical consciousness of violence." Consider the facts in 2006: 200 million guns held amongst the population; \$400 billion a year in military spending, when the next largest nation is spending barely \$40 billion per annum; and thousands of nuclear warheads remaining deployed and ready -- even though the Cold War has now long passed. Add to that the glorification of violence in the culture at nearly every level, and you have ominous incendiary disaster waiting to happen. How has this great country that once sought to avoid persecution and nurtured extreme individuality of the Common Man developed this physical consciousness of violence -- a negative power that can easily, and most dangerously, turn on itself at any time?

Some would say that it is the result of another US problem: a view of life that only sees the physical/material as real; with all other planes -- i.e. the psychological, the societal, the spiritual -- relegated to a secondary or even non-status. One sage has commented that "Americans think with their bodies." This means that they tend to relate to life only

through what they see, to what is materially visible; i.e. to what their five senses are absorbing from the environment. Their center of perception is thus in a lower sense-orientation of the mind, instead of the clear thinking, higher functioning or logical and rational mind, where one can more readily perceive the wider and deeper truths and conditions of life.

This obsession with the outer physical realities of life occurs in many ways -- in their obsession with their physical bodies; through a wild, mindless fascination with all things physical; and in their unbound glorification of technology and scientific advancement at the expense of deeper appreciation of human values. Watch any newscast and you will see a childlike fascination with the physically visible. Little seems to be understood by the American viewer unless there is a video or a graph or some other physical object to engage him. Also, the American cannot sit still for a minute, nor take to several moments of silence. He needs to rush off and accomplish, never to consider and be. Too many American finds it difficult to seriously and sincerely address the deeper meaning of things. Except, of course, when Nature forces them to do so; when She pulls them out of their shallow existence through a variety of tragedies.

The nation is thus divided between its positive and negative attributes. Among the positive are the continuous waves of immigrant who bring fresh energies and ideas, an overwhelming capacity for physical organization and mass production, and the enormous power of freedom and individuality in the society. Balanced against these are the virulent strains of anachronistic conservatism, a physical consciousness of violence, and an obsession with the materially visible at the expense of the deeper perceptions of the truths of life.

Usually we think of a divided country as a fissure between different segments of the society, or two political parties. Here I am suggesting that the division lies along more fundamental lines. It is between consciousness and unconsciousness that cuts across all strata of the American society.

By overcoming the negative and reinforcing the positive, America can bring about the synthesis that will enable further progress in the nation. Because America is so full of energy, she is ripe for such change. Because she has the physical means and material prosperity, she is ready to move to the next level of consciousness. *She is the one country ready to make the decisive evolutionary change.*

America has taken on the role as the material leader and pioneer in the world -- despite her known psychological and perceptive limitations. To become the *psychological* and *spiritual* leader beyond the material, she must confront her demons and limitations. Otherwise, she will falter. If so, she will be forced to hand over her mantle as Pioneer and Leader to other nations, perhaps those of Asia, such as India. And yet, she is now ready and ripe to make this decisive change. We will watch closely for such developments as the course of events unfold.

Multiplicity of Cultures Within Enables the USA to Be a True Nation and Vanguard of the World

An individual becomes a True Individual when he is open to the widest possibilities; when he is unencumbered by the accepted norms; when he does not conform to the narrow influences of the herd. His level of influence and accomplishment becomes infinite like.

Likewise, a nation that is open to the widest possibilities, where its people can move in any and all directions, both outwardly and inwardly, will become eminently successful, and the world leader in its time.

It will rise to greatness when it is open to the widest influences; by the widest variation in culture, as was the case in Greece, Rome, and Britain in their heyday. For better or worse, they serve as the vanguard nation amongst all others.

Currently the US plays that role. It advocates freedom and individuality for its people; and experiences a vast array of cultural influences through its endless waves of immigrant populations. Together with its technological and organizational power, she has become a model True Individual Nation. That in turn has enabled it to be in the vanguard of world leadership.

Where the US goes from here will depend on her ability to expand upon her Individuality. That cannot come through material means alone, but through psychological maturity that embraces higher human values. If she cannot make that transition, then it will be up to other nations to forge that possibility.

India, for one is an excellent candidate, because her Individuality is rooted in a profound awareness of the Spirit and of soul consciousness within. Such a profound inner connection allows for ultimate insight, expression, and action; allowing her to become a True Individual nation, and eventually a leader and Guru of the world.

America's Entrepreneurship and Leadership

America's is not essentially an economy of capitalism, but of entrepreneurship. Most of its prosperity has come through that entrepreneurial zeal -- from Ford to Gates to Jobs to Brin. When it becomes more capitalistic -- i.e. focusing only on money -- it begins to fail, as in the Great Depression when financial speculations ran rampant, and in a milder form as we have seen in recent global speculation and failure related to the housing industry.

Almost all economic growth in America's history -- and it is the world leading nation by far -- has been fueled by individuals deciding to take up an idea or possibility and run with it. That entrepreneurial zeal produced the overwhelming majority of the great companies, industries, and material benefits in the US -- and is still generating the same today.

Now if only America can have that same impact at the higher psychological and mental planes, it could ignite another, even greater revolution. It can move from its current status as world economic and military leader to pioneer and guide of human potential in an ever more unified world.

From a Material to a Human-Centric World

America has become the economic and military leader of the world. Through vast organizational capacity (mass production) and several waves of immigrant population, she has become the pioneer leader of nations. She is a microcosm that the world seeks to emulate.

And yet America suffers periodically as she is now experiencing in the current world financial crisis. It is a reflection of her limitations of consciousness. It is her material-oriented view of reality that is too often devoid of a more complex psychological view of existence.

The Indian sage Karmayogi of India put it this way, "Americans think with their body." That is, US citizens are oriented to what can be seen, heard, and touched; to what mind perceives of the world outside itself through its senses. America's preoccupation with sense knowledge causes her to have a material, mechanistic, technological view of life, which shields her from deeper truths and values. Hence, she suffers as she does now in the current financial crisis, rooted in speculation and greed of the material surface.

To continue to be the world pioneer and leader, America must develop deeper vital, psychological, and mental values. Otherwise, others will take up the mantle of truth leadership. India is one fine candidate in that her tradition has deep roots in the most profound truths of life. These psychological and spiritual insights are what the world secretly yearns for, as the American-led material view that has led to the current catastrophe has proven unworthy for the next stage of human progress and development. The world may embrace America's dynamism, energy, organization, and creativity to create infinite-like material well-being, but humanity is beginning to see that much more is needed for sustaining a stable and meaningful life.

Thus, the current financial crisis is a sign that the reign of the material view of the world is coming to an end, and a new era of more complex psychological and spiritual values is at hand. Who will be the pioneer in this area remains to be seen. America who has been the beacon has lost her glow. Yet even she can discover qualities that take her beyond the mechanistic, scientific, material view, and thereby perceive these deeper truths. She can begin by putting Man at the center of life. When the *individual human* is idolized and cherished, instead of mere material and financial gain, then a new era of life on earth will have begun.

America: Embracing the Other Side of the Coin

Life appears as opposites; hot and cold, night and day; truth and falsehood good and evil, to name a few. Mind normally prefers one side over the other -- e.g. beauty over ugliness. But life is not so simple, as these opposites are in truth complementary pairs; i.e. they need one another. We however prefer the side that meets our preference, opinions, and beliefs.

One of the great dualities, which are really complementary pairs is freedom and cooperation. In America, we enjoy our freedom; cooperation is secondary. And yet we cannot have true freedom unless we learn to live together. In Asia, cooperation is paramount; and yet how can one collaborate if one is not free to express one's true individual position in life.

To be successful in life, we must understand and embrace all sides of an issue, including the pairs of opposites, as well as the shadings between the two. The South Korean flag's Yin-Yang symbol indicates the unity and integration between the two. It is a deep value worth embracing.

After great economic expansion during the Gilded Age of the 19th century, America experienced the great depression. After decades of unbridled material-based individuality, the reality of lack of cooperation reared its ugly head. Unfettered speculation and greed ushered in an era of unprecedented poverty in America. Material-oriented Individuality had gone too far, as all efforts to create rules and regulations -- a direct implementation of the value of cooperation and harmony -- was ignored. The US pulled itself out of its misery through WWII, itself caused by a lack of cohesiveness amongst the nations of Europe before that conflagration.

Sixty years later America forgot all of those events and lessons to be learned and embarked on unfettered material-oriented individuality again. After the Cold War, it saw no need to cooperate with other nations, hence the disastrous Iraq war, and saw no need to put in place regulation for economic control and development. Hence the current financial crisis that threatens the very makeup of the free-market system. In America, a reactionary conservative philosophy that sees government as evil, rather than the complementary force she is has led the country once again down the road of excess individuality at the expense of the harmony and well-being of its people. In the absence of self-control and limited values, life has moved forward and pressed upon the nation the importance of cooperation. If Man won't move in the direction of truth, Nature will. And that means suffering and pain.

America was founded on the premise of individuality and freedom. Instead of true individuality, it has embarked on unfettered *economic* liberty. That translates that in the field of economics we do not want any chains on us; no watchdog organizations to observe us; no government regulation. We want to do as we please. But life cannot succeed unless the other side of the coin -- cooperation -- is adopted. Though at first perceived as opposites, Freedom and Cooperation are in the end complements of one another; that depend on one another for overall success in life.

The Evolution of India

India Rising

Several weeks ago, I was very surprised to read that America's most famous film director Steven Spielberg had considered selling his film company DreamWorks to a Bollywood company. For me this was another sign of India rising, but perhaps not in the way we normally think of it.

In recent years, I have taken a great interest in non-Hollywood films, and have really appreciated efforts from Iran, China, and now India. In 2007, I viewed many highly rated Indian and American films, and recently came to a startling conclusion: the top half dozen rated Indian films were preferable in my mind to the five nominees for best picture at the Oscars, which were Hollywood-based. Indian films like *Water*, *Guru*, *Chak de! India*, *The Namesake*, *Gandhi My Father*, *Peck on the Cheek* and others were very strong, if not excellent. When I thought about it further, it struck me that India has passed a threshold. They were not only rapidly becoming economic equals of the West, but cultural ones as well.

Now there are those who will say that India already has a great culture, and that in fact recent developments in Bollywood cannot compare to the great music, dance, architecture, and other cultural forms of the country. However, I took these developments as first signs of the emergence of the *spiritual* culture of India. Why spiritual? Because the *new* spirituality begins by first embracing the modern notion of rational thought, and then moves upward from there to insight, illumination, and intuition. It culminates in the many sided, integral knowledge of any object or matter of inquiry. India through her prosperity is beginning to shed old superstitions and is embracing the modern thought processes of the West. It reflects in these fine Indian films, and then goes a step further by bringing out a subtle presence that resides in this Spiritual Land.

Again, there are those who will point to the Vedas, the Upanishads, and the Bhagavad Gita as the greatest of all spiritual wisdom ever devised, and I would not disagree, but the current spiritual emergence is something quite different, having a different

character. It adds *evolution* to the equation. India through her prosperity is emerging into a new mentality that is the first step to a spirituality that embraces the progressive, evolutionary movements of life. That mentality expresses in these very fine Indian films, and then suggest something more, some unique Indian quality that has yet to emerge. For me it is the progressive unfolding of spirit in the details of life; a hallmark of the emergence of the spiritual individual and the next stage of life on earth.

The Evolution of Spirit in India

100,000 years ago, Man emerged from the savannahs of Africa and entered two land masses; the Middle East and Europe (the "western wave"), and that of the East, including India and China. The western wave out of Africa took to religion, while the Eastern wave were drawn toward spirituality. The Western wave of religion eventually shed some of its falsehood, evolved into rationality, democracy, freedom, individuality, science, technology, and the modern material world as we see in Europe, the USA, and emerging elsewhere. The Eastern wave developed culture, emotion, and the Spirit. Of course, each of the two developed some of the capacities of the other -- e.g. religion developed in India, and there were strains of spirituality in the West.

My goal here is to trace the Eastern movement that enabled the flowering of Spirit. It appears to have originated in the period of the naturalistic life of the Vedas in India. There people connected to the Spirit through the natural forces of the physical world. In the stone, in elemental and environmental forces, individuals felt a connection to an ultimate spiritual Reality. Life was physical then and their connection to that Reality expressed through physical forms of nature, as well as through the worship of Gods. Mind and higher emotions had not yet developed to interfere with their pure Divine reverence through physical means. Still, it was a great development in the spiritual history of man -- unprecedented until that time.

And yet people perceived that life was full of suffering in life, pain, falsehood, negativity, and evil. Since these issues were raised in the subconscious of society, the avatar -- i.e. one who furthers the evolution -- Buddha came along in India and took to a very different path. He abandoned the aspiration and search for an ultimate Reality, indicating that it could not be known, and instead focused on the causes of evil and suffering in earth. Through a process of enlightenment, he came to see that if we move out of ego, all such negativity ceases. By meditating and reaching the timeless, spaceless Void, one realizes the state of Nirvana, where ego, separation, and desire ceases, which, in turn, eliminates suffering in one's lifetime. It was a profound insight and another great development in the history of the Spirit.

Over time Mind developed, and there resumed the attempt to commune with the ultimate Spiritual reality through this newly evolved faculty. As a result, the period of the Upanishads was ushered in. During that time there was a group of individuals who had a deep urge to connect with and experience the Supreme -- i.e. the ultimate transcendent Reality. They began to perceive that Reality in three aspects; (1) as *Existence* -- i.e. as pure Spiritual Being; (2) as a *Consciousness* that had become aware of its own Existence, and as a result generated a *Force* that became the energy out of which the universe would emerge; (3) and as *Delight*, taking infinite pleasure in being conscious of Its own Existence. (This is expressed by the three attributes of Sat-Chit-Ananda; i.e. Existence, Consciousness-Force, Delight.)

This is roughly equivalent to the fact that I exist as an individual; I am conscious of my existence -- which in turn energizes me; and I delight in being conscious of who I am. These ecstatic devotees -- known as the Rishis -- had the spontaneous experience of the

Spirit. They perceived the Ultimate Reality and how that spiritual Being was emerging into the becomings of life. That Life was just another form and manifestation of that Reality. Thus, they perceived for the first time the integration of Spirit and Matter; they had a vision of this ultimate, integral Reality, which they called "Brahman." In effect, the Rishis of that time had become the greatest spiritual aspirants of the ancient world.

Though they ecstatically experienced the Spirit by communing with the transcendent Reality, it was left to the Bhagavad-Gita to address aspects the Rishis had not considered. While Rishis were more focused on pure *transcendence* and connection to the spiritual Reality, the Gita addressed the specific methods that would enable an individual to spiritually *progress* -- i.e. grow, evolve, and be transformed. By connecting to the Soul within, one not only begins the process of change out of our lower nature -- e.g. controlling negative behaviors, taking to higher emotions, sensing a oneness with others, etc. -- but one comes in touch with the same transcendent Reality that the Rishis experienced earlier.

Now there was a path of individual progress through Soul, opening the way to the transcendent spiritual Reality. Our ultimate purpose then was to find our individual Soul, discover and surrender to the Supreme, and carry out and fulfill the Divine Intent on earth. Through service of works, true knowledge of the ways of life, and surrender to the Supreme and Its Intent, one not only evolves, but fulfills one's ultimate purpose on earth. These are several of the lessons offered by the avatar Krishna to the warrior Arjuna at the battle of Kurukshetra, as explained in the Gita.

And yet, it has been left to modern India, in particular, through the spiritual insights of Vivekananda and further still to the great sage and seer Sri Aurobindo to present the world the wider and all-encompassing spiritual picture. Drawing on the Rishis' ecstatic spiritual experience as captured in the Upanishads, as well as the Gita's methods of yogic progress, Sri Aurobindo put it all in an *evolutionary* context.

He offered the world a wider knowledge of the creation process and unfolding of the universe, even as he was able to trace and project the course of human progress and its ultimate spiritual destiny. He described the *involution* of life -- i.e. how the universe came about from a Divine source -- and the *evolution* of life from matter to spirit through individual transformation, culminating in a Divine life on earth.

Sri Aurobindo also traced the cause of Ignorance back to the involution of Spirit, showed the way back to Integral Knowledge through Soul connection and surrender to the descending spiritual Force that would aid in the individual's transformation. In this way, he provided a more integral view of the Spirit, embracing the evolutionary principles of modern life.

Ascending the Steps in the City

The other day I had an interesting experience. I was walking in the city and was approaching an area where you walk up two dozen steps in an opening in a concrete wall that takes you from the street at the first level to another street that crosses over it. It is a little unusual and hard to explain, though I had climbed this fascinating walkway many times in the past on the way to retrieve my car.

On this particular day, I began walking up the steps as usual. Often when I ascend this dark passageway, I like to chant "Om," as the sound reverberates off the walls and throughout this tubular like structure. I also feel that as I ascend I am calling the universe into my being.

This time however, I did something a little different. Just before I reached the passageway, I thought about Karmayogi's comments on how evolution has occurred on earth through the progression of one type of society or stage after another. So this time as I ascended, I thought of each of these one by one in their natural progression.

And so I climbed the first few steps and said to myself, "Spirit was born in India." Then I climbed several more steps while thinking, "Mind was then born in Greece." Then I continued upwards I thought, "Rome brought law and organization." As I traversed a few more steps, I thought, "Europe brought Mind into science, business, and art." Then as I approached the top, I said "America discovered freedom for all and practical organization of material well-being for the masses."

When I reached the final steps, I stopped to catch my breath. I then hesitated for the next thought, and then remembered and said to myself, "and now India has taken America's material well-being and is applying it through Spirit, completing the circle."

As I finished that happy thought, I climbed the final step, and then came out into the light of day. Immediately, on the bright street, I saw an individual pass me by. She was a well-dressed, prosperous Indian woman in a sari! And she was only person on the street in a busy high-end residential district!

I was simultaneously startled, shaken, and thrilled as I realized that I had suddenly manifest my last thought about India! That is, Indian prosperity in an American setting was realized right before my eyes!

But it was more than a wonderful experience. It was also a clear life response to the intensity of my focused thoughts, as well a confirmation of the insights of my spiritual teacher.

Security, Terrorism, Non-Proliferation

Cause and Solution to Radical Religious Fundamentalism

Religious fundamentalism that has turned to anger has reared its ugly head. As a result, people want to know how to resolve the problem. On one side, the angry bomb throwers and planters sense that they have been treated shabbily over the years; while the other side perceives fanatics resorting to the evil of violence. Is there any common ground to solve these conflicting views? I believe there is, and it is quite simple actually.

Let's consider the evolution of society. It originated in Africa, and spread North and to the East. Religion first emerged in the Middle East. Then thinking and mentality arose in Greece, and ordered society followed in Rome. Many years later, global trade developed, the Renaissance took shape, followed by the rise of democracy, particularly in England, and freedom blossomed through revolution and war in France. Several centuries after, super-prosperity emerged through the practical organization and mass production in the virgin soil of the United States. In the interim -- actually over the course of thousands of years -- spirituality and culture emerged in the East, particularly in India. Now Asia is rising rapidly to material prosperity once only enjoyed by the West.

In the course of history, the nations of the Middle East and the Arab world were overpassed and forgotten, while the rest of the world continued its evolutionary progress, leaving her destitute. Also, with parched soil, the Middle East could produce little of value, until the relatively recent discovery of the natural resource of oil. Over

centuries -- particularly in recent times -- the Middle Eastern denizens became discouraged, looking to hold onto any creed in the face of a society that had failed them. A number turned toward virulent fundamentalism; not so much to express their religious feelings, but to (subconsciously) express their material frustration that the world had left them behind.

This violent strain is actually a recent phenomenon, accelerating in the last several decades. In a world of "Rising Expectations" -- where every individual can learn through the media that the rest of the world is prospering -- it is easy to feel left out, and therefore one is apt to turn bitter and destructive. In the absence of other alternatives, fundamentalist religion filled the vacuum.

So what is the answer? It is said that the solution to any problem can be found in the cause. Poverty and lack of opportunity is the source of the discontent, the cause of extreme religious fundamentalism and its ensuing violence. Overcoming poverty then is the solution, and is one course that must be taken to overcome the problem.

Let us then hear about initiatives that attempt to bring these citizens into material well-being like the rest of the world. Saber-rattling alone will NEVER solve this problem. These people need good jobs, need to experience real opportunity, so that they can taste the material abundance known by the West and now emerging in the East. Absorbed in success, they will have little energy to engage in rabid religious fundamentalism, let alone the dogma and superstition of religion. They can then fully join the rest of humanity in the world's ongoing, progressive pursuit of progress and world unity.

Layers of the Onion in the Middle East

It is said that life is like an onion. As we peel away each layer, greater truths emerge. When an event occurs -- such as 9/11 in the USA -- truth is far away, as we only know the immediate horror of the situation. Truth thus awaits us in the future. However, it can be sped up by an open mind, and rapidly descend on us through experiences of intuitions of knowledge. Let us then examine several layers of truth when it comes to the issue of terrorism.

The first truth that emerged after September 11th is that we need to go after the terrorists, which we did in no small part. Other truths began to reveal themselves thereafter. For one, that there is a serious problem of Islamic fundamentalism in the Arab world, something the West ignored when it was preoccupied by the Cold War. Other truths followed, including the legitimacy of the claim of wrongdoing by the West over the Arabs for a hundred years or more. Gorbachev continually reiterates this theme of valid Arab grievance toward the West, though it has until this point fallen on deaf ears.

While the world has observed the atrocities of the American-led West military meet the atrocities of bands of terrorist gangsters, certain individuals have quietly spoken of Root Causes. A simplistic view is that the source of all of the problems is the religious fanaticism within the Muslim culture. Others respond by saying that this is not a root cause, but the result of the problem. The more enlightened claim that the root cause is very simple -- poverty. If we could devise methods of making the nations of the Middle East prosperous, then the anguish of unemployed youth would cease, their energies would be absorbed in productive behavior, and the need for joining radical fundamentalist groups would end. When an impoverished individual comes to know material prosperity, his interest in religious dogma and fanaticism dissipates, as he is now absorbed in the joy of physical well-being. He may even abandon his traditional

religions altogether. Plans to bring prosperity to the Middle East should then be the leading edge strategy for overcoming the threat of terrorism. E.g., organizations I am affiliated with are already devising detailed strategies for making this a reality. It is coming from the subterranean levels of intelligentsia and working its way upwards, not from the body politic downward, which seems incapable of vision.

Prosperity must be the focus for the future of the Middle East. Even democracy can wait. The current approach of retaliation alone WILL NOT WORK, as it will only agitate those whose borders we cross.

The onion of truth can be peeled further, for there is little doubt that the Arab peoples have actually come to this state of poverty, unemployment, and lack of opportunity because of oppression, much of which has come from without. For 100 years, she has been under the boot of colonialism and the victim of the shifting interests of the West. Clearly, America has most recently used the region for its own selfish interests. Hypocrisy of international politics has reinforced poverty and a sense of helplessness and frustration in the Arab world. This indicates that strategies to overcome hypocritical policies of the West must be devised. Again, to reiterate, all invasions of Arab lands must also cease, as it only agitates those who live there. The terrorist will seek retribution wherever his land is run over, as Osama did when the West used the Muslim holy land of Saudi Arabia for launching its military strikes during the first Gulf War. Likewise, any other individual living there will be stirred to strike back when he perceives that his homeland is under fire.

There are additional layers still to be peeled back because ultimately the issue goes to the heart of who we are -- i.e. our human values. The USA is -- for better or worse -- the global leader, militarily, economically, and culturally. She is also going through a catharsis of conscience since September 11th, which has revealed blind spots that she is only now grappling with. These issues did not gain her immediate attention beforehand since she was embroiled in the Cold War. Now, as they say, the chickens have come home to roost; the rock has been pushed aside, revealing the reality of decades of Western oppression, international diplomatic insincerity, which have in turn lead to legitimate Arab grievances. With the US's energies dominating the world, Nature demands that she confront her own demons -- i.e. her own psychological limitations. Being a dynamic society, allowing for great individuality, and thriving through the dynamism of many immigrant cultures, America is ripe to evolve more mature psychological capacities. In this way, she can become the first True Individual Nation amongst nations. She is surely set to make that transition and make enormous inner progress, despite the conservative forces that drag on her and consistently lead her astray.

Life is layered from the surface to the deepest depths where the integral truth of things is revealed. Whatever deeper truths lurk in the core of things will emerge sooner or later. Nature forces us to address the heart of any matter; and the Middle East is no exception. The wise poet tells us that the answer lies within. It is from there that we can know the core and essence of things. Truth lurks in a silent mind and in the deepest recesses of our hearts.

Merchants of Death

In the fine French film *Persepolis*, a little girl grows up in Tehran amidst vast changes in her country. First, the Shah comes into power, then he is disposed, then the religious

government emerges, and then there is a terrible war between her nation Iran and rival Iraq. Often her family find themselves hunkering down during Saddam's air raids.

At one point in this animated film, the little girl almost casually says that the West is supplying both sides of the Iran-Iraq War with arms. They do not care about the destruction they are wreaking on their countries. The same dynamic was occurring throughout Africa and other conflicted regions of the world. Every one of these nations became the victims of the evil perpetrated by the Merchants of Death.

America will do nearly anything in the name of profit. Great Britain when she oversaw an Empire where the sun never set would do anything to expand trade. Other nations in Europe from Germany to the Czechs to Russia were not much different. Unfortunately, in these situations there is little concern about the aftermath of these transactions, only the quantity of weaponry itself. The human suffering it creates is a mere afterthought.

America is supposed to be the world leader, but she only has sense to be the economic leader. Her values essentially stop at that point. She may publically advocate freedom, but deeper down she is enamored with profits, which includes the transfer of arms shipments to any willing buyer. Nearly all harsh news America reports about its enemies can be traced back to its past insincere diplomatic efforts, its support of the types of leaders it publicly condemns, and for being distributors of small and sophisticated weaponry. And then she nervously calls out, "see, there are terrorists everywhere!" Is it any wonder?

Let the nations of the world through new institutions agree to halt these harmful transaction. Let the world leaders embrace deeper human values, not merely economic ones. Let the superpowers take down their nuclear arsenals, lest they too are one day used against them, or their friends and allies. For after all, unintended consequences is the logical outcome of the activities of the Merchants of Death.

Literature, Film, Art

Subconscious Presentation of Life Response that Can Be Conscious

"Life Response" is a startling phenomenon in which an instance of sudden good fortune is precipitated by taking to a higher level of consciousness, such as shedding a negative attitude, or having a focused aspiration to accomplish something, or engaging in an act of self-givingness. Life quickly responds to such reversals of consciousness and quickly returns the favor to that individual in the form of a life response event. It is miraculous thing to experience.

One interesting aspect of life response is that it is occurring all the time, but we do not have the subtle sense to perceive it. I.e. when good fortune happens to us, we aren't aware of the shift in consciousness on our part that precipitated it. While true in real life, we also see this dynamic at work in works of literature and film. Instances of life response are constantly being presented there by the author in these stories, but we don't recognize the effect, let alone the inner cause.

Another interesting point is that though the writer readily presents life response incidents in his work, he is unaware that he is demonstrating this miraculous-like phenomenon. Then how does it come to be written? The answer is that it comes from the author's subconscious. While the author has a conscious sense of the flow of events

and character movements, the inner truths and subtle life principles of life he has revealed are *subconscious* to him.

Then where does the subconscious knowledge come from? It is there in his inner being, in a buried knowledge passed on through generations that the writer subconsciously taps onto. It is also there in the atmosphere of life that the author becomes an instrument of.

It turns out that all great writers present life response in one form or another, as they are more attuned to the intricacies of human relationships and character, even as they are unconscious and unaware of the subtle life principles at work. For example, if you watch closely, you will notice a startling array of life response incidents in the works of Jane Austin; particularly in her great novel *Pride and Prejudice*. There if one pays close attention one can easily trace the change in consciousness that precipitate sudden good fortune for an individual. E.g. when heroine Eliza Bennett gives up her hostile feelings towards Darcy when visiting his enormous Pemberley estate, he immediately appears out of nowhere (when he wasn't expected for weeks), which has the effect of kindling their romance, directly leading to their great happiness and marriage. Life has responded in her favor to her shift away from hostility to greater understanding, appreciation, and good-will. There are at least two dozen major life response incidents, and dozens of minor ones that I and my colleagues have traced in the story.

As I mentioned, it is there in all the great authors' works -- from Shakespeare's plays, to Valmiki epic *Mahabharata*. It is even there in the most mundane and banal soap operas, or in more serious tv and film fare. Here is an example:

The other day a friend and I were watching the TV series *The Good Wife*. At one point I asked her to temporarily pause the on-demand presentation. I then turned to her and mentioned that one of the three principles in the law firm in the show had just made a decisive shift in attitude, and as a result somewhere soon life would respond in her favor. When we resumed watching the episode that is precisely what happened soon after.

Which brings up an interesting question: what if an author or writer was *conscious* of the phenomenon of Life Response, and had the capacity to subtly show how the inner behavior of the characters precipitated sudden good fortune in the outer events? How would that work out?

It turns out that an associate of mine Garry Jacobs has written a fascinating work of fiction called *The Book*. It is in essence a 500 page mystery-story that is filled with the most profound secrets of the workings of life. Included in it throughout is the phenomenon of Life Response. Not only do the characters experience sudden good fortune in a variety of astonishing ways, but several of them become aware of their ability to evoke it, which they do on a regular basis!

Garry has thus written a novel that not only includes a plethora of life response, which is a result of his conscious awareness of the phenomenon, but also has his characters aware of its workings. This is so because Garry has studied the phenomenon from all angles for thirty five years, and is able to incorporate it in a spiritual-oriented adventure story of unprecedented depth and power.

Likewise, each of us can become aware of instances of life response in our own lives. Better still, we can come to understand the changes in consciousness on our part that precipitate these startling outcomes. Best of all, we can constantly be aware of, and then consciously make the effort to raise level our consciousness relative to given circumstance -- e.g. by practicing non-reaction to another's intensity, by holding back

from expressing our thoughts (silent will), by opening to the spiritual Force before engaging in actions, etc. -- which will quickly evoke luck from life.

In that way, not only are we conscious of the life response phenomenon itself, but use it to attract a continuous stream of good fortune into our lives.

From Science to Science of Life

Our Higher Consciousness that Can Overcome Limits of Scientific Thinking

Combining Science's & Spirit's Startling New Discoveries

In its attempt to understand the nature of Reality, Science is encountering startling and strange phenomena about material existence at both the macro and micro level. It is becoming more sophisticated in its own physical understanding of life, even as it is utterly baffled by its mind-twisting discoveries. Whether at the level of quantum physics or black hole astronomy, the illogical and unbelievable is becoming commonplace. Trying to rectify the theories of the large and the small add to the difficulties.

Meanwhile, in the realm of the spirit and spiritual experience, there have been dramatic new insights into the nature of creation and the process of involution and evolution, particularly by the Indian sage and seer Sri Aurobindo and his admirers. He has expressed a complex, modern view of the omnipresent Reality that transcends all previous understandings of existence. His insights, including the revelation of the descending Force that he called 'Supermind' and its vast power to alter the conditions of life is also startling in their own right.

And yet he has answered all of the major questions of life that religion has told us was unknowable, including the nature and makeup of the Divine Reality, what the process is by which the universe unfolded from a Divine Source, the purpose of life on earth and human existence, the course of our evolutionary destiny, and so forth. Many others have followed in his footsteps, applying this unprecedented cosmic knowledge and unique slant on Existence and Reality and applying it to the modern world. This is particularly true of Karmayogi, the multi-dimensional spiritual genius of South India.

Thus, Science's view of the material world is becoming more sophisticated, as is our capacity to understand the Divine Reality in its various facets. Integrating the two will be a further breakthrough in human knowledge, and will require the resolution of these two disparate points of view.

Science can begin this process by moving beyond its physical, material-centric view of existence and embrace all other planes of existence -- inner and outer, and vital to mental to spiritual. Religion and spiritual thinking needs to embrace the more sophisticated knowledge and insight about the nature of Spirit, the omnipresent Reality and our evolutionary destiny, which it previously considered unknowable, but now has ample evidence and explanation to support that knowledge.

In combination, an expanded Science that includes life not just matter but all of life in what we can call a 'Science of Life,' and a spirituality in which the seemingly unknown can be fully known and experienced in all its dimensions by any person, can change the course of human understanding and the history of life on earth.

Solving the Astonishing Riddles of Science

In the 1960s, a scientific experiment revealed a startling result. It indicated that an individual who wiggles his finger actually starts processing in his brain the fact that his digit has actually begun wiggling *before* his brain processes the fact that he would like to wiggle it! In other words, the *fact* of wiggling happens before the *will* to wiggle, which we would normally perceive as occurring come first -- confounding science, and our concepts of how life functions in time.

In other discoveries, such as those in quantum physics, it has been shown in equations that an individual can be several places at once, while in another it has been revealed that if the spin of one electron of an atom can affect the spin of another electron of the same atom, even though the two electrons are five thousand miles apart! Again, in this latter reality of "non-local connection" the scientific discovery overwhelms our views of space and time, of causality, or what is possible, of what is real. In essence, science has not been able to explain these phenomena.

Scientists are *mental* individuals; they try to discover answers through the power of mind. They are also generally quite empirical, looking exclusively for evidence -- especially *material* evidence -- to explain the physical phenomenon of life. As we see, as they arrive at these fantastic discoveries of quantum and universal science, empiricism fails to provide answers. Observing the world only at the material level will fail to produce adequate explanations for the currently unexplainable. Even the rational mind is unable to fathom what seems to be the unfathomable. Something more is needed.

Another recent insight of science may prove to be the discovery that leads the way to the answers to all of these other confounding scientific issues. It is that the status of the person doing the viewing is critical to the outcome of the phenomenon itself! In other words, the consciousness of the viewer very much determines the outcomes of life that quantum and universal science is trying to uncover. This fact completely changes the equation of scientific inquiry and discovery.

If this is the case, then it would seem that someone of the deepest and highest consciousness would be prime candidate to discover the surreal exigencies of science. Someone who has experienced firsthand in his or her life the subtle laws of life -- such as the phenomenon of life response, or has had the experience of synchronicities -- and yet has a full learned knowledge of the principles of science, would be the ideal person to penetrate these strange and confounding mysteries of material science.

In fact, the Indian sage and seer Sri Aurobindo has already explained fully the evolutionary process of life, and has revealed all of the forces at work in the material and non-material universe. If a learned scientific individual -- an expert in his field -- were steeped in such knowledge, and actually had the subtle experiences that Sri Aurobindo's teachings point to, that individual would become a Master Scientist on earth; one who would reveal the true causality in the universe. He could explain any aberration of life that science has discovered. It is a golden opportunity for anyone who wants to be a true pioneer in the search for the highest purpose and meaning in life.

Limitations of the Mind of the Scientist

Based on Sri Karmayogi's profound insights, Garry Jacobs has developed a new understanding of the limits of science. He indicates that the problem is not just that science is material-oriented and empirical, but that the Mind of the scientist has a number of limitations, preventing him from reaching the integral truth of things, and as

a result creating a vast array of destructive outcomes that match each positive achievement. Here are the highlights of his presentation.

Linearity -- He tells us that Mind tends to think in a linear, unidimensional manner, pursuing one line of truth, ignoring other complementary sides, and thus views all reality from a single viewpoint. This is a limitation that can have dire consequences.

Division -- Mind knows by division & aggregation; by dividing each whole into parts and taking each part as a whole for further subdivision. This leads to reductionism, which in turn leads to overspecialization and fragmentation of knowledge. This narrow focus prevents a comprehensive understanding, causing not investigated negatives of other domains to slip in.

Polarization -- Mind knows by contrasting one thing from another, i.e. through dualities. It sees things in polar opposite of black or white, and right or wrong. Thus Mind comes to know and progress only by creating opposition; by contrasting its own position with those of others. The effect of this is to attract a negative for every positive as every partial truth tends to attract its opposite.

Part vs Whole -- In effect, Mind mistakes the part it knows for the greater Whole that is the Truth of any matter. A Whole, by the way, that is greater than the sum of its parts.

Implications for Science: The implication for science is that these limitations of Mind subdivide Reality and Knowledge into an infinite number of specializations, which cause it to lose connection with the integral Whole and Essence of any matter, resulting in negative outcomes that match their positive creations -- manifesting air and water pollution, nuclear proliferation, resistance to biological viruses, inability to understand truths of existence, ignorance of the subtle movements of life, being confounded by the nature of Reality, and so forth.

If Man rises beyond the limits of Linear, Dividing, Polar, and Part-oriented Mind, it will not only resolve all of the issues and conundrums of Science, but eliminate all the negatives it has unleashed, while contribute mightily to creating a harmonious, wisdom-based, integral and spiritual based life on earth.

New Subtle Insight of Reality that Challenges Science

Converging Views of Science and Spirit

In recent years, the scientists and spiritual evolutionists are coming to a common understanding of the nature of Matter in the universe. The inevitable realization of scientific inquiry is that the basis of all material existence is Spiritual, while the inevitable result of spiritual experience is that Spirit reaches its full flowering and apex when it is expressed through the details of material life.

The recent discovery by scientists of Dark Energy in the universe confirms this trend. Invisible Dark Energy is now believed to be the source of all forms in the cosmos. The Indian spiritual sage and seer Sri Aurobindo came to the same conclusion, but from a different angle; namely that this subtle, invisible Energy is an end product of a Divine process. In fact, the Dark Energy of material science and subtle Energy of the modern spiritual metaphysician may simply be the same thing.

Let's examine this invisible Energy from the spiritual perspective, since the scientific one is more commonly discussed. Sri Aurobindo says that there is an ultimate Reality -- ineffable, immutable, timeless and spaceless. At some point that Reality took its first

step toward manifestation when it became conscious of itself and as a result generated a Force. Conscious-Force thus became the original non-substance "substance" of creation. In reality, that Conscious-Force split in that creation process, leaving only the Force component. That Force became the invisible sea of Energy that permeates the universe, and out of which all forms come into being.

As science continues to explore, it finds itself in endless conundrums; at dead ends, as their discoveries confound their minds. That is because the Reality is beyond the normal functionings of mind. It only can be perceived through intuition, revelation, and supra versions of mentality, which is precisely the way the spiritual seekers of the modern era are beginning to perceive the world. They sense this Reality, and are thus coming in touch with it, and by identity explaining it. Sri Aurobindo has provided this profound knowledge in great detail, saving humanity perhaps 1000 years of spiritual and metaphysical inquiry. Scientists are merely coming to the same understanding through the faulty logic of empiricism, of the material view, which sees only the part, not the Whole; and surely not the Essence.

Life is more than matter. It contains vital movement, energy and force; mental knowledge and awareness; and spiritual expressions taking shape as Oneness of being to Infinite Creation Power to Divine Love to rhapsodic Delight of Being. Science can learn to embrace these other dimensions of the Cosmos. When they do, they will perceive a core Spirit behind all things. Then they will be on their way to a true understand of life in the universe.

Quantum Science and Life Response

It strikes me that science is very slowly coming to understand the attraction or life response phenomenon that has been known for thousands of years in India and elsewhere. I have many friends who experience it several times a day at least. It is a very common experience for myself. These are the case studies that science should be considering. Once science takes into account the role of subtle forces such thought, feeling, intention, attitude, values, spirit, et al, in the outcome of events, it will perceive synchronicity and begin to develop laws or principles of this dynamic just as there are laws of gravity and such. I and my colleagues have developed many dozens of laws related to the life response phenomenon. Science is way behind the curve here, just beginning to dabble into these areas as e.g. quantum physics has begun to reveal the startling truths of non-locality, aka entanglement which is in essence the quantum view of life response. Here are some notes of mine on the subject:

- In physics life response phenomena is explained as the principle of "Non-Locality," also known as "Entanglement," where two objects at opposite ends of the universe from one another instantly interrelate to change or mirror the state of the other. E.g. a shift in the spin of an electron changes the spin of another instantly, even though the second is at the other side of the galaxy. Thus, what affects each is occurring from beyond locality and thus the two are entangled with one another.
- This is similar to how in Life Response two objects are interconnected across-space time, overcoming locality and are in an entangled relationship. E.g. if I shift in consciousness to the positive, a person from around the world instantly contacts me with good news, though I have never communicated with or known them before. Our consciousness's shifted one another, causing us to move in alignment, which we experienced together in a common moment in a common space.
- When I overcame my resistance to work weekends and at that very moment the other party enters and gave me the biggest sale of my life, we moved into

alignment, we were entangled. From my side it was caused by a shift in attitude; from his side a willful need and action to get a thing purchased. The result is instantaneous miraculousness. (and a huge sale; in fact the biggest of my life!)

- Life Response is thus a non-local entangled phenomenon where one thing shifting in consciousness can instantly evoke or align with a shift in another no matter how far apart.
- The basis of this is that all things in the universe are interrelated. It is kind of like a 3 dimensional sphere, where everything is interrelated along strands of connection, If one strand is "pulled" as a result of a shift in consciousness, other related strands also change. They then move into alignment at a single point in space-time, causing the synchronicity that people experience and which I call life response.
- This interconnectivity exists because the universe is an extension of an Infinite Consciousness that is One in essence and being, and thus the creation shares that attribute.
- Consciousness is the source of all, and in consciousness all is interrelated and aligned. We miss it because our consciousness is limited. As we rise in consciousness, we become more aware of it, and therefore can consciously and subconsciously evoke life response more often.

From Material View of Science to Involution/Evolution of the Infinite

We worship the God of Science, trusting in its laws and rules, bowing before its child, Technology. After all, we are dazzled by the material benefit it has given us, including unprecedented security and infinite-like physical comforts.

And yet science's foundation rests on a material view of the world. All of its principles and insights derive from physical matter it can measure. Its view of evolution is a mere progression from matter forward -- i.e. as mere ever-more complex forms of atoms, molecules, chemical reactions, and micro and macro elements. This narrow, materialistic, mechanistic view of existence is what we have subconsciously embraced as the foundation of existence, particularly in the West.

But what if there were a decidedly different view? What if all that we are becoming and evolving towards was already involved, *inherent* in matter? What if embedded in material existence is a seed of all that has evolved from it -- from animated life and life forms to the mentality of Man? What if in the hidden, subtle recesses of matter, there was the consciousness of future life and mind, lying dormant, holding out for the right time and conditions before coming out?

Science of course does not embrace such an involved consciousness latent in matter, for it cannot see it or measure it -- its prime means of determining the existence of anything. How can the seed of a life and mind be contained in material rock or stone or ice or water or fire when there are no signs of that possibility when examined under a microscope or analyzed with the latest, state-of-the-art measuring devices? And yet everything that has evolved from matter *was* and *is* there in consciousness, involved in it, secretly hidden from view, waiting to come out. Embedded in matter is not just the possibility and seeds of animated, energized life and the forms that move and interact; not just the splendors of mentality that emerged through those life forms, including us, but the possibility of Spirit itself emerging through we mental beings. Thus, all of life in the universe is a flowering from that seed; a constant unfolding of higher substance and consciousness from that involved, hidden Essence embedded in matter.

But who or what planted this life-mind-spirit seed in the recesses of matter? The answer is that only an Infinite consciousness, a Divine entity could have imagined, conceived, and planted the hidden fountain of life in the very core and being of matter. Only a Higher Power could have imagined and planted the "DNA" of conscious life in the heart of a material existence; that on the surface appears completely unconscious and inert.

But why would a Divine entity usher in a universe with the dense, gross substance and unconsciousness of matter? Why not *begin* with those higher formations -- of matter, life, and mentality; or better yet their full integration. Surely, an Infinite consciousness could have devised anything It chose. The answer to this conundrum -- which incidentally also explains why there is suffering, difficulty, and evil in the world -- is quite simple: It did so to enable the greatest possibility and multiplicity in life. By starting with the unconsciousness of matter, an infinite array of possibilities could emerge above it; from positive to negative, light to dark, easy to problematic, etc. across all dualities and contradictions of existence. That would enable Its own Divine attributes -- peace, harmony, wisdom, creativity, beauty, love, delight, etc. -- to express through an infinite variety of forces, energies, forms, and circumstance; across an infinitely varied spectrum of existence, providing ultimate diversity and richness to life.

Implicit in a seed of future planes embedded matter is not only an Infinite source, but the fact that these planes existed in some form *before* creation! In fact, we can only understand the evolution of planes from seeds of matter if we perceive the *involutionary* process that embedded those potentialities in first place. Whereas evolution is a self-unfolding from Matter to Life to Mind and Spirit, Involution is a previous and inverse process of self-manifestation of the Infinite consciousness into the planes Mind, Life/Energy, and Matter. Or looking at it chronologically, first there was the Infinite Divine, which manifest the plane of Supermind or Truth consciousness, and then Mind, out of which derived the plane of energy (Vital), out of which emerged the plane of Matter. As each plane emerged, it lost the higher consciousness, but embedded or involved itself as future potential. This is the involutionary process from spirit to matter. The evolutionary process then occurs, which is the unfolding from matter of involved Life/Energy and life forms, and then mentality from Life in those life forms, and then Spirit from Mind. Ultimately, conscious mental individuals in the evolution open and connecting back to the highest, Infinite consciousness that was the source of All in the involution.

The dual involutionary/evolutionary process is thus very different process than the mere, dumb, unconscious material evolution presented by Science. Involution indicates an Infinite consciousness and a Divine process behind the material one. Interestingly, recent scientific/mathematical formulas are starting to point in this direction. E.g., Dark Energy may be one significant step in that direction, indicating energy previous to matter.

Scientists ever-increasingly stand agape as they see their material, mechanistic views of existence ironically torn down through their own scientific investigations. When they come to see that all other planes -- back to cosmic Mind and Spirit -- were/are there before creation, and that life, mind, and spirit are buried in matter waiting to come out, they will begin to perceive the right relation of things, including the ultimate meaning and purpose of life in the cosmos.

The Consciousness, Influence of the Observing Party Can Determine Reality

Science has now come to the startling conclusion that the status of an object is actually determined by that which is observing it. Thus, if you observe an apparently broken

machine and believe in the power of spiritual Force to fix it, and through Its action, it is somehow fixed, then you as observer have determined its status at the Causal plane.

If however you are observing the broken machine and do not believe in such a thing as the Force, and that it will take a repairman to repair it, then I as observer am having a determining affect that awaits solution at the Physical plane.

Thus what the observer believes in, and what inner and outer powers he marshals in his consciousness or outwardly, has a determining effect. I.e. the consciousness of the observing party determines the Reality.

Naturally, there are also effects in between, in the vital and mental plane as well. In addition, there is the collective view, the atmosphere surrounding, karmic effect, spiritual entities and forces, the Will of the Divine, and other forces that are determinants of the Reality.

Since all and everything is connected in an inherent Oneness, then anything can affect anything else. It is just a matter of the consciousness and power brought to bear by the observing entity, including we humans that determine what Reality is.

From the highest Supramental consciousness and power, i.e. Truth Consciousness, the observer and the observed are One. It a state of pure Unity, in which what I am affects it, just as what it is, affects me.

The devotees who utilize the Mother's Force and know the power of intention, attitudes, decisions, action, as well as spiritual techniques such as non-reaction and silent will have experienced firsthand the power of determining reality from within. The consciousness we bring to bear attracts, or aligns with positive conditions. I am thereby able to create the universe from within.

The ancient Upanishads understood that we can determine the nature of reality thousands of years ago. Ironically, Science, which prides itself as being at the head of the curve, is just now catching up.

Beyond Science Fiction to the Truths of Higher Consciousness

Spurred on by America's scientific and technological obsessions, the world experiences films, TV, and novels that include fantastic twists and turns that defy normal views of reality. This artistic media form is collectively known as "science fiction." It expresses as experiences of time travel, multi-dimensions, parallel universes, and other startling shifts and unfoldings that entice the viewer. Though loosely based on true principles of physics and actual mathematical calculations about the workings of the universe, most of what is presented is wholly without fact, as virtually no one has such experiences in real life.

And yet, we *can* experience such dramatic shifts in space-time and inter-dimensionality, but not in the way we normally think of it. There *is* a power that we can access that can overcome barriers of space, time, causality, and reality. It is the power of higher consciousness, and includes our ability to access the Spirit.

For example, before engaging in an act, an individual quiets his mind and opens to the spiritual Force. As a result, a four-year problem that had been dogging him suddenly disappears. Another individual opens to that Higher Power, and as a result, three new projects suddenly spring into action, when just before they were moribund and not expected to begin for years. In this way, limits of time and space are overcome, as the future moves into the present, and what was not there before in space is suddenly

created. The fact is that many have had such experiences; as opposed to what science fiction portrays.

We can also experience sudden good fortune through other shifts in consciousness. For example, one man decides to overcome his hostile feelings towards another, and out of nowhere is suddenly promoted to the job of his dreams -- something he was unable to accomplish in a decade of trying. By shifting from his lower nature to a higher one, he has transcended the local domain of finite possibility and opened to the universal plane where our infinite potential is realized. It is in essence the experience of a "life response," -- i.e. the onset of sudden good fortune, where normal views of space, time, causality, and reality are overcome. It is an experience that each of us can have as often as we want, when we want. This is no science fiction captured in celluloid or paper, but a living truth known and realized by many.

Interestingly science has begun to track this phenomenon at the material/physical level, which it calls "non-local connection." Principles of physics now tell us that two electrons of the same atom can change each other's spin even if they are tens of thousands or even billions of miles apart. This extraordinary association at the subtle material level is but a frontal understanding of something much deeper: that it can occur at the vital, emotional, mental, and spiritual planes as well. That every moment our thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and beliefs move out across the field of life, and align with and attract related condition from the world around us.

Space is extension. Time is movement in extension. When we open to the Force or otherwise raise our consciousness, we overcome extension and its movement. We bring timelessness into time, and spacelessness into space. In that way, we serve as a bridge between the Infinite consciousness and life in the cosmos. We become not only joyful experiencers of the miraculous; not only space-time navigators in the cosmos; but pioneers of the next stage of human evolution.

The Internet: It's Meaning and Purpose

The Internet in Society's Evolution

As we enter the early mental stage of our social evolution we see the characteristics of our age around us -- the blossoming of individual freedom and initiative, a universal aspiration for education, a great mental acquisitiveness, and expanding political and social freedom, amongst others.

Coming together in the mental stage of social evolution these factors have given birth to a new form of organization whose creativity and potential contribution to social advancement rivals any advancement over the past millennium. The recent emergence of the Internet as a worldwide system of communication, information exchange, education and commerce is opening up unlimited opportunities for eliminating the barriers to communication imposed by space and time, leveling the playing field between rich and poor, and making possible universal access to information and services at very low cost.

The Internet and Mental Stage of Evolution

While we are aware of the technological roots of the Internet, we should also be aware that the Internet is really a product of the current mental stage of social evolution that

we have just begun to enter. *The Internet is a natural expression and embodiment of the aspiration of modern society for unlimited and immediate access to information and unlimited means for individual creativity and self-expression. These are characteristics of the mental stage of social evolution.*

This aspiration has released a colossal energy in society that is by no means restricted to any single country or form of expression, but rather flows and overflows through every conceivable channel that will lend itself as an outlet.

Internet As New, More Complex Organization

One definition of social development is society's ability to create new and ever more *complex* forms of organization. In the mental age of social evolution this movement to ever newer and more complex forms of organization has only accelerated. The Internet is perhaps the greatest example of this phenomenon. In one sense what is new and unique about the Internet, thoroughly in character with the temper of our times, and the source of its unprecedented productive capacities, is its organization. The Internet is primarily and preeminently a *new model and form of social organization* with untold power to transform the way society functions.

The most powerful organizations contain systems that are integrated with one another. If one definition of social development is its degree of organization, then organizations where systems interrelate contain the greatest potential for accomplishment and development. In fact, the Internet is not simply a single system, but an amalgam of systems that are linked to and interact with one another, forming a dense, perhaps even self-organizing organization. The reason the Internet is such a force in the world today is because it is perhaps the ultimate dense organization, where its systems are interrelated.

When the systems that are interrelated are more diverse from one another they add an even greater power. For example, one of the great features of the Internet is the ability of individuals in various disciplines to cross-reference information in another discipline. For example a scientist can cross reference a social theory, or a psychologist can cross-reference a biological information. When the information in a discipline is organized, as is done in the Internet, and is then cross-referenced to another systemized discipline there is no end to the new knowledge and discoveries that can be revealed. This is perhaps the ultimate power of the Internet. Like the human mind which instantly cross-references the "disciplines" of the body, the emotions, the psyche, and the mind so to the Internet can cross-reference systems and organized disciplines of knowledge that can unleash infinite possibilities.

Other Points

-If society is in the *mental* stage of its development and evolution is a reflection of the power of the human mind, then the Internet is a reflection of this power of mind.

-One of the conclusions we have come to at Growth Online is that the power of mind itself is infinite. if that is so, then it would suggest the infinite possibility for development and evolution in the future. The internet is but the latest example of this in human history.

Internet Embraced by Society

It is one thing to have a technology such as the Internet; it is another for society to embrace it. One of the characteristics of social development is whether or not society actually adopts initiatives toward development. In the case of the Internet it is clear that

society has embraced the Internet with open arms. *The Internet's entry into the mainstream of the national life was almost entirely the result of the public's ready and enthusiastic response and wholesale adoption of the new form organization that the Internet represents.* The organization was not only new, but enjoyable, easy to use, and fantastically efficient. Who would have thought that the more rich and complex an organization became the more enjoyable it would become. (We discuss the topic of development as more complex organization in another topic at this site.)

Internet and Individual Empowerment

We are all becoming aware of the tremendous practical benefits of the Internet; everything from electronic commerce, instant access to news and information, a tool for research, and many others. The increased velocity and better quality of information, better because more current, has also begun to dramatically increase the speed and quality of *individual decision-making*. This in turn releases mental energy and encourages mental creativity. Thus, the Internet is a very dramatic example of empowerment of the individual, a fundamental characteristic of the emerging mental stage of social evolution.

In addition this empowerment of the individual reverberates back outward to the rest of society. The Internet allows the intellectual work of any individual to reach a far wider audience than is otherwise possible and to be more fully utilized by society. Thus the impact of individuals on society is increased, a related characteristic of the emerging mental stage of social evolution.

Internet and Values

One of the great powers of social development is the power of values, i.e. what the society really believes in. In the emerging mental stage of evolution the values of society and of the individual come into greater play, and reinforce one another.

Organizations, whether business, economic, or social ultimately derive their power from the values they embody and express. Although some people decry the absence of values on the Internet, by which they mean the lack of control over the suitability of content, *the Internet actually embodies high and strong values from which it derives an almost irresistible strength.* These include *physical* values such as speed, timeliness, efficiency and productivity; *organizational* values such as standardization, systemization, coordination, integration and communication; and *psychological* values such as equality of access, public service and empowerment of the individual.

The Internet is far more than a system for accessing information that overcomes the limitations of time and space. It is a reflection of the social evolution of our society in the current mental age -- by its empowerment of individuals, through new and vibrant organizational complexity, and its ability to unleash fresh energies by adopting personal and societal values.

The Internet and the Emerging True Individual

Many think of the Internet as mere technological marvel -- a form of organization that is simply an extension of the electronic products and services that came before it; in particular, the computer and various communication devices. However, the Internet is more than that. It is an outer form and expression of our individual need to explore, discover, and achieve in life. It is a social structure that allows our individuality to ripen

by connecting us the wider knowledge and wisdom of society so we can thrive and fulfill our deepest aspirations in life.

If the Internet is an indicator of new developments in the "support systems" of society, the individual himself is also undergoing a fundamental change. First of all, his life is becoming more oriented around his mind -- i.e. he is becoming more mental. Because he is more educated, because he is more aware of the world around him, and because he is more conscious of his ability to direct the course of his life, his mental bent is in ascendance -- i.e. it is becoming the true leader of his being. As a result, he perceives that he truly has the inner resources -- the knowledge and power -- to become anything he so chooses.

One way this inner-directed person fulfills his deepest aspiration is by making full use of the information and knowledge available to him. As it turns out, the Internet serves this function perfectly well, as it supplies an infinite supply of facts, ideas, and insights to support his ever-deepening aspiration for self-knowledge, individual expression, and greater success. Though the Internet is an outer vehicle, still it serves an inner need -- as this vast organizational system provides truths from every segment of society so that the individual can consciously choose the future direction of his life.

In addition to this mental bent that fosters a truly conscious inner-driven existence, a second contributing factor to Man's increasing individuality is the availability of ever-greater levels of freedom in life. Unfettered by the demands of the old hierarchical order, unrestrained by old, outworn moralities and customs, the individual now feels freer than ever, even compelled to explore the vast array of possibilities available to him. This person perceives that he has full independence to become anything he puts his mind to. Once again, the Internet serves him well by providing a vast array of knowledge that he can choose from that meet his own particular needs and interests so he can reach his maximum potential. Thus, the Internet enables Man's newly inherited freedom to mature into ever-increasing levels of fulfillment in life.

A third fundamental change the individual is going through -- one not readily perceived by society, since it is more subtle and difficult to fathom -- is that he is beginning to move out of his essential Ignorance. By that term, I am not referring to the ignorance of the poor farmer or the individual who is without education, but to an intrinsic unconsciousness that is there in every person at birth: that we inherit simply by being human. We live in what can be called the egoistic ignorance, feeling separate and cut off from the rest of the world, living for ourselves alone, when in fact our fulfillment is predicated on a positive relationship with the rest of humanity. All we possess, all we achieve is based on what we have acquired from society. The Internet offers an unparalleled means for the individual to reconnect and more fully connect with the wider humanity of which we are a part.

In addition, we tend to perceive only a small part of any issue or matter, rather than the multiplicity of factors that make up that object. Dominated by our fixed habits, our virulent attitudes, and our hardened opinions, we tend to guard what little we know of a matter, and shun the wider and deeper knowledge available to us. Holding on to our limited perceptions, we make faulty assumptions that lead to error-prone, misbegotten behaviors and actions that result in difficult, pain-filled lives. The Internet puts us in touch with an unlimited variety of viewpoints, perspectives and aspects of truth. Our emerging individual embraces the wide variety of truths, including the multiplicity of details, as well as the essence that make up the Whole of any matter or concern. The Internet, with its vast array of information and knowledge, serves Man's purpose, as it provides a more integrated, many-sided view of things. The Internet is thus a social power that forces us out of our false, limited view, and gives us the opportunity to

embrace a fuller, more balanced, and integral knowledge. It moves us out of our limited subjectivity and brings us to deeper and wider objectivity rooted in truth. From that vantage point, we have the necessary insight and wisdom to redirect the course of our lives so that we can fulfill our fondest hopes and dreams.

As we look out at the arc of our human existence, of the progress we have made over the millennia, and, in particular, the rapid changes in human consciousness that are occurring today, it seems only right that this self-empowered, inner directed, highly conscious new type of person should appear. The emergence of this True Individual is the logical consequence of everything that has come before. Because of the freedom we have acquired, because of our ever-increasing mental bent, and because of our yearning to know the many-sided, true truth of things, there is a compulsion of Nature to produce the next iteration of human life. It is the True Individual.

In parallel and concord with these developments, we see a powerful new system of society taking shape -- the Internet --, which is serving this New Individual's needs in the extreme. Together they indicate that a new form of human existence is forming that is at once dynamic, creative, and spiritual in nature. It is a sign of the next stage of human progress: a signal of our evolution into a new way of living.

The Environment

Environmentalism and the Future Evolution of Man

The Indian sage and seer Sri Aurobindo envisioned a future divine life on earth, which would in essence be the culmination and ultimate achievement for humanity. He calls for our collaboration in this endeavor by opening up to and drawing in the spiritual dimension into our lives in order to divinize it -- i.e. bring out its infinite potential.

Before that could happen, however, he suggested that several other developments had to take place, one of which is the movement toward human unity amongst the people of the earth. Already this process has begun, especially in the last 50 years with the emergence of the United Nations, the European Union, global economics, the Internet, and the cultural cross-pollination and integration we see in the major urban areas of the world, to name a few. It should be noted that much of this was presaged in the 1960s during the Hippy era when the youth of the world took to greater freedom and creative expression, while exploring a variety of cultures and forms of spirituality, including those of the East. What is occurring now is in one sense a ripening of that dramatic, through relatively short-lived pioneering effort amongst that generation's youth.

Yet another way world unity is emerging is through the rapid expansion of the global environmental movement. Because of the misuse of the resources of the planet, the people of the world have been galvanized to change those dire conditions. On the surface, the degrading of the environment might appear to simply be the byproduct of an industrial society, or the dark side of prosperity, but more fundamentally, it is a reflection of the very way we humans think. Let me explain.

Though scientists, researchers, engineers, and others in the West and elsewhere are able to conceive of an infinite variety of material forms which comfort and benefit us, we are unable to control the negative side of this creative, developmental process. For example, we discovered and unlocked the power of the atom, yet we were unable to contain its byproduct of atomic weaponry. That wanton result has become the greatest

evil ever devised by Man -- casting humanity's very future in doubt. Likewise, we have developed infinite manufacturing capacity to meet the needs of an ever more prosperous and growing population, yet we cannot control the array of forms of pollution it has engendered. Similarly, we have developed powerful automobiles that glide along super highways, but cannot control the hundreds of thousands of deaths from car accidents every year. Thus, for every positive that science and technology devises, one or more very dangerous negative consequences are unleashed upon the world.

Which leads me back to the essential reason this occurs. It turns out that environmental degradation is the end result of our *uni-dimensional* view of life. It is the result of our mechanistic, empirical, material-only approach to the creative process, which excludes other dimensions -- including the psychological, the social, and the spiritual. Environmental degradation itself thus a product of having left *Man* out of the developmental equation. The scientist, engineer, or other professional is too preoccupied by the joy of discovery in matter; by what can be seen under the microscope; by what can be resolved into a neat equation to address the subject from its deepest and widest context. Operating from within a constricting, exclusive box of a materiality, the discoverers and implementers are insulated from the wider truths of life, which allow falsehood, and, yes, evil to be set loose on the world.

We could therefore say that this material, empirical, mechanistic approach to discovery is one of *Ignorance*, since it is separated from the true, wider, multi-faceted, all embracing *Knowledge* that is being addressed. Because the work professional sees only a small *part* of the whole picture, decisions made and actions taken are based on a material, mechanistic, empirical superstition, releasing negative outcomes that become the basis for social strife and danger in the world. In fact, one subtle principle of life is that when we embrace only a part of the Whole of any object of inquiry, all of the *other* parts tend to express negatively. Pollution, nuclear threat, and death on the highways are but several ways the unaddressed Whole, this missing multiplicity of understanding expresses when we look out on the world through these limited blinders. Even now, the unaddressed truths related to any number of subject matters are producing negative side effects in a host of fields that we are summarily unaware of.

Thus, though the world has now begun to perceive the dangers of the degradation of the environment, it has not understood the *process* by which it occurs. It is not simply a product of modern life, or of a developing economy, or even the foolish ignorance of a few men, but the way we put Matter before Man in the discovery process. It is the root cause of the dark consequences that threaten or otherwise degrade our daily lives.

And yet no matter what its origins -- material or otherwise -- environmental degradation is a reality and fact of life. Moreover, that issue is galvanizing the peoples of the world into action. In that process, connections are occurring amongst individuals, associations, and organizations, which, in essence, occur as movements of cooperation, integration, and harmony. Such integrative and harmonic associations are but another way that human unity is taking shape.

We could even say that these harmonic developments are reflections of the Spirit itself - particularly the Divine aspect of the Oneness of life. When we protect the planet we share, and when we do so through deep cooperation and connection, we are experiencing several aspects of the Oneness of being in life. If this is so, then environmentalism may be looked upon as a kind of shared religion; or better yet, a first form of common spiritual experience shared by the peoples of the world.

Through our ever-increasing mentality, through wider circles of culture, through the integration of citizens and nations, human unity is beginning to take shape in the world.

Environmentalism is a particularly powerful catalyst because it addresses a fresh new way of relating to our common experience, enabling people to participate and interrelate in ways that transcend one's background and culture. The environment is not alone in this regard, as the Internet has a very similar nature. It is a most unexpected manifestation of the new: an organization that not only supports ever-greater knowledge and individuality, but ever-greater unity and harmony of purpose amongst the people.

These ever-new, unexpected forms of commonality of purpose are sure signs of an emerging World Unity. We can look around and see many such signs in the arts, politics, economics, the media, public discussion, and so forth. Most of all they subtly reside in the new perceptions of the individual, in the way he or she relates to others as well as humanity as a whole.

And yet this slow but steady emergence of World Unity presages an even greater eventuality for humanity: the emergence of a common spirit-oriented life on earth. It is a human existence where the Spirit is brought into every activity of our lives in order to bring out their infinite potential. It is a new world unimagined where we experience our ultimate psychological fulfillment, while perceiving the deepest truths of life, including the Spiritual underpinnings of all existence. That ecstatic vision and possibility is also now beginning to appear on the horizon: a sign of humanity's ultimate destiny and purpose.

Global Warming, Organization, and Consciousness

There are various levels of organization. One is physical. Cleanliness, orderliness, systemization, etc. are examples. One day years ago I asked a retail outlet president to have his people clean out the stockyard as tools were scattered everywhere. On my arrival there for the next meeting, he told me business and cash on hand was suddenly up. He did not know why, though I subtly suggested the reason; the cleaning of the stockyard.

Suppose we look at the world as a stockyard of filth, pollution, and so forth. To the measure we clean up, will attract benefit; whether more money, more opportunity, more prestige, more power and influence, etc. for the nation, district, town, local, etc.

Global warming is due to lack of physical organization of energy source on the one hand, and by Mother Nature's synchronous movement into a new, though temporary cycle. To the degree we organize, we will overcome pollution's detriments. It can happen at the individual and the collective level, expanding out to world cooperation. World governance can accelerate the latter; even the former.

At the root of roots of global pollution is not just organization, but the substance of the energy. Non-renewables, like oil and coal, is an abuse of maximum utilization of resources. There are resources that are infinite, like the sun. There are others not yet invented that even go beyond that. The world is too lazy and lethargic to move onto the new renewable resources. No one country wants to take on the burden of renewables, so it happens haphazardly. Again world governance can speed up the process at the macro level.

At the micro level, it is still the consciousness of the individual that determines. Maximum utilization of the resources at an individual's disposal, cleanliness, and orderliness will overcome global pollution at the personal level.

Higher consciousness is the golden means of solving all such problems, whether micro or macro, personal or global. Education is a natural means of fostering it. But seeing that we are each a part of a whole, of one another's lives, and relating deeply to the whole is a profounder and longer-lasting way. It is to shed Ego and our facile ways, and embrace the larger currents of life.

New Education

Tending the True Self that Fosters Individuality

Individuality begins at the point where we psychologically and outwardly express who we truly are. Moreover, those who are truly conscious of their own uniqueness will more readily bring it to the surface, creating real benefit for themselves and the world at large. Finally, the society that fosters that indwelling true self and individuality of the person will create a multiplying effect of ever-increasing creativity and accomplishment in the world.

In the recent powerful Indian film 'Like Stars on Earth (Every Child is Special),' we see this latter dynamic in action. There a young boy with dyslexia becomes an outcast from his peers and the school system. And yet one progressive teacher steps forward, sees beyond the surface and into the depths of the child, fostering his individuality as a painter with a genius-like artistic temperament. This, it turns out is the complete opposite of the mass education system that operates on a hierarchical structure, with the teacher all knowing; departing knowledge to a strained or reluctant classroom of children. A better system would therefore be the opposite; where the teacher begins by discovering the true essence, spirit, and aspirations of each child, drawing it out, which allows it to flow and expand through a process of self-discovery. This approach not only energizes the child to no end, but turns learning into a joyful experience.

This approach to education -- and indeed to life itself -- suggests that there really is an essence and true self of each person. That somehow we are here to express our True Individuality, which not only expresses through our own creative, individualistic path, but has a unique influence and impact on the world. Some go a step further and see true individuality as our "spirit," our spiritual essence; even our evolving soul that has a mission and purpose trying to express through the unique capacities and potentiality of the person it inhabits.

In sum, the person who becomes consciously aware of his or her true self will facilitate the expression of his or her individuality, thereby accelerating the process of personal accomplishment and growth for themselves and the world. Moreover, social organizations where facilitators like teachers and leaders bring out the true essence and potential of individuals will foster an ever expanding community of entrepreneurs, creative artists, and free thinkers. One could even imagine a society where the number of geniuses expands a thousand-fold through this dynamic. In fact, one Indian school taking this approach advertised its goal as "every child a genius."

Albert Einstein, Leonardo D Vinci and others were not only infinitely creative individuals expressing their individuality, but had a conscious or semi-conscious sense of their essence and purpose. We too can come to know our true selves and purpose; our inner mission, by looking deep within, which will release powerful energies that will become a springboard for infinite realization and accomplishment in life.

Soul-Based Learning at NewSchool

[In the following imaginary story, we consider what a future, soul-based education might be like.]

Several youngsters walk into the large classroom. There they observe the teacher -- sometimes known as the "team leader" -- sitting in a chair, awakening from what looks like a deep meditation. As Jake Randolph overhears the students filing into the room, his eyes begin to open, and a smile forms across his face. After all, he has just experienced a deep stillness and presence within. He even came in contact with his True Self and Soul.

From such inner excursions, Jake invariably feels a heightened sense of awareness -- a communion with the depth and breadth of his own being, as well as a deep connection with the world around him. This also gives him a keen sense of others, including an ability to perceive their wants and interest, as well as a capacity to intuitive their deepest aspirations emanating from their soul being. As a result, Jake -- as teacher, mentor, and friend -- has developed the capacity to guide others towards meaningful knowledge. And that includes the young students who are now filing in. Jake Randolph is about to begin another day of education adventure at NewSchool.

When Jake scans the room, the first person he recognizes is Amy Johnston. She has a bright face, and an infectious positive attitude. As usual, Amy is just bursting to get to work on the day's agenda. In fact, she and her friend Alicia have recently been talking about the new Negotiating software they recently discovered, which is used to create harmony between disagreeing parties. Though an app of this sort might seem a bit advanced for ten year olds, it was clear that Amy Johnston was ready to tackle the art of helping others find common purpose and get along.

It is 8am and all of the students in Jake Randolph's "Exploration" class are eager to get started. This is a special class where people are exposed to new areas of knowledge based on their own individual propensities and interests. This also turns out to be one of Jake's personal classes, since it affords him the opportunity to perceive the deepest aspirations of this young group of NewSchool students.

And so after several opening comments about changes in the cafeteria menu, and notifying the group about upgrades to the OS of their tablet PCs, Jake asks the youngsters to begin their learning activities.

While Amy opens up the negotiating app on her device, David Slovine plunges into a new user-friendly application language he recently discovered built for Smartphones. When he opens the app, he views an alluring video that makes the process of using the software language very clear. Though his parents were a little hesitant about their son tackling such complex software, David assured them it was actually quite simple. He also understood at that moment that sometimes he and his parents lived in two different worlds. Still, he loved them all the same.

Jake then reminded the students who were using the computer devices to put on their headphones so not to disturb others, otherwise the class would turn into a cacophony of noise. Once he received assurance from the students, Jake sat down, glanced over at Amy, leaned back, and suddenly started thinking about the advice he had given her in the past.

He recalled that one day after a long meditation in which he felt his "psychic center," he had a heart to heart talk with Amy. When she surprisingly came forward and expressed her deepest aspirations about things, -- something extraordinary for one so young -- Jake began to sense her True Self.

From her remarks, Jake could tell that Amy was a real individual; one who thought for herself, not following the herd view. She was bright, creative, insightful, and intuitive. All Amy needed was someone to help find her way amongst the endless opportunities offered by of NewSchool; to direct her aspirations towards a suitable area of study that would absorb her considerable creative energies.

As these thoughts consumed Jake, Sandip suddenly walked into the room, followed by his friend Carter. It was clear by their faces that they were upset; apparently in the midst of some sort of dispute. After hearing both sides of the matter, Jake made a few suggestions to resolve it, but neither boy responded. In fact, they just stood there with their arms folded over their chest with a vacuous look on their faces.

Then suddenly and most surprisingly Amy spoke up, and proceeded to explain the problem from her perspective, which she followed with a startling resolution to the problem. After listening to her suggestions, Sandip and Carter looked at one another rather sheepishly, but then surprisingly agreed to Amy's course of action. They then shook hands and walked out of the room.

After Jake watched the two boys walk down the hall, he slowly turned back toward Amy. He then stared at her for a moment in a state of wonder, as a bright light washed over his face. In a somewhat startled state, and in a voice half muted, Jake asked Amy to take a seat. He then proceeded to tell her straight out that "she had a gift."

"What gift?" asked Amy. "I believe you have an innate ability to settle disputes between people." A small smile mixed with a frown formed on her face. "I'm not sure. I don't know, maybe that's true." "No. I really feel it is," said Jake. "Do you think so?" said Amy. "Definitely. I have seen you do similar things in other situations with the kids over the last few months. You seem to have a knack for smoothing things out among people, for overcoming arguments and conflicts, for bringing kids back to a state of harmony." Amy was taken aback by Jake's remarks and could hardly breathe, let alone respond.

Jake considered the matter further, and then continued. "Listen, we have the Explorations class coming up. It's where we expose NewSchool students to new possibilities, and discover their deepest interests; to find out what really stimulates them. Amy, why not attend the class. In fact, while you are there, you can explore some of the material on the web on solving disputes and creating harmony between people, which you seem to be very good at. In fact, while you're at it, why not take a look at the 'Negotiating for Teens' software we recently acquired from Harmonee."

Jake then realized how serendipitous it was to obtain this software at a time when Amy was showing interest in that area. Though the app was intended for older NewSchool students, Jake was sure Amy could tackle it.

After recalling these moving events with Amy, Jake's attention slowly turned back to the room. When he looked around, the first person he saw was in fact Amy, who was quietly but intently exploring the very same negotiating software he had discussed with her the previous month.

A moment later, Jake noticed that Alicia had come over to join Amy at her workstation, after which they navigated the 'Negotiating for Teens' demo together. When the app's virtual teacher asked them to solve a hypothetical problem, the two worked as a team to come up with an effective solution. Jake observed how focused and energized the two of them were during that twenty minute session.

In fact, everywhere he turned in the Explorations class, he noticed how actively engaged the youngsters were; how their minds and emotions were fully absorbed in their work. Jake smiled within as he understood how this level of concentration and intention was

like catching lightning in a bottle. No amount of standard teacher-led classroom presentation, or homework assignments, or testing, or urging from parents, or scolding could ever match the deep aspiration, focus, and will of the students before him.

Because Jake had discovered the True Individuality and Self of each child, he was able to ascertain and bring out their deepest aspirations; their secret heart's desire. By unearthing their soul's purpose, he was able to show each child a potential path to their future. As each student responded by taking an interest in one or more chosen areas of knowledge, he was able to guide them further on their individual paths; to mentor them and encourage them at every step along the way.

After the students completed their activities in the Explorations class, Jake reached for his jacket, left the room, and then slowly walked down the corridor of NewSchool. About twenty meters down, he came to a familiar plaque on the wall, and once again stopped to read its content. "At NewSchool we look into each student's heart and soul being to help them determine their deepest aspirations and interests in life. Doing so, we guide them on a course of infinite discovery. As their hearts soar and their minds expand, they garner a great depth of knowledge, reminding us of our ultimate mission and goal: "Each child a Genius. Each child a Fulfilled Human Being."

Economics

Poverty

Overcoming Poverty Helps Fulfill Humanity's Evolutionary Purpose on Earth

If we look around the world we will see that poverty is driving all instability in society. Whether it is a near-slave laborer in China producing Western goods at a pittance salary, the 30% unemployment amongst young men in Baghdad and other parts of the Middle East, the fight over territory and resources in rural Africa, or the impoverished individuals stumbling out of the disaster of hurricane Katrina in America, poverty is the root cause of most anguish and insurrection -- including terrorism -- in the world.

Poverty should be attacked as a global problem more nefarious than even terrorism. The war of terrorism should be accompanied by a war on poverty. A rapid reaction force against the evil of terrorism needs to be accompanied by a global rapid reaction force against the scourge of global poverty. One without the other will prevent either from succeeding.

A plan to fight poverty involves the activation of thought, i.e. our mentality. It is easier to revert to physical brutality to step the symptom. It is easier to get anguished and rail against two sides in a conflict such as we observe in the war in Iraq. It is more difficult to be rational, exercise our minds, and come up with comprehensive plans for development that will end or at least substantially reduce poverty on earth. Without doing so, the physical and vital individuals and forces will gain sway, and will continue in their brutality and rage -- whether the unemployed poor, or the Western powers that seek to repulse their violent outrage.

To come together to develop plans of development that ends poverty requires the giving up of ego at all fronts. The national ego that is self-assured must be given up in order to cooperate with other nations. The self-righteousness of individuals who take sides must be abandoned to cooperate for this higher purpose and good.

Man is meant to move to ever-higher states of harmony. It is his evolutionary destiny. Poverty provides one such opportunity. Before WWII, the nations of the world were unconscious. They did not cooperate. In fact, the financial powers engaged in speculation that drove down the world's economy and gave rise to Nazism and fascism that caused over 60 million to die. Only after did Europe learn its bitter lessons of non-cooperation in the face of a rising menace, and the earlier greed of rampant financial speculation. That is a lesson for our own times. We must cooperate on development to overcome poverty to prevent the dark forces from rising and holding sway, whatever their source. It is the time to act.

The 20th century was the time of the rise of the Common Man, where the small individual gained vast rights and was able to rise to improve himself to a level that a prince or king would enjoy in earlier times. Now man must become the True Individual, even the True Spiritual Individual. One way he does this is by discovering his deep commonality with others. Even the recognition that we each share a soul relationship with one another. Harmony of purpose is one dimension in that rise from Common Man to the True, even the Spiritual Individual. The opportunity to overcome poverty has come to serve that very purpose. It comes to help us fulfill humanity's evolutionary destiny on earth.

Finance

Speculation and the Global Financial Meltdown

In the 1970s, the individual known as The Mother predicted the demise of both communism and capitalism. Through the experiences of certain visitors and her own view, she concluded that the Soviet system was failing internally. The Mother was intuitive in the extreme and vastly knowledgeable about world events, including the arc of human evolution. A decade or so later, the Soviet empire crumbled, as president Michael Gorbachev brought it down from within without any loss of life. It is perhaps the greatest development and miracle of history, as his rise to power enabled the world to avoid nuclear confrontation, and therefore the end of life on earth.

As I mentioned earlier, The Mother also anticipated the end of capitalism. She saw both systems as inherently flawed: that humanity was not fully served by either. In fact, she felt that society was subconsciously yearning for something more. And yet for years, capitalism has done relatively well, and might continue to do so. However, it is becoming increasingly clear that it can no longer continue in its current form, for its speculative nature is bringing it to its knees so that it can reexamine itself and evolve to a higher state.

At the core of the financial meltdown is speculation, which rests on the negative value and attitude of greed. Speculation is to try to devise and execute financial instruments without reference to the safety of investors or the individual such as homeowners who own the money in the first place. Risk is extreme, as self-serving instruments become paramount. In an economic environment of laissez-faire capitalism, the law of the jungle rules; deep human values are thrown to the wind. It is on that basis that The Mother suggested the end of capitalism. Because humanity is ever evolving, Nature demands external forms that can meet its higher aspirations. The Soviets tried to incorporate higher human values -- such as cooperation and justice -- but devised an artificial and faulty state system. Thought the foundation for the West was the freedom and capacity of the individual, it lacked in values that could serve cooperative and collaborative interests. Thus, they are two sides of a whole, each a part, and therefore ultimately

inefficient. Human evolution requires the integration of the best of these two domains, and something more.

When freedom becomes extreme, it reinforces ego. Thus. in the extreme of free markets, individuals act on their own behalf. Their self-serving interests and actions come back and destroy their supporters and themselves. The philosophy of unfettered individuality without higher values of cooperation and harmony destroys.

The US is the world leader, especially economically and militarily. Culturally and values wise, she is adolescent at best. Because she leads in these way, the world follows blindly, and so too is caught in the snag that America set for herself. World capital flowed into the faulty financial instruments created by US speculators, bringing down the world along with the originating force, America. The whole world participates in the meltdown as there is no organization to coordinate these activities, employ the necessary social values, and take right action when necessary. Unfettered capitalism has thus spread around the world, and other nations have followed the speculators blindly. It is the greed, ego, and darkness in the heart of man. As we see, it knows no bounds. Where it will lead is anybody's guess. One thing is certain however: human evolution which demands intensive change is on the march.

Money

Aligning with Money's Social Power

We know a variety of ways to bring money to us through sudden good fortune. Greater circulation (i.e. not hoarding it), paying off one's debts, collecting every penny owed, being generous, overcoming selfishness, focusing on another's needs, and being calm in the face of a difficult financial matter are but a few ways to attract money out of nowhere.

From another perspective, we attract money by developing a different orientation toward the meaning and purpose of Money itself. Money exists not for mere human consumption or to serve our separative, individual needs, but for wider social purpose -- including greater social development and progress in the world. At the point where we change our perspective about Money from being a mere means to an end or just a transaction of exchange at the physical level, to it serving a great social purpose and utility at the vital level, we move into harmony with its intent in the world. As a result, we open ourselves to it coming in floods from corresponding points in space and time.

Money is a social power. Its purpose is to serve the wider aspirations and values of the collective life. They in turn serve to fulfill the Higher Purpose of the Infinite consciousness on earth. Each time we tap into Money power through our higher consciousness efforts -- i.e. by making inner, psychological shifts toward the positive -- we become instruments for the Infinite and its purposes. By aligning with Money's Social Power, we not only draw more of it to us, but we fulfill the Divine intention for ever-greater social progress and evolution on earth.

Money Power that Comes through Trust and Detachment

People are beginning to understand that the journey is the reward. That can be interpreted in one sense is that the things you accomplish is all important, not the money. I.e. the money will follow if you focus intently on what needs to be done to lift up yourself, the world.

E.g., the more you innovate and catch the emerging waves of society, the more money will follow in the wake of your efforts. Silicon Valley companies like Apple and Google are examples. They just want to change the world through innovative, breakthrough products and service in the computer and Internet domains. As a result, money follows them in buckets! They are garnering infinite-like cash on hand without any long-term debt. It shows the emergence of self-multiplication power of money in society.

Money is a power of trust. The more trust, the more it circulates. The banking system is one example when they lend out money. One extension of this trust power is the availability of micro credits to poor women in Asia. Money's ultimate power comes through ultimate trust. When we connect to the deepest realms within, and thereby move away from ego and separateness, we enable the greatest trust. I.e., we have the trust of the divine in action. In between, many stages and manifestation of trust will appear in society. Those who tap into that will prosper beyond their wildest dreams.

Money comes to those not attached to it. Man is mostly a slave to it. It is mostly in the hands of dark forces, but that is changing. We can overcome the situation by changing our consciousness, including our relation to and view of money.

Money is a vast social power that the world misses. If we align ourselves with that emerging social power, we align with the infinite money potential.

Changing the Values of Money Lending Institutions from Within

"The financial institutions give money to the already well off, but they ignore the ordinary people and the poor who cannot get funding for autos, shelter, etc. What can be done?"

There are vast social forces that have been at work in the world over time. In his book 'Spiritual Opulence, Karmayogi calls these the "World Energies." As a result of the currents of history, certain countries have prospered, while others have remained behind. The institutions of those poor nations, including the banks, reflect the paucity of the social milieu they are part of. They have limited funds and therefore have little to lend.

In addition, banks have consciously or not subscribed to certain social values which equally determine their lending propensities. We see that particularly when it comes to the value of "trust." Banks tend to lend to those who already are in relatively good condition, and avoid those they believe cannot repay; i.e. whom they do not trust to refund their loans. In this way, the negative conditions of haves and have nots is perpetuated.

And yet, we as Individuals are also capable of shaping our world. There is an infinite Power hidden within us that can have a powerful bearing on the conditions of our lives; particularly our immediate circle. However, we are also Universal beings who are also capable of eliciting positive response for the collective, including the organizations and institutions we are part of or partake in. Through inner spiritual means, we can attract positive conditions for the world, including the lending propensities of banks. If we open to and add the spiritual Force to the dynamic, we can evoke startling positive outcomes from those or related institutions. IT CAN BE DONE. We can change the world around us, including the conditions of the widest collective of individuals, including region and country, from within.

Here are a few strategies to change the current impossibilities of the collective into living realities; e.g. changing a callous lender to an open, trusting one, who is truly committed to those without, including the poor and the common man.

The first is to see the outer limitation of the lender in a corresponding limitation in ourselves. For example, if I discover that I am not a particularly trusting person, and change that attitude, it can evoke positive conditions not only for one's self, but it can vibrate out and alter the lending values of the financial institutions around us. By changing our attitude within, we evoke a corresponding response by the once reluctant, untrusting, fearful lender. If we also add the spiritual Force to the dynamic the results can be overwhelming. I have seen it a number of times in my life.

Another strategy is to actually seek employment in the institution itself, while bringing the spiritual Force to bear in those activities. For example, I find employment in a lending institution, rising as manager in the firm, while aspiring for the organization to change its lending practices. As a result, life outside us will begin to move. The local institution may change; even the whole organization may suddenly see a shift in attitude and values. It may then spread throughout the nations and the world.

A third strategy is to become fully familiar with the money lending habits of the institutions. I.e. to know in detail the issues involved, the problems raised, the potential solutions, which formulate in one's mind as an integral knowledge regarding the situation. If that matter is offered to the Spirit for transmutation, and our aspiration for that change is intense, Life will yield. The intractable problem will suddenly resolve itself. It will appear to occur out of the blue, and in the most unexpected ways. I have seen this dynamic at work first hand; evoking several spectacular results from the collective that affected millions.

Keep in mind that banks and similar institutions are also going through their own evolutionary changes. They are gradually raising their social values and beliefs; and in this particular case, are extending their trust even to those they were once wary of. Micro loans to the poor are an example. Loans to Indian woman are another. When the US and world financial system nearly collapsed due to excessive lending, it was ironically due to the fact that banks were now willing to lend money to poor people to buy houses in the suburbs in America. It was A SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER VALUE on the part of the banks. It only led to disaster because of greed and non-regulation of the parties involved across the world financial system. The original value and intent itself however was highly laudable.

There are thus many levels of force at work in the movement of the Energies of Life -- individual, collective, cosmic. We can use our inner power as well as that of the Cosmic realms to change conditions for ourselves and the collectives we are part of. There are many real-world examples I know of where this has occurred. Others might consider it miraculous, but we know it is a practical power of the Individual Self and the Spirit.

Recently associates of mine have been working hard to develop a New Economics with the Individual Human at the center of life. They have developed much content, and are traveling the world to make this knowledge known at various global forums. Several of them are using the spiritual Force to try to gain perfect knowledge in the field, as well as move life to adopt their profound insights. Already there are signs that it is having an effect. Perhaps the recent upheaval in the Middle East toward democratization and economic opportunity for the common man is a result.

We are capable of moving life around us from within, including any collective, such as a financial institution, so long as we develop the intense will to make it happen. This astonishing capacity will become a practical method of the future; an indication that we have truly embarked on A New Way of Living.

Strategies to Instantly Attract Money into Your Life

Money is a force. It is a concentrated symbol of energy and power in life. Like all forces in the universe, money obeys certain universal laws or principles. By understanding those laws and acting appropriately, we gain a great power over money, enabling wealth and prosperity to come our way.

Most of us are aware of the importance of hard work, determination, and drive to attract money. However, there are also other, more hidden and subtle ways to attract money, wealth, and prosperity. When followed, these methods have a tendency to *instantly* attract money from seemingly out of nowhere, defying our normal notions of cause and effect, and what is logical and possible. Such sudden and abundant results are indications of the wondrous phenomenon of "life response" at work.

Attention

It is a basic law of life that everything -- whether it is a physical object or a human being -- responds to greater attention. Money is no exception. The best way to give attention to money is to account for it accurately and in a timely manner. Keeping precise and up-to-date accounts of money is a powerful mechanism for suddenly attracting more of it.

-One small business owner balanced eight months of back bank statements in a weekend, and received \$5000 from nowhere the next day.

-An individual noticed that an idle machine had become run-down, so he decided to clean and fix it. Within a few days, a new work project suddenly sprung up where this very machine was required. The project, using that machine, became a huge new source of income for the business.

Circulation

Like any force, money needs to move freely in order to sustain itself. Holding back on paying, or otherwise hoarding money, prevents the free flow of energy, and thus the free flow of money. For example, we have seen a number of instances where individuals were unwilling to pay the bills they owed until they first received payments of money due to them. Reversing such an attitude can bring a sudden abundant positive response from life.

A programmer, who had little cash on hand, was unwilling to write out checks for current bills due until he received money owed him from his clients. He had been waiting for a number of days for this payment to come in. He then reversed his attitude, and went ahead and wrote out the checks for the money he owed anyway. When he went to pick up his mail ten minutes later, he was surprised to discover the check he had yearned for in his mailbox.

We have also seen instances where individuals were unwilling to spend their current funds for important necessities. Even when they had plenty of cash on hand, they hoarded it, often because of some unfounded fear. When they reversed themselves, life responded in extraordinary ways.

-A web site owner was hesitant to upgrade to a better web site because of the added expense, even though he had the required funds. The web host provider had suggested the better site a number of times in the past. When the web site owner finally overcame his reluctance to spend, he discovered to his surprise that the web host provider had suddenly, the day before begun offering this better, higher-priced site, at a cost virtually the same as his current site!

-There was a man who was hesitant to spend money on a deserving friend. When he changed his position and did so, he saw that money came back to him in the exact amount he had spent on his friend!

If you give up such attitudes and let money circulate, energy will flow, and life will reward you with good fortune, including the constant flow of money in your direction. This is proof of the subtle principle of "inner-outer correspondence"; i.e. life reflects on the outside your psychological condition inside within yourself. If you make your feelings or attitudes more positive, such as overcoming an unwillingness to pay a bill or the hoarding of money, life on the outside will respond positively to you in kind.

Long-term Debt Owed

Very often, those who suffer from money problems have borrowed in the past and have forgotten to repay, even when they had the opportunity to do so.

One individual owed a friend money for over twenty years. An instance after he committed to paying off the old debt, he received news that he had been offered a better place to live, after having lived in the same cramped apartment for over twenty years! In addition, he experienced a sudden surge in his workload, which included higher-paying type work.

We see from this example how *very important* it is that you pay off old outstanding debts. Not doing so may very well prevent you from ever moving beyond your current situation.

Sums Owed to You

It is also important to collect all money owed to you, including the minutest of sums. If you do so, money will suddenly come to you from all directions.

-An individual understood that one should not neglect collecting even the smallest amount owed to one. He then decided to practice it CONSCIOUSLY, and see for himself what would happen. So he collected even the smallest amounts due to him from others (such as 10 cents and 20 cents!). After he successfully collected on these, in the following few days he received Rs.300,000 (\$7,500) for various receipts coming from unexpected sources.

-An individual had exhausted his bank account. He was in desperate straits. He remembered that if you collect every penny still due to you, money can come. He then contacted the sole debt he had on his books, which went back nearly six years! He contacted that person to secure the payment. The next morning he received a most unexpected purchase and payment from another source that instantly resolved his quandary.

Taking Care of Neglected Duties

There are circumstances where money will not come your way until you take care of neglected areas of your life. Once you give those areas the attention they deserve, money or other good fortune can instantaneously come your way.

A payment for new services rendered was anticipated by a software company, but was delayed for various technical reasons. The individual in charge remembered that several older clients had still not sent their payment. He had neglected to stay on top of that matter. Now with the current situation of the new potential client, he felt there was a correlation between the receivables he neglected to keep up on and the new payment that was having technical problems coming in. Thus, he immediately contacted both of

the older clients that owed receivables to find out their latest status. Instantly, thereafter (literally within seconds of hanging up on the phone with the older clients) the money for the new client properly cleared and came in.

Forget Money Issues; Focus on the Work at Hand

Though we attract money when we give it more attention, especially when it is being neglected, there are situations where we can give so much attention to money that we worsen the situation, causing life to keep it at bay.

One man was having trouble collecting money from a client. He was unable to get a clear direction on when he would get paid. Though he sent another note to the client about the money situation, this time he decided to remove all thought about the issue; not letting his emotions control his day. In fact, he dove into his work; even taking care of things he'd neglected. When he checked his email, he had all but forgotten the money owed. Yet, there was a message in his Inbox from the client telling him that the money was now on the way.

Just as focusing on an illness can increase it, so there are times where our emotions are so focused on it, that we cause the problem to be exacerbated, such as it further getting delayed or otherwise preventing its arrival. If our emotions are too caught up in obtaining money, it is often best to withdraw all such feelings and get with our duties.

Cleanliness, Orderliness

Perhaps the simplest and most dramatic way to attract money is to raise your level of physical cleanliness at home or at work. Many individuals and businesses have followed this practice, and seen money suddenly rush in from all sides, often from the most unlikely sources!

-An instructor had not been contacted for new work for weeks, and was in desperate straits. He decided to apply the principle of higher cleanliness. His apartment was normally clean, but he wanted to take cleanliness a step further. So he decided to clean his refrigerator; something he was ordinarily reluctant to do. At the exact moment he finished putting the foodstuffs back into the refrigerator after the cleaning, he heard a message on his answering machine from his training company offering him *abundant* new work. The response from life was instantaneous to the completion of the cleaning!

-A consultant suggested that before he made any business recommendations to his client that they immediately clean up their showroom and backyard area. Time passed. The next time the consultant visited the company, he learned that there had been an unexpected sudden surge in new orders. This came just after the company implemented the consultant's advice about cleanliness.

We recommend that anyone looking to attract more money take up this strategy *immediately*. There is no faster way to attract positive good fortune -- including fresh new sources of money -- than by raising the level of cleanliness and orderliness.

Wasting, Squandering Funds

One of the best strategies for keeping a sure flow of funds is to avoid wasting money. Those who squander away funds or pay exorbitant amounts for things that can be purchased more cheaply will repel the arrival of more funds. However, if you discover what it is that you waste your money on, and overcome that habit life is likely to quickly respond with instances of good fortune.

Other Books by Roy Posner

The Miraculous Phenomenon of Life Response

A Life Response Reader

An Analysis of Sri Aurobindo's The Life Divine

Inspirations

Essentials