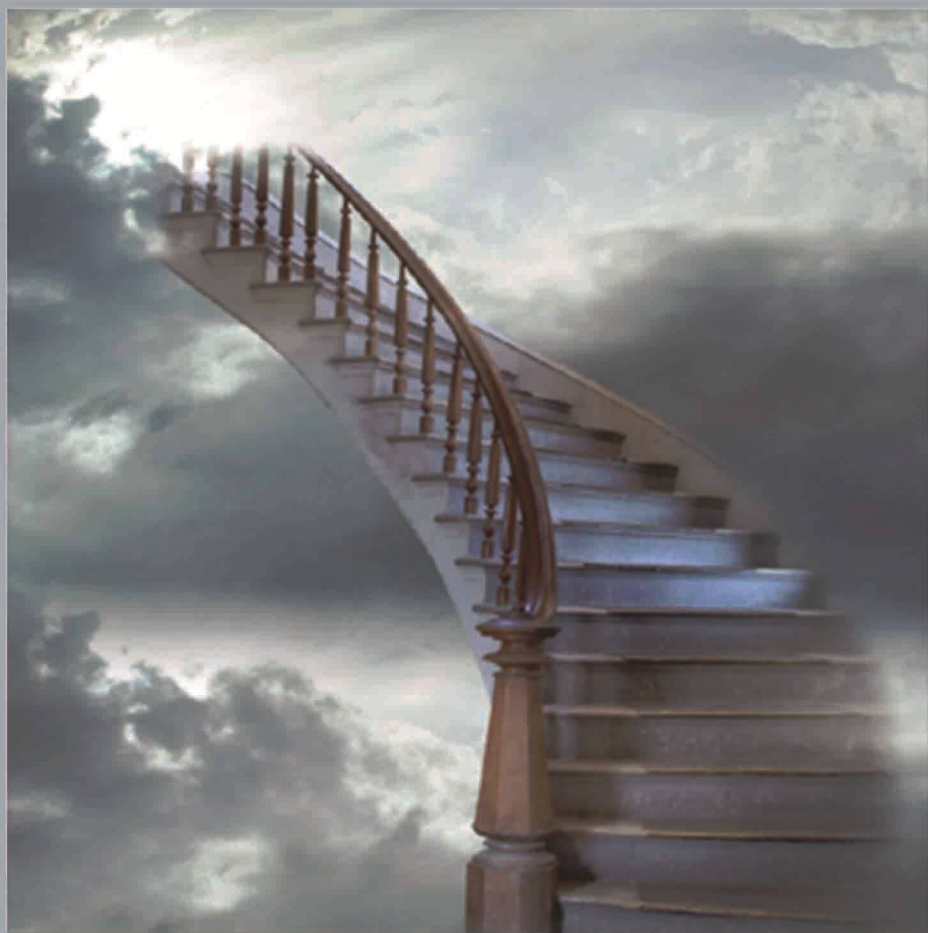


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**Life After Death**

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# Life After Death

*Matter shall reveal the Spirit's face. — Sri Aurobindo*

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*Editorial: Life beyond Death has fascinated human beings since man began to ponder over the deeper mysteries of existence. Yet who can answer this question except one who has either returned from the land of the Dead in the same body or else who has, like the rare yogi and mystic, experienced Death while living. We are extremely fortunate and privileged to have the priceless gifts of the vision and wisdom of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on this as on many other subjects. For Them these mysteries were neither a subject for speculation and philosophical discussion nor of religious belief. Endowed with the Supramental Consciousness They had 'seen' the truths and the Truth that lies hidden behind the various phenomenon of creation. We dedicate this issue to a deeper understanding of one such mystery of life that exists beyond the deep slumber of Death.*



*I claim for men the peace that shall not fail,  
I claim for earth the unwounded timeless bliss,  
I seek God-strength for souls that suffer in hell,  
God-light to fill the ignorant abyss.*

CWSA 2: 674

*Sri Aurobindo*

## The Inner Reason and True Significance of Death

*It was the conditions of matter upon earth that made death indispensable. The whole sense of the evolution of matter has been a growth from a first state of unconsciousness to an increasing consciousness. And in this process of growth dissolution of forms became an inevitable necessity, as things actually took place. For a fixed form was needed in order that the organised individual consciousness might have a stable support. And yet it is the fixity of the form that made death inevitable. Matter had to assume forms; individualisation and the concrete embodiment of life-forces or consciousness-forces were impossible without it and without these there would have been lacking the first conditions of organised existence on the plane of matter. But a definite and concrete formation contracts the tendency to become at once rigid and hard and petrified. The individual form persisted as a too binding mould; it cannot follow the movements of the forces; it cannot change in harmony with the progressive change in the universal dynamism; it cannot meet continually Nature's demand or keep pace with her; it gets out of the current. At a certain point of this growing disparity and disharmony between the form and the force that presses upon it, a complete dissolution of the form is unavoidable. A new form must be created; a new harmony and parity made possible. This is the true significance of death and this is its use in Nature. But if the form can become more quick and pliant and the cells of the body can be awakened to change with the changing consciousness, there would be no need of a drastic dissolution, death would be no longer inevitable.*

CWM 3: 37

**The Mother**

## **Moment of Death**

### **Right attitude towards death**

Whatever the circumstance, if your mind is accustomed to look at it as something favourable, it will no longer be unpleasant for you. This is quite well known; as long as the mind refuses to accept a thing, struggles against it, tries to obstruct it, there are torments, difficulties, storms, inner struggles and all suffering. But the minute the mind says, "Good, this is what has to come, it is thus that it must happen", whatever happens, you are content. There are people who have acquired such control of their mind over their body that they feel nothing; I told you this the other day about certain mystics: if they think the suffering inflicted upon them is going to help them cross the stages in a moment and give them a sort of stepping-stone to attain the Realisation, the goal they have put before them, union with the Divine, they no longer feel the suffering at all. Their body is as it were galvanised by the mental conception. This has happened very often, it is a very common experience among those who truly have enthusiasm. And after all, if one must for some reason or other leave one's body and take a new one, is it not better to make of one's death something magnificent, joyful, enthusiastic, than to make it a disgusting defeat? Those who cling on, who try by every possible means to delay the end even by a minute or two, who give you an example of frightful anguish, show that they are not conscious of their soul....

*CWM 4: 354*

### **Death is only a means**

After all, it is perhaps a means, isn't it? One can change this accident into a means; if one is conscious one can make a

beautiful thing of it, a very beautiful thing, as of everything. And note, those who do not fear it, who are not anxious, who can die without any sordidness are those who never think about it, who are not haunted all the time by this "horror" facing them which they must escape and which they try to push as far away from them as they can. These, when the occasion comes, can lift their head, smile and say, "Here I am."

It is they who have the will to make the best possible use of their life, it is they who say, "I shall remain here as long as it is necessary, to the last second, and I shall not lose one moment to realise my goal"; these, when the necessity comes, put up the best show. Why? — It is very simple, because they live in their ideal, the truth of their ideal; because that is the real thing for them, the very reason of their being, and in all things they can see this ideal, this reason of existence, and never do they come down into the sordidness of material life.

So, the conclusion:

One must never wish for death.

One must never will to die.

One must never be afraid to die.

And in all circumstances one must will to exceed oneself.

CWM 4: 354

## **Fear of death**

When one has to die one dies, and when one has not to die, one does not die. Even when you are in mortal danger, if it is not your hour to die, you will not die, and even if you are out of all danger, just a scratch on your foot will be enough to make you die, for there are people who have died of a pin-scratch on the foot — because the time had come.

Therefore, fear has no sense. What you can do is to rise to a state of consciousness where you can say, "It is like that, we accept the fact because it seems to be recognised as an inevitable fact. But I do not need to worry, for it will come only when it must come. So I don't need to feel afraid: when it is not to come, it will not come to me, but when it must come to me, it will come. And as it will come to me inevitably, it is better I do not fear the thing; on the contrary, one must accept what is perfectly natural." This is a well-known remedy, that is to say, very much in use.

There is another, a little more difficult, but better, I believe. It lies in telling oneself: "This body is not I", and in trying to find in oneself the part which is truly one's self, until one has found one's psychic being. And when one has found one's psychic being — immediately, you understand — one has the sense of immortality. And one knows that what goes out or what comes in is just a matter of convenience: "I am not going to weep over a pair of shoes I put aside when it is full of holes! When my pair of shoes is worn out I cast it aside, and I do not weep." Well, the psychic being has taken this body because it needed to use it for its work, but when the time comes to leave the body, that is to say, when one must leave it because it is no longer of any use for some reason or other, one leaves the body and has no fear. It is quite a natural gesture — and it is done without the least regret, that's all.

And the moment you are in your psychic being, you have that feeling, spontaneously, effortlessly. You soar above the physical life and have the sense of immortality. As for me, I consider this the best remedy. ...

Now, a third thing also one must know, but for this one has to be a mighty yogi. For this means knowing that death is not an inevitable thing, it is an accident which has been



occurring till now (which seems in any case to have always occurred till now), and that we have put it into our head and our will to conquer this accident and overcome it. But it is so terrible, so formidable a battle against all the laws of Nature, against all collective suggestions, all earthly habits, that unless, as I have said, you are a first-rate warrior whom nothing frightens, it is better not to begin the battle. You must be an absolutely intrepid hero, for at every step, at every second you have to fight a battle against all established things. So it is not a very easy thing.

CWM 5: 315-16

### **One dies only if one consents to die**

*You have said: "One can neither hasten nor delay its hour." But death comes if one stops progressing. So, if one progresses, one can put off the hour. Or does this mean that from one's birth the day and the moment of death are predestined?*

No. This is altogether something else and on another plane. I have written elsewhere that one dies only when one consents to die — which seems to contradict what I have said here. But this is the truth. I have told you this once already, I believe; in any case, I have written it somewhere. There are two points of view. Here I have taken quite an ordinary, material point of view, that of the physical consciousness. But I have explained somewhere that there are, as it were, different "layers of determinisms" in our being. The physical existence has a determinism; the vital existence has a determinism; the mental existence has a determinism; the higher mental, the psychic have a determinism. And then the higher existences have determinisms — the supramental existence has a determinism. And the determinism of everyone comes from the combination of all these determinisms

(I am sure I have written this somewhere). If, for instance, at a given moment, when the entire physical determinism must necessarily bring death, you suddenly enter into contact with an extremely high determinism, like the supramental one, for example, and you succeed in joining the two, you change your physical determinism completely at that moment: death which had been determined by the physical determinism is abolished, and the conditions change and are pushed back. ...

If you do not make a higher determinism intervene, truly you can change nothing. That is the only way of changing your physical determinism. If you remain in your physical consciousness and want to change your determinism, you cannot...

CWM 6: 47-49

### **Consciously organizing the different parts around the soul**

*Sometimes when people are dying, they know that they are about to die. Why don't they tell the spirit to go away?*

Ah! well, that depends upon the people. Two things are necessary. First of all, nothing in your being, no part of your being should want to die. That does not happen often. You have always a defeatist in you somewhere: something that is tired, something that is disgusted, something that has had enough of it, something that is lazy, something that does not want to struggle and says: "Well! Ah! Let it be finished, so much the better." That is sufficient, you are dead.

But it is a fact: if nothing, absolutely nothing in you consents to die, you will not die. For someone to die, there is always a second, perhaps the hundredth part of a second when he gives his consent. If there is not this second of consent, he does not die.

I knew people who should have really died according to all physical and vital laws; and they refused. They said: "No, I will not die", and they lived. There are others who do not need at all to die, but they are of that kind and say: "Ah! Well! Yes, so much the better, it will be finished", and it is finished. Even that much, even nothing more than that: you need not have a persistent wish, you have only to say: "Well, yes, I have had enough!" and it is finished. So it is truly like that. As you say, you may have death standing by your bedside and tell him: "I do not want you, go away", and it will be obliged to go away. But usually one gives way, for one must struggle, one must be strong, one must be very courageous and enduring, must have a great faith in the importance of life; like someone, for example, who feels very strongly that he has still something to do and he must absolutely do it. But who is sure he has not within him the least bit of a defeatist, somewhere, who just yields and says: "It is all right"?... It is here, the necessity of unifying oneself.

Whatever the way we follow, the subject we study, we always arrive at the same result. The most important thing for an individual is to unify himself around his divine centre; in that way he becomes a true individual, master of himself and his destiny. Otherwise, he is a plaything of forces that toss him about like a piece of cork on a river. He goes where he does not want to go, he is made to do things he does not want to do, and finally he falls into a hole without having the strength to hold on. But if you are consciously organised, unified around the divine centre, ruled and directed by it, you are master of your destiny. That is worth the trouble of attempting....

CWM 5: 137-38

## **A dark and dangerous exit**

*Why does one suffer when one commits suicide?*

Why does one commit suicide? Because one is a coward....  
When one is cowardly one always suffers.

*In the next life one suffers again?*

The psychic being comes with a definite purpose to go through a set of experiences and to learn and make progress. Then if you leave before its work is finished it will have to come back to do it again under much more difficult conditions. So all that you have avoided in one life you will find again in another, and more difficult. And even without leaving in this way, if you have difficulties to overcome in life, you have what we usually call a test to pass, you see; well, if you don't pass it or turn your back upon it, if you go away instead of passing it, you will have to pass it another time and it will be much more difficult than before.

Now people, you know, are extremely ignorant and they think that it is like this: there is life, and then death; life is a bunch of troubles, and then death is an eternal peace. But it is not at all like that. And usually when one goes out of life in an altogether arbitrary way and in an ignorant and obscure passion, one goes straight into a vital world made of all these passions and all this ignorance. So the troubles one wanted to avoid one finds again without even having the protection which the body gives, for — if you have ever had a nightmare, that is, a rash excursion in the vital world, well, your remedy is to wake yourself up, that is to say, to rush back immediately into your body. But when you have destroyed your body you no longer have a body to protect you. So you find yourself in a perpetual nightmare, which is not very pleasant. For, to avoid the nightmare you must be

in a psychic consciousness, and when you are in a psychic consciousness you may be quite sure that things won't trouble you. It is indeed the movement of an ignorant darkness and, as I said, a great cowardice in front of the sustained effort to be made.

CWM 7: 23-24

**The Mother**

### **Constant Remembrance and the Moment of Departure**

What the thought, the inner regard, the faith, *śraddhā*, settles itself upon with a complete and definite insistence, into that our inner being tends to change. This tendency becomes a decisive force when we go to those higher spiritual and self-evolved experiences which are less dependent on external things than is our ordinary psychology, enslaved as that is to outward Nature. There we can see ourselves steadily becoming that on which we keep our minds fixed and to which we constantly aspire. Therefore there any lapse of the thought, any infidelity of the memory means always a retardation of the change or some fall in its process and a going back towards what we were before, — at least so long as we have not substantially and irrevocably fixed our new becoming. When we have done that, when we have made it normal to our experience, the memory of it remains self-existent because that now is the natural form of our consciousness. In the critical moment of passing from the mortal plane of living, the importance of our then state of consciousness becomes evident. But it is not a deathbed remembrance at variance with or insufficiently prepared by the whole tenor of our life and our past subjectivity that can have this saving power. The thought of the Gita here is not on a par with the indulgences and facilities of popular religion; it has nothing in common with the crude fancies that make the absolution and last unction of the priest, an edifying

“Christian” death after an unedifying profane life or the precaution or accident of a death in sacred Benares or holy Ganges a sufficient machinery of salvation. The divine subjective becoming on which the mind has to be fixed firmly in the moment of the physical death, *yaṁ smaran bhāvaṁ tyajati ante kalevaram*, must have been one into which the soul was at each moment growing inwardly during the physical life, *sadātad-bhāva-bhāvitaḥ*. “Therefore,” says the divine Teacher, “at all times remember me and fight; for if thy mind and thy understanding are always fixed on and given up to Me, *mayi arpita-mano-buddhiḥ*, to Me thou shalt surely come. For it is by thinking always of him with a consciousness united with him in an undeviating Yoga of constant practice that one comes to the divine and supreme Purusha.”

CWSA 19: 295-296

**Sri Aurobindo**

*For mystics the best cure as soon as one begins to feel afraid of something is to think of the Divine and then snuggle in his arms or at his feet and leave him entirely responsible for everything that happens, within, outside, everywhere — and immediately the fear disappears. That is the cure for the mystic. It is the easiest of all. But everybody does not enjoy the grace of being a mystic.*

CWM 5: 318

**The Mother**

### **Repeating the Mother's Name while in coma**

K left his body. The operation had been extraordinarily, almost miraculously successful — one of those dreadful operations where they extract part of your body. He was quite all right for four days afterwards, then everything went wrong.

During the operation and just afterwards, I had simply put the Force on him, as I always do in such cases, so that everything would turn out for the best. Then a few days ago, during my japa, a kind of order came — a very clear order — to concentrate on him so that he would be conscious of his soul and able to leave under the best conditions. And I saw that the concentration worked wonderfully: it seems that during his last days he was ceaselessly repeating Ma—Ma—Ma — even while he was in a semi-coma.

And the concentration grew stronger and stronger. The day before yesterday it became very, very powerful, and yesterday morning, around half past noon, it pulled me inward; he came to me in a kind of sleep, a conscious sleep, and I even said almost aloud, 'Oh, K!'

It lasted fifteen minutes; I was completely within, inside, as if to receive him.

*The Mother: Conversations with a disciple: May 28, 1960*



*When I asked Him (December 8, 1950) to resuscitate his body, He clearly answered: "I have left this body purposely. I will not take it back. I shall manifest again in the first supramental body built in the supramental way."*

CWM 13:9

*The Mother*

\*

*Shall I accept death or shall I turn and wrestle with him and conquer? That shall be as God in me chooses. For whether I live or die, I am always.*

CWSA 12: 472-73

*Sri Aurobindo*



## Transition from Life to After-life

### The living and the dead

Man has made a terrible tragedy out of death. These last few days, I have seen this, because last night or the night before I spent at least two hours in a world which is subtle physical, where the living and the dead intermingle without feeling any difference — it doesn't make any difference. There, there is no difference. The living were there — those whom we call the "living" and those whom we call the "dead". They were there together, they ate together, they moved together, they played together; and all this was in a pretty light, quiet and very pleasant, it was very pleasant. I said to myself, "There, men have made a break, like this, and then they say, 'Now, dead.' " And "dead" — the best part of it is that they treat them as they would treat something unconscious — yet the body is still conscious.

CWM 10: 147

### The attitude of the living towards the dead

There was another case of a man who had been brought to the cremation ground, but a torrential rain started — no question of burning him. They left him there and said, "We'll burn him tomorrow." But the next morning when they came, he wasn't there any more! (*Laughing*) He was gone. But that's not all: thirty years later, he returned (he was a Raja): he had been picked up by sannyasins, taken into solitude, and had become a sannyasin, until, thirty years later, for God knows what reason, he thought it best to go and claim his possessions, so he returned with proofs that he was indeed the same man....

I have heard countless stories of that kind, which show the point to which men ... They want to get rid of the dead,

don't they! And the faster the better. ...

The attitude of the living towards the dead is one of the most loathsome expressions of mankind's selfish ignorance.

It's either a complete I-couldn't-care-less attitude, or else, "Ohh, anything to get rid of that!" I have some children here (they're no longer children), who live here with their fathers and mothers (who aren't very old), and some of those children told me "dreams" in which they saw their fathers or mothers dead and coming to them ... and they sent them back violently, saying, "You're dead, you've got no right to come and bother us"! ...

You're dead, you've got no right to come and bother us. There you are.

That's ... few will be frank enough to say so, but it's very widespread.

Many things must change before a little bit of truth can manifest — that's all I can say.

*The Mother: Conversations with a disciple, August 10, 1963*

### **Do not be in a hurry to cremate**

When they're in too much of a hurry to burn them, sometimes they burn them alive! ... They should wait.

For there's a consciousness of the form, a life of the form. There's a consciousness, a consciousness in the form assumed by the cells. That takes seven days to come out. So sometimes the body makes abrupt movements when burned — people say it's mechanical. It's not mechanical, I know it's not.

I know it. I know that this consciousness of the form exists since I have actually gone out of it. Once, long back, I was in a so-called cataleptic state, and after awhile, while still in this state, the body began living again'; that is, it was capable of speaking and even moving (it was Theon who

gave me this training). The body managed to get up and move. And yet, everything had gone out of it!

Once everything had gone out, it naturally became cold, but the body consciousness manages to draw a little energy from the air, from this or that ... And I spoke in that state. I spoke — I spoke very well, and besides, I recounted all I was seeing elsewhere.

So I don't like this habit of burning people very much.

I think they do it here (apart from entirely sanitary considerations in the case of people who have died from nasty diseases), here in India, mainly because they are very afraid of all these little entities that come from desires, impulses — things which are dispersed in the air and which make 'ghosts' and all kinds of things. All desires, all attachments, all those things are like pieces that break off (each one goes its own way, you see), then these pieces gain strength in the surrounding atmosphere, and when they can fasten on to someone, they vampirize him. Then they keep on trying to satisfy their desires.

The world, the terrestrial atmosphere, is full of filth.

And people here are much more sensitive than in Europe because they are much more interiorized, so they are conscious of all these little entities, and naturally they're afraid. And the more afraid they are, the more they're vampirized!

I think that many of these entities are dispersed by fire — that creates havoc.

*The Mother: Conversations with a disciple: May 28, 1960*

To tell the truth, people burn the dead in that way to destroy the vital, I am sure of it. The idea is not to have any *ghosts*.

*The Mother: Conversations with a disciple, July 27, 1963*

## **Treat the dead with respect and care**

Human beings have made an appalling tragedy out of death. And I saw, with all these recent experiences, I saw how many, many poor human beings have been destroyed by the very people they loved the most! Under the pretext that they were dead.

People give them a very bad time.

*Destroyed?*

Yes, burned. Or shut up in a box without air and light — while fully conscious. And just because they can no longer express themselves, people say they are "dead." They don't waste any time declaring them dead! But they are conscious. They are conscious. Imagine someone who can no longer speak or move — according to human laws, he is "dead." He is dead but he is conscious. He is conscious, so he sees the people around him: some of them are weeping, some of them are ... if he's a bit clairvoyant, he also sees that some of them are rejoicing. And then he sees himself put into a box, sees the lid nailed down, shutting him in: "Ah, now it's all over, they're going to cover me with earth!" Or he's taken over there [to the cremation ground], and then it's fire in the mouth — fully conscious.

I have lived this in recent days. I have seen it. Last night or the night before, I spent at least two hours in a world — the subtle physical world — where the living mingle with the dead with no sense of difference, it makes absolutely no difference there. For instance, when M was in her body I used to see her at night maybe once a year (maybe not even that much). For years she was utterly nonexistent in my consciousness ... but since she left her body, I see her almost every night! There she is, just as she was, you know

(*rotund gesture*), but no longer troubled, that's all. No longer troubled. And there were both living and ... what we call the "living" and the "dead" — they were both there together, eating together, moving around together, having fun together; and all in a lovely, tranquil light — pleasant, very pleasant. "There! " I thought, "and humans have drawn a sharp line, saying, 'Now he's dead!'" Dead! And what really takes the cake is the way they treat the body like an unconscious object, and it's still conscious!

It's treated like an object: "Now then! Let's get rid of this just as quickly as we can: it's a nuisance and it gets in the way." And even those who feel the most sorrow don't want to see it; it's too painful for them.

*The Mother: Conversations with a disciple, October 12, 1962*

## **Helping the departed**

*If at the time of death the vital being is attacked in the vital world by hostile forces or entities, does it not look for a shelter somewhere?*

Yes, it is for this reason that in all countries and in all religions, it is recommended that for a period of at least seven days after someone's death, people should gather and think of him. Because when you think of him with affection (without any inner disorder, without weeping, without any of those distraught passions), if you can be calm, your atmosphere becomes a kind of beacon for him, and when he is attacked by hostile forces (I am speaking of the vital being of course, not the psychic being which goes to take rest), he may feel altogether lost, not know what to do and find himself in great distress; then he sees through affinity the light of those who are thinking of him with affection and he rushes there. It happens almost constantly that a vital formation, a part

of the vital being of the dead person (or at times the whole vital if it is well organised) takes shelter in the aura, the atmosphere of the people or the person who loved him. There are people who always carry with them a part of the vital of the person who is gone. That is the real utility of these so-called ceremonies, which otherwise have no sense.

It is preferable to do this without ceremonies. Ceremonies are, if anything, rather harmful, for a very simple reason: When you are busy with a ceremony, you think more about that than about the person. When you are busy with gestures, movements, with the following of a ritual, you think much more of all that than of the person who is dead.

CWM 4: 204-05

**The Mother**

There is after death a period in which one passes through the vital world and lives there for a time. It is only the first part of this transit that can be dangerous or painful; in the rest one works out, under certain surroundings, a remnant of the vital desires and instincts which one had in the body. As soon as one is tired of these and able to go beyond, the vital sheath is dropped and the soul, after a little time needed to get rid of some mental survivals, passes into a state of rest in the psychic world and remains there till the next life on earth.

One can help the departed soul by one's good will or by occult means if one has the knowledge. The one thing that one should not do is to hold them back by sorrow for them or longings or anything else that would pull them nearer to earth or delay their journey to their place of rest.

CWSA 28: 530

**Sri Aurobindo**

## **Death is not a cessation of the personal existence**

Of course, that is the real fact — death is only a shedding of the body, not a cessation of the personal existence. A man is not dead because he goes into another country and changes his clothes to suit that climate.

\*

What has happened must now be accepted calmly as the thing decreed and best for his soul's progress from life to life though not the best in human eyes which look only at the present and at outside appearance. For the spiritual seeker death is only a passage from one form of life to another, and none is dead but only departed. Look at it as that and shaking from you all reactions of vital grief — they cannot help him in his journey, — pursue steadfastly the path to the Divine.

CWSA 28: 529

**Sri Aurobindo**

Poets make much of death and external afflictions; but the only tragedies are the soul's failures and the only epic man's triumphant ascent towards godhead.

\*

Who shall slay thee, O soul immortal? Who shall torture thee, O God ever-joyous?

CWSA 12: 453, 461

**Sri Aurobindo**

*I can understand the shock your wife's catastrophic death must have been to you. But you are now a seeker and sadhak of the Truth and must set your mind above the normal reactions of the human being and see things in a larger greater light. Regard your lost wife as a soul that was progressing through the vicissitudes of the life of Ignorance — like all others here — in that progress things happen that seem unfortunate to the human mind and a sudden accidental or violent death cutting short prematurely this always brief spell of terrestrial experience we call life seems to it especially painful and unfortunate. But one who gets behind the outward view knows that all that happens in the progress of the soul has its meaning, its necessity, its place in the series of experiences which are leading it towards the turning point where one can pass from the Ignorance to the Light. He knows that whatever happens in the Divine Providence is for the best even though it may seem to the mind otherwise. Look on your wife as a soul that has passed the barrier between two states of existence. Help her journey towards her place of rest by calm thoughts and the call to the Divine Help to aid her upon it. Grief too long continued does not help but delays the journey of the departed soul. Do not brood on your loss, but think only of her spiritual welfare.*

CWSA 28: 528

**Sri Aurobindo**



## What Happens After Death

### **The body is your fortress and shelter**

The human being is at home and safe in the material body; the body is his protection. There are some who are full of contempt for their bodies and think that things will be much better and easier after death without them. But in fact the body is your fortress and your shelter. While you are lodged in it the forces of the hostile world find a difficulty in getting any direct hold upon you. What are nightmares? These are your sorties into the vital world. And what is the first thing you try to do when you are in the grip of a nightmare? You rush back into your body and shake yourself into your normal physical consciousness. But in the world of the vital forces you are a stranger; it is an uncharted sea in which you have neither compass nor rudder. You do not know how to go, you do not know where to go and at each step you do just the opposite of what should be done. Directly you enter any realm of this world, its beings gather round you and want to encompass and get out of you all you have, to draw what they can and make it a food and a prey. If you have no strong light and force radiating from within you, you move there without your body as if you had no coat to protect you against a chill and bleak atmosphere, no house to shield you, even no skin covering you, your nerves exposed and bare. There are men who say, "How unhappy I am in this body", and think of death as an escape! But after death you have the same vital surroundings and are in danger from the same forces that are the cause of your misery in this life. The dissolution of the body forces you out into the open spaces of the vital world. And you have no longer a defence; there is not the physical body any longer to rush back to for safety.

CWM 3: 47

## Domain of death

Generally, “domain of death” is the name given to a certain region of the most material vital into which one is projected at the moment one leaves one’s body. The Part — how to put it? — of one’s life that’s usually the most conscious is projected there at the moment of death. Well, that region, that material vital world is very dark, it is full of adverse formations having desires at their centre or even adverse wills, and these are very, very elemental entities which have a very fragmentary life and are like vampires, in the sense that they feed on all that is thrown out from human beings. And so, at that moment, from the shock of death — for very few die without a shock, go out consciously, in full knowledge of the thing, there are not many such — usually it is an accident: a last accident; well, at that shock of death, those entities rush in upon this, upon this vitality that goes out, and feed upon it. So long as a person is alive, they cannot touch him. For, you have all had the experience of a nightmare in which, when the situation becomes really very dangerous, suddenly you wake up — you come back into your body, for the body is your protection. In the physical they can do nothing to you but when you are completely outside the physical (and even this link I spoke about serves as a protection to a certain extent when you go out), but if the links are broken and you are entirely without a body, well, unless you take advantage of special circumstances... as for instance when a person is much loved by others who are yet alive; if at that moment these people who love him concentrate their thought and love on the departed one, he finds a refuge therein, and this protects him completely against those entities; but one who passes away without anyone’s having a special attachment for him, either because he is surrounded by people he has harmed and who do not love

him or by people who are in a terribly unconscious state — he is like a prey delivered to these forces. And that indeed is an experience that's difficult to bear. ...

This of course is the general law. Now there are bridges, as it were, "protected passages" which have been built in the vital world in order to cross over all these dangers. There are atmospheres which receive people leaving their body, give them shelter, give them protection. There are all kinds of other conditions; what I have told you just now is the normal state of those who die, of ordinary human beings, but as soon as we come to a little higher type of humanity, all these conditions change. The general law remains unless there is a special higher development within the being.

*CWM 6: 55-56*

### **The condition of our being after death**

The condition of your being after death depends very much on whether the vital has been converted here or not. If you are only a medley of unorganised impulses, then at death, when the consciousness withdraws into the background, the different personalities in you fall apart, rushing hither and thither to seek their own suitable environments. One part may enter into another person who has an affinity for it, another may even enter an animal, while that which has been alive to the divine Presence may remain attached to the central psychic being. But if you are fully organised and converted into a single individual, bent on reaching the goal of evolution, then you will be conscious after death and preserve a continuity. ...

You want to know if all men retain their identities after the dissolution of their bodies. Well, it depends. The ordinary mass of men are so closely identified with their bodies that nothing of them survives when the physical

disintegrates. Not that absolutely nothing survives — the vital and mental stuff always remains but it is not identical with the physical personality. What survives has not the clear impress of the exterior personality because the latter was content to remain a jumble of impulses and desires, a temporary organic unity constituted by the cohesion and coordination of bodily functions, and when these functions cease their pseudo-unity also naturally comes to an end. Only if there has been a mental discipline imposed on the different parts and they have been made to subserve a common mental ideal, can there be some sort of genuine individuality which retains the memory of its earthly life and so survives consciously. The artist, the philosopher and other developed persons who have organised, individualised and to a certain extent converted their vital being can be said to survive, because they have brought into their exterior consciousness some shadow of the psychic entity which is immortal by its very nature and whose aim is to progressively build up the being around the central Divine Will.

CWM 3: 144-46

### **What becomes of the vital being after death**

*What becomes of the vital being after death?*

It is dissolved. Rarely does it happen otherwise. But if you have had a very strong passion, if you were divided by fixed impulses, the vital being would break up into small pieces. Instead of going off like a vapour or a liquid, it goes off by little bits. Each of these pieces of vital substance is gathered around the central impulse, the central desire, the central passion of that piece, thus creating little entities which don't have a human form but take at times an indefinite form; at times they resemble the body to which the pieces belonged,

at other times they take a form expressing the desire they represent. And naturally their sole concern is to satisfy their desire or passion and they search everywhere for the means of self-satisfaction.

Take, for instance, the passion of a miser for his fortune. He dies. His vital being is dissolved, but his passion for his money remains alive. It gathers around itself a certain number of elements to form a living and conscious entity in the vital world. If this man has in his lifetime hidden a treasure somewhere, that entity goes and installs itself just above the place where the treasure is, as if to guard it and stop people from coming near it. ...

There are also lots of little entities, quite repugnant, in very large numbers, which originate from that wretched sexual desire. If this desire (with its corresponding entities) is not dissolved at the time of death, these entities continue to exist and they come and settle in the atmosphere of sensitive persons to goad them, spur them on. These entities feed upon the vital force emanated at the time of the act and naturally their only desire is to get as much nourishment as they can. I have seen people enringed by dozens of these beings. It is a very concrete thing. ...

CWM 4: 191-92

### **Exceptional cases**

It is only if one has followed a yoga throughout his whole life, if one has taken great care to individualise, to centralise the vital and the mental around the psychic being that they remain — that happens once in ten million cases, it is very exceptional. Take the case of a philosopher or a writer who has worked considerably in his brain, tried to organise it; that then persists, but as a *capacity to think*, nothing else. There are these capacities of thinking which

persist after death and they try naturally to find another physical brain in which to manifest. It is in this way that the mind of a great thinker may identify itself with another mind and be able to express itself.

From the vital point of view, take the case of a great musician who has worked all his life to make his external being a good instrument for music; he has organised this vital power in his body for playing music; well then, his hands, for instance, are so individualised in their ability to play, that they can persist subtly even after death, with their form, a form analogous to the old physical form. They float in the vital world and are attracted by people who have similar capacities; they try to become identified with them. A person who is sensitive enough, receptive enough, can become identified with these hands and execute wonderful things, profit by all the individualisation of the past life of these hands.

*CWM 4: 195-96*

### **Each part is scattered into its own world**

Suppose you were living a life of desire, passion and impulse: you live with your vital being dominant in you; but if you live with spiritual effort, with great good will, the desire to do things well and an unselfishness, a will for progress, you live with the psychic being dominant in you. Then, when you are about to leave your body, all these beings start to disperse. Only if you are a very advanced yogi and have been able to unify your being around the divine centre, do these beings remain bound together. If you have not known how to unify yourself, then at the time of death all that is dispersed: each one returns to its domain. For example, with regard to the vital being, all your different desires will be separated and each one run towards its own

realisation, quite independently, for the physical being will no longer be there to hold them together. But if you have united your consciousness with the psychic consciousness, when you die you remain conscious of your psychic being and the psychic being returns to the psychic world which is a world of bliss and delight and peace and tranquillity and of a growing knowledge. So, if you like to call that a paradise, it is all right; because in fact, to the extent to which you are identified with your psychic being, you remain conscious of it, you are one with it, and it is immortal and goes to its immortal domain to enjoy a perfectly happy life or rest. If you like to call that paradise, call it paradise. If you are good, if you have become conscious of your psychic and live in it, well, when your body dies, you will go with your psychic being to take rest in the psychic world, in a blissful state.

But if you have lived in your vital with all its impulses, each impulse will try to realise itself here and there... There is a spirit of the form: your form has a spirit which persists for seven days after your death. The doctors have declared that you are dead, but the spirit of your form lives, and not only does it live but it is conscious in most of the cases. But that lasts for seven or eight days and afterwards it is dissolved. I am not speaking of yogis; I am speaking of ordinary people. Yogis have no laws, it is quite different; for them the world is different. I am speaking to you of ordinary men living an ordinary life; for these it is like that.

CWM 5: 133: 35

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*We have to face the future's offer of death as well as its offer of life, and it need not alarm us, for it is by constant death to our old names and forms that we shall live most vitally in greater and newer forms and names.*

CWSA 13: 129

Sri Aurobindo

## State of magicians and occultists after death

*Sweet Mother, I have heard that the magicians who use occult powers for their work suffer a great deal after their death. Is it true?*

I don't know whether they suffer after their death or lose their consciousness, but in any case, obviously they are not in any state of peace or happiness, that's absolutely certain. For it is a kind of absolute rule from the spiritual point of view: it is by an inner discipline and by consecration to the Divine that the powers come to you. But if with your aspiration, your discipline and consecration, an ambition is mixed up, that is, an intention to obtain powers, then if they come to you it is almost like a curse. Usually they don't come to you, but something vital which tries to imitate them comes to you with adverse influences which put you entirely under the domination of beings who give you powers simply with the intention of making use of you, using you to do all the work they have the intention of doing, and to create all the disorder they want to create. And when they find that you have served them enough and are no longer good for anything, they just destroy you. They may not be able to destroy you physically because they don't always have the power to do it, but they destroy you mentally, vitally and in your consciousness, and after that you are good for nothing, even before dying. And after death, as you are entirely under their influence, the first thing they do is to swallow you up, because this is their way of making use of people — to swallow them. So it cannot be a very pleasant experience. It is a very, very, very dangerous game.

But everywhere, in all the teachings, in all the disciplines, in all ages, the same thing has been repeated: that one must never intermingle ambition and personal interest



with the sadhana, otherwise he is inviting trouble. So it is not only a particular case, it is all the instances of this kind which have fatal consequences.

CWM 7: 260-61

## Heaven and Hell

Heaven and Hell are at once real and unreal. They both exist and do not exist.

Human thought is creative; it gives more or less lasting forms to mental, vital and even subtle physical substance. These forms are appearances rather than realities; but for those whose thoughts they are, and still more for those who believe in them, they have a concrete enough existence to give them an illusion of reality. Thus, for the believers of religions which assert the existence of a hell, a paradise, or various heavens, these places do exist objectively, and when they die they can go there for a longer or shorter period. But still these things are only impermanent mental formations; they carry no eternal truth in themselves.

I have seen the heavens and hells where some people have gone after death, and it is very difficult to make them understand that there is no truth in them. Once it took me more than a year to convince someone that his so-called hell was not hell and to get him out of it. ...

Just as you can carry within you a heaven of blissful communion with the Divine, you can, if you do not take care to master the asuric tendencies in your nature, also carry in your consciousness a hell of misery and desolation.

CWM 10: 64-65

*Death is but changing of our robes to wait  
In wedding garments at the Eternal's gate.*

CWSA 2: 219

*Sri Aurobindo*

## Paradise and purgatory

(A child) *After death people enter the vital world, but those who do good go to paradise?*

It is generally what religious priests say to the faithful to encourage them to do good. For it is a notorious fact that life is not more easy for the good than for the wicked; usually it is the contrary: the wicked succeed better than the good! So people who are not very spiritual say to themselves: "Why should I take the trouble of being good? It is better to be wicked and have an easy life." It is very difficult to make them understand that there are many kinds of good and that sometimes it is worth the trouble perhaps to make an effort to be good. So to make this intelligible to the least intelligent, they are told: "There, it is very simple. If you are quite obedient, quite nice, quite unselfish, if you always do good deeds, and if you believe in the dogmas we teach, well, when you die, God will send you to Paradise. If you have sometimes good will, sometimes bad, if, sometimes you do good, sometimes you don't and if you think very much of yourself and very little of others, then when you die, you will be sent to Purgatory for another experience. And then if you are thoroughly wicked, if you are always doing harm to others, doing all kinds of bad things and you do not care about the good of anyone and particularly if you do not believe in the dogma that we teach you, then you will go straight to Hell and for eternity."

This is one of the prettiest inventions I have ever heard of: they have invented *eternal hell*. That is to say, once you are in hell, it is for eternity....

CWM 5: 129-30

**The Mother**

## **What Persists after Death**

### **The psychic being is what persists after death**

The psychic being is that which persists after death, because it is your eternal self; it is this that carries the consciousness forward from life to life.

The psychic being is the real individuality of the true and divine individual within you. For your individuality means your special mode of expression and your psychic being is a special aspect of the one Divine Consciousness that has taken shape in you. But in the psychic consciousness there is not that sense of division between the individual and the universal consciousness which affects the other parts of your nature. You are conscious there that your individuality is your own line of expression, but at the same time you know too that it is an expression objectifying the one universal consciousness. It is as though you had taken a portion out of yourself and put it in front of you and there were a mutual look and play of movement between the two. This duality was necessary in order to create and establish the objectivised relation and to enjoy it; but in your psychic being the separation that sharpens the duality is seen to be an illusion, an appearance and nothing more.

CWM 3: 63

### **The central being and the psychic being**

We said that the central being and the psychic being are the same thing but the part which stays and is in the Divine stays and is in the Divine. The psychic is the delegate of this Divine in the earth life, for the growth on earth. But the part of the central being which is identified with the Divine remains identified with the Divine and does not change. Even during life it is identified with the Divine, and after

death it remains what it was in life, for it this makes no difference. It is the psychic being which has alternations of experience and assimilation, experience and assimilation. But the Jivatman is in the Divine and remains in the Divine, and doesn't move from there; and it is not progressive. It is in the Divine, it is identified with the Divine, it remains identified with the Divine, not separated. It makes no difference to it, whether there is an earthly body or not.

*Then, Sweet Mother, is everyone's central being the same?*

No, for we are told that it is identified in multiplicity. It is the eternal truth of each being. From one point of view they are identical, from another they are multiple; because the truth of each being is an individual truth, but it is identified with the Divine. It is outside the manifestation but it is the origin of the manifestation. It is a unity which is not a uniformity.

CWM 7: 223-24

### **Departure of fully developed psychic being**

If we take the best instance, of someone who has unified his being completely around the divine Presence within him, who is now only *one* will, *one* consciousness, this person will have grouped around his central psychic being a fully developed and organised mind, an absolutely surrendered and collaborating vital and an obedient, docile and supple physical being. This physical being, as it is fully developed, will have a subtle body — what Sri Aurobindo calls the “true physical” — which will infinitely surpass the limits of its body and have enough suppleness, plasticity, balance to be able to adhere to the inner parts of the being and follow the movement of the soul in its... I don't want to say in its ascent, but in its peregrinations outside the body. What the soul will do, where it will go — it all depends on what

it has decided before leaving the body. And this capacity to keep around itself the being that has been fully organised and unified in its physical life, will allow it to really choose what it wants to do. And this also represents a very different field of possibilities, from passing consciously from one body into another, directly — there are instances in which one of these fully conscious and fully developed beings has slowly prepared another being capable of receiving and assimilating it, and in order not to stop its material work when it leaves one body, it goes and joins another psychic being, merges with it, combines with it in another physical body; that is an extreme case, extremely rare also, but one which forms part of an altogether traditional occult knowledge — to the instance at the other extreme, where the soul having finished its bodily experience, wants to assimilate it in repose and prepare for another physical existence later, sometimes much later. And so this is what happens, among many other possibilities: it leaves in each domain — in the subtle physical, in the vital, in the mental domain — the corresponding beings; it leaves them with a sort of link between them, but each one keeps its independent existence, and it itself goes into the zone, the reality, the world of the psychic proper, and enters into a blissful repose for assimilation, until it has assimilated, as described in this paper, all its good deeds, digested all its good deeds, and is ready to begin a new experience. And then, if its work has been well done and the parts or sheaths of its being which it has left in their different domains have acted as they should there, when it descends again, it will put on one after another all these parts which lived with it in a former life, and with this wealth of knowledge and experience it will prepare to enter a new body....

CWM 8: 336-337

**The Mother**

## The ghost is not the soul

What do you mean by a ghost? The word “ghost” as used in popular parlance covers an enormous number of distinct phenomena which have no necessary connection with each other.

To name a few only—

(1) An actual contact with the soul of a departed human being housed in its subtle body and transcribed to our mind by the appearance of an image or the hearing of a voice.

(2) A mental formation stamped by the thoughts and feelings of a departed human being on the atmosphere of a place or locality, wandering about there or repeating itself — till that formation either exhausts itself or is dissolved by one means or another. This is the explanation of such phenomena as the haunted house in which the scenes attending or surrounding or preceding a murder are repeated over and over again and many similar phenomena.

(3) A being of the lower vital planes who has assumed the discarded vital sheath of a departed human being or a fragment of his vital personality and appears and acts in the form and perhaps with the surface thoughts and memories of that person.

(4) A being of the lower vital plane who by the medium of a living human being or by some other means or agency is able to materialise itself sufficiently so as to appear and act in a visible form or speak with an audible voice or, without so appearing, to move about material things, e.g. furniture or to materialise objects or to shift them from place to place. This accounts for what are called *poltergeists*, phenomena of stone-throwing, tree-inhabiting *bhūtas* and other well-known phenomena.

(5) Apparitions which are the formations of one's own mind but take to the senses an objective appearance.

(6) Temporary possession of people by vital beings who sometimes pretend to be departed relatives etc.

(7) Thought-images of themselves projected, often by people at the moment of death, which appear at that time or a few hours afterwards to their friends or relatives.

You will see that in only one of these cases, the first, can a soul be posited and there no difficulty arises.

CWSA 28: 569-70

The ghost is of course not the soul. It is either the man appearing in his vital body or it is a fragment of his vital that is seized on by some vital force or being. The vital part of us normally exists after the dissolution of the body for some time and passes away into the vital plane where it remains till the vital sheath dissolves. Afterwards it passes, if it is mentally evolved, in the mental sheath to some mental world and finally the psychic leaves its mental sheath also and goes to its place of rest. If the mental is strongly developed, then the mental part of us can remain; so also can the vital, provided they are organised by and centred around the true psychic being — for they then share the immortality of the psychic. Otherwise the psychic draws mind and life into itself and enters into an internatal quiescence.

CWSA 28: 117

**Sri Aurobindo**

*There is the divine spark from the beginning, the soul, in all things, but it takes a long time and a long evolution for it to arrive at a conscious expression and form of manifested being — what we call the psychic being.*

CWSA 28: 117

**Sri Aurobindo**



*Death is the question Nature puts continually to Life and her reminder to it that it has not yet found itself. If there were no siege of death, the creature would be bound for ever in the form of an imperfect living. Pursued by death he awakes to the idea of perfect life and seeks out its means and its possibility.*

CWSA 13: 205

*Sri Aurobindo*



## The Many Faces of Death

### **A peaceful death: To die without knowing it**

As you know, N.S. has left his body. It was the result of an accident... When the accident occurred, he came to me (not in a precise form, but in a state of consciousness I immediately recognized), and stayed here motionless, in complete trust and blissful peace — motionless in every state of being, absolutely ... (*gesture of surrender*) total, total trust: what will be, will be; what is, is. No questions, not even a need to know. A cosy peace ... *a great ease*.

They tried, fought, operated: no movement, nothing moved. Then one day they declared him dead... And he was here the whole while, immutable. Then suddenly I felt a kind of shudder; I looked — he was gone. I was busy and didn't note the time, but it was in the afternoon, that's all I know. Later I was told that they had decided to cremate him, and had done so at that time.

The violence of the accident had brutally exteriorized him, but when it happened he must have been thinking of me with trust. He came and didn't budge — he never knew what was happening to his body. He didn't know he was dead!....

Then and there I said to myself, "This habit of cremating people is appallingly brutal!" ... He didn't know he was dead and that's how he learned it! ... From the reaction of the life of the form in the body.

Even when the body is in a thoroughly bad condition, it takes at least seven days for the life of the form to leave it. And for someone practicing yoga, this life is conscious. So you burn people a few hours after the doctors have declared them dead, but the life of the form is every inch alive and, in those who have practiced yoga, conscious.....

But it is possible to die without knowing you are dead..... I don't even say not to cremate people, because in at least ninety — nine cases out of a hundred it's the best thing to do.

The only solution is for people to grow wise, and they're not wise. They accept a law, a principle, and then, having no wisdom, need to follow it blindly. ...

*The Mother: Conversations with a disciple: July 4, 1962*

### **Staying in the Mother's atmosphere after death**

When I.B. was killed, I had to gather up all his states of being and activities, which had been dispersed by the violence of the accident — it was terrible, he was in a dreadful state of dispersion. For two or two and a half days the doctors fought in the hope of reviving him, but it was impossible. During those two days I gathered up all his consciousness, all of it; I collected it over his body, to the point where, when it had come and formed itself there, such vitality, such life was coming back into his body that after some hours the doctors believed he would be saved. But it couldn't last (it wasn't possible — a part of the brain had come out). Well, when not only his soul but his mental being, his vital being, and all the rest had been properly collected and organised over his body and had realised that the body had become quite unusable, it was over — they gave up the body and it was over.

I was keeping I.B. near me because I already had the idea of putting him immediately back into another body — his soul was not satisfied, it had not finished its experience (there was a whole combination of circumstances) and it wanted to continue to live on earth. Then, that night, his inner being went to find V., lamenting, saying he was dead and hadn't wanted to die, that he had lost his body

and wanted to continue to live. V. was very perplexed. He let me know about it in the morning: 'Here's what has happened.' I sent word to him of what I was doing, that I was keeping I.B. in my atmosphere and that he should stay very calm and not get excited, for I was going to put him back into a body as soon as possible — I already had something in view. The same evening I.B. again went to find V., with the same complaint. V. told him very clearly, 'Here is what Mother says, here is what she is going to do; come now, be calm and don't torment yourself.' And he saw in I.B.'s face that he had understood (the inner being was taking on I.B.'s physical appearance, naturally); his face relaxed, he became content.

He went away and he never came back. That is, he stayed tranquilly with me, until I was able to put him into C'.s child.

*The Mother: Conversations with a disciple: June 24, 1961*

### **Living out of habit after the soul's departure**

Did you know B? ... His psychic being had left him quite some time ago and, as a result, to the surface consciousness he seemed a bit deranged — he wasn't deranged but diminished. And he lived, as I said, out of habit. The physical consciousness still held a minimum of vital and mind and he lived out of habit. But the remarkable thing is that sometimes, for a few seconds, he would live admirably, in full light, while at other times he couldn't even control his gestures. Then he left altogether: all the accumulated energy dwindled little by little, little by little, and whatever remained left his body. It was just on his birthday, on December 30 (the night of December 30). He left. So they did as is always done: they cleaned his room, took out the furniture. Since then, there had been no sign of him. Yesterday

evening, after dinner (which is about the same time he left twelve days ago), I was in concentration, resting, when suddenly here comes a very agitated B. who tells me, "Mother, they've taken all the furniture out of my room! What am I to do now!?" I told him gently, "Do not fret, you don't need anything any more." Then I put him to rest and sent him to join the rest of his being.

Which means it took twelve days for all his elements to form again. You see, they burned his body. We cremated him, but I demanded a certain interval of time, although in his case it was really a gradual exhaustion and nothing much remained in his body; nonetheless, even then the consciousness is flung out of the cells violently — it took twelve days to form again. It wasn't his soul (it had already left) but the spirit of his body that came to me, the body consciousness gathered in a well-dressed, neat B. with his hair neatly brushed. He was quite trim when he came to me, just as he would have been in life: he always wanted to be well-groomed and impeccable to see me, that was his way. It took twelve days to gather together because I didn't see to it (I can do it in a few hours but only if I see to it), but in his case, his soul having been at rest for a long time, it didn't matter much. So over twelve days it took form again and when he was ready (*laughing*), he came to reoccupy his room! ... And there was no furniture left, nothing!

I found that very funny.

And he had been living for more than a year, almost two years, I think, just out of a habit of living.

*The Mother: Conversations with a disciple: January 12, 1963*

## **A long time to die**

There is also here the sister of the old portly doctor, she is (I think) five or six years older than I — she is getting on for ninety. She has been dying away too, for several months. The doctors (who don't know the first thing in these matters) had declared she would die after a few days. "Wait a little," I told them, "this woman knows how to enter a state of rest, she has a very peaceful consciousness — it will last long, it may last for years." She is in bed, she can't move much, but ... she lives. She too lives out of habit.

In reality, the body should be able to last much longer than human beings think. They knock it about: as soon as someone is unwell, they drug or knock his body about, they take away that kind of calm vegetative serenity that can make it last a very long time. The way trees take a very long time to die.

*The Mother: Conversations with a disciple, January 12, 1963*

## **Divine and the human Vision**

There was one thing. This little one, they're going to cremate her now. So they came to me with a tray of flowers to show me the flowers they were going to place on her body And there [with the tray], there was something of the little one — a psychic embryo; it was there, and it made a slight movement ... suddenly, a movement of such a deep tenderness. She was like this (gesture in front of Mother, with the tray of flowers), I took a rose, and it was as though I gave it to her in her hand; I gave it and said, "Here, it's for you." And all that, all those vibrations, it was all luminous, lovely, and she (the conscious part in her) was so perfectly happy! ...

How can you tell that to the parents? They would say, "You're crazy ..."

But that's the fact, the plain fact: I saw Champaklal come with the tray of flowers, and it [the psychic embryo] was floating above, like that; so when I saw her, I took a rose and ... there was something so lovely, so luminous, like that (a very small thing, not a great force or anything), but so lovely, so luminous, so happy, with such a sense of repose. ...

*The Mother: Conversations with a disciple, May 3, 1969*

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### Life and Death

Life, death, — death, life; the words have led for ages

Our thought and consciousness and firmly seemed  
Two opposites; but now long-hidden pages

Are opened, liberating truths undreamed.

Life only is, or death is life disguised, —

Life a short death until by life we are surprised.

*CWSA 2: 216*

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Life and death are in fact one, and we may say from different points of view that all death is only a process and change of life or that all life is only an activity of death. Really both are one energy whose activity presents to us a duality of aspects.

*CWSA 13: 241*

**Sri Aurobindo**



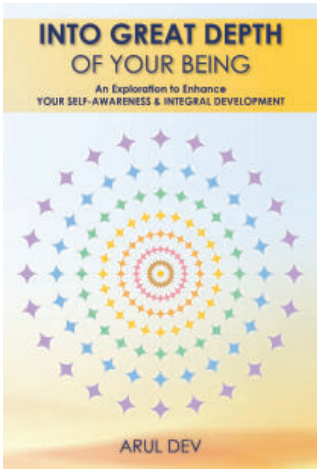
*Sri Anubhava Society*

**AUROPUBLICATIONS**

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## Family Retreat on Towards Life Beautiful

A 3-day Retreat for families and individuals to help them find a deeper connect with themselves and with others, and thereby realise a profounder fulfillment to life. Children are welcome. We have creative activities for children (age 6 to 16).

**Date: 26th - 28th (Tue-Thu) December 2017**

*Organised by:*

Sri Aurobindo Foundation for Integral Management  
(SAFIM)

Venue: Society House, Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry

For registration and further details, please contact:

Email: safim@aurosociety.org, Ph: 0413 233 0256

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### Announcements

#### **Savitri Study Sessions: 22<sup>nd</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018**

Study Sessions on Sri Aurobindo's epic *Savitri* (**Book Eight and Nine**) will be held at the Society House, Puducherry, from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018. They will be conducted by Dr. Alok Pandey. There will be two sessions daily, from 5.15 to 6.00 p.m. and 6.15 to 7.00 p.m. All are welcome.

*With best compliments of:*

**DEORAH SEVA NIDHI**

(Founder Trustee: Late Shri S.L. Deorah)

25, Ballygunge Park, Kolkata - 700019





## AUROYOUTH YOUTH CAMPS

AuroYouth, the youth wing of Sri Aurobindo Society, spreads the message of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother among the youth (15-29 years) through Youth Camps. Topics covered in the Youth Camps include Aim of Life, Developing Inner Awareness, Values for Success, Introductions to Sri Aurobindo and The Mother.

During the last 3 years, nearly 100 such Youth Camps have been conducted in several colleges across India, touching more than 3,000 youths.

### CONTACT US

- **If you are below 40 and wish to volunteer** as an Auro-Youth Executive to conduct camps in your locality
- **If you can introduce AuroYouth** to a college, NCC, NSS etc. for us to organize 1-day camps or short Youth Talks of 1-2 hours of duration
- **If youth in your family wish to attend** an AuroYouth Camp
- **If you are in the age group of 15-29 years** and wish to attend an AuroYouth Camp

AuroYouth is a national programme to introduce the vision of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother to the youth and invite them for a deeper engagement at our Branches and Centres. All Branches and Centres are encouraged to take advantage of this programme.

### **Sri Aurobindo Society – AuroYouth Desk**

Sri Aurobindo Bhavan

C56/36 Sector 62, Noida 201307

Tel: +91-98705 23819; Email: [aydesk@aurosociety.org](mailto:aydesk@aurosociety.org)

Website: [www.ay.aurosociety.org](http://www.ay.aurosociety.org)

## The Renaissance of India

15<sup>th</sup> Aug. 2022 is the 150<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of Sri Aurobindo and the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of India's Independence. It is a very significant day for India and for all of us.

Starting from August 2017, we are taking up a very major initiative, tentatively called "The Renaissance of India", where we will try to bring together all our various initiatives, existing as well as new, for building a new India in the light of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, and which can play its true role in the world.

In this effort, all the branches, centres and members of Sri Aurobindo Society, will have to play a central role. We will also have to reach out beyond, to all those who are open to the new light and willing to join us in this effort.

We are working on a project plan. All our existing initiatives will be part of this effort. We request all the State Committees, the branches and centres to prepare a five year plan for all their various initiatives along with the budgets, encompassing what we aspire to do keeping in view that we will need to take our existing programmes to a higher level and, also reach out to individuals and institutions beyond our existing circle.

One major project in the Renaissance of India will be 'Swarnim (Golden) Puducherry' where through all our initiatives we will strive that Puducherry may become a Model State, as Sri Aurobindo and the Mother always wanted it to be. As we would like to prepare the final proposal at the earliest. It will be nice if we can have the inputs from everyone as soon as possible.

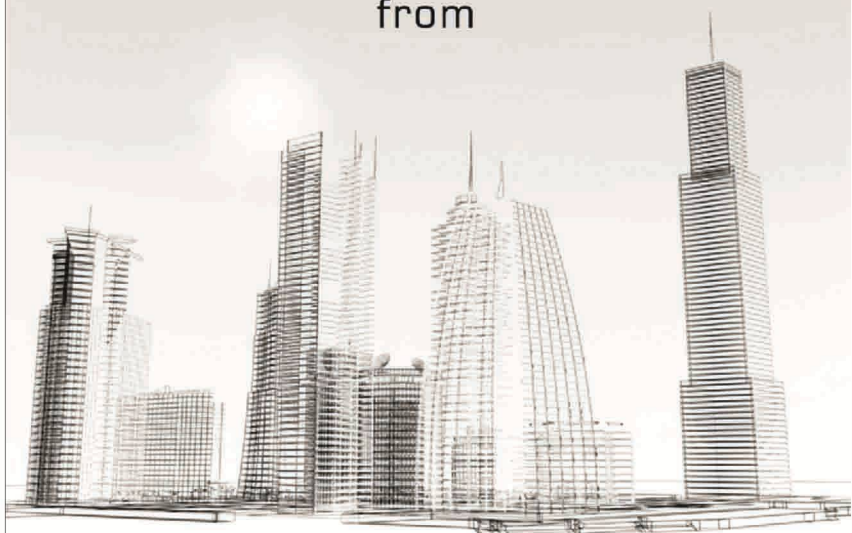
We welcome ideas and suggestions from everyone for any aspect of the project, including areas where they may not be directly involved.

Invoking the Mother's Grace, let us try to make the most beautiful offering of a new India at the feet of Sri Aurobindo on his 150<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary, and work with full sincerity and commitment during these five years to make it a reality.

Pradeep Narang  
Chairman.  
Sri Aurobindo Society



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