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Can a Yogi attain to a state of consciousness in which he can know all things, answer all questions, relating even to abstruse scientific problems, such as, for example, the theory of relativity?

Theoretically and in principle it is not impossible for a Yogi to know everything; all depends upon the Yogi.

But there is knowledge and knowledge. The Yogi does not know in the way of the mind. He does not know everything in the sense that he has access to all possible information or because he contains all the facts of the universe in his mind or because his consciousness is a sort of miraculous encyclopaedia. He knows by his capacity for a containing or dynamic identity with things and persons and forces. Or he knows because he lives in a plane of consciousness or is in contact with a consciousness in which there is the truth and the knowledge.

If you are in the true consciousness, the knowledge you have will also be of the truth. Then, too, you can know directly, by being one with what you know. If a problem is put before you, if you are asked what is to be done in a particular matter, you can then, by looking with enough attention and concentration, receive spontaneously the required knowledge and the true answer. It is not by any careful application of theory that you reach the knowledge or by working it out through a mental process. The scientific mind needs these methods to come to its conclusions. But the Yogi's knowledge is direct and immediate; it is not deductive. If an engineer has to find out the exact position for the building of an arch, the line of its curve and the size of its opening, he does it by calculation, collating and deducing from his information and data. But a Yogi needs none of these things; he looks, has the vision of the thing, sees that it is to be done in

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this way and not in another, and this seeing is his knowledge.

Although it may be true in a general way and in a certain sense that a Yogi can know all things and can answer all questions from his own field of vision and consciousness, yet it does not follow that there are no questions whatever of any kind to which he would not or could not answer. A Yogi who has the direct knowledge, the knowledge of the true truth of things, would not care or perhaps would find it difficult to answer questions that belong entirely to the domain of human mental constructions. It may be, he could not or would not wish to solve problems and difficulties you might put to him which touch only the illusion of things and their appearances. The working of his knowledge is not in the mind. If you put him some silly mental query of that character, he probably would not answer. The very common conception that you can put any ignorant question to him as to some super-schoolmaster or demand from him any kind of information past, present or future and that he is bound to answer, is a foolish idea. It is as inept as the expectation from the spiritual man of feats and miracles that would satisfy the vulgar external mind and leave it gaping with wonder.

Moreover, the term "Yogi" is very vague and wide. There are many types of Yogis, many lines or ranges of spiritual or occult endeavour and different heights of achievement, there are some whose powers do not extend beyond the mental level; there are others who have gone beyond it. Everything depends on the field or nature of their effort, the height to which they have arrived, the consciousness with which they have contact or into which they enter.

*Do not scientists go sometimes beyond the mental plane?
It is said that Einstein found his theory of relativity not
through any process of reasoning, but through some kind
of sudden inspiration. Has that inspiration anything to
do with the Supermind?*

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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 illumined by some other light still farther above. But all that has nothing to do with the action of Supermind and this higher mental level is far removed from the supramental plane. Men are too easily inclined to believe that they have climbed into regions quite divine when they have only gone above the average level. There are many stages between the ordinary human mind and the Supermind, many grades and many intervening planes. If an ordinary man were to get into direct contact even with one of these intermediate planes, he would be dazzled and blinded, would be crushed under the weight of the sense of immensity or would lose his balance; and yet it is not the Supermind.

Behind the common idea that a Yogi can know all things and answer all questions is the actual fact that there is a plane in the mind where the memory of everything is stored and remains always in existence. All mental movements that belong to the life of the earth are memorised and registered in this plane. Those who are capable of going there and care to take the trouble, can read in it and learn anything they choose. But this region must not be mistaken for the supramental levels. And yet to reach even there you must be able to silence the movements of the material or physical mind; you must be able to leave aside all your sensations and put a stop to your ordinary mental movements, whatever they are; you must get out of the vital; you must become free from the slavery of the body. Then only you can enter into that region and see. But if you are sufficiently interested to make this effort, you can arrive there and read what is written in the earth's memory.

Thus, if you go deep into silence, you can reach a level of consciousness on which it is not impossible for you to receive answers to all your questions. And if there is one who is consciously open to the plenary truth of the supermind, in constant contact with it, he can certainly answer any question that is

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worth an answer from the supramental Light. The queries put must come from some sense of the truth and reality behind things. There are many questions and much debated problems that are cobwebs woven of mere mental abstractions or move on the illusory surface of things. These do not pertain to real knowledge; they are a deformation of knowledge, their very substance is of the ignorance. Certainly the supramental knowledge may give an answer, its own answer, to the problems set by the mind's ignorance; but it is likely that it would not be at all satisfactory or perhaps even intelligible to those who ask from the mental level. You must not expect the supramental to work in the way of the mind or demand that the knowledge in truth should be capable of being pieced together with the half-knowledge in ignorance. The scheme of the mind is one thing, but Supermind is quite another and it would no longer be supramental if it adapted itself to the exigencies of the mental scheme. The two are incommensurable and cannot be put together.

When the consciousness has attained to supramental joys, does it no longer take interest in the things of the mind?

The supramental does not take interest in mental things in the same way as the mind. It takes its own interest in all the movements of the universe, but it is from a different point of view and with a different vision. The world presents to it an entirely different appearance; there is a reversal of outlook and everything is seen from there as other than what it seems to the mind and often even the opposite. Things have another meaning; their aspect, their motion and process, everything about them, are watched with other eyes. Everything here is followed by the supermind; the mind movements and not less the vital, the material movements, all the play of the universe have for it a very deep interest, but of another kind. It is about the same difference as that between the interest taken in a puppet-play by one who

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holds the strings and knows what the puppets are to do and the will that moves them and that they can do only what it moves them to do, and the interest taken by another who observes the play but sees only what is happening from moment to moment and knows nothing else. The one who follows the play and is outside its secret has a stronger, an eager and passionate interest in what will happen and he gives an excited attention to its unforeseen or dramatic events; the other, who holds the strings and moves the show, is unmoved and tranquil. There is a certain intensity of interest which comes from ignorance and is bound up with illusion, and that must disappear when you are out of the ignorance. The interest that human beings take in things founds itself on the illusion; if that were removed, they would have no interest at all in the play; they would find it dry and dull. That is why all this ignorance, all this illusion has lasted so long; it is because men like it, because they cling to it and its peculiar kind of appeal that it endures.

What should one do who wants to change his bodily condition, effect a cure or correct some physical imperfection? Should he concentrate upon the end to be realised and exercise his will-power or should he only live in the confidence that it will be done or trust in the Divine Power to bring about the desired result in its own time and in its own way?

All these are so many ways of doing the same thing and each in different conditions can be effective. The method by which you will be most successful depends on the consciousness you have developed and the character of the forces you are able to bring into play. You can live in the consciousness of the completed cure or change and by the force of your inner formation slowly bring about the outward change. Or if you know and have the vision of the force that is able to effect these things and if you have the skill to handle it, you can call it down and apply it in the parts

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where its action is needed, and it will work out the change. Or, again, you can present your difficulty to the Divine and ask of It the cure, putting confidently your trust in the Divine Power.

But whatever you do, whatever the process you use, and even if you happen to have acquired in it a great skill and power, you must leave the result in the hands of the Divine. Always you may try, but it is for the Divine to give you the fruit of your effort or not to give it. There your personal power stops; if the result comes, it is the Divine Power and not yours that brings it. You question if it is right to ask the Divine for these things. But there is no more harm in turning to the Divine for the removal of a physical imperfection than in praying for the removal of a moral defect. But whatever you ask for or whatever your effort, you must feel, even while trying your best, using knowledge or putting forth power, that the result depends upon the Divine Grace. Once you have taken up the Yoga, whatever you do must be done in a spirit of complete surrender. This must be your attitude, — “I aspire, I try to cure my imperfections, I do my best, but for the result I put myself entirely into the hands of the Divine.”

Does it help, if you say, “I am sure of the result, I know that the Divine will give me what I want”?

You may take it in that way. The very intensity of your faith may mean that the Divine has already chosen that the thing it points to shall be done. An unshakable faith is a sign of the presence of the Divine Will, an evidence of what shall be.

What are the forces that are in operation when one is in silent meditation?

That depends upon the one who meditates.

But in silent meditation does he not make himself a

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complete blank? Then how can anything depend upon him?

Even if you make yourself an absolute blank, that does not change the nature of your aspiration or alter its domain. In some the aspiration moves on the mental level or in the vital field; some have a spiritual aspiration. On the quality of the aspiration depends the force that answers and the work that it comes to do. To make yourself blank in meditation creates an inner silence; it does not mean that you have become nothing or have become a dead and inert mass. Making yourself an empty vessel, you invite that which shall fill it. It means that you release the stress of your inner consciousness towards realisation. The nature of the consciousness and the degree of its stress determine the forces that you bring into play and whether they shall help and fulfil or fail or even harm and hinder.

There are many varying conditions in which you may meditate and all have their effect upon the forces brought in or brought down and on their working. If you sit alone, it is your own inner and outer condition that matters. If you sit with others, the general condition is of primary importance. But in either case the conditions will always vary and the forces that answer will never be twice the same. A united concentration rightly done can be a great force. There is an old saying that if twelve sincere persons unite their will and their aspiration and call the Divine, the Divine is bound to manifest. But the will must be one-pointed, the aspiration sincere. For those who make the attempt can be united in inertia or even in mistaken or perverse desire, and the result is then likely to be disastrous.

In your meditation the first imperative need is a state of perfect and absolute sincerity in all the consciousness. It is indispensable that you should not deceive yourself or deceive or be deceived by others. Often people have a wish, a mental preference or vital desire; they want the experience to happen in a particular way or to take a turn that satisfies their ideas or

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desires or preferences; they do not keep themselves blank and unprejudiced and simply and sincerely observe what happens. Then if you do not like what happens, it is easy to deceive yourself; you will see one thing, but give it a little twist and make it something else, or you will distort something simple and straightforward or magnify it into an extraordinary experience. When you sit in meditation you must be as candid and simple as a child, not interfering by your external mind, expecting nothing, insisting on nothing. Once this condition is there, all the rest depends upon the aspiration deep within you. If you ask from within for peace, it will come; if for strength, for power, for knowledge, they too will come, but all in the measure of your capacity to receive it. And if you call upon the Divine, then too — always admitting that the Divine is open to your call, and that means your call is pure enough and strong enough to reach him, — you will have the answer.