



The Five Gears of Life

*A Talk on The Science of Living, based on the writings of The Mother
to the members of Delhi Downtown Rotary Club
at Taj Palace Hotel, New Delhi, on 8th July, 1999, 7.50pm*

I would like to begin this evening by a salutation to the Supreme Mother.

*Om Anandmayee, Chaitanyamayee,
Satyamayee Parame*

The Science of Living is a talk that is based on the writings of the Mother and it, as the title suggests, proposes that life as it is can be led scientifically and therefore all life can be yoga. It is based on the Integral Yoga psychology and proposes that as we see society today, as we see the problems that we face today, as we see life and circumstances today, we find that however much we try and improve our society, however much we try to do good works, both for ourselves and for others, still we find there's no lasting solution. Yes, we can give some amount of help, but when we look at our own lives and when we look at the lives of those around us, when we look at the ills of the society, when we read the newspapers in the morning, we are struck by the fact that the problems that we face (as a nation, as a community, as human beings), don't seem to be getting solved any more than they were 50 years ago. If anything, today we seem to be at a crisis point where people are spelling doomsday all around. And there is a lot of scepticism, there is also a lot of seeking in most of us because we are all looking for that solution, that answer that can perhaps make life more complete, more truly happy and more harmonious. In fact, there's an interesting statement made by Sri Aurobindo where he says, 'All problems of existence are essentially problems of harmony.' And if you notice, whether it is between India and Pakistan - the Kargil war, or it is between Yugoslavia - the Kosovo crisis, wherever you look, there's disharmony and tension. Whether it is the battle we face in our homes, with our children or our spouse, or the daily humdrum existence, whether we go to the vegetable market or we have to make sure that we are not cheated on this or that matter, everywhere we see that however much we do, it doesn't seem to solve the root problem.

Now, I'd like to present today some ideas for your reflection and the first idea is that unless the human being himself changes, unless there's a change of consciousness of each of us, circumstances cannot and will not change. To try and change outer circumstances without changing the mind and the heart of man, without bringing forth his spirit, is a vain chimera. Our ancient yoga was based on that... that's why India was such a great civilisation and in the past we have all seen the greatness of her people. The whole country was filled with culture, with riches, with abundance, prosperity. The great Indian mind celebrated the Vyasas, the Valmikis and also the great artists - Rabindranath Tagore.... We have had great giants here and not just a few but hundreds of them - the great rishis, the great architecture of this country. How was it created? Was it a boon that came down from heaven, as a miracle, that descended on this land? I think it is something that all of us, that you, as this august gathering sitting here are leading citizens, which I understand have a much greater social conscience than a lot of people we meet today - it is something we have to ask ourselves. If this was possible, in the not too distant past, why is it not possible today and, more importantly, how does one make it possible again. Even if we can't do it for ourselves, we can definitely bring in this awareness and this *samskara* for our children and for the future.

Well, the answer to this question is the subject of my talk: 'The Science of Living', because it is through an understanding of both ourselves and the world, the perfection of our capacities and the perfection, therefore, of the human instrument, that life can be changed.

As we all may know that the human being has 5 major capacities and to use an analogy - because we're all modern human beings here - you can liken these 5 capacities of the human being to the 5 gears of your motor car. Most of our cars have 5 gears, some have 4, but if you see, the foundation gear of the human being or



the foundation capacity is the body, the Physical. Everything is based on a sound healthy body. The physical has strength, vitality, energy - it is the foundation. We all take it for granted but it is something that has to be developed and perfected if we want to do some work, lasting work, whether it's through some form of physical exercise, walks, yogasanas, meditation or whatever it may be.

The second capacity, according to the Science of Living, is the Vital, the capacity of *prana* - this is the second capacity. All of us have the life energy, the vital, which basically you can call the second gear. We all work on it. It is that that gives us the enthusiasm to work, the energy to work. It's the *prana shakti* in us.

The third capacity of the human being is our Mind - the mental capacity. And, most of us today are mental human beings. We function from our thoughts, we cognise, we rationalise, we bring in logic to our analysis and the mind is an instrument that has been given to us, which as you know, modern science very clearly says, only 2 to 4% of the mind is used by us. The rest is unused. And, education does everything to spoil, to diminish our mental powers. And this was the greatest strength of India that the mind was disciplined and perfected to its highest use and therefore, we had people who could recite the entire Vedas, the Upanishads. And, there was only one word - 'excellence' - in India. Why? Because of the mind. Today, we do not take sufficient care to develop and to perfect our mind. So, our third gear is not fully used or developed.

When you are driving your car the gears you drive a lot on are the third and fourth. But these higher gears - the 2 higher gears - are something that most of us do not even know of in



ourselves. And yet, if I asked you that let me take away gear 4 and gear 5 from your car - especially gear 4, because gear 5 you can still say, 'okay, you know, can do without that'. Gear 4 - you'll say, 'no, no, no, how can I drive a car just with 3 gears?' But, when you ask yourself this question, 'how are you driving *yourself* with 3 gears?', 'how much do you know about your fourth gear?', the answer is, 'I've some idea, but I really don't know enough.' And that's not only our state, it's the state of the whole nation, the state of the whole society. So, what's the fourth gear? Can anyone guess?

*Consciousness?*¹

No... consciousness is the stuff of everything. But what is the 4th gear? It's a special capacity. All these 4-5 gears are concrete, practical, like the mind, the body, the prana shakti, the vital. These are very very... you can experience them, you can bring them, you can perfect them. What's the fourth gear?

Self-actualisation?

No... self-actualisation is a state of consciousness.

Intellect?

Intellect is part of the mind. Intellect is a faculty of the mind - mind with a capital 'M' is a much larger thing, it's not just the reason. There's something else.

Spirit?

Spirit is perhaps the fifth gear, I would say. What is the fourth gear?

Inner Conscience?

Yes... you are close to it.

'Will' to do it?

Will to do it can come from your vital, prana shakti, it can come from your mind. If you've a strong mind, you've a strong will. But it's a special capacity. What is it?

Soul?

No... you're very close to it. But the soul, like the spirit, is something vaster. I would call it the fifth gear. What is the fourth gear? The fifth gear, I know, is inaccessible to a lot of us, but the fourth gear is also... we're not aware of it.

Positive attitude in life?

Positive attitude can be a mental attitude also - it's an attitude. The fourth gear is a capacity, it has a *chakra* and it has a particular centre - and I'm pointing to it. And it's just like the mind and the body, you can actualise it.

Heart?

Yes... it's something to do with the heart, but it's not the heart. It's behind the heart - the

¹ The audience response is given in italics, followed by a question mark. The speaker's response follows it.



centre is the *anahat* chakra but it is even behind that.

Bhawana?

No... bhawana is a product of the mind or the heart. This is actually a.....

Meditation?

Meditation helps to bring it forward, helps to actualise it. Meditation itself is not a capacity of the human being.

Determination?

Determination is again a mental attitude that you have.

Inner Conscience?

I'll tell you the fifth gear first. Then we'll come back to the fourth. The fifth gear is that vastness, that union with the Supreme. It's that that brings us into oneness with all creation, with everyone. It's what Sri Aurobindo, Sri Raman Maharishi, Swami Vivekananda - all realised. The Spiritual - it is the vastness of the consciousness spread infinitely. It's the complete absence of ego. But the fourth gear... in the fourth gear you have the ego. The sense of individuality is there but there is no egoism. There is a difference between ego and egoism. Ego is essential individuality - 'I am'. But when you get into the spiritual, the realisation, then ego also disappears. Then you have complete vastness of consciousness.

Id?

It's not Id.

Tolerance?

Tolerance is a mental attitude which you can develop. The fourth gear which is the fourth capacity of the human being is the one which can perfect life, is the key to all change. It's the key to... how do you change your life, how do you change circumstances. In fact, it's the master key for perfection in life, for completeness in life. In fact, it's the master key for true happiness. If you wish to seek true happiness in life you'll have to discover your fourth gear, you'll have to discover how to bring it into operation, you'll have to nourish your fourth gear.

Some internal power?

It is an internal power. Mind is also an internal power, so is the vital.

Contentment?

Contentment is a state of being. It comes from various parts. But it's not that capacity. It's a full... you know like your mind, like you're so aware of your mind - it's a complete capacity of the human being.

Everyone gives up? I just wanted to ask you this because I wanted to drive this point home that it is not included in our education. And I don't blame you for not knowing it because it is

not included in our awareness, our study, even in our life. And it's the reason why we have to turn to our ancient literature - and specifically the Vedas and Upanishads rediscovered in the modern language of Sri Aurobindo, to be able to operationalise and understand what it is. It's called the *Chaitya Purusha* or the Psychic Being. It is located - this is the fourth capacity of the human being, the chaitya purusha or the psychic being - it is located at the centre of the chest (not the physical heart), deep within, behind the anahat chakra, and it is called the psychic being.

Now, this fourth gear... the Science of Living is based on the discovery, the realisation of the psychic being. Let's forget about words and see what is the psychic being, what is the nature of this chaitya purusha which is as powerful and more powerful than the mind, more powerful than the body, and actually is the governing force according to our ancient science of yoga. This chaitya purusha... the essence of this chaitya purusha or the psychic being is that it is the true guide of our life. It's that portion of the divinity in our self. Like they say in Sanskrit that '*sarvam idam brahmanam*', '*aham brahmasmi*'. It is that part in you that is divine. It has the complete knowledge of the divine, it is the power of the divine. In you, operational in life, in evolution, it is the psychic being, the chaitya purusha, and the true nature of it is - I'm sure all of you have had an experience - it is the inner guru, the inner guide. Once you discover your psychic being it's that which guides you through your life. Even now it is that which guides you secretly but because you've not discovered it, you've not made it a living reality in your life, what happens is that often your mind overrules it, or your emotions or your impulses or your ambitions or your greed or whatever it may be. Other things come and interfere with its true guidance. But once the psychic being comes forward, i.e. it gains in strength, it becomes more and more strong, then that becomes the true master. Actually it's the king of the house and secretly even now it guides you.

Have there been times in your life when somehow... when there has been a great difficulty, somehow you've got this inner feeling or intuition or inner sense that 'I should do this' without understanding rationally sometimes why, but you feel, 'No, I should not do this.' You have this sense. Sometimes when you've been in very difficult circumstances, when you've to take a very important decision and you don't know what to do and you've sat in meditation or silence or you've gone to the tem-



ple or whatever you may've done. Have you had this uncanny kind of quiet impulsion or voice or something telling from inside your heart, something guiding you that do this. Well, that's the influence of the psychic being. But through the Science of Living, through Yoga, when you start to develop that psychic being, then it can guide you at all times. In fact, Sri Aurobindo has something very revolutionary to say. He says you read the Gita, read the Upanishads, read all the scriptures, but it is only so that you can awaken the inner guru within you. Once that is awakened, *that* will guide you. You do not require even the physical presence of a guru or shastra.

Now this is the fourth gear and as you know it is unoperationalised. You can go back to your car today and try driving it on 3 gears only. See how you feel This is our state. We are driving on 3 gears and even these 3 gears are not perfectly developed, not perfectly trained, not perfectly utilised. See the discomfort of not getting into the fourth. Well that's the same discomfort we feel in life when we do not get true happiness, the true *sukh shanti*, the true completeness and fulfilment of life which we seek. That small discomfort... not being able to... you know you have the potential but you cannot fully express it.

What is the Antaratma?

Antaratma is the voice of the conscience. Antaratma is a voice that can come from even the inner mind or the inner being. It is not the psychic. It is close to the psychic, very close; receives its inspirations from the psychic but it's not exactly the chaitya purusha. But it's very close. You know if there are outer and outer beings, layers, antaratma is closer to the psychic being than is the mind or the vital.

I would like to end with something practical - how to remain undisturbed? I would like to leave you with 5 ways of how not to get too disturbed or regain one's poise when one gets disturbed.

1. Practise Silence: Some amount of silence in the day. Get into the habit of spending some time alone, whether it's during a walk - but then don't keep chattering or gossiping, whether it's quiet music or at home. Practise inner silence, mental silence. That's very useful in beginning to control the temper, the irritations, the tensions.

2. Do some form of Meditation.

3. Stepping Back: It's a very simple exercise but very difficult to do. I think you all know it. We all say count 10 before you speak when you get angry. It's based on that. Step back into

yourself before you speak. Now, when they say step back, you'll ask, 'Step back into what? I'm already where I am. How do I step back? Do I have to jump back?' No. You've to step back from your mental consciousness into your heart consciousness, let me put it, the inner consciousness. Go within. Step back. Get out of your senses - your ears and your eyes - and put your concentration in the heart centre. That helps immediately to quieten the mind and to control the temper.

4. Have Faith that you're being guided, there's a higher destiny and that you'll be led to your goal. Faith is very very important, especially when there are difficulties.

5. Live for something higher than yourself. 'On the quality of your aim depends the quality of your life. An aimless life is a miserable life.' Therefore, it is how vast your aim is that will help you to live for something bigger than yourself. And that again brings in with it the sense of peace, of completeness, of not being too involved in one's own affairs - too small.

Ameeta Mehra



A child went to Sunday School and said to the leader, "I think God lives in my bathroom". The leader was rather taken aback by this, and enquired why the child thought this. "Well, that's simple," replied the child, "every morning my dad bangs on the bathroom door and yells, 'Oh God, are you still in there?'"