

# TRAINING THE MENTAL FACULTIES

## A Resource Guide on the “Mind”

### Aims

1. To understand the concept of the Mind
2. To become aware of how the mind functions, and the possibilities of improving it.
3. To provide some keys to the facilitators to help them plan lessons for their students to develop their mental faculties.

by Aditi

final submission for the course:  
Foundation Course for Facilitators

at The Gnostic Centre, New Delhi  
1999

### THE KEY TO USING THIS BOOKLET

This booklet is a compilation and selection of learning materials on the 'Mind' for all who are interested and curious on this topic. This might provide ideas and suggestions to the facilitators to design modules to develop their students mental faculties. Thus, with the aim of making this topic accessible, the reading and activities have been framed in modular form - 8 modules in all, that will help us to know the mind and each mental faculty in detail.

**This Booklet is based on the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother.**

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## MODULE 1

We all are very well aware of our day to day life problems. And we also know how our mind contributes to it. We are also aware of the fact that we use only 10% of our mind. Yet while designing a class for students, a curriculum with administrators, policies with educationists, we do not even consider the need to develop mental powers. As Sri Aurobindo says **“To give the student knowledge is necessary, but it is still more necessary to build up in him the power of knowledge.”** Thus through this booklet I have tried to get into this subject and see what are our innate mental powers and how could one develop them. I have also tried to see this subject’s relevance to modern education and how can our education system could tap into an individual’s mental powers to nurture his or her growth. Thus the following topics may help in the understanding of this subject.

### THE TRUE BASIS OF EDUCATION

“Education to be complete must have five principal aspects corresponding to the five principal activities of the human being: the physical, the vital, the mental, the psychic and the spiritual. Usually, these phases of education follow chronologically the growth of the individual; this, however, does not mean that one should replace another, but that all must continue, completing one another until the end of his life.” *1*

“The true basis of education is the study of the human mind, infant, adolescent and adult. Any system of education founded on theories of academic perfection, which ignores the instrument of study, is more likely to hamper and impair intellectual growth than to produce a perfect and perfectly equipped mind. For the educationist has to do, not with dead material like the artist or sculpture, but with an infinitely subtle and sensitive organism. He cannot shape an educational masterpiece out of human wood or stone; he has to work in the elusive substance of mind and respect the limits imposed by the fragile human body.” *2*

Now the question is ‘what is mental education’?

#### Mental Education

“Of all education, that of the mind is the best known and the most in use; yet except in a few rare cases, there are lacunae which make of it something very incomplete and, in the end, quiet insufficient.

Generally speaking, education is taken to mean the required mental education. And when a child has been made to undergo, for a number of years, a course of severe training, which is more like stuffing the brain than educating it, it is considered that what ever is necessary for his mental growth has been done. Even when the training is given with due measure and discrimination and does not impair the brain, it cannot impart to the human mind the faculties it needs to make a good and useful instrument.” *3*

Thus we need to understand mind and its true role.

### UNDERSTANDING THE MIND

#### The True Role of the Mind

“For the true role of the mind is the formation and organization of action. The mind has a formative and organising power, and it is that which puts the different elements of inspiration in order, for action, for organising action. And if it would only confine itself to that role, receiving inspiration – whether from above or from the mystic centre of the soul - and simply formulating the plan of action – in broad outline or in minute detail, for the smallest things of life or the great terrestrial organisations – it would amply fulfil its function.

It is not an instrument of knowledge.

But it can use knowledge for action, to organise action. It is an instrument of organisation and formation, very powerful and very capable when it is well developed.

One can feel this very clearly when one wants to organise one's life, for instance – to put the different elements in their place in one's existence. There is a certain intellectual faculty which immediately puts each thing in its place and makes a plan and organises. And it is not a knowledge that comes from the mind, it is a knowledge that comes, as I said, from the mystic depths of the soul or from a higher consciousness; and the mind concentrates it in the physical world and organises it to give a basis of action to the higher consciousness.

One has this experience very clearly when one wants to organise one's life.

Then, there is another use. When one is in contact with one's reason, with the rational centre of the intellect, the pure reason, it is a powerful control over all vital impulses. All that comes from the vital world can be very firmly controlled by it and used in a disciplined and organised action. But it must be at the service of something else – not work for its own satisfaction.

These are the two uses of the mind: it is a controlling force, an instrument of control, and it is a power of organisation. That is its true place.” 4

But if mind is ‘an instrument of control’ and ‘power of organisation’ then why such chaos!!

“If mind is indeed Nature's highest term, then the entire development of the rational and imaginative intellect and the harmonious satisfaction of the emotions and sensibilities must be to themselves sufficient. But if, on the contrary, man is more than a reasoning and emotional animal, if beyond that which is being evolved, there is something that has to be evolved, then it may well be that the fullness of mental life, the suppleness, flexibility and wide capacity of the intellect, the ordered richness of emotion and sensibility may be only a passage towards the development of a higher life and of more powerful faculties which are yet to manifest and to take possession of the lower instrument, just as mind itself has so taken possession of the body that the physical being no longer lives only for its own satisfaction but provides the foundation and materials for superior activity.” 5

“Mind in its essence is a consciousness which measures, limits, cuts out forms of things from the indivisible whole and contains them as if each were a separate integer. In fact even when it knows that they are things not in themselves, it is obliged to deal with them as if they were things in themselves; otherwise it could not subject them to its own characteristic activity. It perceives, conceives senses things as if rigidly cut out from a background or a mass and employs them as fixed units of the material given to it for creation or possession. Mind can multiply, divide, add, subtract, but it cannot go beyond the limits of this mathematics. Thus clearly following it is not an instrument of knowledge.” 6

“Mind is not a faculty of knowledge nor an instrument of omniscience; it is a faculty for the seeking of knowledge, for expressing as much as it can gain of it in certain forms of a relative thought and for using it towards certain capacities of action... For Mind is that which does not know, which tries to know and which never knows except as in glass darkly. It is the power which interprets truth of universal existence for the practical uses of a certain order of things; it is not the power which knows and guides that existence and therefore it cannot be the power which created or manifested it.” 7

“Mind is an inferior power of the original conscious Knowledge or Supermind.” 8

Now to understand mind in its detail, we need to understand different parts of the mind and its function. And also to understand how each part of our mind participate and influence our day to day functioning.

### **The Need To Understand Distinctive Parts Of The Mind**

“Men do not know themselves and have not learned to distinguish the different parts of their being; for these are usually lumped together by them as mind, because it is through a mentalised perception and understanding that they know or feel them; therefore they do not understand their own states and

actions, or, if at all, then only on the surface... We are composed of many parts each of which contributes something of the total movement of our consciousness, our thought, will, sensation, feeling, action, but we do not see the origination or the course of these impulsions; we are aware only of their confused and pell-mell results on the surface upon which we can at best impose nothing better than a precarious shifting order.” *9*

“Just like you have a body and each part of the body has a distinctive role and function for e.g. you don’t expect your body to walk on its head or its hands nor to crawl flat on its belly nor indeed that the head should be down and the legs up in the air. You give to each limb a particular occupation of its own. Well it’s the same thing with the mind function. You must know the different parts of the mind and the role and function of each and then accordingly to develop it.” *10*

Thus the need of mental education.

## THE NEED OF MENTAL EDUCATION

“We have limbs and muscles and nerves, indeed everything that constitutes the body; if we don’t give them a special development, a special education, all these things do what they can to express the Power in the body, but it is very clumsy and very incomplete expression. It is beyond question that a physical body which has been trained according to the most complete and rational methods of physical culture is capable of things it could never do otherwise. I think no one can deny that. Well, for the mind it is the same thing. You have a mental instrument with many possibilities, faculties, but they are latent and need a special education, a special training so that they can express the light. It is certain that in a ordinary life the brain is the seat of the outer expression and of the mental consciousness; well, if the brain is not developed, if it is crude, there are innumerable things which cannot be expressed, because they do not have the instrument required to express themselves. It would be like a musical instrument with most of its notes missing, and that produces a rough approximation but not something precise.” *11*

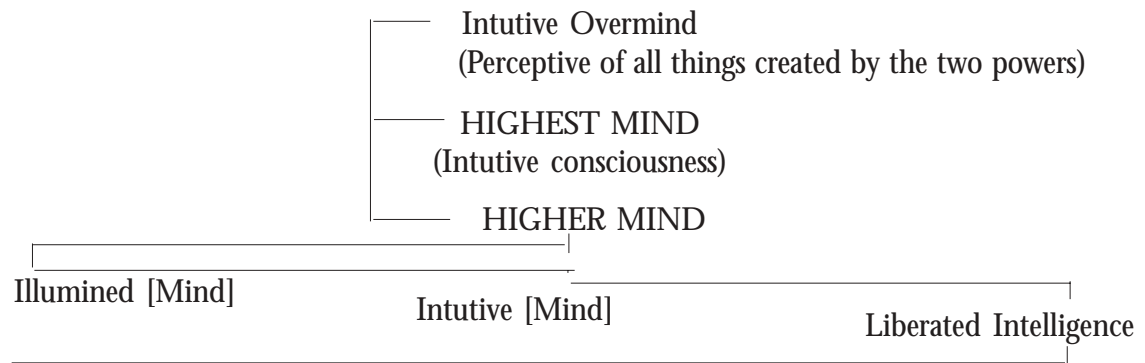
Mental culture, intellectual education changes the constitution of your brain, enlarges it considerably, and as a result the expression becomes more complete and more precise.” *12*

It was said that Jesus raised the dead, healed the sick, made the dumb speak, gave sight to the blind, one day an idiot was brought to him, to be made intelligent and Jesus ran away! “Why did you run away?” he was asked. “I can do everything,” he answered, “except give intelligence to an idiot.” *13*

This story must not be taken in its literal sense. It has been selected to inspire us to think of ways to develop intelligence. But before we even make an attempt to do so, we need to understand the different layers of our mind and its functions in detail.

Next is a chart based on my understanding of the layers of our mind in Sri Aurobindo’s light. Later some passages on the first three layers of the mind may help us to understand it in detail.

## THE LAYERS OF THE MIND



### HUMAN MIND

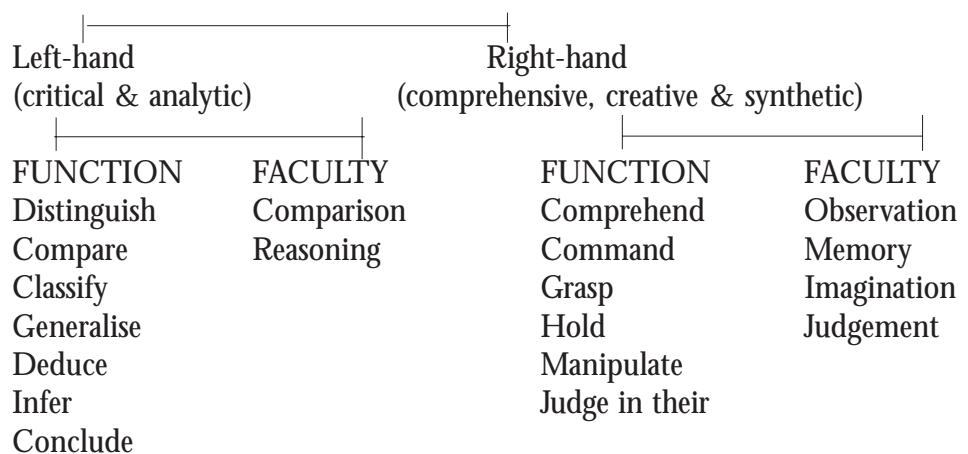
*ANTAHKARANA* (Instrument of educationist)

[Consists four layers]

“*Citta* or the store house of memory, all experience lies within as passive or potential memory. Active memory selects or takes what it requires from that store house.” 14

“Mind proper or *manas*, the sixth sense of our Indian Psychology, in which all others are gathered up. The function of the mind is to receive the images of things translated into sight, sound smell, taste and touch, the five senses translate these again into thought sensations. It receives also images of its own direct grasping and forms them into mental impressions. these sensations and impressions are the material of thought, not thought itself. It gives the food for thought formation - thus the thought to a large extent is dependent on how sufficient and perfect the material provided by the mind proper is.” 15

“Intellect or *Buddhi*, real instrument of thought and that which orders and disposes of the knowledge acquired by the other parts of the machine.” 16



#### Higher Faculty

If developed in man, chiefly known to us from the phenomena of genius -

\* sovereign discernment,

\* intuitive perception of truth,

\* plenary inspiration of speech,

\* direct vision of knowledge..

## Human Mind

*ANTAHKARANA* (Instrument of educationist, Consists four layers)

### 1. Chitta

“*Citta* or the storehouse of memory, all experience lies within as passive or potential memory. Active memory selects or takes what it requires from that store house.

The Chitta is the general stuff of mental consciousness which supports Manas and everything else – it is an indeterminate consciousness which gets determined into thoughts and memories and desires and sensations and perceptions and impulses and feelings (*cittavrtti*).

The Chitta is the consciousness out of which all is formed, but the formation is made by the mind or vital or other force – which are, as it were, the instrument of the Chitta for self-expression.

It is both ways – The Chitta receives these things, gives them for formation to the vital and mind and all is transmitted to the Buddhi, but also it receives thoughts from the Buddhi and turns these into desires and sensations and impulses.

Yes. But the Chitta does not receive desires and sensations from the Buddhi. It takes thoughts from the Buddhi and turns them into desires.” 17

### 2. Manas

“Mind proper or *manas*, the sixth sense of our Indian Psychology, in which all others are gathered up. The function of the mind is to receive the images of things translated into sight, sound, smell, taste and touch, the five senses translate these again into thought sensations. It receives also images of its own direct grasping and forms them into mental impressions. These sensations and impressions are the material of thought, not thought itself. It gives the food for thought formation - thus the thought to a large extent is dependent on how sufficient and perfect the material provided by the mind proper is.

...this movement of the Manas there would be two separate things – a part of the physical mind communicating with the physical-vital. It receives from the physical senses and transmits to the Buddhi – i.e., to some part or other of the Thought-Mind. It receives back from the Buddhi and transmits idea and will to the organs of sensation and action. All that is indispensable in the ordinary action of the consciousness. But in the ordinary consciousness everything gets mixed up together and there is no clear order or rule...

[The function of Manas:] To sense things and react mentally to objects and convey impressions to the Buddhi etc.” 18

## PARTS OF THE MIND PROPER/MANAS

The mind proper is divided into **three** parts:

1. Thinking Mind  
(intellect)

concerned with ideas and knowledge in their own right

2. Dynamic Mind  
(vital-mind)

concerned with the putting out of mental forces for realisation of the idea

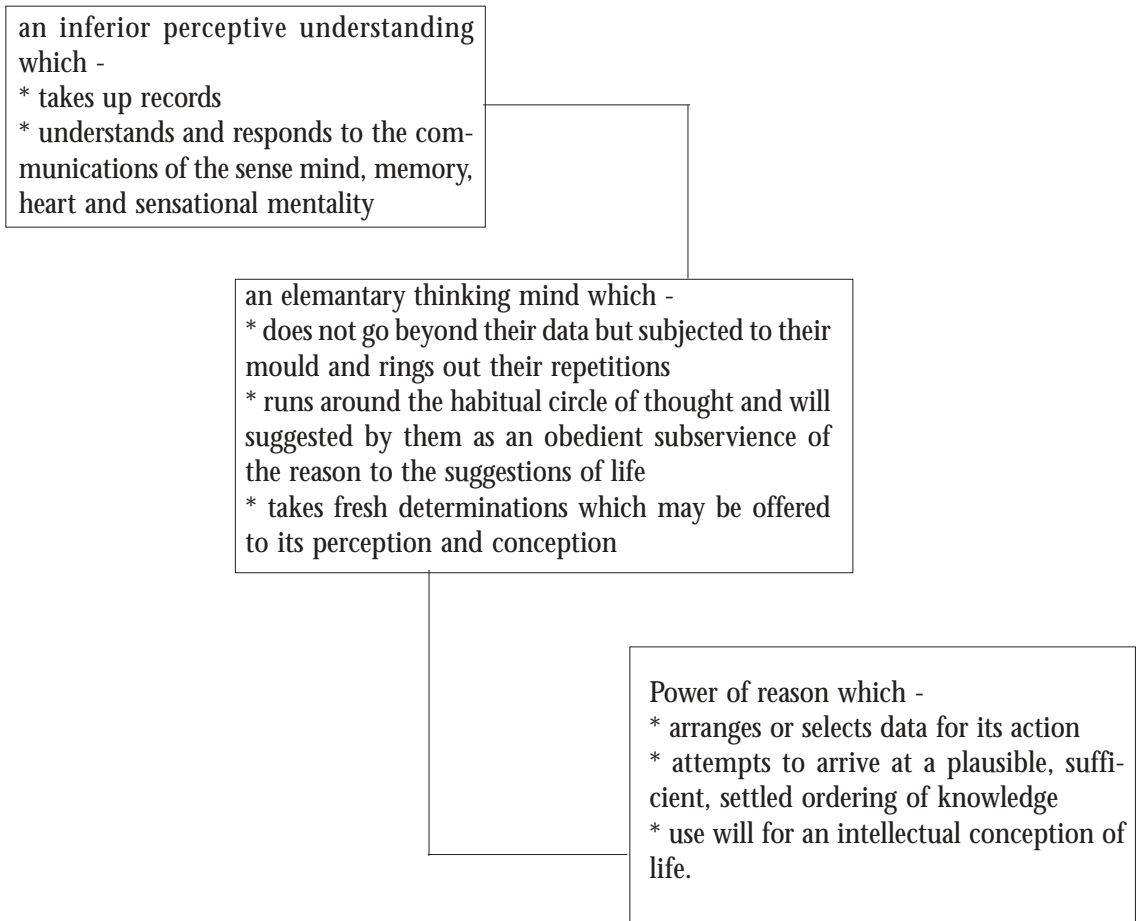
3. Externalising Mind  
(physical-mind)

with the expression of them in life (not only by speech, but by any form it can give).

### 3. Buddhi

“Buddhi is a construction of conscious being which quite exceeds its beginnings in the basic Chitta; it is the intelligence with its power of knowledge and will. Buddhi takes up and deals with all the rest of the action of the mind and life and body. It is in its nature thought power and will power of the Spirit turned into the lower form of a mental activity.” 19

Three successive gradations of the action of this intelligence:\*



## An Application

Following is a self assessment, self-check list. This may help you to understand, if you are more left brained or right brained.. Mark your answers with a 'tick' or 'cross' in the boxes:

- I like details
- I am always on time
- I am skilled at maths
- I rely on logic
- I write clearly
- Friends describe me as articulate
- Analysis is one of my strengths
- I am organised and disciplined
- I like lists
- I read a book starting at page one and go through in order
- I am highly imaginative
- I am good at brainstorming
- I often do or say the unexpected
- I love to doodle
- I read books at skipping around
- In school I was better at geometry than algebra
- I often loose track of time
- I prefer to look at the big picture and leave the details to someone else

[Note: If through this list if you conclude that you are more analytical, think in detail, use your logic, etc. then you are dominated by your left brain, on the other hand if you see things in whole or in big-picture or loose trac of your time and do the unexpected things then most probably you are dominated by your right brain.]

\*

Now it is important to understand each faculty in detail - what is it, what is the need of its development and some practical ways of developing it.

I once heard of a teacher of young children who instructed them in independence, self-help, observation, reasoning, language - all through a simple act of asking them to bring to her the object that was round and soft and yellow instead of naming it. Simple things like asking questions to evoke a reasoned response or recalling something observed nebulously - these and other acts of the teacher make the lesson more interesting, as well as help the students develop mental qualities and skills.

We take up the first faculty i.e. CONCENTRATION.

It is only when a child learns to put his effort to fix his attention on any perticular thing, further steps can be taken.

## MODULE II

### WHAT IS CONCENTRATION?

“Concentration consists precisely in removing the cloud. You gather together all the elements of your intelligence and fix them on one point, and then you do not even try actively to find the thing. All that you do is to concentrate in such a way as to see only the problem – but seeing not only its surface, seeing it in its depth, what it conceals. If you are able to gather together all your mental energies, bringing them to a point which is fixed on the enunciation of the problem, and you stay there, fixed, as though you were about to drill a hole in the wall, all of a sudden it will come. And this is the only way. If you try: Is it this, is it that, is it this, is it that?... You will never find any thing else or else you will need hours. You must get your mental forces to a point with strength enough to pierce through the words and strike upon the thing that is behind. There is a thing to be found; swoop down upon it.

... But here ninety-nine times out of a hundred, it is a kind of half inertia of the mind which makes you think that you have too much work. If you observe yourself, you will find out that there is something which pulls this way, something which pulls that way and then this kind of haziness as though you were living in cotton wool, in the clouds: nothing is clear.

The usefulness of work is nothing else but that: to crystallise this mental power. For, what you learn (unless you put it in practice by some work or deeper studies), half of what you learn, at least will vanish, disappear with time. But it leave behind one thing: the capacity of crystallising your thought, making something clear out of it, something precise, exact and organised. And that is true usefulness of work: to organise your cerebral capacity.” 19

### NEED TO DEVELOP THE FACULTY OF CONCENTRATION

“Concentration is necessary, first, to turn the whole will and mind from the discursive divagation natural to them, following a dispersed movement of thoughts, running after many branching desires, led away in the track of the senses and the outward mental response to phenomenon: we have to fix the will and the thought on the eternal and real behind all, and this demands an immense effort, a one-pointed concentration. Secondly, it is necessary in order to break down the veil which is erected by our ordinary mentality between ourselves and the truth; for outer knowledge can be picked up by the way, by ordinary attention and reception, but the inner, hidden and higher truth can only be seized by an absolute concentration of the mind on its object, an absolute concentration of the will to attain it and, once attained, to hold it habitually and securely unite oneself with it. For identification is the condition of complete knowledge and possession; it is the intense result of a habitual purified reflecting of the reality and an entire concentration on it; and it is necessary in order to break down entirely that division and separation of ourselves from the divine being and the eternal reality which is the normal condition of our unregenerated ignorant mentality.” 20

“Whatever you may want to do in life, one thing is absolutely indispensable and at the basis of every thing, the capacity of concentrating the attention. If you are able to gather together the rays of attention and consciousness on one point and can maintain this concentration with a persistent will, nothing can resist it – what ever it may be, from the most material physical development to the highest spiritual one. But this discipline must be followed in a constant and, it may be said, imperturbable way; not that you should always be concentrated on the same thing – that’s not what I mean, I mean learning to concentrate.

And materially, for studies, sports all, physical or mental development, it is absolutely indispensable. And the value of an individual is proportionate to the value of his attention.

And from the spiritual point of view it is still more important. There is no spiritual obstacle which can resist a penetrating power of concentration. For instance, the discovery of the psychic being, union with the inner Divine, opening to the higher spheres, all can be obtained by an intense and obstinate power of concentration – but one must learn how to do it.

There is nothing in human or even in the superhuman field, to which the power of concentration is not the key...

And everyone has in himself a tiny little beginning of it – it is given to everybody, but people do not cultivate it.” 21

## A NOTE FOR TEACHERS

“It cannot be gainsaid that what most impedes mental progress in the child is the constant dispersion of his thoughts. His thought flutters hither and thither like a butterfly and a great effort is required on his part to fix it. Yet the capacity is latent in him for when you succeed in making him interested, he is capable of a good deal of attention. It is therefore the skill of the educator that will gradually make the child capable of sustained effort of attention and a faculty of more and more complete absorption in the work while it is being done. All means are good that can develop this faculty of attention: they can be utilised according to need and circumstances, from games up to rewards. But it is the psychological action that is most important and the sovereign means is to rouse in the child interest in the thing that one wishes to teach, the taste for work, the will to progress. To love to learn is the most precious gift that one can make to a child: to love to learn always and everywhere. Let all circumstances, all happenings in life be occasions, constantly renewed, for learning more and ever more.

For that, the attention and concentration should be added observation, precision of recording and faithfulness of memory.” 22

## SOME ACTIVITIES

Any simple activity can become an aid to develop concentration, only the art lies in the skill of the teacher who must be clear of her aim and know how to make her lesson interesting for children.

### \* Mundane Activity

Take five minutes out while reading a book to develop your concentration. Bring all your attention on the first letter of the first sentence. Start observing that letter in great detail, its thickness, its proportion of thickness within a letter, its curve, its style, its bent and almost become the letter. Make a record how many letters you could observe carefully, the first time. Also close your eye and see those letters again. How many you could recall as exactly they were printed? Make a record of your progress. See what happens when you practice this exercise more and more.

Think of other ways how you can bring variations into this activity. What other materials can be used for such exercises.

### \* Stick Game

Take twelve thin five inches long sticks of the same size (if you want you can make them of different colours). Throw them together. Now try to pick them up one by one without moving or shaking any of the placed sticks. It could be of great fun if two people play together.

### \* An Outdoor Activity

Any walk together can become a means to work on one's and students concentration. Simple tips like concentrating on the different sounds, shades of colour can help oneself to develop attention. Questions like - what is the nearest/farthest sound that you can hear, can demand students to be attentive.

Similarly any aiming or listening game can become a resource to develop the student's concentration.

### \* Concentration through Meditation

Children can be taught to meditate through creative visualization (where they can even visualise their day in a creative way. Teachers can also ask them questions that can make their lesson interesting and help them solve their classroom problems), relaxation or introspective exercises. Children can be taught from the very beginning to go within to look for answers and pursue their questions, like 'who am I', 'what do I want to be', my potentiality etc.

A sample of guided introspection:

There is a secret and beautiful place within all of you. If you want to discover that land of beauty within you, Come I'll take you there. For that you must sit comfortably. Feel your body.., Is any part tensed or uncomfortable of your body? Take soft and long breaths as though you are inhaling the fragrance of white roses. Just feel the white bird of peace coming down to you and sitting in your mind and body. Remain absolutely calm, quiet, and comfortable. Let no thought or feelings create any wave within you. Now feel your heart and hear your heart beats till it becomes louder and louder. Then with each beat you will find a door opening in your heart. Whenever you feel ready just step inside and keep going till you pass through the second, third, and fourth door. And as you pass through all the doors you will come across a room with beautiful treasures in it. You will see different kind of treasures there, in many different forms, and colours. How are you feeling there, quiet, joyous, peaceful? Feel the Space there. Is it warm or cold.? What colours do you see? Is anyone calling you? Listen carefully, someone might be calling you softly and wanting to tell you something very special.... Collect everything from there as you might want to bring back the treasure with you. As you come back, watch the way carefully as you might want to go there again to bring back more treasures. Hold all your treasure carefully as you might would like to draw and create all you have seen and discovered.

Now it is important to remain quiet, and without talking otherwise you might loose out some of your treasures. Take a paper and colours and start drawing quietly. (A follow up drawing exercise can help them to remain that concentrated state with their eyes open.

**\* A Worksheet**

Upside-down drawings and opposite-handed drawings help us to free ourselves from habitual perceptions. Thus it can become an aid to develop concentration while drawing.

Looking at lines, shapes, shades, curves, etc. and draw.



NOW NEXT COMES THE FACULTY OF OBSERVATION

## MODULE III

### NEED TO DEVELOP THE FACULTY OF OBSERVATION

“The first qualities of the mind that have to be developed are those which can be grouped under observation. We notice some thing, ignore others. Even of what we notice, we observe very little. A general perception of an object is what we all usually carry away from a cursory half-attentive glance. A closer attention fixes its place, form nature as distinct from its surroundings. Full concentration of the faculty of observation gives us all the knowledge that the three chief senses can gather about the object, or if we touch or taste, we may gather all that the five senses can tell of its nature and properties. Those who make use of the sixth sense, the poet, the painter, the Yogin, can also gather much that is hidden from the ordinary observer. The scientist by investigation ascertains other facts open to minuter observation. These are components of the faculty of observation, and it is obvious that its basis is attention, which may be close or close or minute. We may gather much even from a passing glance at an object, if we have the habit of concentrating the attention and the habit of *sattwic* receptivity. The first thing the teacher has to do is to accustom the pupil to concentrate attention.” 23

### SELF-OBSERVATION

“Do not believe that it is such an easy thing, for to observe your thoughts, you must first all separate yourself from them. In the ordinary state, the ordinary man does not even know that he thinks. He thinks by habit. And if he is asked all of a sudden, “What are you thinking of?”, he knows nothing about it. That is to say, ninety-five times out of a hundred he will answer, “I do not know.” There is a complete identification between the movement of thought and the consciousness of the being.

To observe the thought, the first movement then is to step back and look at it, to separate yourself from your thoughts so that the movement of consciousness and that of thought may not be confused. Thus when we say that one must observe one’s thoughts, do not believe that it is so simple; it is the first step. I suggest that this evening in our meditation we take up this first exercise which consists in standing back from one’s thought and looking at it.” 24

### A NOTE FOR TEACHERS

“This faculty of observation can be developed by various and spontaneous exercises, making use of all opportunities that help to keep the child’s thought wakeful, alert, quick. The growth of the understanding much more than that of memory should be insisted upon. One knows only what one understands. Things learnt by heart, mechanically, get blurred little by little and finally fade away: you never forget what you understand. Moreover, you must never refuse to explain to a child the how and the why of things. If you cannot do it yourself, you must direct the child to those qualified to answer him or to books dealing with the question. It is in this way that you will progressively awake in the child the taste for real study and the habit of persistent effort to know.” 25

### SOME ACTIVITIES

Very often we don’t notice or notice very little, thus we do not remember things properly. However it does not require separate lessons to develop the observation power.

#### \* Mundane Activity

Models, structures, maps, flowers. Or even circumstances and events can be a occasion for one to draw, describe, present in precise detail. Simple questions like ‘ If a cow takes her first step from front left leg then which leg she will use next?’ Though child can use his or her reasoning to answer such questions

but it can make child awake and alert in the class as well as awaken an interest for the observation of mundane things. To make it more challenging for them the teacher can ask children to come up with such questions.

Now thinking of the subject you teach or the subject you are interested in prepare some questions that will help children to develop their observation. Incorporate it in your daily lesson plan.

Subject:

Topic:

Plan:

Aim:

Questions that will help children to be alert and develop observation:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

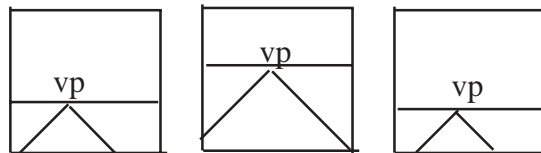
\* **Observation through Drawings:**

1. 3 views of an object – drawing an object from different views.
2. Perspective drawing -

Draw a horizontal line across your paper and label it “eye level”. Experiment by drawing it at different heights on your page (everything in a picture is drawn relative to eye level).

Place a dot near the centre and label it “VP” - vanishing point. Draw a straight line to each bottom corner of your paper. Notice the difference the eye levels make on the impression of the street.

Now create variations by drawing different shapes as well as things. Does it make sense? What do you observe?



\* **An Outdoor Activity**

Studying a moving object – observe minutely (bird or any moving creature) and state your observation.

\* **Theme observations**

Choose a topic that interests you and ask 10 questions about it. E.g. how does a bird fly – why does it have two wings? Why does it have feathers? Etc.

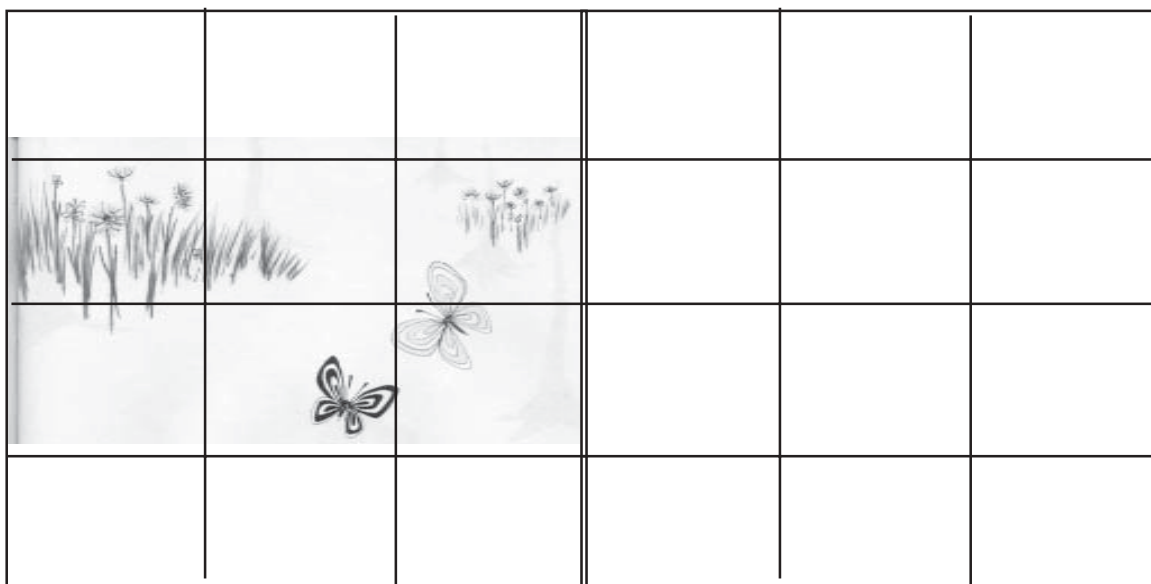
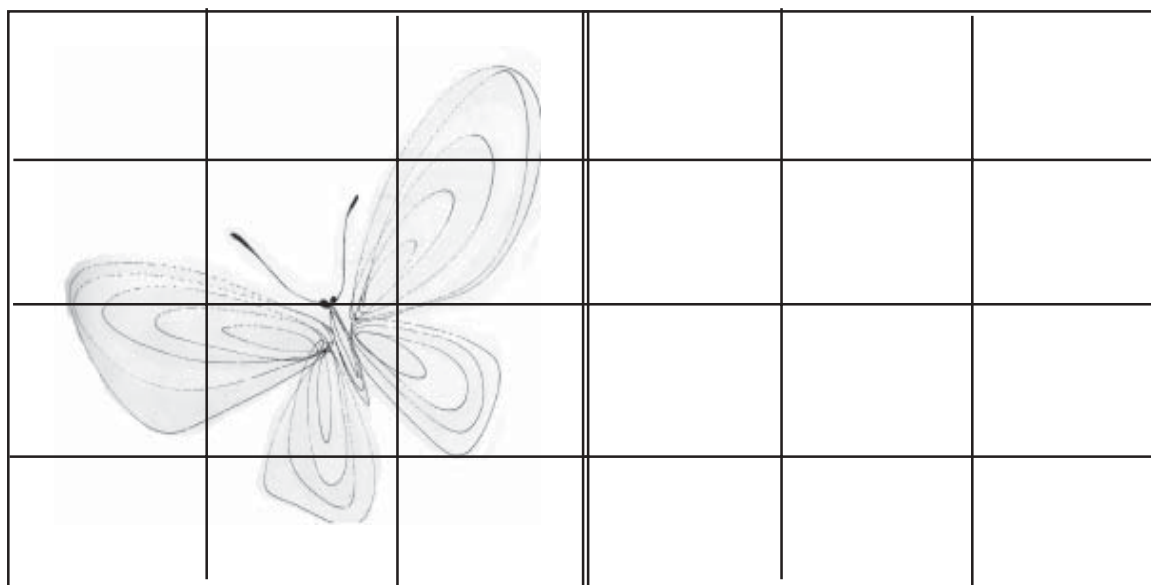
\* **Self-observation sheet**

- Set a target of the day.
- What did I achieve today?
- Was it less than what I could have achieved or more?
- What helped and what hindered?
- What did I learn today?
- What do I need to focus on next?

\* **Becoming aware –**

By simply introducing a diary or self-reflective journal in the class can help children to become aware of themselves. Teacher can think of ways of bringing variations. For example, make a list of 50 questions that are important to you. Review your list and choose 10 that seem most significant. Then rank them in importance from **one** to **ten**.

**\* A Worksheet for detailed Observation**



The above copy drawing inside the graph helps child to notice and record lines, curves dots etc. in detail. Think of ways how you can incorporate this technique in your lesson plan.

NOW COMES THE FACULTY OF MEMORY

## MODULE IV

Once the child learns to concentrate and observe things properly, the next capacity that is demanded from him is to remember them. So we need to know -

### WHAT IS MEMORY?

“Memory is a mental instrument and depends on the formation of the brain. Your brain is constantly growing, unless it begins to degenerate, but still its growth can continue for a very, very long time, much longer than that of the body. And in this growth, necessarily some things will take the place of others. And as the mental instrument develops, things which have served their term or the transitory moment in the development may be wiped out to give place to the results. So the result of all that you knew is there, living in itself, but the road traversed to reach it may be completely blurred. That is, a good functioning of the memory means remembering only the results so as to be able to have the elements of moving forward and a new construction. That is more important than just retaining things rigidly in the mind.

Now there is another aspect also. Beyond the mental memory, which is something defective, there are states of consciousness in which one happens to be registers the phenomena of that moment, what ever they may be. If your consciousness remains limpid, wide and strong, you can at any moment what so ever, by concentrating, call into the active consciousness what you did, thought, saw, observed at any time before; all this you can remember by bringing up in yourself the same state of consciousness. And that is never forgotten.” 26

“Memory is the indispensable aid of the mind to preserve its past observations, the memory of the individual but also of the race, whether in the artificial form of accumulated records or the general race memory preserving its gains with a sort of constant repetition and renewal and, an element not sufficiently appreciated, a latent memory that can under the pressure of various kinds of stimulation repeat under new conditions past movements of knowledge for judgement by the increased information and intelligence. The developed logical mind puts into order the action and resources of the human memory and trains it to make the utmost use of its materials.” 27

### HOW CAN MEMORY BE ENLARGED?

“Widen your consciousness and your memory will grow.

Consciousness is much higher memory than the mechanical brain memory. I explained this to you one day, not so very long ago. I told you that the mechanical brain memory can forget – can confuse and deform – but if you are able to establish in you once again the state of consciousness in which you were at a given moment, you have exactly the same experience. And that is only the true memory. And this depends entirely on the development of your consciousness” 28

### A NOTE FOR TEACHERS

“The student should not be made to repeat the same lesson over again in order to remember it. This is a mechanical, burdensome and unintelligent way of training the memory. A similar but different flower should be put in the hands and he should be encouraged to note it with the same care, but with the avowed object of nothing the similarities and differences. By this practice daily repeated the memory will naturally be trained. Not only so, but the mental centres of comparison and contrast will be developed.

The learner will begin to observe as a habit the similarities of things and their differences. The teacher should take every care to encourage the perfect growth of this faculty and habit." 29

## SOME ACTIVITIES

To train the power to retain and recall, we can phrase questions in a way where one may recall what one has experienced or understood rather than parrot out the text book. Especially with younger kids it can be done during an informal chat where they may recall what was the colour of the dress they wore last night, what they had for breakfast, or when they woke up what their parents were doing. Memory is not only equivalent to the capacity to retain factual information as we understand from our school experience there is much more to it.

### \* Utilise your Memory Power

The faculty of memory gives teacher an opportunity to see what and how much students have assimilated. Because what is interesting for children and what one understands once, never forgets. During the lesson the teacher can keep phrasing questions to check if students are following her or not. An easy way is to give lots of examples during the lesson and also ask students to come up with more examples. A self-check list can also be given to children to understand the types of things they forget easily.

For instance, I usually forget my,

- ☒ appointments
- ☒ outings
- ☒ homework
- ☒ school
- ☒ holidays
- ☒ answers asked in the classroom
- ☒ eating medicine
- ☒ going to hobby club
- ☒ extra class
- ☒ papers during my exams, etc.

[note: students themselves can be asked to come up with solutions to their problems. Or a remembrance pad can also be introduced according to the need]



### \* Mind Mapping, a way to remember things

- Think of something you would like to remember.
- Put all points of your subject in detail. Use images to give expressions to it.
- Use colour or different images to highlight important points.
- When you complete it, put it aside. Take a blank sheet of paper and try to re-create it.
- Do this until you can re-create your original in detail.
- When you rest visualise mental images with the content until the mental images match your content.
- Now you are ready to recall every thing!

### \* Design a Worksheet:

Children can design their own work cards as assimilation exercise after the lesson. They can also exchange their cards amongst themselves to answer questions. Following are the points that teacher must remember while designing a worksheet for students to enhance their memory:

- Ensure that all information that was given during the lesson is incorporated in the worksheet.
- Form questions in a way that students are able to answer in their own words.
- Give students a possibility to workout a further plan based on their previous knowledge.
- Ensure that their presentation explains what they did and how they did.

Now design a worksheet on the topic that you are going to take tomorrow. Consider all the above points.

## MODULE V

### WHAT IS IMAGINATION?

“This is a most important and indispensable instrument. It may be divided into three functions, the forming of mental images, the power of creating thoughts, images and imitations or new combinations of existing thoughts, the appreciation of the soul in things, beauty charm, greatness, hidden suggestiveness, the emotion and spiritual life that pervades the world. This is in every way as important as the training of the faculties which observe and compare outward things. But that demands a separate and fuller treatment.” 30

“Imagination is a power of formation. In fact, people who have no imagination are not formative from the mental point of view, they cannot give a concrete power to their thought. Imagination is a very powerful means of action. For instance, If you have a pain somewhere and if you imagine that you are making the pain disappear or are removing it or destroying it – all kinds of images like that – well, you succeed perfectly.” 31

### USE OF IMAGINATION

“If one knows how to use it, as I said, one can create for oneself his own inner and outer life; one can build his own existence with his imagination, if one knows how to use it and has a power. In fact it is an elementary way of creating, of forming things in the world. I have always felt that if one didn't have the capacity of imagination he would not make any progress. Your imagination always goes ahead of your life. When you think of yourself, usually you imagine what you want to be, don't you, and this goes ahead, then you follow, then it continues to go ahead and you follow. Imagination opens for you the path of realisation. People who are not imaginative – it is very difficult to make them move; they see just what is there before their nose, they feel just what they are moment by moment and they cannot go forward because they are clamped by the immediate thing. It depends a good deal on what one calls imagination. However...

*Men of science must have imagination!*

A lot. Otherwise they would never discover anything. In fact, what is called imagination is a capacity to project oneself outside realised things and towards things realisable, and then to draw them by the projection. One can obviously have progressive and regressive imaginations. There are people who always imagine all the catastrophes possible, and unfortunately they also have the power of making them come. It's like an antennae going into a world that's not yet realised, catching something there and drawing it here. Then naturally it is an addition to the earth atmosphere and these things tend towards manifestation. It is an instrument which can be disciplined, can be used at will; one can discipline it, direct it, orient it. It is one of the faculties one can develop in himself and render serviceable, that is, use for definite purposes.” 32

### POWER OF IMAGINATION

“The imagination is really the power of mental formation. When this power is put at the service of the Divine, it is not only formative but also creative. There is, however, no such thing as an unreal formation, because every image is a reality on the mental plane. The plot of a novel, for instance, is all there on the mental plane existing independently of the physical. Each of us is a novelist to a certain extent and possesses the capacity to make forms on that plane; and, in fact, a good deal of our life embodies the products of our imagination. Every time you indulge your imagination in an unhealthy way, giving a

form to your fears and anticipating accidents and misfortunes, you are undermining your own future. On the other hand, the more optimistic your imagination, the greater the chance of realising your aim. Monsieur Coue got hold of this potent truth and cured hundreds of people by simply teaching them imagine themselves out of misery. ...

The imagination is like a knife which may be used for good or evil purposes." 33

## A NOTE FOR TEACHERS

"An interesting reply brings in its train others and the child, his attention attracted, learns without effort much more than what he usually does on the school bench. A careful and intelligent selection should also give him a taste for healthy reading which is at once instructive and attractive. Fear nothing that awakes and satisfies his imagination; it is imagination that develops the creative mental faculty and it is through that study becomes a living thing and the mind grows in joy." 34

## SOME ACTIVITIES

Usually when a child asks a question or rather wants an answer to a problem, as teachers or as an adult we are in the habit of providing ready made answers, thus killing their special power of problem solving. A few added helping questions from an adult can help children to become curious and encourage them to solve problems in a creative manner.

### \* Create a learning environment

What happens to kids who ask too many questions in the class? Teachers don't need to be an encyclopedias to answer all questions. Students question itself can become a means for a teacher to develop self-quarry and initiate a process of creative problem-solving in students. A few added interesting questions like, 'why is the sky blue', 'why do birds have feathers', 'what would have happen if you had one eye at the place of your nose and two nose at the place of your eyes', 'what is the biggest mistake you have ever made', 'if I'll give my brain to my computer how will it work', etc. from the teacher can make the class a joyous learning space.

Now form at least five interesting questions thinking of the scope of your subject that you can ask in your class. Also make a follow up questionnaire that will help children to take adventure into the questions asked. This will also ensure the learning outcome of the class.

### \* Poetry and Literature

Such subjects give ample opportunities to a teacher to work on the aesthetics, rhythm, creativity and imagination of children. In a poetry class teacher can ask children to listen to the rhythm and the words of the poetry and ask them to visualise and then narrate or write their feelings.

A writers plot itself can become a plot for students to use their imagination and create their own plot.

### \* Open Ended Questions

Questions can be prepared, selected and formed in away that it does not have one answer. And students can come up with all different answers from their own imagination.

Some samples:

- How does a person looks when he smiles without teeth?
- If I have to ask you to travel inside your body - what all you would see their? Describe it in detail - colours, shapes, structures, feelings, etc.
- If you have to travel in space and time - 50 years ahead of the present time, what all you will see? (you can give some hints) - In terms of clothes people will wear, environment, houses, schools, family, etc. Or one can also choose an object or a theme that the child is interested in and ask them to design. For instance, a model of a car, what special capacity it would have?
- If plants knew how to speak what they would have said to man?
- If an alien comes to you how would you greet them?

**\* Creative visualisation**

This can be used as a tool and a power to solve any problem and come in touch with one's goal (immediate or future).

**A sample:**

Take comfortable position. Take a few deep breaths to relax yourself. Close your eyes so that you are not distracted. Make your body relaxed, each part relaxed. Relax your toes... feet... calf... knees... stomach... hips... back... chest... shoulders.... fingers... hands.... neck... face... head... See if any part of your body is heavy or tensed make it light and relaxed. When you are absolutely calm and relaxed, then question your self what are you afraid of? Now again ask yourself why you feel afraid? Now imagine that there is a huge fire in front of you and you are throwing all your fears in that fire and slowly it is disappearing. feel that you have no fear now and it has disappeared from your body. How do you feel without it. How is your body feeling? How is your face looking?

Is there any image or feeling that comes to you? Keep it with yourself. Now imagine what you want to be. Now take strength from that same fire and see yourself becoming, what you truly want to be. See yourself that you are no more afraid of staying alone or you are not afraid of asking questions in the class.....

**\* A Worksheet**

Give them half drawing or half scene or half structure and ask them to finish it from their own imagination or create a story around it.



## MODULE VI

### WHAT IS REASONING?

“The characteristic power of the reason in its fullness is a logical movement assuring itself first of all available materials and data by observation and arrangement, then acting upon them for a resultant knowledge gained, assured and enlarged by a first use of the reflective powers, and lastly assuring itself of the correctness of its resultant knowledge gained, assured and enlarged by a first use of the reflective powers, and lastly assuring itself of the correctness of its results by a more careful and formal action, more vigilant, deliberate, severely logical which tests, rejects or confirms them according to certain secure standards and processes developed by reflection and experience.” 35

### NEED TO TRAIN THE FACULTY OF REASONING

“The training of logical reason must necessarily follow the training of the faculties which collect the material on which the logical reason must work. Not only so but the mind must have some development of the faculty of dealing with words before it can deal with successfully with ideas.... For the logical reason cannot proceed without premises. It either infers from facts to a conclusion, or from previously formed conclusion to a fresh one, or from one fact to another. It either induces, deduces or simply infers.

There are three elements necessary to correct reasoning: first, the correctness of the facts or conclusion I start from, secondly, the completeness as well as the accuracy of the data I start from, thirdly, the elimination of other possible or impossible conclusions from the same facts.” 36

“The first business of the logical reason is therefore a right, careful and complete observation of its available material and data. The first and easiest field of data open to our knowledge is the world of Nature, of physical objects made external to it by the separative action of mind, things not ourself and therefore only indirectly knowable by an interpreting of our sense perceptions, by observation, accumulated experience, inference and reflective thinking.” 37

“And Sri Aurobindo puts reason at the summit of man’s mental activity; he tells us that in the development of mind, reason is the surest guide, the master, so to speak, who prevents you from deviating from the path or taking the wrong one, from straying away and losing your common sense. He makes reason the arbiter of man’s mental activity, which guides and controls; and so long as you have to deal with mental activities, even the most speculative, it is reason which must guide you and prevent you from going astray from the right path and entering more or less fantastic and unhealthy imaginations.” 38

“But before one reaches a higher state of consciousness, there is a stage where one can develop in oneself the faculty of reason – a clear, precise, logical reason sufficiently objective in the vision of things. And when one has developed this reason well, all impulses, feelings, desires, all disturbances can be put in the presence of this reason and that makes you reasonable. Most people, when something troubles them, become very unreasonable. When, for example, they are ill, they pass their time saying, “Oh, how ill I am, how frightful it is; is it going to last like that all the time?” And naturally it gets worse and worse. Or when some misfortune befalls them, they cry out: “It is only to me that these things and I was thinking that every thing was fine before”, and they burst into a fit of tears, a fit of nerves. Well, not to speak of superman, in man himself there is a higher capacity called reason, which is able to look at things calmly, coolly, reasonably. And this reason tells you, “Don’t worry, that will improve nothing, you must not grumble, you must accept the thing since it has come.” Then you immediately become calm. It is a very good mental training, it develops judgement, vision’ objectivity and at the same time it has a very healthy action upon your character. It helps you to avoid the ridiculousness of giving way to your nerves and lets you behave like a reasonable person.” 39

## A NOTE FOR THE TEACHERS

“In order to increase the suppleness and comprehensiveness of his mind, one should not only look to the number and variety of subjects for study, but particularly to the diverse approaches to the same subject; by this means the child will be made to understand in a practical way that there are many ways of facing the same intellectual problem, dealing with it and solving it. The brain will thus be free from all rigidity and, at the same time, thought will gain in richness and suppleness and be made ready for a more complex and comprehensive synthesis. In this way also the child will be imbued with the sense of the extreme relativity of mental knowledge and, little by little, an aspiration will be awakened in him for a truer source of knowledge.” 40

### SOME ACTIVITIES

Reason is a faculty that provides us the scope to widen our mental horizons and take the leap forward. Thus must be utilised properly. All subjects can become an aid to develop reasoning. We only have to ask - “what”, “why”, and “how”. Asking ‘WHY’ can become an important tool to get into the bottom of any issue.

#### \* A Mundane Activity

Every day investigations and estimations are easy ways of developing reasoning in children. Teacher can take some care while framing questions for children. So that they don't need to spend extra time and energy in making resources. Mundane questions like -

Is every apple in this basket is of same size?

What features would an ideal car have?

Which ball out of this four will roll downhill fastest?

In how many ways can you describe a year?

What all thing you have to plan to call all your class friends in your birthday party? And so on..

Now write down ten questions that will help children to reason and that you can ask children tomorrow during your class.

#### \* A Self Reflective Activity

Reason out the following questions. (Variations can be done according to the aims of set for an activity.)

- What are my goals?
- What resources will I need?
- How much time will I devote to it?
- Where can I find people who can help me in achieving my goals?
- What obstacles must I overcome?
- what activities can help me in achieving my goal?

#### \* Observe and Question

Children can be asked to maintain a record book for their observations with their own comments.

Teacher can introduce a journal as part of their subject study.

A Sample:

Observation: I saw two birds with different beaks.

Comments: The bird with a short beak might eat on the ground.

The bird with a long beak might take food from the pool or river.

#### \* A Word Game

This can be played any where and any time. One participant becomes the leader and he is been asked to think of any thing under the sun. The group has to frame questions in such a way that they should be able to find out what the leader has thought. The leader can only answer in ‘yes’ or ‘no’.

A sample:

Word thought: Flower

Questions:

1. Is it part of the earth. - yes
2. Is it a non living thing - no
3. Does it move on its own. - no
4. Are they in many colours - yes and so on..

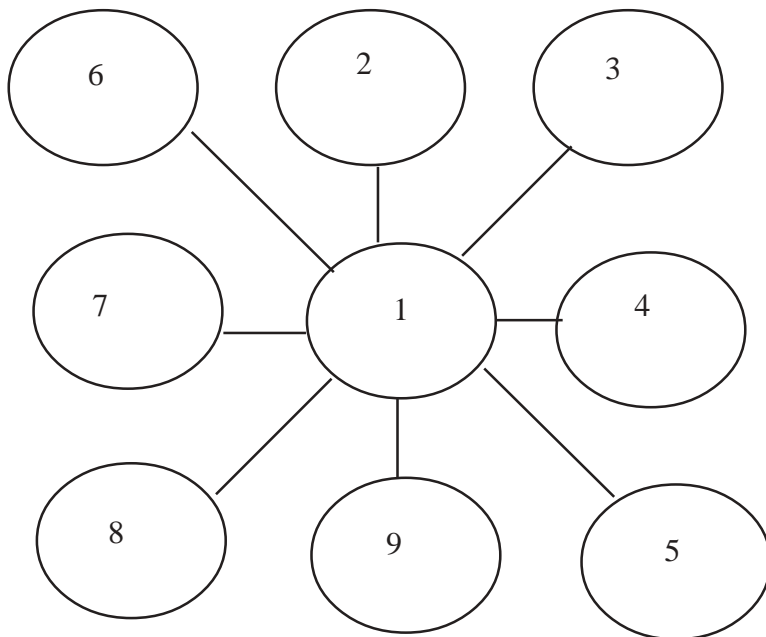
(With some variations this game can also be introduced to see if the students are understanding what are they thought. Also this can be played on a particular chapter.)

\* **Mathemagical worksheets**

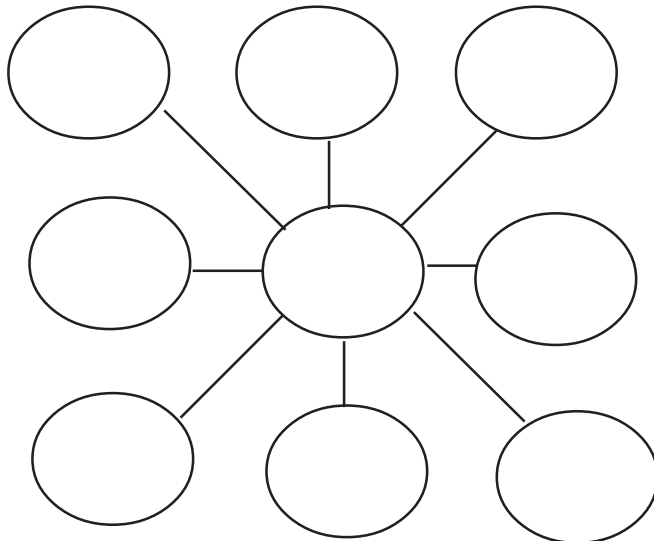
Little magic wheel: Use the numbers 1-9 so that each of the four rows has the same sum.

A Sample:

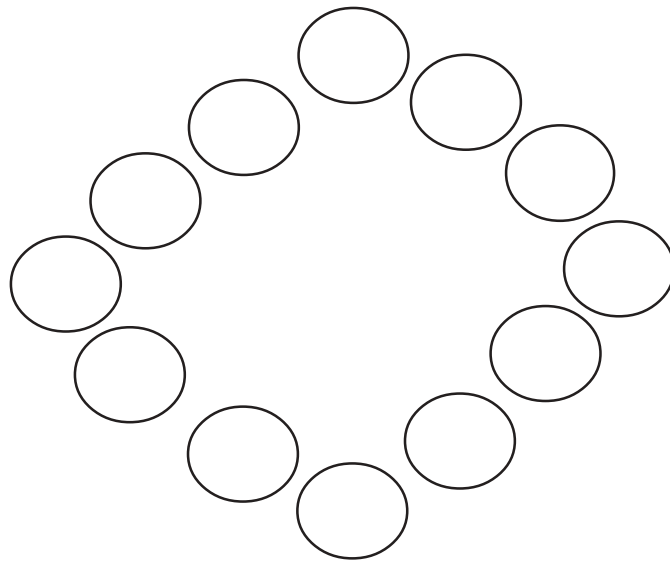
Sum = 12



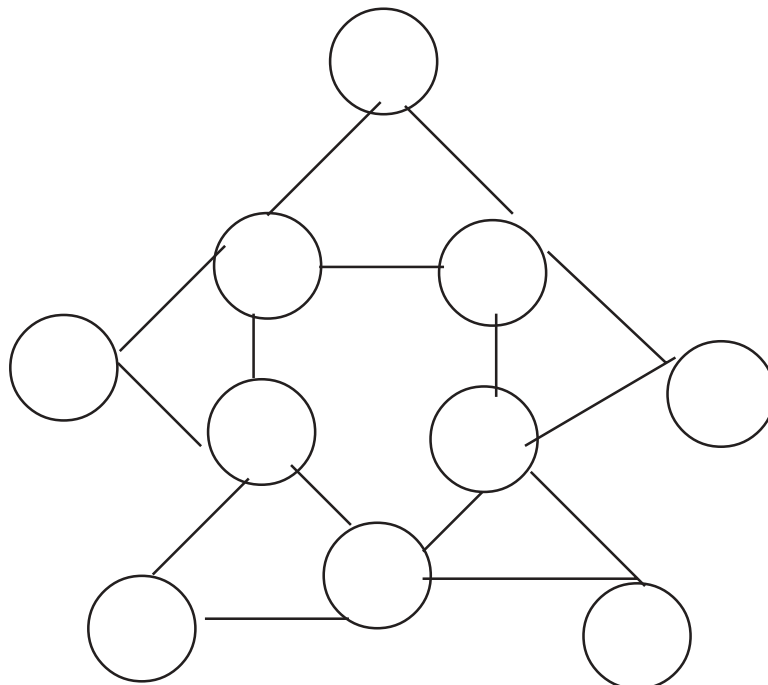
Use the numbers 1-9 so that each of the four rows has the same sum and that is 15.



You must make it more challenging for children as they start solving it. For example -  
Use the numbers 1 -12 in the following 'Magic Diamond'. Each row must equal the same sum.



Use the numbers 1-12 except 7 and 11. Each of the five rows must equal 24.



## MODULE VII

Now we move to another faculty of our mind and that is judgement.

### ON JUDGMENT

“As a rule, everything is thought to be all right when judgements are based on a thorough technical knowledge and on a sufficient degree of impartiality. These judgements rely on sense-perception, which is normally considered incontrovertible. In fact, however, this mode of perception is in itself uncertain. The sense-organs are directly under the influence of the psychological state of the individual who uses them, and thus the sense perceptions are altered, falsified, distorted in one way or another by the perceiver’s feelings towards the things perceived.” 41

Thus for a proper mental education, and especially for the development of the faculty of judgement we cannot deny the importance of the training of the senses. And this itself is a different subject of study for a teacher.

### A NOTE FOR THE TEACHERS

“The judgement will naturally be trained along with the other faculties. At every step the boy will have to decide what is the right idea, measurement, appreciation of colour, sound, scent, etc., and what is wrong. Often the judgements and distinctions made will have to be exceedingly subtle and delicate. At first many errors will be made, but the learner should be taught to trust his judgement without being attached to its results. It will be found that the judgement will soon begin to respond to the calls made on it, clear itself of all errors and begin to judge correctly and minutely. The best way is to accustom the boy to compare his judgements with those of others. When he is wrong, it should at first be pointed out to him how far he was right and why he went wrong; afterwards he should be encouraged to note these things for himself. Every time he is right, his attention should be prominently and encouragingly called to it so that he may get confidence.” 42

### SOME ACTIVITIES

Thus we see judgement is a faculty where most of our senses and faculties are involved. So proper training of the senses and other faculties help children to develop the faculty of judgement. Activities on compare, contrast and discrimination help children to refine their judgement. Thus again most of our interactions and subjects give us opportunity to help them move towards correct judgement. But for that as an adult or as a teacher we must be careful to be sincere, unbiased and trustworthy.

#### \* **A Mundane Activity**

If we are clear of our aim then any simple activity of art and craft (for example, to be able to judge the combinations of right colours), maths (estimations - to be able to organise required number of things), social sciences (compare - events, periods, culture, etc.) or even a simple sharing becomes a tool to work upon it.

#### \* **Solving class room problems**

The common problems which a teacher faces in a class can be solved if it can be introduced to children as an activity where a child becomes a judge and the class in two groups presents their views. Teacher emphasises on the discriminating power without making it a personal issue for himself as well as for the students.

Same way literature as well as social sciences give us ample occasions where we can use this technique to develop judgement in children.

Students’ personal problems can also be solved in this manner.

## MODULE VIII

### INTUITION

“... when the human will intervenes and changes something, that seems to you quiet natural, because you have been accustomed to it from your childhood; you remember, don't you, the example I gave you the other day: a stone falls according to the law of its own determinism, but you wish to interrupt its fall and you stretch out your hand and catch it; well you ought to call this a “miracle”, but you don't because you are used to it (but a rat or a dog would perhaps call it a miracle if they could speak). And note that it is the same for what people call a “miracle”; they speak of a “miracle” because they are absolutely ignorant, unaware of the gradations between the will which wants to express itself and the plane on which it expresses itself...

There is a “miracle” because you do not give people time to see the procedure by which you do things, you do not show them the stages. Thus, some men have reached higher mental regions and do not need to follow step by step all the gradations of thought; they can jump from one idea to a far distant inference without the intermediary links; this is usually called intuition (it is not all together an “intuition”, it is that the idea, to begin with, is at a great height and from there these people can see while descending the whole totality of things and consequences without passing through all the gradations as ordinary human thought is obliged to do).” 43

“The scientist, who gets an inspiration revealing to him a new truth, receives it from the intuitive mind. The knowledge comes as a direct perception in the higher mental plane illuminated by some other light still farther above.” 44

### REMAIN SILENT

“... to know how to remain silent before what one does not understand is one of the things which would help most in the progress – to know how to remain silent, not only externally, without uttering a word, but assert its ignorance with its usual presumptuousness, does not try to understand with an instrument that is incapable of understanding, that it may know its own weakness and open simply, quietly, waiting until the time has come for it to receive the light, because only the Light, the true Light, can give it understanding. It is not all that it has learnt nor all that it has observed nor all its so-called experience of life, it is something else which is completely beyond it. And until this something else – which is the expression of the grace – manifests within it, if, very quietly, very modestly the mind remains silent and does not try to understand and, above all, to judge, the things would go *much* faster.

The noise made by all the words, all the ideas in your head is so deafening that it prevents you from hearing the truth when it wants to manifest.

To learn to be quiet and silent... When you have a problem to solve, instead of turning over in your head all the possibilities, all the consequences, all the possible things one should or should not do, if you remain quiet with an aspiration for goodwill, if possible a need for goodwill, the solution comes very quickly. And you are silent you are able to hear it.

When you are caught in a difficulty, try this method: instead of becoming agitated, turning overall the ideas and actively seeking solutions, of worrying, fretting, running here and there inside your head – I don't mean externally, for externally you probably have enough common sense not to do that! But inside in your head – *remain quiet*. And according to your nature, with ardour or peace, with intensity or widening or with all these together, implore the Light and wait for it to come.” 45

## HOW DOES IT MANIFEST?

Um! How does it manifest? It is something which takes place without any reasoning, any analysis, any deduction. Suddenly one knows a thing, without having reasoned, without having analysed, without deducing, without having reflected, without having made use of one's brain, without having put together the elements of the problem and tried to resolve them – it is not like that. All of a sudden it comes like a light in the consciousness; it can be in the head, it can be lower down, elsewhere; it is a light in the consciousness which brings a precise knowledge on a particular point and it is not at all a result of analysis and deductions. In fact, it is the first manifestation of the knowledge by identity..." 46

## THE FACULTY OF THE FUTURE

"This faculty which is exceptional, almost abnormal now, will certainly be quiet common and natural for the new race, the man of tomorrow. But probably the constant exercise of it will be detrimental to the reasoning faculties. As man possesses no more the extreme physical ability of the monkey, so also will the superman lose the extreme mental ability of man, this ability to deceive himself and others." 47

## A NOTE FOR TEACHERS

"The fact is that, like all the other parts of the human being, the mind too needs rest and this rest it will not have unless we know how to give it. The art of giving rest to one's mind is a thing to be acquired. Changing mental activity is a way of rest; but the greatest possible rest lies in silence. And in the case of mental faculties, a few minutes passed in the calm of silence mean a more effective rest than hours of sleep.

When one will have learnt to silence the mind at will and concentrate it in the receptive silence, then there will be no problem that one cannot solve, no mental difficulty to which a solution will not be found. Thought, while in agitation, becomes confused and impotent; in an attentive tranquility, the light can manifest itself and open new horizons to man's capacity." 48

## SOME ACTIVITIES

### \* Establishing Peace in the Mind

A few minutes exercise done before starting a class can make teacher as well as students well receptive and readiness for learning. And it can also help in developing concentration in a great deal.

#### A sample:

Today we are going to learn to Meditate. And learn how to silence the mind. What does it mean to silence the mind? It means not to let any thought come and disturb you. What happens when you do your lessons, while solving a math problem, so many thoughts come and disturb you. You start thinking about your friends, about your toys, and about where you will be going for weekends and all that. And you are not able to focus on the thing that you are supposed to do. Do you know why it happens and why you need to learn to stop these thoughts of entering in you? Have you seen great sports star or any body who has achieved something in their field, have you noticed how they work or or how they play? Just imagine if they start thinking of all these while playing their game what will happen!!! I am sure you won't enjoy their game...

You know our mind is just like an antennae. As we train to tune it, it will respond accordingly. If we want it to catch every thing from all different direction it will do so, but if we want it to catch only one thing at a time it can also do so.

Have you heard the saying "Let us be silent, that we may hear the whispers of God."

It is by the practice that you learn to silence your mind. And once you learn to silence your mind you will see even in the midst of something you are able to concentrate and study. You will understand quicker and better. And because you will understand better you will not forget whatever you have learnt.

That is why it is important to train your mind to become silent in order to learn better. And all this can be done by a simple exercise of “calling peace”.

“First of all, you must want it. To want to be peaceful. And then you must try to persevere... continue trying. There is another way also. You sit quietly, to begin with; and then, instead of thinking of fifty things, you begin saying to yourself, ‘Peace, peace, peace, peace, calm, peace.’

You imagine peace and calm. You aspire, ask that it may come: ‘Peace, peace, calm.’

And then, when something comes and touches you and acts, say quietly, like this, ‘Peace, peace, calm.’ Do not look at the thoughts, do not listen to the thoughts...

You must not pay attention to everything that comes. You know when someone bothers you a great deal and you want to get rid of him, you don’t listen to him, do you? You turn your head away and think of something else.

Well, you must do that: when thoughts come you must not look at them, must not listen to them, must not pay any attention at all, you must behave as though they do not exist.

And then, repeat all the time like a kind of – how shall I put it? – as an idiot does, who repeats the same thing always: ‘Peace, peace, peace...’ Do this while getting up in the morning, do this in the evening when going to bed. If you want to digest your food properly... you can’t imagine how much this helps your digestion! Before beginning to eat you sit quietly for a while and say, ‘Peace, peace, peace!’ and everything becomes calm. It seems as though all the noises were going far, far, far away.” 49

#### \* Shloks

As you know Sanskrit Slokas or mantras have power of realisation, if done with the true aspiration and correct pronunciation. Thus it can also be used as a tool to develop silence, receptivity and peace. We can choose shlokas according to our need.

A Shloka for Students:

Asato ma sad gamaya

असतो मा सद्गमय

Tamaso ma jyotir gamaya

तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय

Mrityor ma amritam gamaya

मृत्योर्मा मृतम् गमय

## CONCLUSION

*“Every child is a lover of interesting narrative, a hero worshipper and a patriot. Appeal to these qualities in him and through them let him master without knowing it the living and human parts of his nation’s history. Every child is an enquirer, an investigator, analyser, a merciless anyomists. Appeal to those qualities in him and let him acquire without knowing it is the right temper and the necessary fundamental knowledge of the scientist. Every child has an insatiable intellectual curiosity and turn for mataphysical enquiry. Use it to draw him on slowly to an understanding of the world and himself. Every child has the gift of imaginative power. Use it to give him the groundwork of the faculty of the artist.”*

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## APPENDIX

### THE STAGES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF MIND

“A true education of the mind, that which will prepare mans for a higher life, has five principal phases. Normally these phases follow one after another, but in exceptional individuals they may alternate or even proceed simultaneously. These five phases, in brief, are:

- Development of the power of concentration, the capacity of attention.
- Development of the capacities of expansion, wideness, complexity and richness.
- Organisation of ideas around a central idea or a higher ideal or a supremely luminous idea that will serve as a guide in life.
- Thought control, rejection of undesirable thoughts, so that one may, in the end think only what one wants and when one wants it.
- Development of mental silence, perfect calm and a more and more total receptivity to inspirations coming from the higher regions of the being.”

### COMMON ERRORS IN UNDERSTANDING THE TERM “MIND”

“The “Mind” in the ordinary use of the word covers indiscriminately the whole consciousness, for man is a mental being and mentalises everything; but in the language of this yoga the words “mind” and “mental are used to connote specially the part of the nature which has to do with cognition and intelligence, with ideas, with mental or thought perceptions, the reactions of thought to things, with the truly mental movements and formations, mental visions and will etc., that are part of his intelligence...

There are several capital and common errors here:-

1. That mind and spirit are the same thing.
2. That all consciousness can be spoken of as “mind”.
3. That all consciousness therefore is of a spiritual substance.
4. That body is merely Matter, nor conscious, therefore something quite different from the spiritual part of the nature.

First, the spirit and the mind are two different things and should not be confused together. The mind is an instrumental entity or instrumental consciousness whose function is to think and perceive – the spirit is an essential entity or consciousness which does not need to think or perceive either in the mental or the sensory way, because what ever knowledge it has is direct or essential knowledge, *svayamprakasa*.

Next, it follows that all consciousness is not necessarily of a spiritual make and it need not be true and is not true that the thing commanding and the thing commanded are the same, are not at all different, are of the same substance and therefore are bound or at least ought to agree together.

Third, it is not even true that it is the mind which is commanding the mind and finds itself disobeyed by itself. First, there are many parts of the mind, each a force in itself with its formations, functionings, interests, and they may not agree. One part of the mind may be spiritually influenced and like to think of the Divine and obey the spiritual impulse, another part may be rational or scientific or literary and prefer to follow the formations, beliefs or doubts, mental preferences and interests which are in conformity with its education and its nature...

Finally, the body obeys the mind automatically in those things in which it is formed or trained to obey it, but the relation of the body to the mind is not in all things that of an automatic perfect instrument. The body also has a consciousness of its own and, though it is a submental instrument or servant consciousness, it can disobey or fail to obey as well. In many things, in matters of health and illness for instance, in all automatic functionings, the body acts on its own and is not a servant of the mind. If it is fatigued, it can offer a passive resistance to the mind’s will. It can cloud the mind with *tamas*, inertia, dullness, fumes of the subconscious so that the mind cannot act... All this proves that there is a body-consciousness which can do things at the mind’s order, but has to be awakened, trained, made a good and conscious instrument.”

## UNDERSTANDING TERMS RELATED TO MIND

### Intellect

“The intellect, in its true nature, is an instrument of expression and action. It is something like an intermediary between the true knowledge, whose seat is in the higher regions above the mind, and realisation here below. The intellect or, generally speaking, the mind gives the form; the vital puts the dynamism and life-power; the material comes in last and embodies.”

### Thoughts

“If we do not see thought, it is because its substance is more ethereal than that of light; just as, if we do not hear light, it is because its essence is more subtle than that of sound.

“Among the elements of its own order, thought moves just as our bodies do among physical objects. Just as our hands know how to shape these objects, in the same way thought also knows how to mould these elements and cast them into a myriad appropriate forms.

“Thus intellectual gestures are no less fruitful than our physical gestures. And that is why wisdom has always taught that we must watch over our thoughts as we would over generating acts.”

“So we see that thought, which is a dynamism in the highest sense of the word, acts in its own realm as a formative power in order to build a body for itself. It acts like a magnet on iron filings. It attracts all the elements which are akin to its own character, aim and tendencies, and it vivifies these elements – which are the constituent cells of its own body, that I shall call fluidic to avoid going into too many explanations – it animates them, moulds them, gives them the form which is best suited to its own nature.”

“The first is that thought is a living, active, autonomous entity.

The second is that in order to contend victoriously with the injuriously effects of the polluted mental atmosphere in which we live, we must build up within ourselves a pure, luminous and powerful intellectual synthesis.

For this purpose we must bring down into ourselves the highest thoughts within our reach, that is, within the field of our mental activity, and make them our own.

But since thoughts are living beings, they have, as we do, their likes and dislikes, their attractions and repulsions.

We must therefore adopt a special attitude toward them, treat them as people, make advances and concessions to them and show them the same attentions as we would to someone we would wish to be our friend.”

“You cannot think powerfully of something without your thought taking a form. But if you were to believe that this form was physical, that would obviously be an error, yet it really does exist in the mental world.”

### Thought and Will

“In reality thought is only a scout and pioneer; it can guide but not command or effectuate. The leader of the journey, the captain of the march, the first and most ancient priest of our sacrifice is the Will. This Will is not the wish of the heart or the demand or preference of the mind to which we often give the name. It is that inmost, dominant and often veiled conscious force of our being and of all being, Tapas, Shakti, Shradha, that sovereignly determines our orientation and of which the intellect and the heart are more or less blind and automatic servants and instruments.”

### Thinking with Ideas

“Our house has a very high tower; at the very top of that tower is a bright and bare room, the last one before we emerge into the open air, into the full light.

Sometimes, when we are at leisure to do so, we climb up to this bright room, and there, if we remain very quiet, one or more visitors call on us; some are tall, others small, some single, others in groups; all are bright and graceful.

Usually, in our joy at their arrival and in our haste to receive them well, we lose our tranquility and come galloping down to rush into the large hall which forms the base of the tower and which is the store-room of words. Here, more or less excited, we select, reject, assemble, combine, disarrange all the words within our reach in an attempt to transcribe this or that visitor who has come to us. But most often the picture we succeed in making of her is more like a caricature than a portrait.

And yet if we were wiser, we would remain up there at the summit of the tower, quite still, in joyful contemplation. Then, after a certain length of time, we would see the visitors themselves descending slowly, gracefully, calmly, without losing any of their elegance and beauty and, as they cross the store-room of words, clothing themselves effortlessly, automatically, with the words needed to make them perceptible even in the material house.

This is what I call thinking with ideas...

“When you think with words, you can express what you think with those words only. To think with ideas is to be able to put the same idea in many kinds of words. The words can also be of different languages, if you happen to know more than one language. This is the first, the most elementary things about thinking with ideas.

When you think with experience, you go much deeper and you can express the same experience with many kinds of ideas. Then thought can take this form or that form in any language and through all of them the essential realisation will remain unchanged.”

Following is a ladder which expresses my understanding of the dimension of our thoughts.

KNOWLEDGE

