

The Call Beyond



Volume 48 No.10

15 October 2023



Highlights

Is Life a Game of Chess? Page 4

The Hope of the Future Resides in Spiritual Practicality ... Page 9

Why We Cannot Take Success for Granted ... Page 12



An Online Publication of
SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM - DELHI BRANCH

Contents

Editorial

- *Is Life a Game of Chess?* 4

Article

- *How To Discover the Secret Identity of Others* 6

Words of the Mother

- *To See Oneself as One Is* 8

Words of the Master

- *The Hope of the Future Resides in Spiritual Practicality*
. 9

Twenty-five years ago

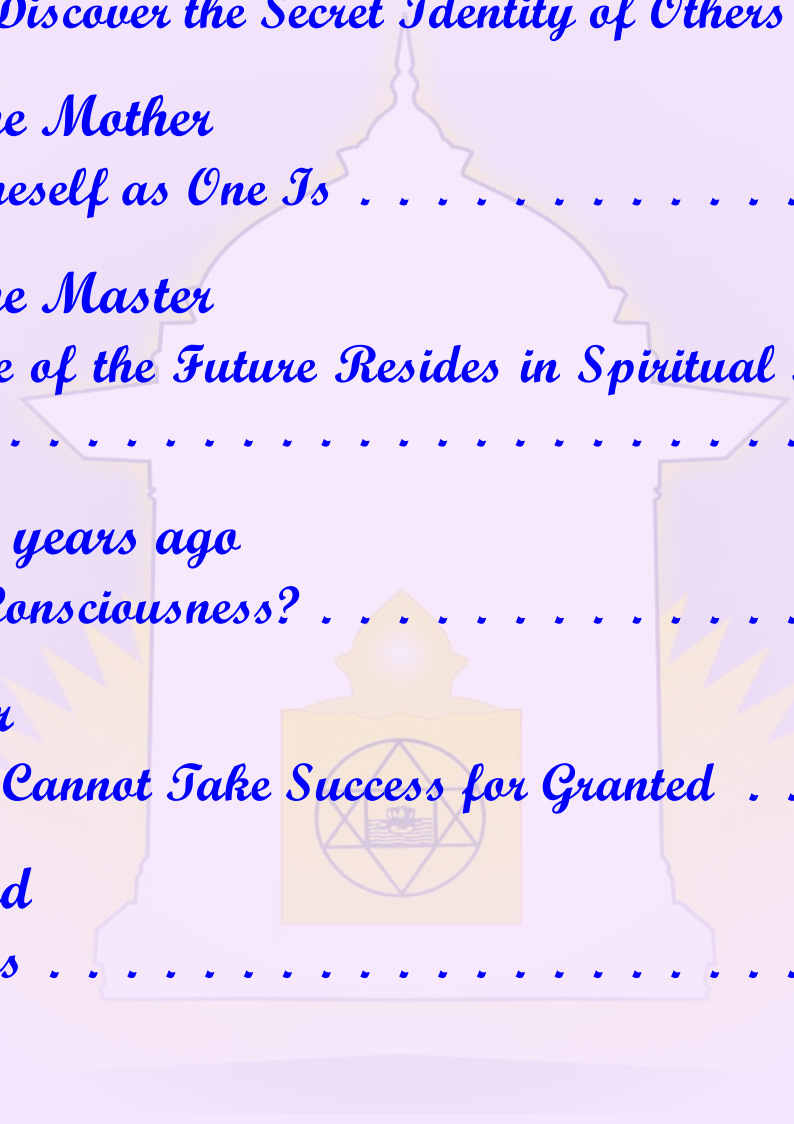
- *Poverty Consciousness?* 11

KidzKorner

- *Why We Cannot Take Success for Granted* 12

Notice Board

- *Contact us* 15





Is Life a Game of Chess?

Life is a game, so it is commonly said. It is also said that all creation is unwittingly participating in a game, or *leela*, being played by the Creator. What type of games are these? Do these games have any resemblance to chess?

Chess is a game involving strategy, a game in which ‘nothing’ is hidden, a game in which winning is not by chance. There are only two players, and winning needs threatening the opponent’s king with inescapable capture.

In the Creator’s *leela*, there is a design, although not a strategy; and nothing is hidden from the Creator. The board is “measureless,” and each of us is “one more pawn who comes destined to be pushed,” says Sri Aurobindo in his epic poem, *Savitri* (Book 1, Canto 2, p. 18, lines 248-250). But there can be no winner or loser, for there is no other with whom the Creator has to compete. However, what makes the game interesting is that man has been designed for being more than just a pawn to be pushed around. Within each human being are planted two players. One of these, the surface self, apparently makes all the clever moves with its army of the body and the mind to protect its king, the Ego, from getting captured. The other, the deepest Self, moves rather silently with its army of Truth, confident that its king, Love, cannot be captured. The game begins when the self becomes aware of the Self. The discovery happens when a revealing “light falls on our vexed unsatisfied lives” (*Savitri*, Book 2, Canto 11, p. 261, line 67). However, that is just the beginning. Our mind has a million strategies to prevent the capture of the Ego, one of them being the accumulation of a vast body of scientific knowledge that reduces the Infinite “to square and cube” (*Savitri*, Book 2, Canto 11, p. 269, line 325). The pursuit of scientific knowledge leads to many amusing diversions and digressions but leads only to truths that one can “find and hold but not the one Truth” (*Savitri*, Book 2,



Canto 11, p. 271, line 394). The result is that while man may not feel being pushed around helplessly like a pawn, he is actually “Zigzagged at the gesture of a chess-player Will / Across the chequerboard of cosmic fate” (*Savitri*, Book 2, Canto 11, p. 270, lines 363-364). The zigzagging only prolongs the game, while the Self works silently by sweet seduction using the Power of Truth, the Power that does not need the crutch of strategy. At the end of life, the time is up, and the game is terminated with a little more self-knowledge than when the game began. The game is terminated, but continues in the next life, and so it goes on life after life, until the self concedes defeat, happily and willingly. The person becomes one with his deepest Self. The separative Ego has been captured and replaced by Love inspired by identification of the self with the Self, the realization of oneness of the self with all other selves. The individual continues participating in the game, but not as a helpless pawn.

Before the game begins, the individual identifies himself with his self. The game begins when the person discovers an opponent within. The game ends with the realisation that the opponent is the person’s true identity. The person starts with the feeling that he is one, and ends with the realization of being One. Between the two extremes is the phase of division, the phase when the self plays a game designed by the Creator to take the individual from self-discovery through self-knowledge to Self-realisation. The game lasts several lives, but its end is fixed. How the individual games begin and how they end is the game being played by the Creator. Thus there are games within a game, both having some features of chess.

First published in the Speaking Tree column of 'The Times of India' on 28 August 2023. Link: <https://www.speakingtree.in/article/does-life-seem-like-a-game-of-chess>



How To Discover the Secret Identity of Others

Rahul Sharma

We can spend a lot of time wondering what other people might really be thinking: it could be a colleague, partner, parent, a child, or a stranger in a train. We may know intuitively what they are thinking, but we can't be really sure. There is one tool, however, that we are surprisingly reluctant to make use of to penetrate the mystery of others: our own experience. Almost the very last thing we dare to have recourse to is the thought that our opaque acquaintances or friends might to a substantial extent resemble us; that what they are most likely to be thinking and feeling is just another version of what we have thought and felt in the quieter corners of our minds, but perhaps never quite admitted. We make astonishingly little use of our private lives when trying to decode the private lives of others.

Our reluctance can be traced back to childhood. To five-year-olds, that their teacher might in certain ways be similar to them is an alien thought. If on a Sunday, by chance, a child were to spot his teacher in the supermarket in her jogging gear, he might be deeply surprised: the teacher, whom he has only known only as someone who teaches history, also likes chocolates and ice cream? She has headphones? We, the grown-ups might be similarly surprised if we find our doctor at the skating rink or our accountant at the beach. Behind our surprise, we catch an echo of a broader supposition: that other people cannot be quite as we are, and in particular, that they are unlikely to share in all the vulnerable, extreme, embarrassing, odd or frivolous aspects of our natures.

We think so because of a fundamental feature of the way we understand humans: we know ourselves from the inside but can know others only from the outside, an inevitably much more edited and sober selection. But what if dared to



assume that others have far greater similarity with us than we think? We might then be able to conceive that other people too might be distressed by anxiety, that others too might not understand great works of art, that others might also pretend to have read certain great books, and others too might do some very disgusting things. Others too might alternate between entertaining some mean thoughts about their friends and wanting the best for them. Yet despite the darkness and the cynicism, there might be great reserves of goodness in them, just as in us. They might be desperate to be of service, their hearts might long to reach out to others, they might be very ready to help a stranger in need.

Out of a misplaced shyness and a sharp feeling of being unique, we trust, in the absence of any evidence, that there can't be too many people like us around. And yet for better and for worse, there are in fact close to 8 billion of us, waiting to be witnessed as one of us. Spiritually speaking, oneness is the Truth; differences are mere appearances. All of us have similar bright and dark spots, and all of us are on the same journey whereby eventually the dark spots would vanish through the Light inherent in our souls.

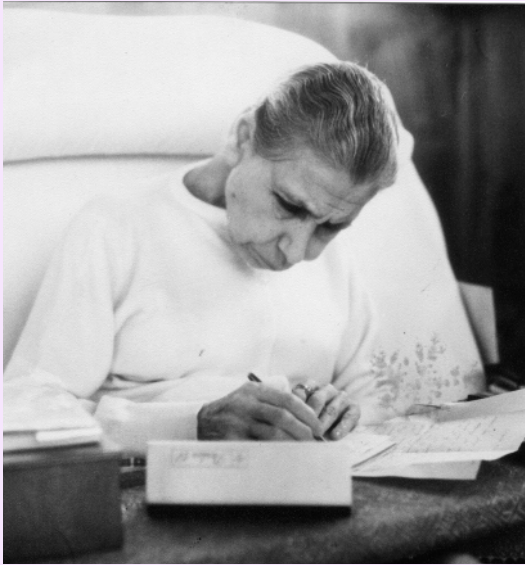


There is a well-known French saying: "What a happiness is it to be able to dispense with the company of people one does not care for!" My idea of good and true social life is to be in the company of people for whom we sincerely care. Or in other words, good social life, true social life, consists in being positively happy in our human relations. This calls for certain qualities in our environment, in other human beings, and, above all, in ourselves.

Nirad Chaudhuri ('To Live Or Not To Live', p. 18)



To See Oneself as One Is



It is no use at all hiding things and pushing them behind, like this, and imagining they are not there because one has put a veil in front. It is much better to see oneself as one is – provided one is ready to give up this way of being. If you come allowing all the bad movements to rise to the surface, to show themselves; if you offer them, if you say, “Well, this

is how I am,” and if at the same time you have the aspiration to be different, then this second of presence is extremely useful; you can, yes, in a few seconds receive the help you need to get rid of them; while if you come like a little saint and go away content, without having received anything, it is not very useful.

Automatically the Consciousness acts like that, it is like the ray that brings light where there wasn't any. Only, what is needed is to be in a state where one wants to give up the thing, to get rid of it – not to cling to it and keep it. If one sincerely *wants* to pull it out of oneself, make it disappear, then it is very useful.

The Mother ('The Great Adventure', p.66)

All the pages of The Mother's work, 'The Great Adventure', in Tara Didi's voice, have been uploaded on the YouTube channel of Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch. The link to the playlist is: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLbJ59iL6vu-UXeufBeKQlUTwGf3GhZ9LJ>



The Hope of the Future Resides in Spiritual Practicality



The present era of the world is a stage of immense transformations. Not one but many radical ideas are at work in the mind of humanity and agitate its life with a vehement seeking and effort at change; and although the centre of the

agitation is in progressive Europe, yet the East is being rapidly drawn into this churning of the sea of thought and this breaking up of old ideas and old institutions. **No nation or community can any longer remain psychologically cloistered and apart in the unity of the modern world.** It may even be said that the future of humanity depends most upon the answer that will be given to the modern riddle of the Sphinx by the East and especially by India, the hoary guardian of the Asiatic idea and its profound spiritual secrets. **For the most vital issue of the age is whether the future progress of humanity is to be governed by the modern economic and materialistic mind of the West or by a nobler pragmatism guided, uplifted and enlightened by spiritual culture and knowledge.** The West never really succeeded in spiritualising itself and latterly it has been habituated almost exclusively to an action in the external governed by political and economic ideals and necessities; in spite of the reawakening of the religious mind and the growth of a widespread but not yet profound or luminous spiritual and psychical curiosity and seeking, it has to act solely in the things of this world and to solve its problems by mechanical methods and as the thinking political and economic animal, simply because it knows no other standpoint and is accustomed to no other



method. On the other hand the East, though it has allowed its spirituality to slumber too much in dead forms, has always been open to profound awakenings and preserves its spiritual capacity intact, even when it is actually inert and uncreative. Therefore the hope of the world lies in the re-arousing in the East of the old spiritual practicality and large and profound vision and power of organisation under the insistent contact of the West and in the flooding out of the light of Asia on the Occident, no longer in forms that are now static, effete, unadaptive, but in new forms stirred, dynamic and effective.

Sri Aurobindo: 'Essays in Philosophy and Yoga', CWSA Vol. 13, pp. 137-138



*For not for ourselves alone our spirits came
 Out of the veil of the Unmanifest,
 Out of the deep immense Unknowable
 Upon the ignorant breast of dubious earth,
 Into the ways of labouring, seeking men,
 Two fires that burn towards that parent Sun,
 Two rays that travel to the original Light.
 To lead man's soul towards truth and God we are born,
 To draw the chequered scheme of mortal life
 Into some semblance of the Immortal's plan,
 To shape it closer to an image of God,
 A little nearer to the Idea divine.*

Sri Aurobindo ('Savitri', Book 12, CWSA Vols. 33-34, p. 720)



Poverty Consciousness?

Michael Virat

Poverty consciousness begets poverty. A consciousness of abundance begets abundance. Your belief system comes first, then your reality follows. As you believe, so it will be done. "I can't afford it," "It is too expensive". Your thoughts and words create your future.

Everything comes from God. If He/She is our Source, how can we experience lack? The answer is that God allows us the freedom to make choices. Change your mind; change your reality. Try a new mantra:

I can, I am, I will, I do, I have, I love, I create, I enjoy.

Memorize it and use it often. It does not address what you are doing or what to do. It simply opens the door to success.

Infinity knows no limitation. There is within you a spark of Divine Fire. You can access that point of wisdom. **You can bring abundance and divine order into your life, if you believe in it.**

Reproduced from The Call Beyond, Vol. 23, No. 4, 1998, p. 20

*[Editor's note: We will get whatever we want if we dream of it, if we think about it, if we wish for it, has become a very common attitude these days, sometimes called the 'Law of Attraction'. This is an oversimplification of a possibility, which depends on a big 'if'. Merely memorizing any 'mantra', or repeating affirmations mechanically parrot-fashion will not do. As Michael Virat says above, "There is within you a spark of Divine Fire. You can access that point of wisdom." **Not only you can access, you have to access and work on sincerely unifying with it, without any expectations.** That is the 'if' for the thoughts to materialize into reality.]*



Why We Cannot Take Success for Granted

I am a spoon. I think that if I take food to Arpan's mouth, he will get the food. Arpan picks me up, loads it with some food, and takes me towards his mouth. The food reaches his mouth. He swallows it. The food reaches his tummy. He digests it. The food ends up nourishing Arpan. I, the spoon, am happy. I think I have fed Arpan successfully.

However, one day, Arpan picks me up, loads it with some food, and takes me towards his mouth, as usual. But just before I reach his mouth, I decide to get naughty. I shake a bit, and the food drops on his shirt. I regret having been naughty. It is because of me that Arpan could not eat, and his shirt got dirty.

One day, Arpan picks me up, loads it with some food, and takes me towards his mouth, as usual. But just before I reach his mouth, somebody bumps into the chair on which Arpan is sitting. He gets a jolt. His hand shakes, and the food drops on the table. Why did somebody have to bump into his chair? I do not know, but the food did not reach his mouth. I think I failed to feed Arpan. My failure makes me sad.

One day, Arpan picks me up, loads it with some food, and takes me towards his mouth, as usual. The food reaches his mouth. Just when he starts swallowing it, he starts coughing. The food is back to the dining table, strewn all over the plate and beyond. Why did he cough? I do not know, but Arpan could not eat. I think I failed to feed Arpan. My failure makes me sad.

One day, Arpan picks me up, loads it with some food, and takes me towards his mouth, as usual. The food reaches his mouth. He swallows it. The food reaches his tummy. Then he stops eating. He feels sick. He runs to the sink. He vomits the food out. Why did he vomit? I do not know, but Arpan could not eat. I think I failed to feed Arpan. My failure makes me sad.



Why do I feel sad so often? I realise that I feel sad **because I think I feed Arpan**. I start identifying myself with what I do. Actually, I am not the device that feeds Arpan. **I am just a spoon. I am only an instrument in the hands of Arpan**. I should not be a naughty instrument. My job ends there. After that, what happens is not under my control. I should not be sad for what I cannot control.

We are all like the spoon. We are instruments in the hands of God. We think we do something. We start identifying ourselves with the work that we do. We think that if we do something, we can be sure of what will happen. But it does not work that way all the time. Sometimes we succeed, and sometimes we fail. We do not always know why we succeeded or failed. We should not be naughty instruments. We should do in the best way we can what we think God wants us to do. We should be happy and willing instruments. Our job ends there. After that, what happens is not under our control.

If we succeed, we cannot take credit for it, just as the spoon cannot take credit for feeding Arpan. The spoon cannot feed Arpan unless Arpan uses it. If we fail, we need not blame ourselves, provided we have not been naughty. Failure need not make us sad.

Now we can understand what Sri Krishna means when he tells Arjuna in the Gita that we should not be attached to the outcome of our work. All the outcomes of our work should be acceptable to us. No matter what the outcome of our work is, we should accept it happily.

Fixed in Yoga do thy actions, having abandoned attachment, having become equal in failure and success, O Dhananjaya, for it is equality that is meant by Yoga.

'The Gita', 2:48



Our tasks are given, we are but instruments;

Nothing is all our own that we create:

The Power that acts in us is not our force.

The genius too receives from some high fount

Concealed in a supernal secrecy

The work that gives him an immortal name.

Sri Aurobindo ('Savitri', Book 7, Canto 6, p. 542)



12.2.69.

Be more eager
for truth than for
success.

blessings



Contact us

Our quarterly magazine in Hindi, '**Sri Aravind Karmadhara**', is also available on-line now, and may be viewed on our website www.sriaurobindoashram.net.

For a free subscription to '**Sri Aravind Karmadhara**', please send an e-mail to sakarmdhara@gmail.com

To get '**The Call Beyond**' online regularly, month after month, please send an e-mail to: callbeyond@aurobindoonline.in

To learn about the recent and forthcoming activities through the Ashram's e-magazine, '**Realization**', send an email to: callbeyond@aurobindoonline.in

Please follow a simple two-step process:

1. Subject: *Subscribe*
2. Click on *Send*

If you subscribe either to '**Realization**', or to '**The Call Beyond**', you will start receiving, month after month, both the magazines.

For information about Auro-Mira Service Society and the Kechla project, please visit the website www.auromira.in



Note

In view of the Hundred and Fiftieth Birth Anniversary of Sri Aurobindo on 15 August 2022, the Ashram is expanding its mailing list to reach out to more and more who may benefit from the teachings of the Master and the Mother. To get included in the Mailing List, please go to <http://erp.saaonline.net.in/addcontacts.cfm> to fill in a form, which will take you only a few minutes.



Get in touch with Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch on:

Our website: www.sriaurobindoashram.net

YouTube: <https://youtube.com/sriaurobindoashramdelhibranch>

Facebook: <http://facebook.com/sriaurobindoashramdelhibranch>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/sriaurobindoashramdelhibranch>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/saadelhibranch>



Feedback

Please send your feedback to
callbeyond@aurobindoonline.in

The Call Beyond is a publication of
Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch

Sri Aurobindo Marg

New Delhi 110 016

contact@aurobindoonline.in

91-11-2656-7863