



21. Organs of Perception and Action (92)

बुद्धीन्द्रियाणि श्रवणं त्वगक्षि
घ्राणं च जिह्वा विषयावबोधनात् ।
वाक्पाणिपादं गुदमप्युपस्थः
कर्मेन्द्रियाणि प्रवणेन कर्मसु ॥ ९२ ॥

*buddhīndriyāṇi śravaṇam tvagakṣi
ghrāṇam ca jihvā viṣayāvabodhanāt,
vākpāṇipādam gudamapyupasthaḥ
karmendriyāṇi pravaṇena karmasu. (92)*

92. The ears, skin, eyes, nose and tongue are organs of knowledge, for they help us to gain knowledge of objects (stimuli, viṣayas). The organs of speech, hands, legs, the anus and the genital organ are the organs of action since they have a tendency for work.

Here, the Teacher undertakes to enumerate the different faculties of our personality that together constitute the subtle body. These faculties, in their aggregate, express through the gross body and establish the individual's contact with the world of objects around, from where he gains his own experiences of the world. The Teacher points out the five organs of knowledge (jñāna indriyas), and the five organs of action (karma indriyas). To perceive the stimuli reaching us and to respond to them, together constitute the expression of life through us.

The inlets that allow the stimuli to reach us are called the organs of knowledge because they perceive the world around us. These, the sense organs, are the ears, skin, eyes, nose and tongue.

When the stimuli are received, we respond to them through our motor organs which are also five in number. These are called the organs of action, as our responses expressed at the body level are our own reactions to the stimuli received. They are the organ of speech, the hands, the legs, the anus and the genital organ. Since these are points at which the individual explodes into action while expressing his responses, they are called the organs of function or action.

