

Evolution Fast Forward – Part 3

Parts of the Being and Planes of Consciousness

1. Introduction: Vertical and Horizontal Systems

	Audio	
1	Our body is composed of many parts and systems.	
2	This is an objective view.	
3	Sri Aurobindo gives us a subjective view.-	
4	This is a symbolic map of our psychological parts.	
5	In our normal waking state we can access only a small part of our consciousness.	
6	But through yoga, we can access a wider range: above, below and within.	
7	There are two systems in the organisation of the being and its parts.	
8	There is a vertical system spanning above and below.	
9	There is also a concentric system.	
10	These two systems are simultaneously active.	
11	On the vertical axis, the ranges above are superconscious.	
12	And the ranges below are subconscious and inconscient.	
13	Our normal waking state is only the outer surface of consciousness.	
14	Behind our waking state, are the vast inner ranges that are subliminal.	
15	Our true being, the soul, is the inmost.	
16	The concentric system is grouped as the outer, the inner and the inmost.	
17	We are unaware of what is inner and the inmost,	

	as well as what is above and below.	
18	We are aware only of the surface.	
19	By stepping inward, we can observe the surface movements of our consciousness.	
20	Thoughts are experienced in the region of our head.	
21	The movements of emotions, passions, drives and desires are experienced in the chest and below.	
22	From the hip and below, are the largely unconscious movements.	
23	We are normally lost in these surface movements.	
24	These movements reflect three different parts of our being - Mind, Vital and Physical.	
25	These three parts are woven into each other in their normal operations.	
26	Discerning these three parts and their intermixing is the first step into our inner world.	

2. Physical: The Consciousness of the Body

No	VO	
1	Our body has a consciousness that's quite personal to it.	
2	There is an automatic intelligence and organisation at work	
3	managing incredibly complex operations,	
4	keeping the body in a dynamic and healthy equilibrium.	
5	Our waking state knows only some surface movements	
6	of thoughts, ideas, imaginations, waves of emotions, drives, desires and sensations.	
7	We have no access to the consciousness of the body.	

8	The body regulates itself independent of our conscious mind.	
9	It is habitual in its operations, reflecting the mechanics of matter.	
10	The body is a product of evolution of consciousness in matter.	
11	It carries with it, the inertia of matter.	
12	The body consciousness conserves and preserves all its habitual movements.	
13	It makes our daily movements into routine habits.	
14	This allows the habits to animate our daily life independent of our conscious mind.	
15	Our senses operate habitually.	
16	Our desires become habits under the influence of the body consciousness.	
17	So are the emotions made into habits.	
18	The body consciousness makes even our thoughts into habits.	
19	Thus our psychological habits get preserved in the body consciousness.	
20	The cells of our body retain them.	
21	As we get old, the habits get etched deeper into the body and will be more difficult to change them.	
22	The body is also the reservoir of our long evolutionary journey.	
23	It preserves our past as habitual movements.	
24	The physical consciousness is passive, habitual and mechanical.	
25	It responds habitually to external contacts.	
26	Its movements are random and dispersive.	
27	However, its instinct is to persist. Physical self-preservation and resistance to	

	change are native to it.	
28	And its refusal to change is one of the greatest obstacles in transforming ourselves.	
29	It has a will of its own quite independent of the will of the conscious mind and its ideas.	
30	It can learn new movements but this requires repetition of the movement till it become automatic and habitual.	
31	Since the physical consciousness is passive it can be moulded by constant repetition.	
32	The passivity of the physical consciousness is exploited by the advertising industry to create new habits by repeated impressions.	
33	The physical consciousness learns slowly but once it acquires a skill it will preserve the skill faithfully and does the movements automatically without any active control by the mind.	
34	- like typing, driving, swimming, dancing and playing musical instruments. These skills stay like a memory in the body.	
35	Then we say that the movement has become effortless.	
36	Thus, the passivity of the physical consciousness becomes a great advantage as it can transmit and express, outwardly, the inner movements.	
37	The physical consciousness can be made supple and receptive through physical education.	
38	A well-trained body becomes a receptive instrument, capable of expressing higher consciousness.	

3. Vital: The Life Force

No	VO	
1	The nature of the vital is fluid and dynamic.	

2	It is the prana or the life-force that transforms matter into living substance.	
3	It brings in the movement of growth,	
4	develops the senses,	
5	and emerge as complex nerve currents.	
6	This life-force eventually bursts out as the spectacular vitality and play of life on earth.	
7	It is the same energy that animates human life.	
8	Our breath and heartbeat are the most tangible physical rhythms of the vital energy animating the body.	
9	Practices like pranayama and Hatha Yoga are some of the physical methods which energise and balance the vital energy in the body.	
10	Sri Aurobindo approaches the vital energy from a psychological perspective.	
11	The surface movements of the vital are subjectively experienced predominantly in the frontal region of the body.	
12	These surface movements can be broadly grouped into three:	
13	The Higher vital or the region of emotions	
14	The Central vital which is the region of strong drives and passions	
15	And the Lower vital, that is the region of small impulses, desires and sensual cravings	
16	The word lower vital is not used in any derogatory sense; it refers only to its position in the hierarchy of the planes.	
17	Learning to distinguish these parts is a necessary step towards the mastery of the vital.	
	4. Lower Vital: The Enjoyer	
1	The lower vital is the part of our being which is concerned and occupied with the outer things.	
2	Its movements are experienced as hungers, cravings, small desires, impulses and	

	enjoyments.	
3	It is a playful enjoyer of sensory pleasures.	
4	It prefers to stay within the zone physical comforts.	
5	However, it is fickle and impulsive and gets carried away by temptations.	
6	There are many marketing tricks designed to tempt this part of our being.	
7	It seeks new sensations.	
8	It demands immediate satisfaction of its impulses.	
9	Quarrels, jealousy, envy and petty angers are its movements.	
10	Our likes and dislikes, attractions and repulsions are its contribution.	
11	Greed and lust are its perverse movements.	
12	In general, it is obscure, ignorant, egoistic, selfish, impulsive, random, turbulent, and undisciplined.	
13	It often hijacks reason.	
14	It revolts against discipline.	
15	It is also the seat of all our fears.	
16	Fears arise from here and grip other parts of our being.	
17	Many traditions have tried to demonise the lower vital.	
18	The ascetic denial is a common way.	
19	But integral yoga demands not a denial but a mastery over the lower vital and its transformation.	
20	The first step towards such mastery is to stand back from lower vital impulses and observe it with detachment.	
21	Then, to bring it under the control of reason.	
22	The next step is to develop equanimity towards	

	all sensations.	
23	Further, the senses can be refined through beauty and aesthetic delight.	
24	When the psychic influence permeates the lower vital, it opens to a deeper transformation and refinement.	
25	A greater transformation happens when the descending higher consciousness establishes perfect equanimity and equal delight in all experiences.	
	5. Central Vital: The Force for Action and Creation	
1	The central vital is the most dynamic expression of the life-force in us.	
2	Its movements are experienced in the region of the navel.	
3	A strong central vital is one that is full of life-force.	
4	And has great energy	
5	It is courageous and heroic.	
6	It is ambitious.	
7	Unlike the lower vital it is not bound by comforts or sensory pleasures.	
8	It is daring and adventurous.	
9	A large expansive movement is natural to it.	
10	It brings generosity in giving.	
11	It has the drive for leadership	
12	and domination.	
13	It brings the urge to expand and conquer.	
14	It throws itself out in the wider movements of life.	
15	It is responsive to the greater objects of Nature.	
16	It is a force for action and creation,	

17	...a power to fulfil and materialise.	
18	It brings forth the competitive spirit.	
19	It is ruthless.	
20	The central vital brings a stupendous play of passions into life...	
21	the fury of anger, wrath and revenge are its blazing intensities.	
22	It drives us to seek power and status in society.	
23	It is the seat of strong desires and passions.	
24	This energy is like a wild horse.	
25	The yogic process seeks to tame and master this great energy of Nature.	
26	It brings impatience and restlessness in our action.	
27	The main difficulty of the central vital is the pride of its ego and the attraction of its powers.	
28	It is often difficult for such a vital to surrender itself because of this sense of its own powers.	
29	The power of reason and strong self-discipline are helpful in mastering the central vital but not sufficient.	
30	It is necessary to detach from its strong movements.	
31	This would enable us to reject its strong waves gripping the mind.	
32	Equanimity over its movements is a necessary condition.	
33	However, to transform the central vital, it must come under the influence of the psychic.	
34	In the later stages of the yoga, the descending higher consciousness takes up and transforms the central vital into a divine instrument.	
35	The development and mastery of the central vital brings a great abundance of steady and inexhaustible energy.	

	6. Higher Vital: The Emotional Being	
1	The higher vital is the emotional being in us.	
2	It covers the field of emotions rather than sensations and desire.	
3	It is the seat of all our feelings, experienced in the heart region.	
4	Our love and joy, sorrow and grief, hopes and despair are the easily observable movements of the higher vital.	
5	It brings the thirst for emotional intimacy and bonding...	
6	In human relationships, emotional intimacy easily moves towards sensual intimacy which is a lower vital movement.	
7	Family spaces are the most common playground of the emotional being.	
8	Emotionalism and sentimentality are the common expressions of the higher vital.	
9	This emotional being is responsible for our emotional attachments and vulnerability.	
10	Our emotions are habitual waves.	
11	Their action is largely regulated by emotive memory.	
12	They can be changed by conscious will.	
13	The deformations of the emotional being come from the duality of emotional attractions and repulsions.	
14	It gets more complex when it is mixed with the lower and central vital desires and drives.	
15	All this further invades the intelligent will of the mind and often makes it a helpless slave of the emotions.	
16	A vigilant rejection of these mixtures is a necessary step in the purification of the mind and emotions.	

17	Charity and selfless service or seva are the common methods used by many to broaden the heart and its emotions.	
18	Humanitarian works are its natural domains.	
19	However, all these are still an outward turn of the emotional being.	
20	Integral yoga demands an inward turn to find the soul within.	
21	Compared to the lower and central vital, the higher vital is much easier to surrender.	
22	The more it gets influenced by the psychic, the more the emotional being gets refined.	
23	The yoga of love, bhakti yoga, turns the emotional being towards the divine and seeks intimacy and union with the divine.	
24	When the heart is purified, the vital emotions change into psychic feelings.	
25	By opening upward to the descending force and its peace, calm, and equanimity, the emotional being undergoes spiritual transformation.	
26	The purified heart has a universal love. It can receive with an untroubled sweetness and clarity the various delights which God gives it in the world.	

7. Mind: Cognition and Intelligence

No	The Mind	
1	The mind deals with our cognition and intelligence.	
2	The mental vision and will are part of this intelligence.	
3	It can envision future possibilities.	
4	It can interpret the past.	
5	It can see the flow of time from the past to the future.	
6	The mind lives in its thoughts and ideas of the past, present and the future.	

7	Its movements are experienced in the head.	
8	The human mind has an evolutionary past.	
9	It has emerged in the context of the body animated by the life force.	
10	Both the physical and the vital have their corresponding parts in the mind.	
11	The physical part of the mind has an outward turn through the senses.	
12	The vital part of the mind views everything through its emotions and desires.	
13	It is only in the mind proper that intelligence and will are free from the limitations of the senses, emotions and desires.	
14	In our normal state, all these three parts are mixed up.	
15	Their operations are to be clearly distinguished.-	
16	However, this is only a surface consciousness.	
17	There is vast subliminal inner mind behind this surface.	
18	There are also the spiritual ranges of the mind above.	
19	All this together constitute the full spectrum of the Mind.	
20	In our normal waking state we access only the surface parts.	

8. Physical Mind

No	VO	
1	The physical mind, as the name suggests, is a composite of both mental and physical consciousness.	
2	It has two parts.	
3	The physical involved in the mind creates the physical mental or the Externalising Mind . It is occupied with the externalisation of the	

	mind.	
4	The mind involved in the physical creates the mental physical. It is the mechanical or the habitual mind.	
5	The Externalising Mind is part of the mental consciousness	
6	Whereas the mental physical is part of the physical consciousness.	
7	They are closely tied and work together.	
8	The term physical mind may mean any one of these two or both together.	
9	However, only the externalising mind is part of the mind proper.	
10	This part externalises the mind through speech.	
11	It is an instrument of ordered action on physical things.	
12	It has a practical mentality based on the outer world experience.	
13	This part deals intelligently with physical things.	
14	But its reasoning depends on objective facts.	
15	It can even arrive at objective truths of the physical world that cannot be seized by our senses.	
16	Experimental physics and the knowledge, thus gathered, is a vast extension of this part of the physical mind.	
17	But when it has to deal with supraphysical things, it becomes incompetent.	
18	The physical mind thinks of God and spirit as abstract concepts.	
19	Even when it has spiritual experiences, it finds it difficult to believe them and forgets them easily.	
20	It lives in rigid thought formulas and habitual grooves of thought.	

21	Narrowness and doubt are the chief defects of the physical mind.	
22	The lower part of the physical mind is the mind involved in the physical consciousness.	
23	It is the mental physical or the mechanical mind.	
24	This part is closely tied to the externalising mind.	
25	When left to itself, it will simply go on repeating past customary thoughts, ideas and reactions.	
26	It is habitual and mechanical.	
27	It is animated by the physical consciousness, not the rational intelligence.	
28	It simply stores, associates, repeats, gives reflexes and reactions to outward contacts of life.	
29	This mechanical mind is necessary for the maintenance of things gained through the outer life experiences.	
30	It is by conservation and repetition that Nature does that.	
31	The subconscious is the basis of conservation and the mechanical mind is the means of repetition.	

9. Vital Mind

No.	VO	
1	The vital mind mediates between vital emotions, desires, impulses and the mind proper.	
2	Its movements are experienced in the upper chest just above the emotional being.	
3	The vital mind gives mental forms to the desires, feelings, emotions, passions, ambitions, possessive and active tendencies of the vital.	
4	It uses thought for the service not of reason but the vital pushes, pulls and reactions.	
5	It is a mind of dynamic will, action and desire,	

	not of rational intelligence.	
6	It is very energetic and creative.	
7	The function of this mind is to dream or imagine what can be done.	
8	It lives by imagination and makes formations for the future.	
9	The pure imaginations or dreams of greatness, happiness etc. in which people indulge are one peculiar form of the vital mind activity.	
10	By its power of imagination, it goes beyond the sense bound physical mind and the physical actuality.	
11	It has an incessant drive towards self-exceeding.	
12	It always needs some kind of activity and change.	
13	People of action always have vital mind in a very high measure.	
14	However the vital mind is limited by its emotions, desires and drives.	
15	It acts in random and excessive ways without discipline or concentration on what really needs to be done.	
16	It has no sense of proportion or measure and is eager to be or achieve something big at once.	

10. Mind proper: Intelligent Will (*Buddhi*)

No.	VO	
1	The Mind proper is the seat of pure reason and intelligent will.	
2	It is called buddhi in Sanskrit.	
3	This power of intelligent will is normally available to humanity in the current stage of evolution.	
4	It can review the past,	

5	envision future possibilities,	
6	and give us a sense of continuity of self in the changing flow of life and time experience.	
7	It organises all experiences around the sense of "I" and creates the ego, the surface personality.	
8	It is an instrument of the soul, by which it comes into ordered possession of itself and its surroundings.	
9	By the activity of the intelligent will the soul begins the process of awakening.	
10	There are two parts to the Mind Proper.	
11	The Thinking Mind and	
12	The Dynamic Mind.	
13	The Thinking Mind is essentially a mind of knowledge.	
14	Here pure reason, free from the senses, deals with abstract ideas, principles and the essential nature of things.	
15	It concerns with a disinterested pursuit of truth and knowledge.	
16	It lives in the world of ideas.	
17	The thinking mind finds its satisfaction in the reasoning and logical intelligence.	
18	Its role is to give the right direction to our energy and actions.	
19	The ability to use reason with any purity is not very common, but the attempt to do so is the topmost capacity of the thinking mind.	
20	For action in the world the Thinking Mind depends on the aid of the Dynamic Mind.	
21	The Dynamic Mind is a mind of Will to action.	
22	It is a channel for putting ideas into action.	
23	It has a pragmatic intellectuality in which creation and action are its real motives.	
24	It acts by idea and reason.	

35	To this pragmatic reason, truth is only a formation of the Thinking Mind effective for the action.	
36	It is in itself, therefore, a mind of the Will to life and action.	
37	It uses the Externalising Mind as a channel for manifesting its ideas.	
38	However, all these three layers of the mind do not work in their own purity.	
39	They are assailed by the defects of the lower instruments.	
40	The intelligence and will of the mind must be made free from the invasion of the emotions, desires, drives and the habits.	
41	This will purify the intelligent will and its power of pure reason.	
42	For further development, the mind must cease from thought and arrive and inner silence.	
43	Its inward opening would lead to the discovery of the psychic being and its transformative influence.	
44	Its upward opening would lead to the spiritual ranges of the mind and their transformative influence...	
45	An increasingly silent and still mind would open to the inner and higher ranges of the mind.	

11. Inner Being: The Subliminal Self

No.		
1	The subliminal self is a vast and submerged portion of our consciousness.	
2	Our waking mind and ego are only the tip of an iceberg.	
3	This tip is experienced as our surface consciousness.	
4	It is our outer being.	

5	Behind this outer being is our inner being or the subliminal range.	
6	Behind the outer mind there is a vaster and truer inner mind.	
7	Behind the outer vital there is a vaster and truer inner vital.	
8	Behind the outer physical there is a vaster and truer inner physical.	
9	In these inner ranges are the formations of our larger true individuality.	
10	To know our inner being is the first step towards a real self-knowledge.	
11	It is through dream state that we usually enter the subliminal.	
12	It is a subtle dimension of reality.	
13	While dreaming, we move in these subtle worlds using our subtle body.	
14	Our material body is only an outer form.	
15	There is an invisible subtle body enveloping the material body.	
16	The chakras or the centres of consciousness are located in this subtle body, not in the material body.	
17	The subtle body is composed of subtle physical, vital and mental sheaths.	
18	It is by using one of these sheaths that we move around in its corresponding subtle worlds or planes of consciousness.	
19	The subtle body is an individual formation.	
20	The subliminal extends beyond these sheaths and forms a circumconscient envelope.	
21	It is through this envelope that the external world consciousness enters into individual consciousness.	
22	This envelop is surrounded by the ocean of universal mind, universal vital and universal physical consciousness.	

23	The circumconscient envelope can expand and open to the universal range.	
24	In this concealed subliminal part of our being, our individuality is close to our universality, in constant relation and exchange with it.	
25	All these together constitute the subliminal and universal ranges of our inner being.	
26	Our body exists in this vaster ocean.	
27	Our inner being does not depend on the sense organs.	
28	It can know through a direct contact of consciousness with another consciousness.	
29	By this inner contact we can know the thoughts and feelings of people around us and feel their impact.	
30	There is an exchange happening all the time without our awareness.	
31	Our inner being has subtle senses and their operations bring telepathy, clairvoyance and other supernormal capacities.	
32	It opens the narrow limits of our physical senses and brings an immense range of knowledge and power that are otherwise inaccessible.	
33	From this subliminal come all the greater aspirations, ideals and strivings towards a better humanity.	
34	Below the subliminal are the ranges of the subconscious and the inconscient.	
35	These regions are obscure and habitual unlike the subliminal.	
36	Above the subliminal are the superconscient ranges	
37	Usually, the word 'unconscious' is used in the Western psychology to cover the subliminal, the subconscious and the superconscient.	
38	But Sri Aurobindo clearly distinguishes them.	

12. Psychic Being: The Evolving Soul

Sc	Voice Over	
1	Psyche is a Greek word for 'soul'.	
2	The soul is a spark of the Divine that supports evolution in the material world.	
3	It contains all possibilities and it is the function of evolution to give it form.	
4	The psychic being is formed by the soul in its evolution.	
5	It is our inmost and true being, behind the surface ego personality.	
6	It is the <i>antarātman</i> , or <i>caitya puruṣha</i> in Sanskrit.	
7	It supports the mind, the vital and the body and grows by their experiences.	
8	This psychic being is the representative of the central being, known as <i>jivatman</i> in Sanskrit.	
9	The central being above presides over all the births but it does not descend into birth in time.	
10	It is our eternal and infinite Self.	
11	Spiritual liberation comes by an ascent and union with this universal Self.	
12	But for the evolutionary transformation of life and nature, the awakening of the psychic being is indispensable.	
13	Our psyche, in its early stages of development, exists only as a divine spark.	
14	This soul spark evolves through the cycles of rebirth through increasingly complex life forms.	
15	It is the impeller of evolution on earth, the Agni of the vedic seers.	
16	It carries the essence of experiences from the past births into the present birth.	
17	It is the knower of our purpose and mission in the world.	

18	This leader of our evolution is behind the veil of our surface consciousness, the ego, the false outer personality.	
19	Our psychic being reveals itself as a gentle response and preference for all that is True, Good and Beautiful.	
20	But normally this gentle response gets lost in the flux of surface consciousness.	
21	Our identification with the mental chatter, the emotional flux and the sensations; veils the messages coming from the emerging psychic being.	
22	Therefore it is necessary to establish inner silence and peace.	
23	The psychic being can be discovered by a deep inward journey.	
24	The more we accept this inner call, the more the inner guide reveals.	
25	Then, under the influence of the psychic being, the subliminal ranges opens up.	
26	Deep within the depths of the heart is our psychic being.	
27	As the psychic comes forward to take charge of our evolution, the utility of the ego ends.	
28	The natural attitude of the psychic being is to feel itself as the child of God, the devotee.	
29	It is full of love and delight and feels itself as a portion of the divine.	
30	Our true individualisation happens with the emergence of the psychic being.	
31	It brings the experience of oneness with the larger existence and yet acts as a unique centre for the action of the divine in the world.	

13. Planes of Consciousness

Sc	Voice Over	
1	Our being has two poles of existence.	
2	The superconscient pole is above.	

3	And the unconscious pole is below.	
4	There is vast spectrum of consciousness between these two poles.	
5	Our mind can access only a small range of consciousness that lies in between these two poles.	
6	Sri Aurobindo divides this full spectrum into two hemispheres, the upper and the lower.	

7	The upper half is our divine higher Nature, the formless eternal and infinite existence beyond time and space.	
8	The Blissfully Conscious Existence of Oneness, the Satchidananda in Sanskrit.	
9	The lower hemisphere is formed by the three planes of Mind, Vital and Physical worlds in time and space.	
10	Between the two hemispheres is the Supermind linking both.	
11	It is the Mahas or Vijnana of the Vedic Rishis.	
12	Thus, as a whole, there is a vertical hierarchy of 7 planes of consciousness.	
13	The Supermind is the creative power that builds the worlds.	
14	All the higher planes are involved in the physical plane.	
15	The evolution unfolding on the earth is in the physical plane, as a result of pressure arising from within the physical plane to express the involved consciousness.	
16	This is supported by a descending pressure from the planes above.	
17	The emergence of human beings on earth is a result of the descend of the mental plane into the physical plane.	
18	A yogi can consciously ascend to the higher planes.	
19	Within the mental plane itself there are spiritual ranges.	
20	First is Higher Mind that transforms our step by	

	step linear thought process into mass ideation	
21	Second is Illumined Mind of light, vision and revelatory knowledge..	
22	Third is the Intuition where knowledge comes by identity	
23	And the Fourth is Overmind, the highest spiritual range of the Mind.	
24	The Overmind universalises consciousness... ...bringing cosmic consciousness and action.	
25	Above the bright lid of Overmind is the plane of Supermind	
26	...where it is no more diversity moving towards unity... ... but unity embracing diversity in the infinity of our being...	
27	The power of triple time vision, trikaladrishti, embracing the past, present and future arrives at its perfection.	
28	Knowledge and Will moves together upon the foundation of oneness...	
29	But such an ascent does not transform the human nature.	
30	All these higher ranges are yet to fully descend into human beings and manifest their higher operations.	
31	Only when the dynamic powers of the higher planes descend...	
32	...with the psychic being as the support from below....	
33	...the mental, vital and physical parts of being undergo spiritual and supramental transformation.	

14. Parts & Planes: Overview